



# PROJECT FACTSHEET

Bosnia and Herzegovina October 2021

## ACHIEVING BETTER FUNCTIONING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



The entity Associations of Municipalities and Cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AMCs) play a crucial role in advocating for changes in legislation and funding on behalf of municipalities. They should drive intensive advocacy processes and promote decentralization. The main aim of the Strengthening Associations of Municipalities and Cities in BiH project will be to enhance and intensify AMCs advocacy role.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, in its transitional process, faces various development challenges such as economic decline, high unemployment, growing poverty and socio-economic inequalities. The complex governance structure often hampers development which affects the potential of local governance to be the key drivers of development. Moreover, the municipalities are often trapped by inadequate and not harmonized policies and legal frameworks, as well as insufficient funds to implement priority projects. In such institutional system and incomplete decentralization, the AMCs are the voice of municipalities and represent their interests to higher level authorities, bridging numerous gaps in communication and moving reforms forward. In the future, the role of AMCs will also be highly important and needed to build capacities of municipalities to reach EU standards and access EU funds.

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### COMMON INTERESTS OF MUNICIPALITIES AND FUNCTIONAL DECENTRALIZATION

The project aims to support AMCs' institutional and organizational change so that they may improve their advocacy role and firmly represent the municipal interests in the evolving decentralization processes. In addition, the project will work on strengthening the capacities of AMCs, in order for them to support local governments in delivering efficient services to the citizens and demonstrate accountability. Consequently, this would lead to an improved role and status of the AMCs as a respected actor in promoting democratic developments in the context of the EU integration.

The Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Republika Srpska consists of 64 local governments, whereas the AMC of the Federation of BiH represents 80 local governments, plus Brcko District. In their mission, both AMCs should advocate for common interests of municipalities before entity and state authorities and lobby for adoption of new laws and regulations. They should provide professional services to municipalities primarily in the area of legal and fiscal support and EU integration. Furthermore, they should serve as exchange platforms of knowledge and information. To intensify AMCs role and advocacy efforts, it will also be important to raise awareness of municipalities about the functions the Associations should have so they can eventually create a bottom-up pressure.

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### THE PROJECT AS A JOINT INTERVENTION OF SDC AND SIDA

Since 2001, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has supported municipalities and cooperated with AMCs through numerous projects, and continues to empower local governments for independent, visionary, and effective management of development processes.



The Strengthening Associations of Municipalities and Cities in BiH project will complement ongoing municipal development projects of SDC and other international organizations. The project will support the implementation of the strategic plans of the AMCs, as well as the process of enhancing functional decentralization to better position and increase the functioning of local governments.

The project is planned over three phases in the period from January 2016 to December 2027, with a total investment of 5,000,000 CHF. The project will be realized in partnership of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), thus being jointly funded by the Swiss and Swedish Governments.

## THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

### NAME:

The Strengthening Associations of Municipalities and Cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina

### DOMAIN:

Local Governance and Municipal Services

### THEME:

Governance, Institutions and Decentralization

### LAND/REGION:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

### PARTNER:

Swedish Government / Sida, as the co-donor agency  
SALAR/SKL, as the project facilitating agency  
Associations of Municipalities and Cities of Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH, as the implementing agencies

### STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina operate within inadequate policy context and legal frameworks which are not harmonized across different government levels. Furthermore, their development priorities face insufficient funds for implementation. The prerequisite to better positioning of municipalities and achieving functional decentralization is strengthening and intensifying the role and activities of the Associations of Municipalities and Cities (AMCs).

### PROJECT TARGET:

The Strengthening Associations of Municipalities and Cities in BiH project aims to develop capacities of the AMCs and strengthen their advocacy role to better represents municipalities' interest at higher government levels and within EU accession processes. The project will also support AMCs in the processes of enhancing functional decentralization.

### TARGET GROUP:

Associations of Municipalities and Cities of Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH (total of 144 local governments), plus Brcko District

### COSTS:

CHF 2,062,000 (Swiss contribution, Phase 1)

### DURATION:

February 2018 - March 2022 (Phase 1)

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

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