



ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) recognize the health sector reform as an urgent priority to improve quality of care, efficiency, facility management and broader governance in BiH's health systems. In response to the governments' demand, the *Technical Support for Bosnia and Herzegovina Health Reform* project is supporting Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) to strengthen the quality of care and financial sustainability of their health systems, thereby contributing to building resilient, primary healthcare-based health systems fit for moving towards achieving Universal Health Coverage in BiH.

The project is implemented by the World Bank through the global Multi-Donor Trust Fund on Healthy Lives, Nutrition and Population (HLNP). In BiH, this trust fund is a welcome collaboration between the Swiss Development Cooperation, the Delegation of the European Union, and the World Bank, and speaks to the long history of partnerships between the World Bank, the authorities, and other development agencies to accelerate social and economic development in BiH.

PROJECT GOALS

The project's goal is to contribute to building resilient, primary healthcare-based health systems fit for moving towards achieving Universal Health Coverage in BiH.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND INDICATORS

The outcomes expected to be achieved under the project are:

- Increased capacities of health service providers to provide services of improved quality.
- Enhanced financial sustainability of health care providers and institutions.
- Increased citizen engagement in monitoring and promoting health reforms.

In medium to long term, these outcomes will lead to more people-centered and performance focused health care, development of regulatory preconditions and supportive policy frameworks for introduction and scale-up of integrated, people-centered primary care service delivery, improved service quality and coverage, and improved social dialogue on healthcare.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project is financing a range of activities that have been developed in close collaboration with the Republika Srpska Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the Federal Ministry of Health, by providing targeted advisory services and analytics, training and learning exchanges. The project has three pillars and three sets of corresponding activities which will be implemented in both BiH entities:

Pillar 1: Implementing people-centered primary health care. Activities will support strengthening primary care, particularly for patients with Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). They will include developing of clinical pathways/guidelines, design and delivery of training programs, digital health assessments and developing digital health strategies, health surveys, and assessments to support expanded role of primary care and nurses.

Pillar 2: Improving efficiency of spending and expansion of fiscal space for health service delivery. Activities will facilitate improvements in the financial sustainability of the health sector by appraising revenue raising options and increasing efficiency of spending. They will include studies and consultations on repricing of health services based on the true cost for selected care pathways, developing recommendations on basic benefits package revision, scaling-up pooled procurement, training and capacity building on financial management, and studies appraising options to expand revenue base for the health sector.

Pillar 3: Strengthening social dialogue on health reforms: Activities will facilitate systematic engagement of citizens in health reforms at the system and facility levels as a way of strengthening health systems' accountability. They will include consultation and advocacy targeted to decision makers and health professionals, developing citizen engagement plans and patient satisfaction surveys, communication campaigns and training on citizen engagement.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT AND PREVIOUS RESULTS

Health outcomes in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are in line with regional averages but lag the EU and OECD countries. The main public health challenge in BiH is the high burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which are estimated to account for 94 percent of the country's annual deaths. BiH's slow progress in improving health outcomes is due to the twin challenges of low healthcare quality and financial sustainability. These challenges are mutually reinforcing dimensions of system performance and have several common underlying drivers, such as inefficient network of preventive, primary and secondary care services, gaps in planning and data management, managerial and structural inefficiencies, and the lack of payment systems to incentivize provision of high-quality person-centered care, lack of incentives and accountability mechanisms, and unsustainable health systems' financing model.

The project seeks to address these challenges and accelerate the transformation in the BiH health systems

through regulatory changes, analysis, training and learning exchanges, to inform investments in quality and financial sustainability. Within the World Bank health portfolio, this project forms part of a multi-pronged program to address the protracted challenges of health system arrears, gaps in accountability, and deficiencies in quality. It leverages the World Bank's US\$100 million Development Policy Financing for regulatory and legal changes and the US\$ 75 million Health Systems Improvement Project that provides investment financing in the sector, by providing strategic technical assistance to build technical and operational capacity for these complex reforms.

PROJECT IN BRIEF

NAME: Technical Support for Bosnia and Herzegovina Health Reform

DOMAIN: Health

LAND/REGION: Bosnia and Herzegovina

PARTNERS: World Bank – implementing partner, Delegation of the European Union – co-donor, Ministry of Health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska.

STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The project is a collaboration between the Swiss Development Cooperation, the Delegation of the European Union, and the World Bank aimed at helping the country to build a resilient and patient-centered health system. The project provides complementary technical assistance to the World Bank's financial support to broader health sector reform in BiH.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE: It aims to contribute to building resilient, primary healthcare-based health systems fit for moving towards achieving Universal Health Coverage in BiH.

TARGET GROUP: Health ministries, health insurance funds, public health institutes, quality accreditation agencies, health care institutions and professional associations in BiH. The primary target group is the health policy makers and health workforce in BiH. The end beneficiaries of the project are the users of health services, i.e., whole population of BiH.

COSTS: USD 6.135
(of which Swiss contribution USD 2.363)

DURATION:
01 June 2023 – 31 January 2027

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