

PROJECT FACTSHEET

Bosnia and Herzegovina June 2016

REGIONAL COOPERATION AND MUTUAL LEARNING FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE



Regional cooperation and better delivery of municipal services are key topics of accession strategies to the European Union. GiZ's *Open Regional Fund for Modernisation of Municipal Services* (ORF MMS) supports regional initiatives for efficient and sustainable municipal services, which will increase socio-economic development and improve livelihood in municipalities of South East Europe.

Municipalities in the South Eastern Europe region are often demonstrating lack of legal, organizational, and technical capacities to deliver their responsibilities, thus making the decentralization process one of the major transition challenges. This results in a situation where decentralised competences are not in line with currently insufficient financial resources and obsolete standards of service, causing poor quality of services, as well as economic inefficiencies and scarce local development. Furthermore, due to the history of conflicts in the region, cooperation and sharing experiences between countries is at a low level, even though several municipalities in the Western Balkans countries have implemented good practices in service delivery which respond to the needs of citizens. Here lies great potential for mutual learning and assistance across country

borders, which could benefit the modernisation of municipal services, improvement of living conditions, and joint efforts for a prosperous future in the region.

OVERCOMING COMMON CHALLENGES IN THE REGION

Through the contribution to the *Open Regional Fund for Modernisation of Municipal Services* (ORF MMS) of GiZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), the Swiss government aims to support the reforms in the countries of South East Europe in order to ease their accession into the European Union. The project operates in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Serbia, but also encourages networking to neighbouring countries of the region.

Currently the second phase of the project is being implemented (period of 2013-2016), with a total value of 8 million Euros. Within this phase 11 projects will be financed by the Governments of Switzerland and Germany, with each investing 4 million Euros (equivalent to 4.8 million CHF). The first phase of the project was funded solely by the German government.

With representatives of municipalities, municipal associations, political decision-makers and other relevant partners, ORF MMS first analyzes the most urgent problems of communal services. Specific project ideas are then developed by these partners, with a focus on improving regional dialogue, business environments, management of water supply utilities, cooperation within the area of solid waste, energy efficiency, protection of users of municipal services, etc. These are major challenges in about all municipalities of the WB region. Special emphasis is placed on identifying the best practices implemented by these municipalities and replicating them across the region, thus enticing cooperation and joint initiatives. The ORF MMS

provides support in improving the range of services offered by the municipalities and capacity building of their respective management, all with the aim of covering the basic needs of populations in urban and rural areas.

Ultimately, the municipalities embed principles of good governance within their service delivery, which includes establishment of responsive management efforts as well as the empowerment of citizens in decision-making processes with inclusion of all ethnic and social groups. Users of the municipal services are also empowered to participate in the regional cooperation to advocate for good quality of municipal service delivery.



SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS BENEFIT OVER 1'5 MILLION CITIZENS

Since 2007, the ORF MMS project provided funding for 25 projects in the Western Balkans region, with a total investment of 15 million Euros. Over 1'5 million citizens benefited from improved municipal services. Additionally, three new regional networks for replicating relevant practices have been established. Municipal actors developed methodologies and measures for effective and efficient service delivery to citizens, with recommendations for modernisation available to other local governments and public utilities management.

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

NAME:

Contribution to the *Open Regional Fund for Modernisation of Municipal Services (ORF MMS)* of GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)

DOMAIN:

Regional programs and projects

THEME:

Democratisation, Decentralisation and Local Governance

LAND/REGION:

Western Balkans

PARTNER:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)

STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

South East European countries are currently implementing reforms aimed at easing their accession into the European Union. At the communal level, municipalities often lack capacity and instruments necessary for implementing the EU's demanding standards, which require they improve the quality of their municipal services. Furthermore, due to the history of conflicts in the region, cooperation and sharing experiences between countries is at a low level, even though several municipalities in the Western Balkans countries have implemented good practices in service delivery which respond to the needs of citizens.

PROJECT TARGET:

The ORF MMS provides support to municipalities to improve their service delivery and develop good practices which can be replicated across the regions. Regional cooperation is used as a tool to modernise the system of delivery – technical improvements and more efficient management schemes - in accordance with EU standards. This will lead to an increase in socio-economic development and improved living conditions of municipalities in South East Europe.

TARGET GROUP:

Key actors in municipal service delivery systems of 6 main partner countries (Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) with a population of about 19 million citizens; regional and national associations for the development of MMS measures; relevant ministries and governmental agencies; more than 860 local governments; civil society organizations; regional development agencies; relevant academic and private institutions. The end beneficiaries are the citizens of municipalities (close to 1'5 million people), with a particular focus on most needed populations in middle-sized and rural municipalities.

BUDGET:

CHF 4'800'000

DURATION:

01.02.2013 – 31.03.2016

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

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