



Bosnia and Herzegovina Needs Assessment Report



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Technical Assistance for
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**Bosnia and Herzegovina
Needs Assessment Report
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List of abbreviations

ACIPS	Association Alumni of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies
BAM	Bosnia and Herzegovina Convertible Mark
BD	Brcko District
BiHCoM	Council of Ministers of BiH
BiH DEI	Directorate for EU Integrations BiH
BiHMoJ	BiH Ministry of Justice
CBC	Cross Border Cooperation
CBGI	Capacity Building of Government Institutions project
CCI	Centres for Civic Initiatives
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CS	Civil Society
CSF	Civil Society Facility
CSPC	Civil Society Promotion Centre
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
EU	European Union
FBIH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
KULT	Institute for Youth Development KULT
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
JSRS	Justice Sector Reform Strategy
LAG	Local Advisory Group of TACSO 2 Project in BiH
LOD	Reinforcement of Local Democracy project
MBO	Membership Based Organisation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MM	Million
MP	Member of EU Parliament
MIPD	Multiannual Indicative Planning Document

NAR	Needs Assessment Report
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
P2P	People to People Program
P2P SB	P2P Single Beneficiary event
P2P MB	P2P Multi Beneficiary event
PBO	Public Benefit Organisation
PCM	Project Cycle Management
RS	RepublikaSrpska
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement
SECO	Sector Organizations Consultative mechanism
SIF in BiH	Social Inclusion Foundation in Bosnia and Herzegovina
TACSO	Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisation
VAT	Value Added Tax
VPI	Foreign Policy Initiative BH
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Introduction

The aim of this study is to review existing Needs Assessment conducted in 2011 and to update it according to TACSO 2 methodology used for original NAR. The study provides insight into strengths and weaknesses of the civil society, and its impacts to date and the challenges it faces to its further development.

Being led as well to contribute as much as it was possible to the indicators reflecting the ones in the Annex A-Monitoring and Evaluation and Proposed Results Framework of the “DG Enlargement Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020“, within the context of the Civil Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina, data of the same type from different sources were compared and discussed in order to serve as initial baseline and encourage further research.

Information provided are based on the desk research of relevant documentation including the most recent research and analysis of different aspects of the environment civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in, legislative changes, policy documents, etc. A number of interviews with representatives of authorities, donor community, CSOs and other CS stakeholders were conducted.¹ In addition, two focus groups with representatives of CSOs in Sarajevo (with representatives of several networks) and in Mostar (with a few CSOs) were held.² In this way, as well as through on-line questionnaires, all mentioned stakeholders, primarily CSOs had the opportunity to provide input, identify needs and provide a general overview of the state of civil society in BiH, as well as prospects for possible improvement of that state.

All information obtained through the interviews were analysed, grouped and presented in the report.

The study is an integral part of the project inception and it provides the premise for the majority of other project activities by serving as the basis of the development of the national as well as regional work plans to be implemented during the project’s duration.

¹ List of interviews is provided in Annex 1

² List of participants in focus groups is provided in Annex 2.

In line with the project's Terms of Reference and SIPU's technical proposal, the study understands civil society in the following two complementary ways:

1. All organisational structures whose members have objectives and responsibilities that are of general interest and who also act as mediators between the public authorities and citizens. This definition clearly emphasises the associational character of civil society, while also accentuating its representational role. Civil society would include a variety of organisational types, including NGOs, mass movements, cooperatives, professional associations, cultural and religious groups, trades unions and grassroots community groups (CBOs), etc.
2. A space for views, policies and action supportive of alternatives to those promoted by government and the private sector. This definition places the emphasis on social inclusion, social and political pluralism and the rights of expression in developing a participatory democracy.

The document is composed of four sections:

- Section one provides an analysis of the civil society environment, including the legal framework governing CSOs and their work, the current donor opportunities and other sources of civil society funding, the government mechanisms for cooperation with and support of civil society and the policy framework determining government-civil society relations and public perceptions and support for civil society and its activities.
- Section two gives an overview of the main features of civil society: the types of organisations represented and their key organisational characteristics, the types of activity they carry out and their main sector interests, their geographical distribution and way they are structured within an overall civil society architecture. CSOs are assessed according to their technical, organisational and institutional capacities, including human resources and technical skills, strategic strengths, analytical capabilities, external relations with other actors including other CSOs, government and the community, and material and financial stability and resilience.

- Section three summarises the main achievements of civil society to date, noting key milestone achievements and broader social impacts, and also identifies shortfalls in civil society performance in need of strengthening and further development.
- Section four sums up the most important institutional and organisational capacity needs of civil society in the country and identifies key strategic issues for the implementation of the project. By way of conclusion, recommendations are made for both the project's regional work plan and country-specific work plan.

1. CIVIL SOCIETY ENVIRONMENT

1.1. Legal framework – an analysis of relevant law and financial regulations

Law on Associations and Foundations

Law on Associations and Foundations of BiH³ regulates the establishment, registration, internal organization and cessation of work of associations and foundations, which want to be registered at the level of BiH.

The BiH Ministry of Justice (BiHMoJ) is responsible for registering association and foundation at the state level. BiHMoJ is also responsible for the registration of changes in the Register that the subjects of registration are obliged to timely report to the Ministry on appropriate forms and with necessary documentation. Certain amendments have been adopted in late 2011 to the Law on Associations and Foundations of BiH however no significant changes have been introduced. The parliament rejected a proposal by the BiHMoJ that would have created separate legislation for foundations and associations, which are currently addressed in a single law.

³ 'Official Gazette of BiH', No: 32/01, 42/03, 63/08 and 76/11

As in previous acting Law definitions of associations and foundations remains the same:

Associations: The Law defines an association as a not-for-profit membership organisation established by a minimum of three natural (citizens or those with residence in BiH) or legal persons (in any combination) to further a common interest or public interest.

Foundations: The Law defines a foundation as a not-for-profit organisation without members, intended to manage specific property for the public benefit or for charitable purposes. A single person or legal entity is sufficient to establish a foundation, but its governing board must consist of a minimum of three members.

Neither an association nor a foundation may support or fundraise for a political party or candidates, or engage in political electioneering.

Associations and foundations are free to carry out economic activities whose purpose is the pursuit of its stated goals. An association and a foundation may undertake economic activities which are not directly related to the achievement of its goals only by establishing a separate commercial legal entity; in such a case, the total profit from unrelated activities must not exceed one third of the organisations total annual budget, or 10,000 BAM (approx. 5,000 EUR), whichever amount is higher. In addition, profit generated from unrelated economic activities can only be used for furthering the stated purpose of the organisation.

There are laws on associations and foundations at the both entities but they do not differ significantly in main provisions from the one at state level.

Registration

Registration process at the state level is being carried out by the BiHMoJ as noted in the previous section. This process is still time consuming and burdened with many obstacles. Registration authorities have made it common practice to deny CSOs the right to use the words “centre,” “institute,” or “agency” in their names. Even though this is not directly prohibited by law, they argue that it is necessary to prevent people from confusing CSOs with government institutions.⁴

⁴ USAID NGO Sustainability Index 2012, available at:
http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/2012CSOSI_0.pdf

The process of consultations with interested parties is the main improvement, recently introduced by the BiHMoJ, in an attempt to speed up the process of registration. The consultations are organised every day in the period 1.00 – 3.00p.m, and interested parties can get all necessary information and advice on the registration process. The updated Register of Associations at the state level shows that by the October 2013 there were 1,407 associations registered at the state level, which is nearly 12% of all registered CSOs in BiH.

When registered at the state level, CSOs can operate throughout the country while registration in one entity only can hinder activities in the other entity, particularly if the CSO is involved in employing people in the other entity (due to problems with different tax authorities). A CSO can also register at both the state and entity level.

Registration is conducted in different ways in the two entities, but in both cases it appears a relatively straightforward and quick process. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), registration of associations takes place in either the cantons or the entity Ministry of Justice (Federal Ministry of Justice), while foundations can register only in the Ministry. In both cases registration takes no more than 30 days. In the RepublikaSrpska (RS) both associations and foundations register at one of the four district courts, depending on where the organisation is located. The registration process is completed within 15 days. The RS Government launched an initiative for introducing a single register at the RS level, as part of the Agency for Intermediary, IT and Financial services (APIF)⁵ which already keeps the register of companies and farms.

Having in mind that CSO registrations are done at different levels of authority in BiH and that there is no single register that would collate all the information on registered CSOs and establish unified procedures of registration, there are still no reliable data on the overall number of CSOs operating in the country. A framework number of some 12,000 registered CSOs has been in use (but without the possibility of establishing an actual number of active CSOs).⁶ The latest attempts to improve this situation have not been successful. Namely, due to the inability of the country's two entities to agree on proposed Law provisions, the BiH parliament failed to pass the draft framework Law for Joint Registry of Non-Governmental Organizations in BiH, proposed in

⁵ For more on Agency for Intermediary, IT and financial services see: <http://www.apif.net/>

⁶Žeravčić, G. (2008) Analysis of Institutional Cooperation between Governmental and Non- governmental Sectors in BiH; Sarajevo: Kronauer Consulting, available at: <<http://www.kronauer-consulting.com/download/analiza-en.pdf>>

September 2011, which would have created a centralized database of CSOs in the country, as well as unified registration procedures.

Registration carries with it the right to receive public funding from the administration where the CSO registers. State budgets for funding CSOs are much lower than those of the entities, so for this reason, but also because the entities officially do not recognise the state-level registration process, CSOs will generally register only within their own entity.

Public Benefit Status

Acting Laws on Associations and Foundations at the state level as well as, entity laws, provide the opportunity for a registered CSO to gain the status of a Public Benefit organisation if objectives and activities of the association go beyond the interests of membership of the association, i.e. if association or foundation is established primarily for the purpose of propagation, providing services or promoting in the areas such as: health, education, science, social protection, civil society, human rights and rights of minorities, support to the poor and socially endangered people, support to disabled persons, children and elderly persons, protection of environment, tolerance, culture, amateur sport, religious freedom and support to victims of natural disasters and other similar aims.⁷

In theory, public benefit status qualifies an organisation for certain tax exemptions and financial incentives from the state, but these concessions are not defined in law and in practice it is not clear how the status provides tangible benefits to the organisation.

At the state level, there is a detailed list of documents that need to be submitted to acquire the public benefit status. However, the process of deciding on awarding the public benefit/interest status to association or foundation lacks transparency.

At all administrative levels, confirming public benefit status for a CSO is not carried out according to clear criteria and transparent procedures. The RS has been determined to introduce clear criteria and improve transparency in awarding the public benefit status over the last few years. Certain decisions and principles have been adopted in that regard.

⁷http://mpr.gov.ba/organizacija_nadleznosti/uprava/registracije/udruzenja/osnivanje/Default.aspx?id=193
6

At the state level, only three organisations out of over 1,200 registered, have been awarded the status of public benefit, while in the RS, 13 plus additional eight CSOs have been awarded such status since 2010. Initially, organisations were awarded the public benefit status for a three-year period, during which there will be no awards of this status to any new organisations. Subsequently, the RS Government decided to extend the status for additional two years. This was done wanting to introduce system solutions in the process of acquiring and losing the public benefit status, and ensure time to carry out all the analyses necessary for establishing detailed criteria for the process, making it even more transparent. The RS Government will announce its next public call for awarding the public benefit status in early 2016. The objective of the RS Government is to avoid having the public call linked to the election years, and thus prevent any possible political interference with the process.

Finally, there is still room for improvement in terms of procedures for awarding the public benefit status, financial assistance that accompanies the status, transparency in the procedure, as well as requirements set forth for CSOs that hold the public benefit status at all administrative levels.

Voluntarism

There is as yet no legal framework defining the respective rights and responsibilities of volunteer and volunteer-involving organisations at the state level. Draft state law prepared in 2009 with the expert assistance and consultations from relevant CSOs has still not been adopted. The main reason for this lies in lack of political will from entity(s) to adopt any laws and strategies at the state level.

Certain progress has been made at the FBiH level, where the Law on Voluntarism was adopted in late 2012.⁸ Institute for Youth Development KULT (KULT) together with other CSOs have been initiators of the adoption of the law. Volunteers from the Federation of BiH have finally been provided with the legal solution according to which volunteering undertaken in their

⁸ The FBiH Law on Volunteering was adopted at the 12th session of the Federation BiH House of People with 45 votes in favour, one abstained and none against.

professional fields will be recognised as their work experience. This law is drawing from the best EU practices, latest recommendations on volunteering and upon developing interdependence between the needs and traditions of volunteerism and volunteer activities in FBiH. The terms volunteer and volunteering have been defined for the first time, and the law also says that activities to be carried out by volunteers will be recognised as socially useful. Moreover, in order to prevent volunteer abuse, profitable companies can no longer offer volunteer programmes. At the beginning of 2013 accompanying by-laws have been adopted⁹ and KULT is monitoring implementation of the law.

In the RS, new Law on Volunteering entered into force in late October 2013, after many years of CSO lobbying. The Law regulates the principles of volunteering and describes the rights and obligations of both volunteers and host organizations.¹⁰ This Law also provides framework for creation and adoption of the Strategy, which is currently being drafted. In accordance with recommendations of the Council of Europe, the Law does not recognize and support volunteering as primary tool for solving of unemployment problem, as it can lead to exploitation of volunteers as free labour. The new Law also defines unique volunteer's Identification Document for all volunteers; so at least, any volunteer work can be evaluated and officially recorded in this way.

The term volunteer work is also defined by the Law on Labour as non-financial compensated internship and way of gaining of professional skills and knowledge, needed for licensing the profession by relevant institutions.¹¹

Tax Incentives

CSOs are exempt from paying tax on donations, grants, membership fees and also any profits from economic activities directly related to the achievement of the organisations' goals. For all other economic activities, CSOs are treated the same as any profit-making enterprise and revenue

⁹ These by-laws include: Rulebook on format and process of issuing a volunteer's booklet, Rulebook on the process of accrediting organisers of volunteering efforts, Rulebook on obligations of the organisers of volunteering efforts, contents and method of submitting the reports, Rulebook on volunteering compensation in FBiH.

¹⁰ The RS National Assembly adopted Law on Volunteering in the RS at its 30th session held on 25 October 2013. Law on Volunteering in RS was published in the Official Gazette of RS : 89/13

¹¹ For more on this see: <http://www.okcbl.org/grep.php?tid=600&lng=sr>

from all activities related to the organisation's goals or not, are liable to tax on profits at the standard rate.

Deductibility of Charitable Contributions

Since the development of last Needs Assessment report, no changes have been made in custom policy in BiH. There are still discrepancies in concessions available for charitable contributions in the two entities, with the Law on Income in the RS offering individuals and businesses considerably more encouragement to support charitable and non-profit organisations, including CSOs. In FBiH, charitable donations from both individuals and registered businesses may be deducted against tax up to a limit of only 0.5 % of individual earnings and corporate profit. In the case of the RS, the limit is raised to 2% of earnings and profit. CSOs complain that these concessions are too low to stimulate a culture of giving in BiH, and also that, as far as individual giving is concerned, as the scheme is only available to individuals who submit annual tax returns (in effect the self-employed), it is far too restricted in scope to generate significant revenues for CSOs.

Value Added Tax

CSOs are exempt from charging VAT (payable at the standard rate of 17 %) on goods and services directly related to the achievement of their statutory objectives, which they offer to their members as a means of paying membership, so long as the exemption does not cause unfair advantage within the wider market. In effect, this allows CSOs to provide its core services free of VAT to the general public.

Otherwise, CSOs pay VAT on goods and services they themselves receive. The threshold for registering for VAT is an annual turnover of 50,000 BAM (approx. 25,000 EUR). As the majority of CSOs have revenues lower than this amount, they are not in the VAT system and are therefore not able to claim VAT refunds.

1.2. Donors and funding opportunities (local and international) today and as predicted in the future

CSOs find their funding sources among international and local donors. In terms of domestic institutions, financial support is provided by all levels of authorities, municipal, cantonal (in FBiH), entity and state level. This support has always been significant considering that funds allocated to CSOs have always amounted to some 0.5 -0.6 % of country GDP, in line with trends in other countries in the region.

The amount of funds allocated to CSOs and the funds available to domestic institutions vary depending on the administrative level in question. The municipalities have always been the biggest donors, while the state level has the most limited funds for financial support to CSOs. Looking at the overall amount allocated for CSOs support from all levels of authority, one can notice the amount has been decreasing over the last couple of years.¹² This can be explained by economic crisis and very bad financial framework in BiH, imposing great cuts on the institutions. These cuts have had an impact on funds planned for CSO support.

The latest TACSO research: Financial support of public institutions to nongovernmental organisations in BiH in 2011¹³ has confirmed the trend of decreased funding for CSOs from domestic institutions budgets. Despite using different methodology than in 2010, the research claims that it can be established that 36 million BAM less was allocated to CSOs in 2011 than in 2010.¹⁴

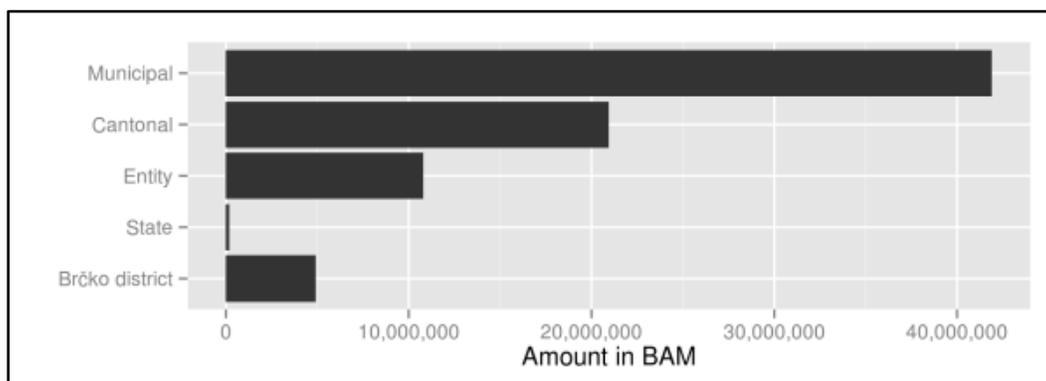
According to this research, the biggest donors from the public sector in 2011 were municipalities and then the cantons. In 2011, the municipalities allocated 53.23% of funds for nongovernmental organisations, cantons 26.58%, entities 13.71%, Brcko District 6.22%, and state level institutions 0.23% of the overall funds identified in the research.

¹² Research: "Halfway There: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010" (Sarajevo: SIF in BiH and CSPC, February 2011, p. 12, shows that governments have allocated as much as 3,955,197.70 BAM less in 2010 in comparison to 2008 allocations

¹³ Research available at: http://tacso.org/doc/Financial-Support_BiH_2011.pdf

¹⁴ Difference in the methodology used in these two researches is that in 2010 institutions were requested to provide data on funds planned for CSOs, while for 2011 research they were asked to provide data on funds allocated to CSOs. However, regardless of the difference in methodology, such discrepancy in the figures for two consecutive years is sufficiently strong indicator of the current trends.

Figure 1: Allocations for the NGO sector by level of government, 2011



Source: Financial support of Public Institutions to Non-Governmental Organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2011, TACSO BiH, 2012.

The trend of gradual decrease in funding for a large number of activities and services provided by CSOs in sectors of human rights protection, ecology and social policy and similar was recorded, while funding for sports and war veterans association continued to be priority at all levels of authority.

Similar to this, at the entity level the largest amounts of money were allocated to non-governmental sector in the areas of sports and war veterans. Out of a total amount allocated by the RS Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports to non-governmental organisations (2,529,784 BAM), its sports department allocated 1,728,107 BAM to sports associations and clubs, i.e. 68.31% out of the total amount allocated to non-governmental organisations.¹⁵ It is important to note that this Ministry's budget for CSO support is bigger than budgets of all other ministries together. In comparison with the cantonal level, the entities also provided significant funds for non-governmental organisations working in education and social protection sectors.

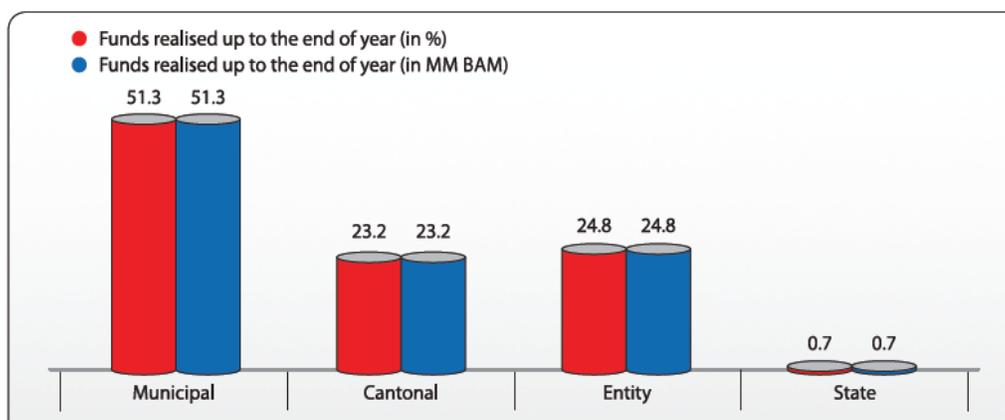
Based on the research *Heads or Tails: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2012* published by SIF in BiH and CSPC the governmental sector allocated around 100 million BAM to NGOs; "observed at administration levels, the largest total

¹⁵ TACSO research: Financial support of public institutions to non-governmental organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2011, available at: http://tacso.org/doc/Financial-Support_BiH_2011.pdf

allocated funds were at municipal levels, although institutions at the cantonal level had the largest individual allocations. Out of all institutions, 45.7% municipal level institutions allocated 51.3% of the total allocated funds, 32.2% cantonal level institutions allocated 23.2% of total allocated funds, 18.9% entity-level institutions allocated 24.8% of the total allocated funds and 3.2% of state-level institutions allocated 0.7% of the total allocated funds¹⁶.

According to the same source the „increasing reliance of the NGO sector on local sources of funding is a positive process which, in spite of all problems, leads to its sustainability“¹⁷.

Figure 2: Total allocated funds of government institutions in 2012 within administration levels (in MM BAM and in %)



Source: SIF in BiH and CSPC, “Heads or Tails: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in BiH for 2012” (Sarajevo: SIF in BiH and CSPC, February 2013).

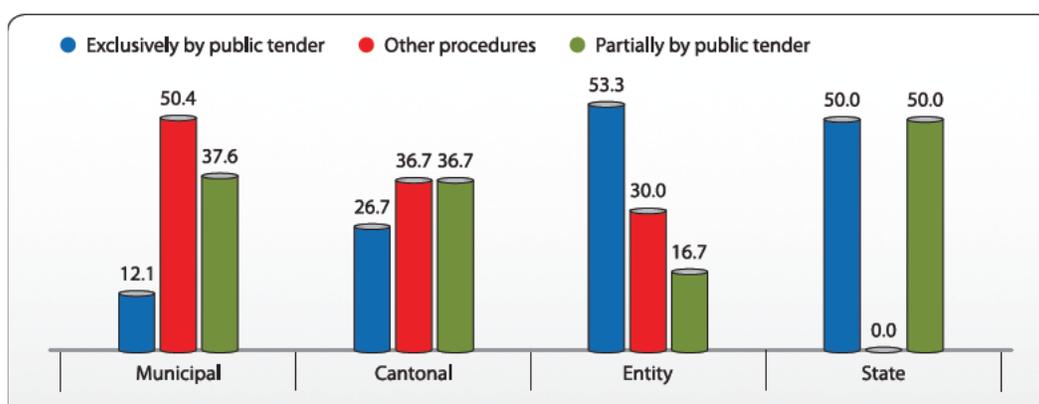
In addition, the practice of some of the institutions is to divide CSO funds into equal parts and distribute it to all applicants who respond to the public call for project proposals. From their point of view, this seems as a fair practice because it gives equal opportunity to all. However, for CSOs this is inconvenient because they receive funding for only one part of their project activities, while full implementation of the project and achievement of the project goal remains undermined.

¹⁶SIF in BiH and CSPC, “Heads or Tails: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in BiH for 2012” (Sarajevo: SIF in BiH and CSPC, February 2013), p.9. Research available at: <http://sif.ba/ba/index.php/publikacije-2/sm=93&ie=UTF-8>

¹⁷SIF in BiH and CSPC, “Heads or Tails: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in BiH for 2012” (Sarajevo: SIF in BiH and CSPC, February 2013), p.5. Research available at: <http://sif.ba/ba/index.php/publikacije-2/sm=93&ie=UTF-8>

In terms of the procedures for allocation of funds, which determine the level of transparency of the process the findings in the report published by SIF in BiH and CSPC for 2012. shown that “exactly one half of the total amount at the state level is allocated through public calls and the other half through public and other procedures, in all other administration levels all three types of fund allocations are present, with a different type of allocation dominating in every level, as was the case in 2010. So, the dominant type of fund allocations at the entity level (with 53.3%) is allocating the total amount through public calls; on the other hand, the most frequent method at the municipal level(with 50.4%) is allocating the total amount through other procedures; at the cantonal level, percentually the same amount (36.7%) of the total amount is allocated through using procedures other than publiccalls or partially through public calls.”¹⁸

Figure 3:Methods of fund allocations by administration levels (in %)



Source:SIF in BiH and CSPC, “Heads or Tails: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in BiH for 2012” (Sarajevo: SIF in BiH and CSPC, February 2013).

The UNDP LOD project played a significant role in improving the development of this process, focusing among other things on setting up more transparent procedures for funding of CSO and municipal budgets.¹⁹

¹⁸SIF in BiH and CSPC, “Heads or Tails: Government Allocations for the Non-governmental Sector in BiH for 2012” (Sarajevo: SIF in BiH and CSPC, February 2013),p.17. Research available at: <http://sif.ba/ba/index.php/publikacije-2/sm=93&ie=UTF-8>

¹⁹ More on LOD project see: http://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/operations/projects/poverty_reduction/reinforcement-of-local-democracy-iii--lod-iii-.html

The common feature at all levels of authority remains the fact that they very rarely link public call for project proposals and criteria in their priority areas to implementation of strategic documents of their institutions. Thus the authorities fail to identify CSO partners for implementation and monitoring of strategic documents, as well as to take strategic and deliberate approach to allocation of funds and support for CSOs.

Donor funding

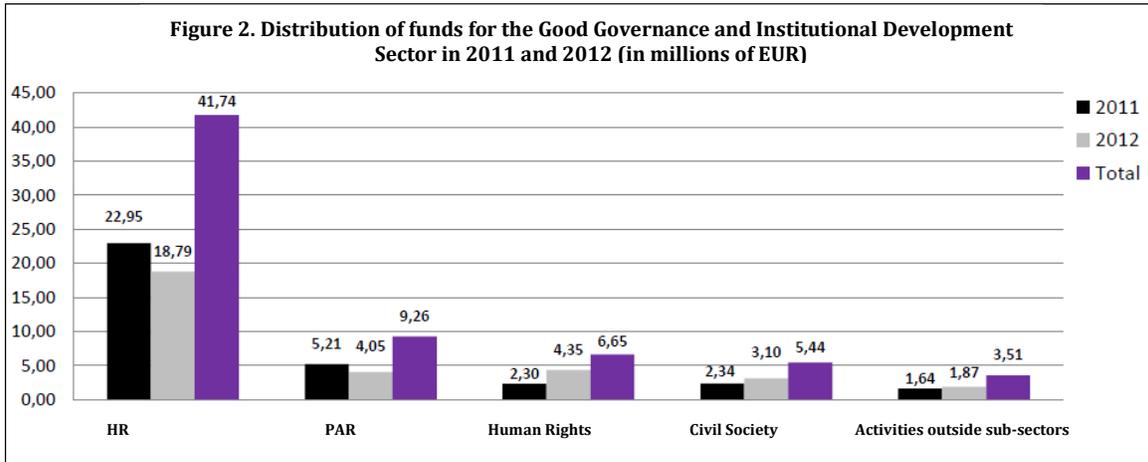
The trend of withdrawal of bilateral donors from BiH and the region in general, recorded over the past several years, has continued. A number of donors have reduced their bilateral assistance for BiH, to redirect it through assistance provided by the European Union (EU). The report on donor assistance for 2011-2012 shows that the total funds for development decreased for 133.37 million EUR in 2011 in comparison to 2010. The grants have increased for 8.58 million EUR, while loans decreased for 141 million EUR.

According to the BiH Ministry of Finance, which is responsible for coordinating foreign aid, allocations of foreign aid to civil society amounted to 2.34 million EUR or 6.8 % in 2011, and 3.10 million EUR or 9.6 % in 2012 of total funds for good governance and institutional building sectors.²⁰ The total amount for these sectors was 34 million EUR in 2011 and 32 million EUR in 2012.²¹

²⁰ Donor Monitoring Report 2011-2012, BiH Ministry of Finance, available in local language(s) at: http://www.mft.gov.ba/bos/images/stories/medjunarodna%20saradnja/koordinacija_medjunarodne_pomoci/DMR_2011_2012_BOS.PDF

²¹ Although for 2012 this includes all spending made until July 2012, so that additional amounts are to be expected. However, this is a significant decrease having in mind that the total amount for these sectors was 49.47 million EUR in 2009, and 52.20 million EUR in 2010

Figure 4: Distribution of donor funds for the Good Governance and Institutional Development Sector in 2011 and 2012 (in millions of EUR)



Source: Donor monitoring report 2011-2012, BiH Ministry of Finance

The donors that have supported the civil society sector in 2011 and 2012 are almost the same as in previous years: EU, Italy, Norway, the Netherlands, Swiss SDC, Sweden, USA/USAID and Hungary, World Bank, UNDP, UK, Austria/ADC, and UNICEF.

Spain/AECID, UK/DFID and Holland finished with all their activities and closed down their offices in BiH in 2011, while Austria/ADC is due to phase out its direct bilateral technical assistance by the end of 2013. In 2012, the Republic of Slovenia joined the donor coordination forum in BiH. In the period 2011-2012, donor activities in the Civil Society sub-sector were focused on promotion of communication and partnership between the CSOs and local authorities, as well as providing funds for local and regional non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in the area of democratisation.

The reports on coordination of foreign aid show that the donors are increasingly incorporating civil society and human rights- related issues into other projects. In addition to this, civil society often benefits from internationally funded projects in all sectors that are the subject to donor assistance.

The following section provides an overview of available funding sources for CSOs

EU IPA and other funds

Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU in 2008. Although SAA has still not entered into force, the country took upon itself the obligation to implement certain institutional and economic reforms on the path to the EU. In all strategic documents, EU underlines the importance of strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring inclusive democratic processes that support these institutions and reinforce core democratic principles and common EU values. An empowered civil society is recognized as a crucial component of any democratic system. In particular, civil society plays an important role in terms of the EU association process and bringing it closer to BiH citizens, disseminating relevant information and advocating for necessary economic and institutional changes.

The EU focus on civil society development in Bosnia and Herzegovina is on:

- Improvement of transparency in funding CSOs from public budgets.
- Improvement of cooperation between municipal governments and CSOs.
- Improvement of cooperation among CSOs.
- Establishment of institutional mechanisms for cooperation with civil society in the governments of the state, entities, and Breko District (BD).
- Regional cooperation among CSOs.²²

EU support for civil society is mostly directed through IPA programme and EIDHR. So far significant funds have been allocated to support the civil society, in particular to develop capacities of the civil society to engage in civil dialogue, reinforce local democracy and strengthen civil society organisations to fight corruption and protect the environment.

EU recently presented IPA II for 2014-2020 that is also an opportunity to ensure an even closer link between the enlargement strategy and the priorities for assistance. IPA II introduces some important innovations, notably the focus on defining long-term policies and strategies in a limited number of priority sectors, which will be aligned with the needs and capacities of each country. Clear targets and realistic indicators will be set and linked to multi-annual sector

²²<http://europa.ba/Default.aspx?id=33&lang=EN>

assistance. If countries meet the necessary standards of public financial management, they will be able to benefit from budget support – a further incentive for reform. Incentives will be available to countries that advance on their reform path. In case of underperformance, funds will be reallocated. The management of IPA programmes will be further streamlined, mainly through fewer and larger projects.²³

Current EU funding opportunities include:

Civil Society Facility (CSF) was established in 2008 to support the development of civil society financially. It includes both national and multi-beneficiary initiatives, which are programmed in a coordinated manner to achieve shared outcomes. CSF 2013 is ending and CSF 2014 is in the stage of programming, all consultations with stakeholders have been conducted and main priorities that stakeholders identified to be supported are following:

- Establishment of Office for cooperation with civil society at state level
- Continuation of support to issue based networks
- Tackling unemployment

Financial framework for CSF 2014 has not yet been defined, but tendency is that it will be at least as in 2013.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a member of Seventh framework programme for research and technology development – FP7 and Culture Programme. Additionally, BiH participates in programmes related to education like TEMPUS and Erasmus Mundus. Even BiH is not member of Life Long Learning Programme, BiH can participate in this programme in form of a Partner in Multilateral project activities and networks and participate in sub-programme Jean Monnet.

²³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdfhttp://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf

Participants from BiH have access to two activities under Programme Youth in Action: European Volunteer Servis and Youth in World (Activity: Cooperation with neighbouring countries).

In framework of second component of IPA – cross border cooperation, BiH participates in 6 programmes: in 3 bilateral programme of cross border cooperation with Croatia, Serbia and Monte Negro and in one programme of cross border cooperation with countries members of – IPA Adriatic Programme and as well as in two programmes of transnational cooperation South East Europe (SEE and Mediterian (MED)).²⁴

IPA BiH – “Reinforcement of Local Democracy III (LOD III)”, after the successful completion of the first two cycles – LOD I (2009-2011) and LOD II (2011-2012). LOD project is currently in its third phase. It was designed to strengthen inclusiveness, participation and transparency in municipal funding, to emphasise the importance of the role of civil society in local communities and to create long-lasting partnerships between local governments and CSOs. It creates the conditions for competitive project-based approaches to funding disbursement, motivating CSOs to professionalise and become better service providers, acting in accordance with local development strategies. The project works with local governments in order to enable them to select the most relevant projects for their community in the most transparent manner.

CBGI project: Capacity Building of Government institutions project is a two-year EU IPA funded project that started in December 2012 with the main aim to build capacities of government institutions at state, entity and BD level to take part in civil dialogue.

Cross Border Cooperation: BiH currently participates in six programmes within the framework of the IPA Component II Cross Border Cooperation: three bilateral Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) Programmes with its immediate neighbours Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, a CBC programme with EU Member States (IPA Adriatic CBC Programme) and two Transnational Programmes (South East Europe and Mediterranean).²⁵

²⁴http://dei.gov.ba/dei/direkcija/sektor_koordinacija/programi_eu/osnovi_ucesca/programi_eu/default.aspx?id=10069&langTag=bs-BA

²⁵<http://europa.ba/Default.aspx?id=35&lang=EN>

In terms of participation in the EU Programmes, BiH participates as a full member in the Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities (FP7) and in the COST and the EUREKA networks. The country became an associate member of the Culture 2007-2013 programme and joined the Europe for Citizens Programme. A single contact point is instrumental for enhanced participation by citizens across the country in the Culture and Europe for Citizens programmes.²⁶

USAID

The Civil Society Sustainability Project addresses the lack of civic engagement in policy development, implementation and oversight, with a broader goal of increasing government accountability. The project assists civil society in BiH to more effectively engage with government and other key stakeholders over the long-term by teaching them new skills to operate more professionally and help them join forces and focus on areas of comparative advantage.

This project will assist selected 10-12 CSOs to:

partner with a wide array of stakeholders from business, government, media sectors;

strengthen their internal capacities and organizational structures to ensure sustainability and financial viability; and

increase engagement in policy development and government monitoring and oversight of key structural, political, social and economic reforms essential for EU integration.

This project will continue to monitor the work of elected officials and regularly inform the public on government efficiency. It will also advocate for more enabling legal and fiscal environment for civil society, on issues such as individual and corporate philanthropy, social entrepreneurship, CSO self-regulation mechanisms, and relations between CSOs and government. Implementing Partners are Centres for Civic Initiatives (CCI) and CSPC.

This 5 years project started in September 2013 with total funding of 8.85 million \$.²⁷

Anti-Corruption Civic Organizations' Unified Network (ACCOUNT) Project will establish systematic and sustainable approaches to successfully combat corruption in BiH in the long term.

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ For more on the project see: <http://www.usaid.gov/news-information/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-civil-society-sustainability-project-bosnia-and-herzegovina>

It will work to augment existing anti-corruption initiatives to create more coordinated, comprehensive and publicly recognized civic anti-corruption campaigns through the accomplishment of three objectives:

- Encourage NGOs to form larger and more inclusive movements by establishing an umbrella network of NGOs and other relevant stakeholders;
- Develop, adopt and enforce existing and new anti-corruption legislation and policies; and
- Create widely known and safe avenues for reporting on corruption, while using all available means of public outreach to raise awareness at the grassroots level.

Project is running till mid-2015, its value is 1million \$ and implementing partners are Centre for Media Development and Analysis (CRMA), and InfoHouse.

Engaging Civil Society in Constitutional Reform works with civil society leaders, grassroots activists, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and key stakeholders to help them develop a citizen-driven movement for BiH constitutional reform that will effectively engage government officials. Under this program, implemented by the Public International Law & Policy Group (PILPG), civil society leaders from all political and social groups will coordinate amongst themselves to develop proposals for constitutional reform based on common interests. They will engage the BiH government to enact reforms that address ethnic division and promote stability in the country. More specifically, this activity builds the capacity of civil society to:

- Coordinate with other civil society groups on the constitutional reform process;
- Develop proposals for constitutional reform based on common interests; and
- Engage the state government on issues pertaining to constitutional reform.

Project is running from 2011-mid 2014, total value of the project is 1 million \$ and implementing partner is Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG).

Sweden/SIDA

Continues to support BiH CSOs through its national implementing partner- the Civil Society Promotion Center (“Be the Change project”). Also supports the Centre for Investigative Reporting and Citizens for Europe. In total Sweden/SIDA support is worth approximately 2.5 million Euros per year.

Norwegian Embassy

is supporting CSO through two funds: Strengthening civil society fund and the Embassy fund.²⁸

1.3. Government mechanisms for civil society – government cooperation and the policy framework determining government – civil society relations

State level cooperation with CSO

In the observed period, the cooperation did not improve significantly at any of the levels of authority in BiH, including the state level. The Agreement on Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BH (BH CoM) and the Non-Governmental Sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina signed in 2007²⁹ has not been implemented. Institutional mechanisms provided for in the Agreement, such as the BiH’s Office for cooperation with CSOs, have not been established.

Engagement of citizens in the decision-making processes at the state level in BiH is regulated by the Council of Ministers Rules on Consultation in Legislative Drafting (Rules on consultation)³⁰.

²⁸ For more on this fund see: http://www.norveska.ba/Embassy/Embassy_Fund/Strengthening-Civil-Society-Fund-2013-SCSF/#.Urdvu2RDvk0

²⁹ Agreement available at: http://civilnodrustvo.ba/files/docs/Agreement_on_cooperation.pdf?phpMyAdmin=4dbc505c79a6t34771d80r81d7&phpMyAdmin=687c50a0fa0ct42d51eb1r81d7

³⁰ Council of Ministers Rules on Consultation in Legislative Drafting available at: http://mpr.gov.ba/web_dokumenti/BiH_Regulations_Consultations_LegislativeDrafting_2006%5B1%5D.pdf

The Rules on consultation provide a legislative framework, but are still not being implemented in full. Although the last in-depth analysis which attempted to identify reasons for failure to carry out consultation process was done in 2010, some of the general observations recorded since that time have noted that authorities have still not recognised the need to engage citizens into the decision making processes or are not aware of the benefits that could follow from that process. On the other hand, due to lack of trust that their input and comments will be considered at all, citizens have not demonstrated sufficient interest or engaged into decision-making processes.

However, BiHCoM has taken some concrete steps aimed at improving the consultations process and bringing it closer to the citizens. Thus, a web portal for public consultations at the level of BiHCoM is currently under construction. This will to large extent facilitate citizens' access to information regarding legislation, which is subject to the public consultations process. In addition, changes to the Rules on consultation are underway as part of the EU funded CBGI project, aiming to develop capacities of the government institutions for civil dialogue.³¹

In addition, BiHMoJ can serve as good practice example, with the different types of cooperation it has developed with CSOs and its openness for similar operations in future. Among other things, BiHMoJ signed the Memorandum of Understanding with five CSOs, which allowed engagement of these CSOs in monitoring the implementation of Justice Sector Reform Strategy (JSRS) for the period 2008 – 2012 in BiH. The CSOs also presented their reports at the BiH's Justice Ministers Conferences. Together with several other CSOs, these five CSOs also took part in early stages of drafting updated JSRS for 2014-2018.

When it comes to developing mechanism for engaging in structured dialogue with governmental institutions, it is important to mention development of SECO mechanism (Sector Organizations Consultative mechanism). Namely, SECO mechanisms are so far a unique approach to state authorities in trying to develop a structured dialogue with civil society in specific sectors and use its information, know-how, ideas etc. to the advantage of IPA programming.³² Building on experience from the region especially from Serbia, TACSO BiH has organised a training workshop with general objective to support building capacities of CSOs for participation in

³¹ For more on CBGI project see:

http://cbgi.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=102

³² 'Capacity building of civil society organizations in Serbia in the areas of regional networking, cooperation and advocating on the EU level', Balkan Civil Society Network, Workshop report, Belgrade, February 2012

consultation processes of IPA II programming and monitoring. CBGI project is currently developing those SECO mechanisms together with government authorities in order to ensure that SECO mechanisms are being implemented in institutions in charge for IPA planning and programming. So far CBGI project has developed and introduced an institutional framework for SECO mechanism and sent it to BiH DEI for adoption. Future activities will include development of the Rulebook for the implementation of SECO mechanism and organisation of trainings for CoM ministry officials on SECO implementation.

Based on the dynamics and phases of opening the process of consultation for participation of CS related to IPA II programming, TACSO BiH should support SECO mechanisms development, assist in ensuring financial sustainability through IPA II, in cooperation with other donors in the country and support activities on educating CSOs in country on EU enlargement processes and IPA programming.³³

Entity Level Cooperation with CSOs

Despite certain initiatives to have the agreements on cooperation with non-governmental organisations signed at the entity and BD level, so far this did not happen. The cooperation does exist, however it is frequently only formal and not substantial. The cooperation between authorities and CSOs at the level of FBiH remains quite limited. There are no legislative or institutional mechanisms in place regulating cooperation with civil society. All initiatives related to appointment of civil society coordinator, as well as establishment of the legislative framework for engagement of citizens in decision-making processes, have still not yielded any results due to not functioning of FBiH government. However, despite the fact that the FBiH still has no legal framework that would standardize the consultation process there are some examples of good practice when it comes to different types of cooperation between government institutions and CSOs in this entity. However, these are sporadic examples and do not involve any systematic solutions. In spring 2013, the FBiH Parliament created a CSOs register in order to consult them when a legal act is drafted. Having in mind that this register has been introduced recently, it is still too early to assess the actual use of this register.

³³Full report on Workshop for building capacities of CSOs to develop SECO mechanisms in BiH, prepared by Dubravka Velat, trainer, and Snežana Stojanović, trainer.

In the RS, the legislative framework for engagement of citizens in decision-making process has been set up in form of *Guidelines for action of Republic bodies of management on participation of public and consultation in drafting laws* and to a certain extent it is being implemented.³⁴ Still, those Guidelines need further amendments in order to ensure efficient consultations with the public and CBGI project is providing technical support in this process to RS authorities. In addition to that, CBGI project is aiming to harmonise legal framework for including citizens in decision-making processes at all administrative levels.

Municipality Level Cooperation with CSOs

Cooperation of government institutions with CSOs at the municipal level is not different in any major way to that exercised at other levels of authority. The agreements on cooperation with nongovernmental organisations have been signed by some municipalities. The analyses have indicated that these agreements are viewed by the participating parties as relating primarily to the system of regulating the distribution of public funds to CSOs.³⁵ However, despite these agreements being signed, the MIPD document rightly states that the civil society organisations are excluded from the decision-making processes, although cooperation agreements with civil society organisations exist at the state and in the municipalities, while the funding mechanisms are not transparent.³⁶

According to CCI's Report on citizen participation in decision making process in BiH for 2011, almost 80% of respondents stated in the 2011 research that they would like to engage in public policy development and indicated that local communities are their preference when it comes to participation mechanism at the local level. However, authorities did nothing to reform the local communities. Due to their out-dated role and functioning, the local communities have actually become a part of the problem, not solution, in terms of engagement of citizens in the decision

³⁴ RS Official Gazette, 123 year XVII

³⁵Zeravčić, G. (2008) Analysis of Institutional Cooperation between Governmental and Non- governmental Sectors in BiH; Sarajevo: Kronauer Consulting, available at <<http://www.kronauer-consulting.com/download/analiza-en.pdf>>

³⁶ Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document MIPD 2011-2013 for Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/mipd_bih_2011_2013_en.pdf

making processes. The CCI report further notes that recommendations for policy changes have been repeatedly put forward for years; however, entity authorities in charge of local governance and self-governance have taken no steps to change the law and allow the local communities to become a modern mechanism for engagement of citizens. The overall causes for such situation include lack of awareness about the need and reluctance among the elected representatives to open up for citizens and make their work more transparent and accountable.³⁷

1.4. Government (local and national) institutional capacities for engaging civil society

Capacities of the government institutions for engagement with civil society vary to significant extent. However, common feature for all levels of authority and all institutions in BiH is that a lot of work remains to be done to raise awareness among representatives of government institutions regarding benefits of cooperation with civil society and the need to do so. There are still a lot of prejudice among the government representatives about CSOs and their work. In addition, CSOs are not recognised as real partners. All declarative efforts of government institutions to engage citizens and develop participative democracy have not been matched by practical government efforts. In reality, citizens have almost no influence on the decision-making processes.³⁸

Within the government sector generally at all levels in BiH there is no clear understanding of the importance of participatory democracy and civil society's role in facilitating it. Accordingly, there is huge space for CSOs to fulfil the social policy area with their initiatives and activities and make it open for public debate. In addition, CSOs could serve as a link between the government institutions and citizens. This would be particularly useful in the public consultations process, since CSOs have direct access to local communities and understand the problems and needs of citizens. In this way, CSOs would have a unique opportunity to contribute with their input and analyses to creating better policies in line with the needs of all beneficiaries.

³⁷Report on citizen participation in decision making process in BiH, CCI, 2012, available in local version at: <http://www.cci.ba/pubs/1/21/1.html>

³⁸Report on citizen participation in decision making process in BiH, CCI, 2012, available in local version at: <http://www.cci.ba/pubs/1/21/1.html>

For this reason, it is essential for government representatives to recognise the benefits of participative democracy and of cooperation with CSO, as well as to continue working to improve their capacities for civil dialogue.

The need for further strengthening of participative democracy and government institutions capacities for civil dialogue has been recognised by the EU as well, which provided funding for projects focused on this area at all levels of authority.³⁹

1.5. Public perceptions and support of civil society and its various segments

Although USAID NGO Sustainability Index 2012 for BiH⁴⁰ shows that public image of civil society organizations declined slightly it can be stated that the public perception of CSOs ultimately is not positive one and is underpinned by prejudice. Thus some members of the public deem that civil society acts to advance interests of different political parties, that it is not independent and that it advocates certain lines of thinking of some political elites.

There is still a perception among many citizens and media representatives that CSOs do not work on solving problems in certain fields. The reason can be on media reporting about the work of CSOs, but also to lack of knowledge of citizens about the purpose of CSOs. Such an understanding on both the side of the government and general public, places obstacles to including all civil society actors in the policy and development processes in the country.

As stated in previous Needs Assessment, the notions of civil society and civil society organisations are not generally clear to the majority of BiH citizens; civil society is generally reduced to non-governmental organisations, while religious organisations, unions, chambers, etc. are not recognised as civil society actors. The inability of CSOs to organise successfully as a sector, to publicise a unity of purpose and inform people of the role of civil society is a contributory factor to civil society's low public recognition in BiH.

There is still an insufficient number of organisations which organise the Assembly meetings regularly (at least once a year). The failure of organisations to enable governance structures to

³⁹ CBGI project and LOD project

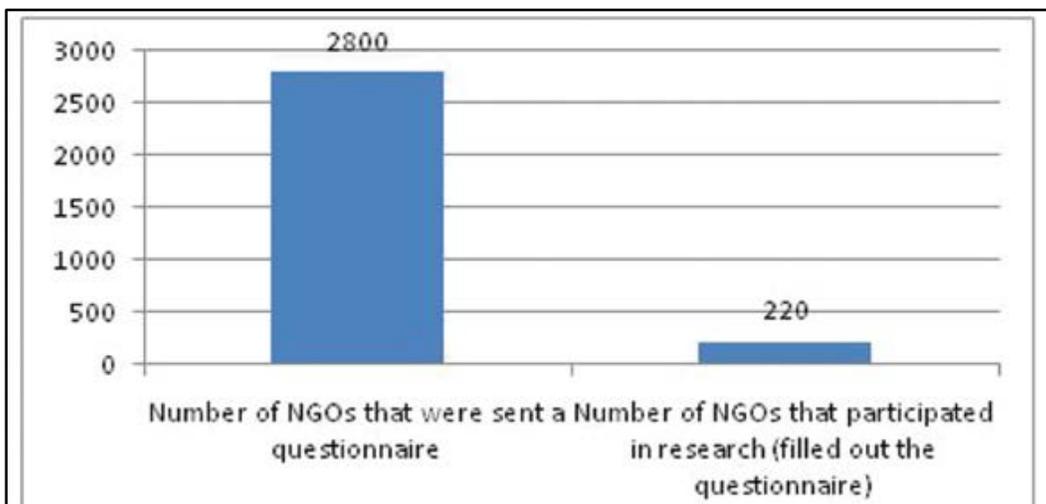
⁴⁰ USAID NGO Sustainability Index 2012, available at:
http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/2012CSOSI_0.pdf

meet, gain insight and make decisions on important issues, achievements and strategic directions that an organisation desires to take are directly reciprocal to the level of transparency and accountability of organisations towards their own beneficiaries, members and public. In many cases, the lack of such governance mechanisms is due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of some organisations on the purpose of such bodies and their role in the work of a CSO.

Another important factor that contributes to the low trust of citizens in civil society is the fact that CSOs do not practice conducting independent financial audits of their work. The HTSPE &KronauerConsultingStudy shows that only 18% of organisations undertake financial audits of associations/projects and less than 5% publicized their yearly accounts.⁴¹

Complementary results are in the survey done by TACSO BiH on Annual Financial reporting of CSOs in 2011 conducted with aim to contribute to the promotion and strengthening of the transparency and good management in work of CSOs; it shown that 8% of contacted NGOs were willing to participate in the research (220 NGOs out of 2800 contacted) and (on voluntary basis) publicize their yearly accounts. Taking into account hypothesis that in both researches the sample was representative, it could be said that there is a slight positive trend in contributing to the better public perception of CSOs.

Figure 5: Response rate was 7.9% (220 out of 2800 NGOs)



Source: Annual Financial Reports of Civil Society Organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina – 2011, TACSO BiH, 2012

⁴¹HTSPE Ltd UK &Kronauer Consulting: Civil Society, 2009.

Looking from the prospective of the social attitudes on the perception of civil society it is worth mentioning a study undertaken in 2007 (Oxford Research International)⁴² which assesses that low levels of trust are perhaps to be expected in a country with a history of recent conflict, but the survey concluded that trust in BiH has been eroded to an exaggerated extent. A corollary of low trust is low social capital or the total mass of horizontal ties between people in society. Social capital usually finds expression in group behaviours, such as participation in clubs and associations and all forms of CSOs. While there are plenty of CSOs in BiH, many of which are indeed membership-based, real participation and active membership in civil society is in fact very low. CSOs in BiH are poorly supported by their constituencies and enjoy little legitimacy in the community.

When looking at the CSOs as one of the driving forces in informing citizens on EU integration process, it is interesting to look at the perception of the citizens in that aspect of CSO work as well, which is according to the following figure in increasing trend (comparison 2011-2012).

As part of the project “Monitoring of the BiH European Integration Process”, VPI BiH⁴³ conducted public opinion research on the topic of the perception of the EU integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its implications on social relations in the West Balkans. Some of the segments of this study contain the citizens' perception of the activities of non-governmental organizations in the country.

Figure 6: Rating the activities of Non-governmental organization; Comparison 2011-2012

⁴²UNDP and Oxford Research International, *The Silent Majority Speaks: Snapshots of Today and Visions of the Future in BiH*, Sarajevo, 2007. Available at <http://www.undp.ba/index.aspx?PID=7&RID=413>.

⁴³VPI-Vanjskopolitička inicijativa BH (Foreign Policy Initiative BH)

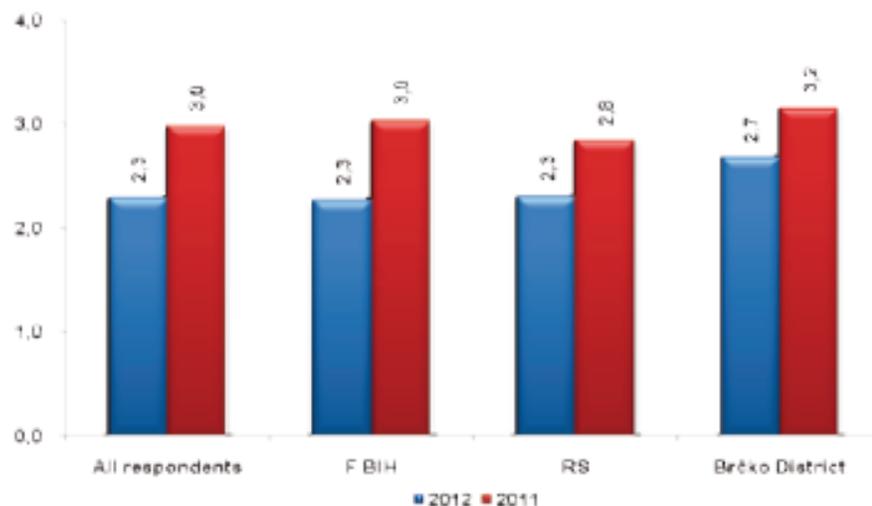
Q15. How do you rate the activities of non-governmental organisations?

-Total, comparison between 2011 and 2012



The analysis excludes the responses "I do not know/I do not want to respond"

The chart shows respondents' average rating of the activities of non-governmental organisations. Ratings are given on a 4-point scale, with 1 meaning "very unfavourably", and 4 meaning "very favourably". Therefore, the higher the average rating the more favourably the respondents assessed the work of non-governmental organisations.

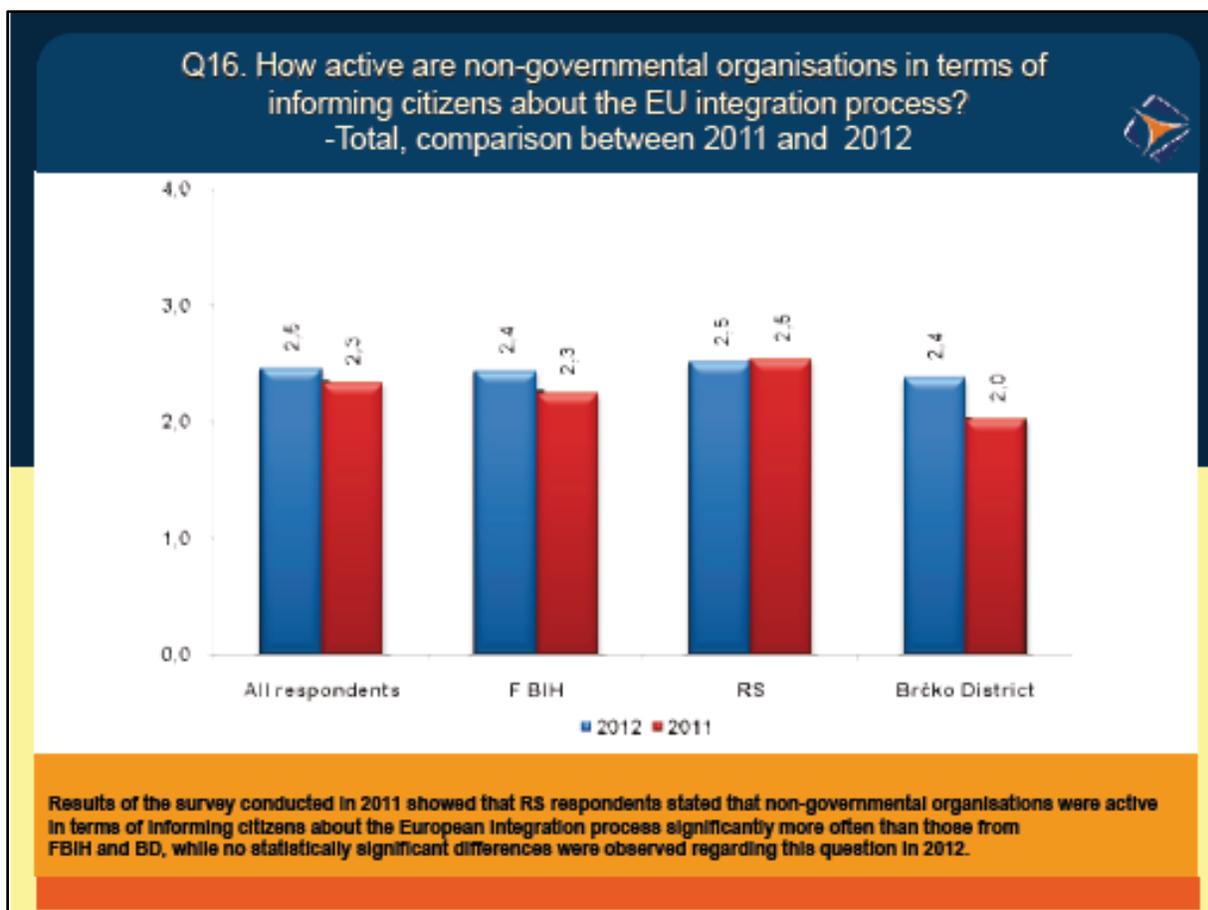


Respondents rated the activities of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) significantly less favourably in 2012 than in 2011. The 2011 survey showed that respondents from BD rated the activities of NGOs significantly more favourably than those from FBiH and the RS, and that respondents from FBiH rated the activities more favourably than RS respondents. In 2012 no statistically significant differences were established between the entities regarding this issue.

Source: BiH Public Opinion on the EU Integration process 2009-2012, VPI BH Report

On the following figure the trend of recognizing the role of the non-governmental organization in informing citizens about the EU integration process is increasing in comparison of data for 2011 and 2012.

Figure 7: Rating the activities of non-governmental organizations in informing the citizens on EU integration process; Comparison 2011-2012



Source:BiH Public Opinion on the EU Integration process 2009-2012, VPI BH Report

The summary findings in the Report shown that „In 2012 BiH citizens rated activities of the local non-governmental organizations significantly less favorably than in 2011. The rate has gone from 2.7 in 2009, to 3.0 in 2011, in order for it to drop to 2.3 in 2012. However, it is an unusual result that those aimed at informing the BiH public about the European integration process have a higher mark which has grown from 2.3 in 2011 to 2.5 in 2012. This could be a consequence of greater expectations the citizens have from to the civil sector in the sense of pressure exerted to the public institutions.“⁴⁴

Having in mind all what was mentioned above thereason of such public perception of civil society may be found in three factors.

⁴⁴ VPI BH Report: BiH Public Opinion on the EU Integration process 2009-2012, p.40. Report available at: [http://www.vpi.ba/upload/documents/eng/BiH Public Opinion on the EU integration process 2009-2012.pdf](http://www.vpi.ba/upload/documents/eng/BiH%20Public%20Opinion%20on%20the%20EU%20integration%20process%202009-2012.pdf)

First, CSOs struggle to secure long-term funding and the constant pressure to ensure funds for activities disconnects the CSOs from their beneficiaries and members in order to comply with donor requirements and interests. Second – and directly linked to the first factor is the general lack of clarity of the management and governance structures within organisations, which affects the level of accountability of organisations to their stakeholders and beneficiaries. Thirdly, organisations are pressed with project frameworks, results to be achieved and a strict selection of target groups which affects their ability and availability to maintain active dialogue with different stakeholders and base their work on participatory project cycle management and active inclusion of members.

Finally, the public image of CSOs depends also on the ability of an organization to present itself to the public. Larger organizations have more capacities and knowledge to present themselves to citizens and to the media. But in general, CSOs do not do enough to promote their work and even social media as a free tool to share information about their work and gather support, are not used fully by CSOs.

Civil Society and the Media

Relationship between CSOs and media in BiH is especially complex and constitutes a real challenge, in view of the state of development of the both actors. In general, the media play a key role in creating the culture of democracy. Freedom of speech is essential for the existence of a democratic society and media have huge power in creating public opinion and attitudes. Both sectors operate in rather unstable political environment in a transition society, posing additional challenges to their work. The level of development of these two sectors serves as the best indicator for level of democracy in a society; however, their mutual relationship is key to that development. In BiH, relations of these two sectors are marked by prevalent prejudice and based on lack of trust and knowledge. The Missing Link-CSO relations report⁴⁵ states that many responses in the research which focuses on CSOs perception of the media and vice versa, as well as some introspections, clearly indicate that there are huge problems in the internal functioning of both parties; CSOs' representatives are aware that they do not have the knowledge or

⁴⁵The Missing Link-CSO relations, TACSO 2012, available at: http://tacso.org/doc/doc_missing_link.pdf

capacities to deal with the media in a proper way. And with less obvious self-criticism on the media's side, there is a confession that the media do not approach CSOs always in the most professional manner. For example, a media representative from BiH recognised that, due to time constraints and other circumstances, CSOs' events/actions are sometimes covered by junior journalists, who lack the knowledge and sensibility for CSOs' work.

Furthermore, the Missing Link report stated that media do not enjoy great trust by the CSOs who openly question their independency. General conclusion is that there is not enough investigative journalism and that media are under political control, publicising only information that favour the political parties with their backing. CSOs believe that media help create huge presence of stereotypes towards CSOs, which affects a wide spectrum of their work, from visibility to reputation.⁴⁶

On the other side, how CSOs are perceived by the media is also full of prejudices and stereotypes, because of which steps towards better cooperation are not made. Media say that CSOs are unable to present information as news, but use project terminology, which ordinary citizens do not understand. Although media deem that CSOs have a role to play in reconciliation and creating a more democratic society in general, they find that CSOs are not fulfilling that role adequately.

In general, CSOs do not do enough to promote their work. Only a few CSOs, such as KULT, employ public relations professionals to promote their media presence. Others have launched their own web TV stations to inform the public about various problems facing BiH society and the work of CSOs. For example, CCI's Initiative TV allocates a certain portion of its air time to local and regional CSOs and TV stations. Similarly, radio Open Network (currently in its test phase) is the first radio station aimed specifically at the civil sector in BiH. It aspires to become the go-to media outlet for all social forces in the country aimed at generating positive changes, the promotion and protection of human rights, and free access to information⁴⁷.

⁴⁶Ibidem

⁴⁷USAID NGO Sustainability Index for BiH, http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/2012CSOSI_0.pdf

On the positive note, many organizations do have very good cooperation with media representatives. Some examples are the Centres for Civic Initiatives (CCI), The Association Alumni of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies (ACIPS) or Transparency International (TI), whose activities are regularly reported by the media.

This is the situation of CSOs in bigger cities, while CSOs in rural areas find it very difficult to ensure continuous media coverage for their activities.

In cases where media coverage in rural areas is present, the media reports do not contain analytical insight into the achievements and activities. Also, civil society activities in thematic areas, which are not high on policy agendas (such as confidence and peace building, children, youth, women's rights, social services, etc.) do not enjoy as much media attention or critical approach of media to their work.

Finally, the report concludes that the main obstacles for communication and increasing mutual visibility are the lack of a systematic approach to the "other" groups.

In the other report having focus on capacity of civil society for effective media relations⁴⁸ there are three main recommendations for strategic approach of CSO-media relations: building capacities of civil society communication professionals in knowledge, skills and competences, building capacities of civil society professionals in awareness raising and advocacy with special reference to media relations and exchanging effective communication and enhancing collaboration and partnership with media.

According to the concluding remarks of the report „Capacity building should focus on a number of skills and competencies needed in that function and apply a holistic, integrated approach and critical thinking principles. CSO communicators need to know everything that business communicators know but an additional developmental and sustainability perspective needs to be integrated in capacity building in order to ensure their positioning towards media and other stakeholders in line with the mandate and mission of civil society organisation“⁴⁹

⁴⁸Building Capacities of Civil Society Organizations for Effective Media Relations, Majda Tafra Vlahović, 2013 Report available at: http://www.tacso.org/doc/Input_for_Strategy_Paper_NEW1.pdf

⁴⁹Ibid., p.19.

2. CSO ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITIES

2.1. Overview of civil society community in BiH

Having in mind that capacity is a broad umbrella concept encompassing a range of approaches starting from the readiness and motivation to building of capacity and measuring of impact/change process made based on the competences of individuals, groups/teams, organizations and systems of organizations (could be CSO/CSO networks, coalitions, initiatives, platforms) who were involved in capacity building activities, the notions and messages based on the implementation of the project during 2009-2013 period shown that multiplication and dissemination of the knowledge/skills gained is a crucial for reaching a sustainable/desirable/projected change regardless of the context (organizational or/and institutional-in a part of society defined by the environment which is subject of coordinated capacity building efforts undertaken by CSO/CSO networks/coalitions/initiatives/platforms and capacity building providers).

Feedback received from the CSOs/CSOS networks/initiatives during NA updating period and clustered based on the similar issues and topics indicate that still lack of analytical thinking and strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects open a space for improvement; cooperation with media are as well weak points. In addition to that, engaging in policy dialogue with governmental institutions and participating in decision making process needs to be further developed and improved.

Networks in BiH also lack rotating leadership skills, evidence based decision-making processes are poor, internal monitoring system for measuring progress of activities and presenting it to the public is needed, fundraising skills are not sufficient and moderation and facilitation skills still need to be enhanced. CSOs generally don't invest enough efforts in constituency building and accountability (involvement of Managing Boards, Assemblies, other bodies into strategic planning, decision making..., presenting the results). This all shows that additional efforts need to be done in Training of Trainers approach to design of capacity building activities on topics important to CSOs/CSOs networks/initiatives/coalitions/platforms as well as supporting tailor made capacity building trainings for CSOs and CSO networks.

Interesting finding appeared during NA update period that project proposal writing and PCM have not been identified as priority areas for the project intervention in the next period and anticipation is that could be explained with the fact that there have been significant steps taken in capacity building from TACSO BiH, which by the independent evaluation was regarded as very successful and tailor made⁵⁰ and as well by other projects in that area.

Since there is still a lot of room for additional capacity building activities-these activities should address the new trends in terms of approach, concepts, knowledge, skills in order to contribute to the application of acquired competences.

Structure of the CSO

There are approximately 12,000 CSO registered in the country. This is only a rough number knowing that there is no single CSOs register-data base. These registers exist on all administrative levels where registration is possible, however there some overlap having in mind that some CSOs have been registered on state and lower levels. However, out of a total number of registered CSOs, it is not possible to ascertain how many are indeed active, and is a challenge to any strategic deliberations regarding civil society development in BiH.

As stated in previous Needs Assessment, the fragmented politico-administrative system in BiH determines that few CSOs operate at either the state level or operate across the whole country. Only 12% of all CSOs are registered at the state level, the majority of which are unions of various membership-based organisations operating at the grassroots level. Civil society activity is reasonably well distributed across the country, with over half of all registered CSOs (51.1 %) operating from smaller towns in more-or-less rural municipalities. Only a little fewer than one in six CSOs work in the capital, Sarajevo (15.9%), and a further 25 % are located in the larger towns (Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla). As might be expected, CSOs operating only in rural parts, away from areas of significant population density are few in number (7.7 %) ⁵¹.

When it comes to general CSO classification, it can be done according to two broad categories: Mutual or member benefit organisations (MBOs) which are established to work exclusively in

⁵⁰ Report on Impact Assessment of Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Activities, JarmilaBujak-Stanko for Internal Impact Assessment, Sarajevo, July 2013

⁵¹ HTSPE&Kronauer Consulting, Civil Society, 2009.

the interests of their members, and so-called public benefit organisations (PBOs); that is, those associations whose purpose is to act in the general public interest. So, as stated in previous Needs Assessment, MBOs comprise a large majority (71.8 %) of all the CSOs in BiH and cover a wide range of activities and organisational types, such as sports, hobbies and other recreational interests, culture, veterans' associations, refugee returnees, and women's and youth clubs, etc. Typically, MBOs are small, semi-voluntary organisations, with, at most, a handful of part-time paid employees, providing services or opportunities for participation in activities to their members. Over 85 % of CSOs have less than 10 staff members and /or under 100 members.

Furthermore, the Assessment Report on advocacy capacity of membership based CSOs⁵² shows that the MBOs area of interest is insufficiently defined. They lack clear focus and are not very much familiar with the concept of advocacy. MBOs self-assessment in the field of advocacy is rather poor. Although they scored their advocacy skills in questionnaires very high, from the interviews was clear that term advocacy is not clear to them and most of the time concept of advocacy is partly understood. Rare are those MBOs that understand what advocacy activities imply. The Assessment report states that MBOs advocacy activities are rarely based on analyses of the policies they prepared themselves. Also, only exceptionally, they monitor implementation of policies they advocated for.

Although the MBOs have a significant membership they lack the skills to clearly formulate their needs and advocacy goals and therefore miss the opportunity to mobilise their huge membership potential.

MBOs still struggle ensuring financial sustainability: they are poorly financed and dependent on local authorities for what little funding they can access.

CSOs which are oriented towards the interests of the general public (PBOs) are in most cases devoted to providing specialist forms of non-institutionalised service delivery, such as social protection (children, vulnerable women and victims of domestic violence, unemployed, etc.), psycho-social assistance or education and assistance to assist citizens generally or specific social

⁵² Assessment Report on advocacy capacity of membership based CSOs, TACSO BiH, 2012, available at http://tacso.org/doc/ba_ar_advocacy_capacity_en.pdf

groups participate more fully in society (“empowerment”). These organisations comprise fewer than 30 % of all CSOs in BiH. In general they are oriented towards international donors and promote rights-based agenda, in place of an emphasis on specific needs or interests. Many of these CSOs have been established by international NGOs as instruments for project delivery, or later as means of leaving something behind when facilitating their exit. While these CSOs are administered and managed along more-or-less professional lines, they have little or no membership base and often poorly functioning governing boards; decision-making powers are very often concentrated in one or two key staff members upon whom the organisation is over-dependent for leadership, technical skills and the ability to attract adequate project funding.

The larger and very capable and profiled PBOs are usually located in the country’s urban centres and are well-developed, sophisticated, fully professional CSOs. Numbering from possibly as few as 50 or 60 organisations up to around 200 (HTSPE / Kronauer 2009), these CSOs count their number of specialists in human rights advocacy groups, but most often they remain service providers that are only engaged in advocacy, lobbying and policy development as a secondary activity.

Field of Operation/Activities

Since there are no more recent studies and research, this section on CSO organizational capacities makes extensive use of the data provided by the study: HTSPE/Kronauer Consulting (2009) *Civil Society: Contributions to the Development of the Strategy for Establishing an Enabling Environment of Civil Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

As the study shows, of the 998 CSOs included in the research, the greatest number (18.45%) indicated sport as their primary scope of activity, followed by “interest organisations” (12.02 %) covering a range of recreational and special economic interests, such as beekeeping. Women’s organisations (73 %) and associations dealing with the problems of children and youth (6.01%) are also common fields of CSO operation. Among those least represented are workers’ rights or unions (1.29 %), human rights (2.58 %), animal rights (0.86 %) and peace initiatives.

The most frequent activities undertaken by CSOs in BiH are education, activities in local communities, providing advice and information, as well as lobbying for members’ interests,

while the least represented activities are oversight of public policies and work of state institutions and mediation.

Despite the member-based character of civil society in BiH, on average, almost 50% of all organisations state that their main target group, or final direct beneficiaries, is the general public (and almost 49 % of MBOs identified the general public as the end user of their projects). A large proportion of CSOs work with the youth (15.9 %), followed by children (6.4 %) and women (5.6%).

Classification of CSOs according to Field of Work is on the following table.

Table 1: Percentage of CSOs based on their primary field of work

Associations	%
Sport associations	18.45
Interest associations	12.02
Associations for protection of women	7.30
Cultural associations	6.87
Associations dealing with problems of children and youth	6.01
Other activities	5.15
Associations arising from the last war	4.72
Associations dealing with environmental protection	4.29
Associations for psychosocial help and social protection	3.86
Educational associations	3.43
Associations for rural and agricultural development	3.43
Hobbyist associations	3.00
Associations for local economic development	3.00
Civil initiatives	2.58
Humanitarian associations	2.58
Associations for human rights protection	2.58
Associations for civil society promotion and development	1.72
Vocational associations	1.72

Associations for ethnic minorities	1.29
Unions	1.29
Associations for technological advancement	1.29
Spiritual associations	0.86
Returnee and refugee	0.86
Associations for animal protection	0.86
Association for protection of tourism and catering	0.86
TOTAL	100

Source: HTSPE &Kronauer Consulting (2009)

2.2. Human resources and technical skills

Despite the fact that civil society in BiH has received a great input in terms of trainings and capacity building workshops within different international programmes, technical skills of CSOs are still not well developed.

As stated in previous Needs Assessment, smaller organizations, especially those working at the grassroots level and those located in smaller towns and rural areas are often lacking in many of the basic technical skills necessary for running an efficient CSO, including all areas of PCM, general management and financial administration. Among the CSOs participating in the HTSPE/Kronauer study, 25.1 % of associations had never had any training organised for their staff. Of those which had organised staff training or been included in capacity-building projects, around half indicated that trainings had been organised for all their members of staff, but 41.8 % of organisations said that trainings had been for leaders and key staff members. A key finding of the study is that that the greater majority of trainings that CSOs received (68.5 %) have been restricted to the subjects of writing project proposals and/or fundraising, as well as strategic planning.

Funding limitations determine employing qualified and suitable staff to a large extent. Due to fact that CSOs are project based, they find it very difficult to ensure permanent or longer lasting contracts for their staff. Furthermore, due to lack of financial sustainability, CSOs try to engage as much as possible volunteers who will be implementing different activities in the organisations.

This is a positive situation since young volunteers can gain valuable skills and knowledge that will make them more competitive on the job market later on.

2.3. Monitoring and Evaluation capacities of CSOs in BiH

CSO capacities in performing monitoring and evaluations (M&E) skills remain weak. Needs Assessment for 2011 has established a good baseline of CSOs capacities in this field. It was stated that in 2011, TACSO BiH conducted an M&E Needs Assessment of 12 CSOs in BiH who either applied or were partners in projects funded by EU IPA 2008. This M&E Needs Assessment focused on assessing capacities and needs of CSOs in terms of establishing internal M&E Systems as continuous effort to help anticipate the probability of success and measure the changes the organisation will contribute to.

The Needs Assessment revealed that the organisations may be roughly divided into two groups:

Group 1

Organisations that have already developed structures and standards for M&E, but these systems are still predominantly ad-hoc and underdeveloped. As such, the M&E systems do not reflect the complex needs for comprehensive M&E of the organisational work. Existing M&E systems have mainly been adopted from international organisations that supported the work of these organisations, or developed based on recognized needs and upon trainings on M&E.

Group 2

Organisations that have no capacities, knowledge and/or M&E structures adopted. The Needs Assessment found that even more developed and experienced organisations do not have any systems or capacities for comprehensive M&E. Such organisations do collect data for reporting, but this data is not systematically collected and analysed.

Generally, organisations have succeeded in attracting EU funds, but the majority of organisations (especially partners in projects or sub-grantees) still struggle with a good definition of the results framework, especially in terms of defining suitable Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs). Very few CSOs develop baseline studies for the EU funded project. Organisations do not have the tradition to develop baselines for other projects either. The review of project proposals shows that none of the organisations discuss internal Monitoring procedures, while only a small number of organisations mention evaluation measures to be undertaken.

Organisations in general do not collect and analyse data to track progress and achievements within their strategic goals. Organisations in many cases do not have true participatory planning and monitoring in terms of ensuring active participation, input and feedback from stakeholders, and primarily beneficiaries do not help in performance management.

Organisations are generally pretty strong in their areas of expertise, but their organisational capacities may at times be an obstacle to organising the M&E work in the best possible manner. The lack of an adequate M&E system also places an additional burden to the management staff members, who need to collect data and analyse it besides other duties.

Building capacities and sharing responsibilities and roles with other members/and beneficiaries of the organisation is crucial in order to enhance governance, accountability and manage the structures of organisations in other words the internal M&E system should serve as a vehicle for permanent organizational learning and promoting the values of the organization or/and CSO network as learning organizations/networks.

2.4. Strategic strengths of CSOs in BiH

When it comes to strategic strengths of CSOs in BiH, situation did not change significantly since the last Needs Assessment was produced. There are still very few CSOs in BiH strategically oriented. The findings of the previous TACSO Needs Assessment in BiH show that half of CSOs consulted had a strategic plan in place, but most of them did not use it as a tool to guide their long-term programming and organisational development, as well as shorter-term project identification. Most of them also said that they did not update their strategic plans periodically. These findings were confirmed by the HTSPE&Kronauer survey, which found that 42 % of all types of CSOs have strategic plans. In support of this suggestion was the finding that “almost half of the associations in BiH were ready to admit that their chief orientation and scope of work are rather or entirely dependent on desires and interests of their donors.” Only 22.70 % of those participating in the survey (HTSPE&Kronauer, 2009) thought that donors do not influence their purpose (mission) and their overall strategic direction.

For this reason, one can conclude that strategic thinking remains an underdeveloped capacity within the civil society. The fact that donors have rarely supported institutional development or strategic approach to CSO work has also contributed to such situation.

There is a small number of CSOs that are exception to this. These CSOs have clearly identified lines of work and do not change their strategic orientation to match the priorities of the international donors. These organizations have been active on the CSO scene for a long time. Based on their clearly identified area of work and confirmed expertise, these CSOs have managed to take strategic positions in society and be recognized by government institutions as good partners in identifying policies and strategic documents. Such CSOs are most frequently members of a number of regional and EU networks and they follow trends and adopt new practices, bringing innovation into their work process.

Key strategic issue for all CSOs in BiH is how they can contribute to EU integration process in the country and become a part of the reforms demanded by the SAA. In addition, CSOs need to be more actively engaged in the EU related planning process.

2.5. Analytical capacities

Looking at the civil society sector overall, only a small number of organisations has developed capacities for analysis. This is a serious shortcoming, in view of the fact that any type of cooperation and civil dialogue or an advocacy campaign would be based on research and analyses. Many CSOs have only superficial knowledge about the quantitative and qualitative research methods and are not familiar with methodology for developing policy studies and policy briefs. It often happens that even some major CSOs present only data obtained through the research, without analytical thinking, logical conclusions or data interpretation.

However, there are some good practice examples as well and these are well-established organisations at the CSO scene. For example, CCI has been successfully conducting different types of monitoring of the government institutions work for a number of years and research which is subsequently used as good basis and tools in advocacy campaigns.⁵³ Some other CSOs that have been established as think tanks, such as Foreign Policy Initiative BH, Populari and ACIPS, also have developed research capacities.

In addition to that, successful advocacy campaign was implemented by the Initiative for Freedom of Declaration, a coalition of several human rights groups and other CSOs that successfully amended the questionnaire for the 2013 census, the first census in the country in over two decades. The initial questionnaire required citizens to declare an ethnicity, marginalizing those who did not want to define themselves in ethnic or religious terms. Amendments to the questionnaire also ensured additional freedom in answering certain questions, for example, by allowing citizens to declare themselves agnostics or atheists.

Example of activities of CSOs based on the capacity for analytical thinking is the *Initiative for Monitoring BiH's European Integration* - a group of non-governmental organizations active in BiH and interested in the EU accession process. The initiative's main goal is to effectively monitor the work of the government throughout its mandate and constantly inform the domestic and international public about all of the positive and negative developments in

⁵³After research and studies it carried out, CCI successfully completed advocacy campaigns in the area of economic policies, i.e. long term disposal of packaging waste and the issue of allocation of funding for CSOs from the BiH Games of Chance (LutrijaBiH) Fund, which was not done before.

the integration process. Background on establishing this coalition is in the introduction of a new political and economic system 1995 which forced the political elite and citizenry of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to face a new reality. International actors, especially the Office of the High Representative, were the driving force behind the transference of competences to the state level, as well as the establishment of new institutions, ministries, and mechanisms. According to the Initiative members' opinion in 2006, the "post-Dayton" period ended and a new phase in BiH history started: "the Brussels phase." The international community withdrew from the scene without a clear exit strategy, promoting "local ownership." European Union and NATO integration became the only perspective for civil society engagement. Since BiH politicians have a low level of accountability and responsibility, it is only with the support of international pressure mechanisms that civil society will make a significant change in BiH politics and society.

Accepting the European Union integration process as a reality and an opportunity, an informal civil society coalition under the name The Initiative for Monitoring BiH's European Integration (Initiative) was founded at the beginning of 2013. The Initiative aims to monitor the European Integration process in a transparent, expert, non-partisan way. The Initiative is founded by the following Sarajevo-based organisations: Centre for Political Studies, the Sarajevo Open Centre, the Human Rights Center of the University in Sarajevo, ACIPS (Alumni Association of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies), European Research Center, the Foreign Policy Initiative and the association Why Not/Zasto Ne. In 2013, the following organisations joined the Initiative: the women's rights organisations Foundation CURE Sarajevo, Vesta Tuzla, Infohouse Sarajevo and the Helsinki Citizens Parliament Banja Luka; the sustainable development organizations Green Council Sarajevo, Zeleni Neretva Konjic, the Center for Socio-ecological Development from Tuzla; the youth organisations Perpetuum Mobile Banja Luka, OKC Abrasevic Mostar and Youth Center Kwart from Prijedor and so far there are 21 CSO members of the Initiative.

During the first year, the leading organization Centre for Political Studies mobilized the Initiative and the following concrete achievements were made: a) submissions to the European Union Progress Report were sent in May 2013, b) members of the Initiative participated in the consultations on the Progress Report in the European Union Delegation

in Sarajevo, as well as the European Commission in Brussels, c) different meetings with civil society organisations were organized with the aim to mobilize further member organisations, d) research was conducted resulting in the first Shadow Report to the European Union Progress Report for 2013.

Initiative believes that the European Union integration process has no alternative and that in that process, civil society needs to become a “third factor” -- an equal partner of the European Union institutions -- in order to achieve the maximum level of development during the integration period.

Another rather successful advocacy effort was carried out by a CSO operating in the area of rural development ‘Green Council’. Namely, as part of its research on the necessity to establish and strengthen the institutional framework at the state level in the area of the agriculture and rural development the Green Council advocated for establishment of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development at the state level⁵⁴. In particular, the Green Council noted activities of the EU Delegation in this area. The analysis of the official Progress Reports for BiH from the past several years found that the EU has always advocated and strongly encouraged establishment of the BiH Ministry of agriculture, food and rural development. More specifically, such position was clearly stated in 2010 Progress Report and all the reports before that. Despite the lack of any reform processes and meaningful and systematic structure in the sector of agriculture and rural development, for the first time in the 2011 Progress Report for BiH, the EU failed to recommend establishment of this ministry to BiH. In a way, establishment of the state level ministry was pushed down on the list of priorities. The Green Council’s advocacy initiative⁵⁵ was aimed at bringing the issue of establishment of the Ministry back on the EU Delegation agenda. Although this is a new CSO, due to its well-developed capacities and advocacy efforts conducted in BiH and outside, the Green Council succeeded in having the MPs from the EU Parliament requesting establishment of the state level Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development in BiH to be included in the BiH Progress Report for

⁵⁴ Research available at: http://green-council.org/WP/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Broshura_engleska-verzija_v3.pdf

⁵⁵In advocating for establishment of BiH Ministry of agriculture, food and rural development Green Council had a significant support form local CSOs operating in rural development sector as well as from different institutions at almost all administrative levels in BiH. However, advocating campaigns on EU level, Green Council has conducted using only its own capacities.

2013 through amendments. Recommendations of the Green Council for establishing mentioned Ministry at state level were adopted at the session of MPs from the EU Parliament held on February 6, 2014.⁵⁶

2.6. Relationships with other actors – networking and partnerships

CSO networks

In BiH exist many formal or informal CSO networks, most of them being sector based networks. As noted in previous Needs Assessments, a large majority of BiH CSOs are members of one or more networks and this experience is seen by CSOs to be beneficial. According to the HTSPE/Kronauer study, 52 % of CSOs are members of a local BiH network, while 27 % participate in at least one international network.

In the CSPC research commissioned by TACSO⁵⁷, over 50 networks are identified within the research and the most common form of organizing is advocacy networking, which makes 47 %. Sector networking is largely present (41 %) while only 12% are partnerships formed to provide services. Some of identified networks (24 %) are part of different European networks. Based on the responses given by 30 questionnaires received, the most used shape of organizing are: networks (73 %), followed by coalitions (20 %) and initiatives (7 %), while the research hadn't identified any of platforms. This research shows that most of the networks/platforms/initiatives/coalitions are financed by donor funds (76 %), followed by membership fees (36,36 %), self-financing (33,33 %), and other sources. Such high level of donor funding for networks brings into question the existence of networks based on sustainable and long term platforms.

In general, networks in BiH lack rotating leadership skills, evidence based decision-making processes are poor, fundraising skills are not sufficient and moderation and facilitation skills still need to be enhanced.

⁵⁶<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+20140206+ITEMS+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN#sdocta8>

⁵⁷ Assessment report on CSO networks/platforms/initiatives/coalitions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, TACSO, Sarajevo 2012, available at: http://tacso.org/doc/ba_ar_cso_networks_en.pdf

All this clearly demonstrates the need for building capacities of CSO networks and improving network members' skills and techniques in communication, leadership challenges, planning, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation and in many other areas.

Aware of the divisions and fragmentations in the BiH civil society, as well as of the need for further networking, the EU through its funds places particular focus on development of capacities in sectoral networks.

CSO – government relationships

Relationships between the government and civil society have to a large extent been dealt with in detail under sections 1.3 and 1.4.

The cooperation has always been ad-hoc. Government institutions still do not recognise the benefits of participative democracy and cooperation with CSOs, in particular the citizens. The institutions are still quite closed and not transparent, with access to information made rather difficult. Any type of cooperation is done sporadically and ad-hoc. Furthermore, a number of government representatives from different levels of authority deem that engagement of citizens into decision-making process is redundant, representing an additional burden to their work and slowing down the process of legislative drafting. Thus, CCI's report on citizen participation in decision making process in 2011 noted that close to 23 % of civil servants deem that citizens slow down the process of decision making, and similar percentage of civil servants find that participation of citizens in decision making process unnecessary.⁵⁸

However, the fact remains that government institutions are distanced from beneficiaries in the communities, and in the largest number of cases they are also distanced from the primary users of these measures. Their procedural, administrative and bureaucratic frameworks often do not allow time and space to deal with the communities adequately, researching their needs and problems and deliberating solutions. On the other hand, CSOs are unburdened with institutional procedures and frameworks and have free and direct access to community and its groups. Thus

⁵⁸Report on citizen participation in decision making process in BiH, CCI, 2012, available at: <http://www.cci.ba/pubs/1/21/1.html>

they have the opportunity to understand the needs, status and likelihood that certain measures and programmes can be implemented. Due to the fact that they are fast and mobile, CSOs can provide support, understand and monitor progress of their target groups.⁵⁹ In such situations CSOs can play a key role in bringing the government institutions closer to citizens and their real needs.

On the other hand, CSOs and citizens have not showed sufficient level of interest to get a more proactive role. There is a low level of trust in government institutions among the CSOs and citizens, and they in principle do not believe that their inputs would be considered. In addition, lack of access to information also prevents more active engagement of citizens and their cooperation with government institutions.

CSO – business relationships

As stated in previous Needs Assessment, CSOs cooperation with business is vestigial, and in most cases CSOs approach business from a purely instrumental standpoint, understanding it solely as a potential source of revenue. For its part, business is generally indifferent to civil society, restricting its support usually to sporting clubs and cultural associations.

In business sector it is important to mention social entrepreneurship that has been gaining more and more importance in the world recently and that is occurring between public, private and civil sector. Social entrepreneurship is especially important for BiH in the context of reducing and preventing poverty and social exclusion. As Assessment report states, according to the latest data in BiH one third of population is at risk of poverty and social exclusion, while 40% is faced with serious deprivation of the material goods, which is greatly a consequence of the global economic crisis.⁶⁰

Despite good practice examples of social entrepreneurship that have been mentioned in the Assessment report, the social entrepreneurship has not been yet adequately recognized and

⁵⁹More on this in local language available at: "Pravila o konsultacijama-mrtvoslovo na papiru", ACIPS, Selma Osmanagic Agovic and Zehra Kacapor Dzihic, Sarajevo, 2009, available in local language at: http://www.acips.ba/bos/uploads/istrzivanja/acips_primjena_pravila%20o%20konsultacijama_bos.pdf

⁶⁰ Assessment report on social entrepreneurship in Bosnia and Herzegovina, TACSO BiH, 2012 available at: http://tacso.org/doc/ba_ar_social_entrepreneurship_en.pdf

developed in BiH.⁶¹The main reasons for this are insufficient knowledge of the concept and possibilities that open through social entrepreneurship, non-existence of the adequate institutional framework, sporadic programs and initiatives for employment through social entrepreneurship, lack of the initial capital, needed knowledge and skills.⁶²

2.7. Material and financial stability and resilience

One of the biggest challenges facing CSOs is how to establish and sustain financial stability. This is particularly challenging in a situation when the international donors have reduced funds and domestic budgets introduced austerity measures. In addition, sports and war veterans associations have been most successful in obtaining funds from domestic budgets, leaving very little space for other organisations. Another obstacle to financial sustainability is the fact that many CSOs have relied in their activities on one or a small number of donors, thus contributing to high level of dependency on a single donor. Not enough organisations have worked to diversify their funding sources and attracting different donors. An assessment of CSO budgets in 2008 made by the HTSPE&Kronauer(2009) mapping exercise concluded that in BiH almost 60 % of all CSOs had annual budgets of under 15,000 EUR, while 19% of the total subsisted on less than 1,500 EUR a year. Only around 10 % of all CSOs had budgets in excess of 250,000 EUR.

Taking into account both a different methodological approach in two surveys - HTSPE&Kronauer, 2009 and survey commissned by TACSO BH,2012(conducted by CSPC)and hypothesis that (even limited) sampleof surveyed CSOs is different, the data found are compared for the purpose of establishng a baseline for this aspect of CSOs resilience.

According to second survey the summed data on height of annual budget of non-government organizations are the following: around 25% of NGOs who participated in this survey have annual budget of less than BAM 5.600 (around 2800 EUR), while 54,44% of NGOs have annual

⁶¹ Assessment report has identified some of the good practice examples in social entrepreneurship: Mozaik Foundation,Uspon, Bospo organisation, GOPA organisation, Foundation for social inclusion etc.

⁶² Assessment report on social entrepreneurship in BiH, TACSO BiH, 2012 available at:: http://tacso.org/doc/ba_ar_social_entrepreneurship_en.pdf

budget of less than BAM 30.000(around 15 000 EUR). At the same time, data show that 75% of organizations have budget with less than BAM 100.000 (around 50 000EUR). Only 51 organizations has annual budget between BAM 100.000 and one million (50 000-500 000 EUR), and only four of NGOs have confirmed that they had income more than BAM one million in 2011(more than 500 000 EUR)

In tables data from two surveys are respectfully shown:

Table 2:summed data on height of annual budget of non-government organizations for 2008

Framework revenues 2008 (BAM)	% of surveyed associations
Less than 3.000	19%
3.000-30.000	39.3%
30.000-100.000	13.5%
100.000-500.000	19.02%
500.000-1.000.000	6.12%

Annual budget 2011 (BAM)	% of surveyed associations
Less than 10.000	33.63%
10.000-30.000	20.81%
30.000-50.000	8.60%
50.000-100.000	11.76%
100.000-1.000.000	23.08%
Over 1.000.000	1.81%
Over 1.000.000	3.06%

Table 3:summed data on height of annual budget of non-government organizations for 2011

Comparable data from both surveys indicate the following:

In the range of having budget of up to 30.000 BAM there are 54.44% (2011); 58.3% (2008) of surveyed organizations; 30.000-100.000 BAM-20.36% (2011);13.5% (2008)and in the range of 100.000-1.000.000 BAM-23.08% (2011); 25,14% (2008) of surveyed organizations.

As stated in previous Needs Assessment, over 40% of interviewed CSOs collect membership fees, and over one quarter (26.2%) receive voluntary support from members of the community. A similar number engage in self-financing activities, usually by charging for provided services. These sources provide a CSO an element of financial stability, but in most cases the revenue accrued in this manner is insufficient to fund activities or pay wages, and is no more than a marginal top-up to the annual budget. CSOs are extremely reluctant to charge more than nominal fees for CSO membership, and tend to feel that they have a social or moral duty to keep charges for services to a minimum, as their members and their wider constituencies, particularly those in smaller towns and rural areas, are very often from among the poorer or more disadvantaged social categories.

CSOs are very lax when it comes to financial management practices. They are generally reluctant to publish or share their financial reports unless a donor specifically requests this information. Many CSOs do not have the financial resources to employ accountants or bookkeepers and cannot afford independent audits.⁶³ This is already indicated by the data that during CSPC research that was commissioned by TACSO, with the aim to promote and strengthen transparency and good management in work and functioning of NGOs in BiH, only 220 CSOs, out of a total number of 2,800 that were contacted, meaning 8 % of contacted CSOs forwarded their financial reports to be published in the Annual Financial Report for 2011.⁶⁴

According to data collected, overall budget of NGOs who participated in the survey and who delivered their data on financial operations, was BAM 28,6 million. In following chart given is review of income from different sources.

⁶³ USAID NGO Sustainability Index 2012 for BiH, available at:
http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/2012CSOSI_0.pdf

⁶⁴ For more on this see: Annual Financial Reports of Civil Society Organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina – 2011, available at: http://tacso.org/doc/Annual_Financial_Report_BiH_2011.pdf

From given review it is evident that main and most important source for financing of NGOs that participated in the survey are primarily foreign donations, then public budget allocations. Considering that this is survey with limited sample, it is hard to identify some general trends. Anyway, based on this data and other surveys, it can be stated that foreign donations are still significant source of financing of non-government sector in BiH. In other hand, it is very possible that organizations who participated in the survey and were ready to share and publicize their data on financial operations, are in great part financed by foreign donations and in more strict rules on reporting towards donors and therefor more transparent in their work.

Also, data show dependence of non-government sector on foreign and domestic donations which can bring to certain influence on goals and directions on work of non-government organizations from institutions representing sources of financing. At the same time, this dependence pinpoints long-term financial unviability of civil society in BiH.

Figure 8: Collected funds in NGOs by sources of funding in 2011.

Chart 1: Collected funds in NGOs by sources of financing in 2011

Source	Absolute value in BAM
Income from own activities	2.508.267,02
Income from membership fees	455.830,50
Individual private donations	555.328,27
Income from other sources	886.502,55
Foreign donations spent in 2011	20.079.067,98
Public budget allocations spent in 2011	2.826.229,28
Domestic donations spent in 2011	699.914,49
Donations from business community spent in 2011	587.879,85
Total	28.599.019,94

Source: Annual Financial Reports of Civil Society Organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina – 2011, TACSO BiH, 2012

A very small number of organisations have capacities to withdraw EU funds. The application process is very demanding and time consuming, while very few organisations have the writings skills needed to draft EU project or meet the eligibility criteria for applying to projects. Despite extensive training carried out over the past 10 years, a large number of CSOs still lack writing skills for drafting project proposals and PCM skills⁶⁵. A number of smaller organisations see

⁶⁵Sarajevo Economic Region Development Agency (SERDA) with a history of very successful use of the EU funding recently launched the Project Academy. It consists of two training cycles and very successfully and very thoroughly tackles the issue of drafting project proposals for the EU public calls, development of PCM

their chance in applying for EU projects as project partners, which helps them to get strengthened, with better capacities and possibly able to apply for EU funding on their own.

Some organisations are also faced with other issues in terms of the EU funding. Namely, as indicated in the Provision of Financial Contribution to the EU funded Projects by the Civil Society Organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina⁶⁶, CSOs are generally faced with the three key issues as follows:

Providing contribution to the project as defined by the EU call (usually 15 %);

Covering ineligible, but direct project costs such as VAT in EIDHR projects;

Covering the project costs for which organisations receive the funds only after the approval of the final financial and narrative reports – which can take few months (which is particularly emphasised in the South-East and IPA Adriatic programmes.)

These financial requirements represent considerable challenge for the applicants and only a small number of organisations in BiH are able to provide the reserves, which enable them to successfully implement project activities.⁶⁷ For that reason, in 2013 BD, started co-financing all EU projects, thus enabling smaller CSOs to compete for these grants. In RS similar decision have also been introduced.

On the positive note, some organizations successfully supplement their incomes with revenue from services. For example, in 2012, 25 % of KULT's income (approximately 200,000 KM or \$130,000) came from fees it charged for conference room rentals, corporate training, and other courses and seminars. Other organizations, such as the Centre for Information and Legal Help and the NGO Council, collect membership dues to help offset their expenses.⁶⁸

skills, as well as EU project implementation. In addition to these two training cycles, all persons who undergo training become members of the Project Academy and have the possibility to network with other organisations that have completed the training. In addition, SERDA provides mentoring support in drafting project proposals.

⁶⁶http://www.euclidnetwork.eu/files/TACSO_BH_Report_on_PRAG_focus_group.pdf

⁶⁷ Provision of Financial Contribution to the EU funded Projects by the Civil Society Organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina – APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES, TACSO REPORT 2013

⁶⁸ USAID NGO sustainability index 2012, available at:

http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/2012CSOSI_0.pdf

3. CIVIL SOCIETY MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACTS AND CHALLENGES

3.1. Milestone achievements and impacts in the country

Progress towards government-civil society cooperation

Important momentum in the starting process is the creation of the Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for the Development of Civil Society. Although this process has been stopped for a while in 2013 but there are already planned activities for beginning of 2014 to continue development of this strategic document.

The “Agreement on Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Non-Governmental Sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” is an important milestone for civil society in BiH. The Agreement, not only established a basis for a future institutional framework for coordinating government-civil society relations, it generated a formal political acceptance for the first time of the legitimate role of civil society in the democratic policy-making process.

Monitoring of government performance

The last couple of years CSOs have been more actively engaged in monitoring government performances. The following are a few examples of performance monitoring:

TI is monitoring the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Strategy (2009 – 2014) and anti-corruption reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The objective of the project is to provide detailed analysis of the implementation levels of the anti-corruption strategy and anti-corruption reforms in key areas in BiH, which will serve as a basis for defining measures and planning future advocacy activities with the aim for an efficient and successful implementation of anti-corruption reforms in BiH and an increase in the capacities of state institutions and the society in general in curbing corruption.

TI is also monitoring the implementation of Strategy for public administration reform and assessing the results of Strategy implementation. In addition to that TI is monitoring also financing of political parties.

The Initiative for EU integration monitoring is an informal initiative of organisations recently established with the aim to monitor implementation of reforms in BiH as part of its path to the EU and draft shadow reports. The Initiative presented its first report at the end of 2013.⁶⁹

CCI has been monitoring the work of legislative and executive bodies at the national/state, entity, cantonal and local level for years. As a part of the government's performance monitoring, CCI is conducting monitoring of institutions fulfilling their obligations regarding drafting and adopting laws as schedule by certain ministry work plans

3.2. Shortfalls in CSO performance

Programme approach to development

Civil society has yet to adopt a programme approach as a means for achieving sustainable systemic social and economic development objectives. Project-orientation, determined to a large extent by donor funding policies, low levels of long-term strategic thinking, competition between CSOs and inadequate networking and cooperation between CSOs – within and across specific fields of operation –, an unstable political environment and an inadequate institutional framework for cooperation with government, are all factors encouraging the continuing trend for short-term, discrete and uncoordinated CSO-led development initiatives. Social change has been at best partial and very often superficial and short-lived. The measurement of impact in the community is rare, and low standards of monitoring and project evaluation mean that positive

⁶⁹ Shadow report on the progress of BiH's European Union accession process. Available at: <http://cps.ba/inicijativa-za-monitoring-evropskih-integracija-bosne-i-hercegovine-2013-alternativni-izvjestaj-o-napretku-bosne-i-hercegovine-u-procesu-evropskih-integracija/>

results and lessons learnt cannot be verified. Finally, the CSOs do not devote time and space for inclusion, feedback and participation of their members and beneficiaries. This challenge, together with weak M&E and impact measurement are strong factors that negatively affect the ability of organisations to achieve stronger and more sustainable impact in the society but also to gain the trust and support from the citizens and public.

Holding government to account

Very few CSOs are active in overseeing government performance, in particular in providing a means for the public to scrutinise standards of democratic governance and to ensure the open and proper use of public funds. Apart from TI, CCI and a few other organisations, BiH CSOs lack the watchdog expertise. In order to increase the accountability of decision makers and those who implement them, there is a need for larger number of organisations that monitor and act as watchdog organisations.

At the moment, there is a Watchdog Initiatives project of the OSCE Mission in BiH being implemented with about 20 CSOs gathering in issue-specific watchdog coalitions who apply long- term sustained pressure on decision makers to implement necessary reforms and improve public service in diverse areas.

Policy Dialogue

Regardless of limited opportunities that are provided to CSOs for engaging governments owing to low government capacities and the rudimentary institutional framework, CSOs are insufficient in researching social policy, promoting new solutions to policy problems, acting as a bridge between the grassroots and government agencies and representing the interests of their constituencies to the government and, in general, in introducing a participative, inclusive rights-based approach to governance and policy dialogue. In particular, little is being attempted in this field by CSOs at the entity level.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Needs assessment conclusions

Civil society environment

BiH's complex political and administrative structure impedes the development of a fully integrated civil society. The legal framework governing civil society is broadly encouraging and is in accordance with international standards and practice.

Despite, actions that have been introduced for simplifying registration process at the state level, CSOs are still discouraged for registering at this administrative level.

Tax incentives provided to companies and individuals to support CSOs are different in the two entities. Those in the FBiH are considerably lower than those in the RS.

Confirming public benefit status of a CSO is not carried out according to clear criteria and transparent procedures

At the RS level the legal framework for including citizens in the decision- making processes is being implemented to large extent but needs to undergo certain amendments to make the process more efficient and in line with best practices.

FBiH still lacks the institutional and legal framework for engaging for cooperation with civil society. FBiH Parliament created a CSOs register in order to consult them when a legal act is drafted. Having in mind that this register has been introduced recently, it is still too early to assess the actual use of this register.

The state level still lacks a formal institutional framework for cooperation with civil society as envisioned in Agreementsigned between BiHCoM and non-governmental organizations (2007)-Office for cooperation with civil society. The legal framework or conducting consultation process is not being fully implemented. Certain steps are being made in terms of simplifying

consultation process at the BiHCoM level and developing single consultation portal on BiHCoM level.

Cooperation between civil society and the government on specific policy issues and sector strategy is at a very low level of development and carried out infrequently in a haphazard manner. Within the government sector generally, at all levels, there is no clear understanding of the importance of participatory democracy and civil society's role in it. Government tends not to recognise civil society as a representative of legitimate, alternative and independent voices. All declarative efforts of government institutions to engage citizens and develop so-called participative democracy have not been matched by practical government efforts. In reality, citizens have almost no influence on the decision making processes.

Municipalities are the single largest source of civil society funding in BiH. In 2011, the municipalities allocated 53.23 % of funds for nongovernmental organisations, cantons 26.58 %, entities 13.71 %, BD 6.22 %, and state level institutions 0.23 % of the overall funds identified in the research.

Municipalities still struggle to provide CSOs with a transparent and fair means of competing for financial support.

The state government is the least significant source of public funds, with trends of further decrease.

International funding sources continue to reduce in scale, leaving the EC and USAID as the most important international supporters of civil society.

The space for civil society to engage in policy dialogue is constrained by the continued dominance of political elites in the process. At the same time, organisations struggle with finding their niche in the advocacy and policy arena, due to an often weak sector and thematic focus and project-oriented approach.

Social trust in BiH is very low, and there is generally low public recognition of the work of the civil society. Contributing factors to such a situation are the weak investment of CSOs in including their constituency (members and beneficiaries) in their governance and management processes, through mechanisms such as Boards and Assemblies, and participatory (objective oriented) planning. Organisations do not invest in measuring the progress and impact of their achievements, which also contributes to low visibility of the organisations, and their impacts in society, organisations do not have sustainable sources of funding which demands constant fundraising, which reverts the focus of organisations from their beneficiaries to donors (either domestic: business and government and international) and their interests. Finally, the public image of CSOs depends also on the ability of an organization to present itself to the public. Larger organizations have more capacities and knowledge to present themselves to citizens and to the media.

CSO – Media relations are full of prejudices and stereotypes, because of which steps towards better cooperation are not made. The CSOs or the media are lacking the procedures, standards, and strategies on how to approach the media/CSOs, which and what kind of information they need/should publish, how to measure their impact on public/users and how to increase their influence in cooperation.

Despite good practice examples of social entrepreneurship, the social entrepreneurship has not been yet adequately recognized and developed in BiH. The main reasons for this are insufficient knowledge of the concept and possibilities that open through social entrepreneurship, non-existence of the adequate institutional framework, sporadic programs and initiatives for employment through social entrepreneurship, lack of the initial capital, needed knowledge and skills.

CSO organisational capacities

Despite the fact that civil society in BiH has received a great input in terms of capacity building activities within different international programmes, technical skills of CSOs are still not on satisfactory level.

Civil society in BiH is largely composed of a wide range of membership based organisations (MBO) working at the grassroots level. Typically, these MBOs are small, semi-voluntary organisations, with very limited technical and organisational capacities. A majority of them are financially unstable and do not receive sufficient financial support to undertake a significant programme of work. MBOs area of interest is insufficiently defined. They lack clear focus and are not very much familiar with the concept of advocacy. Although the MBOs have a significant membership they lack the skills to clearly formulate their needs and advocacy goals and therefore miss the opportunity to mobilise their huge membership potential.

Approximately one third of CSOs have missions to provide benefits to the general public. In most cases these public benefit organisations are devoted to providing specialist forms of non-institutionalised service delivery. Organisations promoting human rights and rights-based development agendas are underrepresented. These interests are largely restricted to small elite of well-developed professional NGOs, working across the country in the four or five main urban centres, which undertake a range of advocacy and capacity building activities for citizens' empowerment, although rarely engaging in policy dialogue.

The sector is highly reliant on voluntary labour, and most organisations are insufficiently funded to maintain full-time professional staff.

Smaller organizations, especially those working at the grassroots level and those located in smaller towns and rural areas are often lacking in many of the basic technical skills necessary for running an efficient CSO, including all areas of PCM, general management and financial administration.

Financial viability remains the most problematic dimension of sustainability as CSOs struggle to diversify their funding and compete for EU funds. A very small number of organisations have capacities to withdraw EU funds. The application process is very demanding and time consuming, while very few organisations have the writings skills needed to draft EU project or meet the eligibility criteria for applying to.

Only a small number of organisations have developed capacities for analysis. This is a serious shortcoming, in view of the fact that any type of cooperation and civil dialogue or an advocacy campaign would be based on research and analyses. Many CSOs have only superficial knowledge about the quantitative and qualitative research methods and are not familiar with methodology for developing policy studies i policy briefs. CSOs are lacking analytical thinking, logical conclusions and data interpretation.

CSOs, and civil society generally, are strategically weak. Strategic thinking is still an underdeveloped capacity within civil society. Project dependency and low organisational capacities determine that long-term planning rarely takes place. CSO missions are routinely adapted to prevailing donor priorities. There is a small number of CSOs, which are exception to this. These CSOs have clearly identified lines of work and do not change their strategic orientation to match the priorities of the international donors. Based on their clearly identified area of work and confirmed expertise, these CSOs have managed to take strategic positions in society and be recognized by government institutions as good partners in identifying polices and strategic documents.

Although there are many informal CSO networks based on geographical or sector interests, the sector is poorly coordinated. Networks rarely function effectively and most are established without agreed-upon objectives and a clear agenda of work. Networks in BiH lack rotating leadership skills, evidence based decision-making processes are poor, fundraising skills are poorly developed.

CSOs generally struggle with methodologies and mechanisms for M&E, impact measurement and accountability and governance.

Resource Centres

In line with the phasing out strategy, TACSO BiH will gradually decrease its engagement and transfer activities to the so-called project activity follow-ons. For that purpose, TACSO BiH has organised two focus groups in BiH with participation of representatives of CSOs and CSO networks⁷⁰ to ensure input for further steps regarding development of civil society and discuss the role of the resource centres in BiH, as part of that process.

In the focus groups, the participants shared their views regarding the resource centres and how best to organise them in order to fulfil their purpose.

The participants deemed that the resource centres need to cover the entire country and be available to all CSOs. The centres need to ensure recognition and linking among the CSOs that want to partner on projects.

The participants also noted that the resource centres need to be the place where both CSOs and government institutions will be able obtain information on civil society in general and raise their public profile. Organisations that operate as resource centres need to have their capacities strengthened and quality of service to other CSOs should be provided in a highly professional manner.

The participants particularly stressed the issue of sustainability, since the experience so far indicated that resource centres struggle with ensuring their financial sustainability.

Some of the focus groups participants deemed that networks can also serve as the resource centres in terms of dissemination of information. In addition, smaller CSOs should build their capacities through cooperation with bigger CSOs in networks.

The participants also stressed that resource centres will have particularly important role in smaller communities where CSOs are not sufficiently linked.

The participants recommended the following:

Advocate through TACSO campaigns for donor institutional grants to CSOs, CSOs networks and resource centres.

Draft strategy for development of the resource centres and their sustainability

Ensure greater visibility of the resource centres selected by TACSO BiH.

⁷⁰ List of focus groups held is available in Annex 2

4.2. Recommendations for the country specific work plan-TACSO BiH

Civil society environment /CSO-Government relationship

- Re-opening process of Creating Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development with Office for Cooperation with CSOs as the priority, establishing Council for CS Development by proposing and exploring modalities with CSOs; organizing meetings of relevant stakeholders to check the readiness to re-open the issue;
- P2P events could be organised for contributing to recreate and restore the environment for a proper government-CSO relationship;
- Facilitation of multi-stakeholders dialogue and processes involving CSOs and CSO key stakeholders (government institutions, donors, media, business);
- Continue providing an open information resource and disseminate information to CSOs on the EU, EU legislation and standards, the process of European integration, BiH's progress towards fulfilling the conditions of the SAA, the proposed role of civil society and opportunities for inclusion in policy dialogue, as well as EC funding opportunities;
- Facilitate CSOs networks/coalitions/initiatives/platforms meetings with governmental institutions in efforts of advocating for better legislation reflecting CSOs efficiency of work (e.g. fiscal policy, institutional settings...);
- Maintain close cooperation with the current IPA-funded projects, such as the LOD and CBGI project, for the synergetic effects, etc.;
- If necessary provide technical support to the Working group for development of the Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for the Development of Civil Society;
- Facilitate the implementation of the Agreement signed (2007) between Council of Ministries and Nongovernmental Organizations among the civil society organisations;
- Support process of establishing SECO mechanisms - In order to ensure that SECO mechanisms are being developed and implemented TACSO BiH should support their development; assist in ensuring financial sustainability through IPA II or other EU funds and

support activities on educating CSOs in country on EU enlargement processes and IPA programming;

- Encourage developing institutional mechanisms for developing cooperation with civil society at state level in line with CoM-NGO Agreement;
- Facilitate the process of an allocation of funds from the state and entity levels to CSOs to be more transparent (CSO organisational capacities);
- Facilitate the process of promotion of EU programmes (e.g. Europe for citizens programme, other programs).

Civil society environment /People to People Programme (P2P MB and SB events)

The People to People (P2P) programme was one of the three (3) strands of the Civil Society Facility, the strategy of the European Commission Directorate General for Enlargement (DG ELARG). In September 2013, P2P became a new component of the TACSO project.

The P2P component provides an excellent opportunity for CSOs in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey to expand their knowledge about the EU and the accession process through visits to the European Institutions, meetings with European CSOs and the opportunity to network internationally and regionally.

Under the guidance of DG ELARG, TACSO has the overall responsibility to plan, organise and provide follow-up support for the realisation of P2P events.

The P2P events will be announced on TACSO social media channels and the TACSO Web page. In general, single beneficiary and multi- beneficiary activities are planned in the IPA countries, with occasional study tours to Brussels, other EU destinations and within the IPA region.

P2P topics will be decided on a semi-annual basis, and CSOs can submit their proposals for the topics they believe should be explored. The final list of topics and activities will be decided upon consultations with DG ELARG, the EUDs and TACSO LAGs.

The calendar of P2P activities will be published on a six-month basis, however, the list of events will be subject to change.

Based on the summary of the proposals coming from both the CSOs approached through CSO-mailing list and LAG members after the first TACSO 2 LAG meeting the topics to be considered for **P2P** multi-beneficiary events and single-beneficiary events for the first six months are the following:

P2P MB events:

EU standards- transparency and accountability of public institutions;
Social Entrepreneurship- a source of diversification of fundraising portfolio of CSOs/Women entrepreneurship in entrepreneurial Europe;
Support for EU to self-employment;
Direct democracy and e-democracy as a vehicle for transparency and inclusion of citizens;
Sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth and role of CS in that process;
Forum for networking of EU members CSOs and CSOs from WBT region;
EU and LGB rights;
Consultations of interest groups to the EU support to the accession process in the region;
Mental health and human rights;
Art and social inclusion.

P2P SB events:

Creating environment for development of Social Corporate Responsibility
Dialogue contributing to recreate the environment for a proper government-CSO consultations
Social Entrepreneurship (and Social Inclusion)-alternative financial support to CSOs
Education on public policies and public consultations processes reflecting sector approach SECO
Participation of CSOs in contributing to Progress Report
Employment of youth through linkage of business and educational sector
Systematic approach to the addiction deceases
Support to entrepreneurs in rural communities

CSO organizational capacities

- Provide extensive capacity building of CSOs networks/platforms/initiatives/coalitions in the areas of network management/governance and accountability, with special focus on the values of inclusion of constituency in governance and management of the organisations. Experience sharing, mentoring and advisory between organisations of similar size and thematic focus in the country, region and EU would be beneficial to enable organisations to learn and apply governance and accountability mechanisms;
- Support to visibility of CSOs (CSOs-PR and Media relations; Tailored made support with special focus on less developed, rural and membership based CSOs in the area of media relations, PR and internal/external communication, usage of social media to contribute to increased visibility of the CS sector);
- Support to policy development and advocacy (including communication strategy related issues-internal and external communication, communication skills, usage of social media in both the promotion of achievements and advocacy efforts); This area should be considered in the frame of EU integration and accession process;
- Provide capacity building and/or technical assistance (e.g. through Training of Trainers (ToT) to active CSO initiatives/networks/coalitions contributing to the EU integration process in BiH by assisting them in developing advocacy activities and strategic planning by the networks/initiatives/coalitions/platforms; usage of social media as a tools in advocacy and community support mobilization;
- Provide technical assistance for the improved capacity of CSOs/CSO networks in the area of development of an internal Monitoring and Evaluation system, with special focus on development indicators, impact measurement, baselines and reporting. Mentoring to CSOs in developing and implementing their M&E plans would be beneficial;
- Provide support to sector CSO networks/initiatives/platforms/coalitions in areas of network communication, leadership challenges, including setting of internal monitoring and evaluation system; network management (rotating leadership) and dynamics, network facilitation and accountability (constituencies building and decision-making related issues; CSO networks procedures for feedback sharing; transparency in decision-making process, presenting achievements of networks);

- Support to CSO networks with on-going mentoring, technical assistance and facilitation of partnerships with other networks in the region and the EU;
- Continue providing tailored made capacity building workshops for CSOs/CSO networks/platforms, initiatives/coalitions on EU application procedures, developing EU project proposals, partnerships and networking;
- Support capacity building workshops for CSOs/CSO networks /initiatives/coalitions/platforms interested in contributing to the consultation process for the drafting of laws and other legal regulations – policy research, drafting process, negotiation, etc.;
- Provide capacity building sessions to CSOs and CSO networks in developing policy papers, developing research methodology and analytical thinking in order to strengthen its capacities to monitor the key policy documents and laws and advocate for the changes where needed;
- Provide technical assistance to CSOs and CSO Resource Centres in order to serve the needs of newly established organisations (to connect them to CSOs with a similar mission, PADOR registration) and to provide sector specific expertise to the interested organisations;
- Support to CSOs annual financial reporting.

4.3. Recommendations for the regional project work plan

- Identify common CSO themes of interest and support regional/bilateral CSO dialogue on those themes;
- Building on experience of new and old EU member states, organise conference on the CSO role in European integration process and advice on increased EU fund for CSO's;
- Connect regional and country networks on policy issues, EU platforms, memberships, information sharing, etc.;
- Continue creating opportunities for mutual experience exchange and learning, but also joint project activities either bilaterally (between two countries) or multilaterally among sector CSO/sector CSO networks. Publicise these networks among local CSOs in the project countries, and facilitate contacts with them;
- Promote further regional networking and collaboration between CSOs in the project countries; facilitate partnerships among like-minded CSO's;

- Facilitate the exchange of experience, lessons learned and good practice between CSO's on projects for cross-border cooperation between neighbouring countries;
- Facilitate an exchange of information between CSO's and relevant government agencies from the project countries on anti-corruption measures and programmes;
- Organise regional conferences on the subject of policy dialogue – best practice and developing effective methodology;
- Establish and maintain a publicly accessible database of sector CSO networks working in the region.

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Annex 1

List of persons consulted during the research:

Name	Institution/CSO/Network	Comment
Natalia Dianiskova Džemal Hodžić	EU Delegation to BiH	Several meetings focusing on strategic approach to civil society sector development; LAG
Sadeta Škaljić	BiH Ministry of Justice, Department for Civil Society	Current legal framework, strategy and policy development regarding civil society organisations in BiH
Lejla Rešić Milanka Šopin	Ministry of Government and Local Self-government Republika Srpska	Process of Civil Society Strategy developmet
Niko Grubešić Željko Bogut	BiH Ministry of Justice	Process of Civil Society Strategy development;
Goran Kučera Goran Žeravčić	CBGI (EU funded project)	LAG Synergy of EU Funded projects realted to Civil Society development
Dragan Golubović Samir Omerefendić	UNDP LOD II (EU funded project)	Synergy of EU Funded projects related to Civil Society development
Aida Daguda, Milan Mrđa, Omir Tufo Šejla Karamehić Slaviša Prorok	Center for Promotion of Civil Society Development	CSO Networks (Mreža Sporazum Plus) Assesment
Garret Tankosic Kelly, Đordija Blagojević	SEE Change Net	CSO's working on specific sectors (environment)
Remzo Alija Bakšić, Seid Fijuljanin	Association of Employers BiH	Sectoral approach and needs assesment of speciefic issues covered by this type of organisations (Corporate Social Responsibility); LAG
Ljijana Zurovac	Press Council BiH	Media Community and media CSO's
Midhat Džemić	BiH Directorate for EU	Coordination of EU support and IPA

Danijela Bugarin	Integrations	Consultations with the aim of involvement of CSO's in process
Ranka Ninković-Papić	Fondation for Social Inclusion BiH	CSO's working on specific sectors (Social Inclusion); Needs for nomination of social inclusion issues for P2P SB topics
Marco Lamborji Elma Hodžić	Humanity in Action	
Enrique Aguado Asenjo; Vasileios Vasilatos	Cross Border Institutional Building +	Cross border planning and programing; youth organizations in the region
Miroslav Živanović, Boris Tihi, Lada Sadiković Thomas Deleu	Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies of the University Sarajevo	Involvement of Academic Community in process of civil society development
Zoran Puljić, Vesna Bajšanski Agić Amna Kurbegović Sabina Đapo Darko Vučenović	Thera International Srebrenica Foundation MOZAIK	Social Entrepreneurship and Corporate Social Responsibility in BiH
	Oxfam British Embassy	Capacity Building of CSO's through advocacy campaigns
	Ministry for Local Governance and Self-Governance in Republika Srpska	LAG
Ivan Matešić	Federal Ministry of Justice	Process of Civil Society Strategy development (LAG)
Amra Selesković	CSO Vesta	LAG
Sanja Stanić	CSO Viktorija	LAG
Snežana Mišić Mihajlović	CSO MDP Initiative	LAG
Vladan Vasilić	CSO Teledom Šekovići	LAG
Jasmin Jašarević	CSO PRONI Brčko	LAG
Dragana Selmanagić	CSO COOR	LAG
Dobrila Močević	PRIME Communications	LAG

Selma Sijerčić	US AID	LAG
Jonathan Francis	SIDA	LAG
Enver Sarvan	NBR PIT Centar	Process of Civil Society Strategy development and sectoral platforms
Igor Stojanović	CCI	USAID Civil Society Sustainability project; research on perception of CSOs by different segment of public
Asmir Ćilimković		
TRAG Foundation and TACSO Serbia	CSOs and institutions dealing with SECO mechanisms in Serbia	Review workshop on three years implementation of SECO mechanisms in planning and programming
Dražko Ignjatić	Radio Television of Republika Srpska	Media sector and civil society
Tamara Ćuruvija	Radio Television of Republika Srpska	Media sector and civil society
Damir Banović	Centre for Political Studies	Capacity building for initiative, networks, colaitions, platforms re EU integration process
Tijana Cvjetićanin	NGO “Why not”	Capacity building for initiative, networks, colaitions, platforms re EU integration process
Jadranka Milićević	Foundation CURE	Capacity building needs of well-developed CSOs, networks; Roma issues
Vedrana Frašto		Needs for nomination of social inclusion issues for P2P SB topics

Annex 2

List of participants in focus groups:

Name	Organisation
Goran Bubalo	Catholic Relief Services
Vedrana Frašto	Foundation CURE
Željko Marić	Udruženje građana 'Demokratija-Organizovanje-Napredak' UG 'DON'
Milan Mirić	ICVA International Council of Voluntary Agencies
Milan Mrda	Center Society Promotion Center
Valentina Pellizzer	OneWorldSEE platform
Azra Pitaparente	Fondation Publika
Edita Pršić	Foundation of local democracy
Enisa Raković	Voice of Woman
Svetlana Snežana Šešlija	Association of citizens ToPeeR
Tomislav Majić	Link Mostar

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