

SARAJEVO SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY CITY NOTE

This note presents the results of a Social Sustainability Assessment carried out by the Institute for International Urban Development (www.i2ud.org), Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development (www.co-plan.org) and the US Alumni Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This assessment is part of the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Sustainable Cities Initiative and the WB-Austria Urban Partnership Program (UPP) for Strengthening Local Governments in South-Eastern-Europe, funded by the UPP and managed by the ECA Social Development and ECA Urban Development departments and the World Bank Institute. A summary of findings of the desk and field research, which included Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews, as well as a Participatory Workshop are presented below. Further details are available in the Sarajevo City Synthesis Report. For more information, please refer to the ECA Sustainable Cities Website: <http://bit.ly/XWFMCG> and www.seecities.eu. The analysis, results, and views expressed in this paper are those of the authors alone and do not represent the position of the World Bank or any of its member countries.

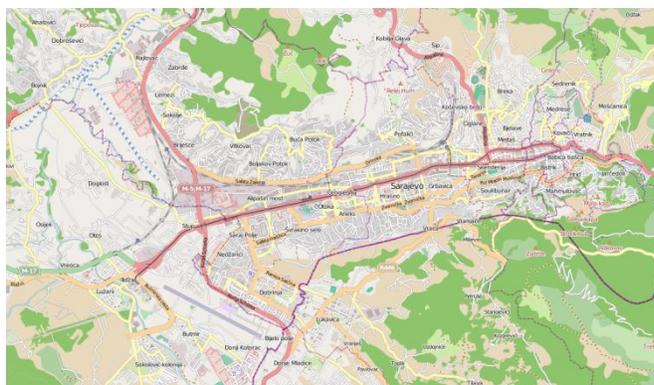


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FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE

CITY OF SARAJEVO



BASIC INDICATORS

- 310,571 inhabitants¹
- Most prominent minority groups: Roma, Serbs, Croats, Jews
- High number of refugees and IDPs
- 35.7 % unemployment²
- No official figures on current levels of poverty and extreme poverty

VULNERABLE GROUPS

1. The unemployed
2. Youth (15-25)
3. Persons with disabilities
4. Employed with low-income
5. Roma
6. Women
7. Pensioners and elderly

CHALLENGES IN SERVICE DELIVERY

The conflict in Bosnia in the 1990s and the longest city siege in modern history had a strong impact on local governance and the delivery of public services in Sarajevo. As a result of the fighting, Sarajevo was separated into two cities – Sarajevo and East Sarajevo – that, despite being physically contiguous, are split into two administrative units, controlled by the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska. Furthermore, local governance in Sarajevo is divided into 3 different levels of power: the Sarajevo Canton (encompassing primarily the City and a few neighboring municipalities); the City of Sarajevo; and four local municipalities (*mjesne zajednice*). Although much of the city infrastructure has been reconstructed, there is still damage in some systems: water supply, sewage, and roads. During and after the war, large-scale migration changed the population structure and ethnic composition in the

¹ Based on estimates of the Institute for Statistics of Federation of B&H, 2011.

² These data are available only for Canton of Sarajevo. *Socio-economic information in municipalities of Federation of B&H in 2011*, Federal Development Institution, Government of Federation of B&H, 2011.

Sarajevo region. Finally, the economic crisis that started in 2009 created high unemployment and raised poverty rates among vulnerable groups, as well as increased socio-economic inequalities. These factors have posed significant challenges to the delivery of public services:

- The **unclear division of responsibilities between the municipalities, the City and the Canton** negatively affect the quality of local governance in Sarajevo and the delivery of services. Furthermore, the large local administration is entirely financed by the local public budget.
- Citizens are primarily dissatisfied with **the services of public companies and institutions managed by the Canton** (public transportation, heating, sewage, water supply, housing management, etc). Since these companies are insulated from direct citizen influence and critique, there is a perception that they have been mismanaged, employ unnecessary employees and charge excessive rates for services, which excludes vulnerable groups.
- **Corruption** is believed to be a major factor in poor service delivery. Vulnerable groups are especially affected by corruption in the health care system and higher education, and by nepotism in employment.
- **A lack of information and insufficient digitalization of public services:** citizens and businesses find procedures to obtain documents and certificates inefficient and complicated.
- **Informal settlements** around the City challenge future urban developments. Inclusion of these settlements into urban infrastructure systems will require intensive investments and reconstruction strategies.
- Formal **internal audit, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms** need to be established where they do not exist within municipalities, the City Administration and the Sarajevo Canton.



Focus Group Discussions

INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted numerous strategies to foster development, social inclusion and poverty alleviation (Development Strategy of B&H; Public Administration Reform Strategy of B&H; Employment Strategy of B&H; etc.). These strategies apply at the national and cantonal levels. The Sarajevo Canton has adopted its own Development Strategy, Solid Waste Management Strategy, and Strategy for ICT Development in Health, among others. Four Sarajevo municipalities have also adopted physical development strategies as well as action plans for youth, and tourism. However, the majority of the policies in these strategies have yet to be implemented. Harmonization between different strategies as well as structured evaluation and monitoring mechanisms would ensure better coordination and policy implementation. Similarly, while current legislation provides a basis for the inclusion of vulnerable groups in local decision-making processes, implementation of existing laws is often a challenge.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES TO BE CONSIDERED

- The political system in B&H provides a basis for the inclusion of at least one representative of minority groups in the legislative bodies of local government: City Council and municipal councils.
- The Sarajevo Canton is the only local government to implement the constitutional amendments that create equal political rights among Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. Additionally, the European Human Rights Court has ruled that Bosnia and Herzegovina is obliged to create a constitutional basis for equal political rights for all its peoples, not only the three major ethnic groups.
- The main mechanism for the inclusion of citizens in political decision-making and for garnering social accountability is the local community (*mjesne zajednice*), the smallest administrative unit of a municipality. However, these local governance units have been neglected.
- The complexity of the local governance structure in Sarajevo has complicated the delivery of services and conveyance of social accountability.

EXISTING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

- ✓ The Law on Local Self-Governance in B&H establishes various mechanisms (referenda, citizen initiatives, petitions, consultations, hearings, etc.) for the inclusion of citizens in local policy decisions. However, a similar law needs to be adopted by the Sarajevo Canton to establish a legal basis for public participation in the cantonal, city and municipal bodies.
 - The Cantonal Assembly and several cantonal ministries regularly organize public consultations on important legislation. However, the City and municipalities have not been active and have held only a few such consultations.
 - Even when citizens are involved in consultations, this usually occurs after legislation has already been drafted, and not in the early stages of policy creation, making it difficult to change policy proposals or to evaluate other options.
- ✓ Most *mjesne zajednice* are inactive. However, the municipalities of Center and Stari Grad have engaging and interactive web presentations of their neighborhood communities.
 - The majority of Focus Group participants are not aware if a local community existed where they live, while others stated that most decisions in these communities are made behind closed doors. None voted in the election of their local community representatives. Citizens are not aware of the roles and functions of these communities and it is unclear how to get involved. Most citizens are not interested in getting involved or proactive in finding such information, while promotion of local communities and their role and services is also missing.
- ✓ Almost all local government units in Sarajevo hold annual consultations on the budget.

- However, budget proposals are presented as a whole, not program or project-based, making it difficult to determine where funds are allocated. Furthermore, most citizens find it difficult to interpret this information due to lack of expert knowledge.
- ✓ The law on free access to information presents an important instrument in social accountability. Although several NGOs promote it, citizens still lack information on how to use it, and local governments tend to neglect the citizens' requests submitted on the basis of this Law.
- ✓ Associations of citizens represent an important mechanism for including vulnerable and minority groups in local decision-making, particularly within the Sarajevo Canton Government. These associations provide important legal and policy information to their members and directly represent their interests in governmental working groups or committees.
 - However, some citizens are dissatisfied with the management of these associations (e.g., the promotion of personal objectives versus group interests and the mismanagement of funds) and advocate for democratization of these NGOs.
- ✓ Meetings of legislative bodies in Sarajevo are open to the public.
 - However, only occasionally are these opportunities used or promoted.
- ✓ While municipalities publish online most of the decrees and policies they adopt, the Sarajevo Canton, which has the most important local governance powers in Sarajevo, publishes everything in its Official Gazette.
 - The Gazette is not free of charge. Usually, only local governance units are subscribed to the Gazette. The most important legislation is published on cantonal ministries websites.
- ✓ The Cantonal TV station (TVSA) broadcasts sessions of the Cantonal Assembly.
 - Many citizens described these sessions useful and suggested that broadcasting such content could be done in a more creative way.

WHY PROMOTE SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN SARAJEVO?

While little consensus can be found at the national level in B&H, many changes can be adopted at the local level without ethno-nationalist political obstacles. As the capital city, Sarajevo should lead and showcase these reforms for the country.

Citizens are highly dissatisfied with political institutions and do not trust politicians and civil servants in part due to the poor level of service delivery and a high incidence of corruption. However, citizens also lack information on how to change political practices and improve service delivery. Social accountability mechanisms would inform citizens on how to regularly demand responsibility, rather than solely during elections cycles.

Citizens themselves are critical about civic and political involvement in Sarajevo. They noted that a majority of citizens are quite passive. Most citizens believe they cannot make an impact through formal mechanisms or that they lack information on how to get involved.

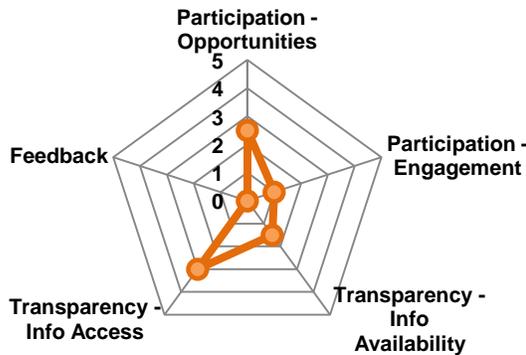
Without involving citizens and diverse interest groups in decision-making, local governments cannot expect to develop and implement successful policies. This side of social accountability needs to be emphasized to decision-makers.

Social accountability presents a powerful tool to bridge the divide between local decision-makers and citizens. Given the mistrust between these two sides, the first step would be to create opportunities for regular dialogue.

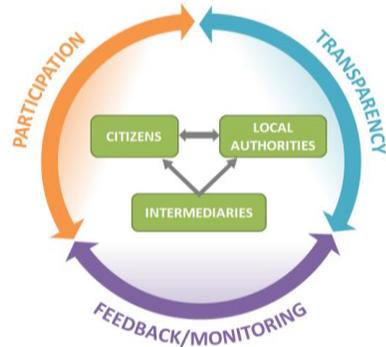
In the medium- and long-term, social accountability should provide a basis not only for more efficient policies but also for better distribution of resources among diverse social groups. This is important given rising socio-economic inequalities that are especially affecting vulnerable groups.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY INDEX

In order to gauge existing levels of social accountability in each city in a comparable way, this Assessment developed a Social Accountability Index around 5 categories relating the framework of Participation, Transparency and Feedback/Monitoring. The index is a simplified measure of the effectiveness of existing practices and identifies areas that can benefit from improvement.



Index results for Sarajevo³



Social Accountability Framework

STAKEHOLDER OWNERSHIP

Proposed interventions foresee the municipalities in Sarajevo as the main actors responsible for implementing the proposed scenarios, along with the *mjesne zajednice* and the City of Sarajevo. However, successful implementation must entail the active participation of NGOs, particularly associations that represent vulnerable persons. In addition, involvement of traditional and non-traditional media will be a crucial element in promoting proposed solutions among citizens and NGOs.



Participatory Scenario Development Workshop

³ Please refer to the City Synthesis Report Annex for a full description of the index and its categories.

PROPOSAL #1: IMPROVE INFORMATION EXCHANGE BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENS IN SARAJEVO

The exchange of information between citizens and local governance structures and units in Sarajevo does not take place through formal mechanisms and is irregular or unreliable. Furthermore, information delivery is decentralized, redundant in some areas, and non-existent in others. Additionally, complaint systems are not functional and citizens rarely receive replies or action if they make complaints vis-à-vis certain public services.

Overall goal: Improve information exchange and delivery between citizens and local government.

Vision

- ✓ Efficient exchange of information between citizens and the City, the municipalities and local communities.
- ✓ Functioning complaint system that regularly improves delivery of public services in Sarajevo.
- ✓ High citizen satisfaction with public services in Sarajevo.

Specific Actions

WHAT	Establish an Information Center that would be connected to a network of local information points. This network would provide information regarding various local governance structures, rights, obligations, and services; and at the same time would gather information from citizens on various problems of communal interest. The City could also host a central database where information would be posted.
HOW	1) Analyze local communities' needs and capacities as part of the planning process so as to ensure that established centers meet the needs of particular social groups; 2) Adopt the necessary policy and legal framework in the City and municipalities; 3) Create an e-complaint system that would be managed by the Information Center; 4) Create an SMS platform for making formal complaints related to public services. Advertise the phone number and the SMS complaint system widely to local communities using TV, radio and billboards in public spaces. 5) Hire and attract more young people to manage and participate in activities of the <i>mjesne zajednice</i> ; 6) Train staff to work at local information centers; 7) Make sure that complaint forms and evaluation surveys about quality of public institutions are available in their buildings along with submission boxes. Citizens should also be able to propose suggestions to public institutions through this system.
WHO	The City of Sarajevo; the municipalities of Stari Grad Sarajevo, Novo Sarajevo, Novi Grad Sarajevo and Center; the local communities in each municipality.
WHEN	Two years
INDICATORS	The number of established information centers; number of information requests and complaints received through the system; satisfaction of citizens with the system.
HOW MUCH	Difficult to calculate at this point: the human resources are already available but need to be trained. Alternatively, younger people could be employed. The greatest cost would be the e-complaint system and the internal systems that connect the central Information Center with local communities.

PROPOSAL #2: INCREASE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

The FGDs, IDIs and the PSD Workshop participants found that citizen participation in local decision-making is insufficient or sometimes non-existent. *Mjesne zajednice* have great potential to expand civic participation in decision-making processes, as stipulated by the Law on Local Self-Governance. However, more financial resources need to be allocated to local communities to create the preconditions for revitalizing local governance.

Overall goal: Increase public participation in local decision-making through revitalization of *mjesne zajednice*.

Vision

- ✓ Increased and effective participation of citizens in local decision-making procedures.
- ✓ Citizens have real input into local politics and governance.
- ✓ Local policies based on actual citizens' needs and interests.
- ✓ Municipalities and public companies provide better and more efficient services to citizens.

Specific Actions

WHAT

A **set of formal procedures** was envisioned along with several non-formal activities that should foster and revitalize the local communities in decision-making. Foremost, local decrees should be developed that provide a clear framework and guidelines on decision-making processes in neighborhoods. From there, municipalities need to include in their annual budget support for such activities. Finally, *mjesne zajednice* should cooperate with NGOs in order to implement joint local projects. Particularly, partnerships and sessions with associations of persons with disabilities would help map the unique situations of these persons. All these processes should be accompanied by ICT solutions.

HOW

1) Municipalities should develop sector strategies and annual action plans that include annual citizen consultation plans. These should be presented to the public in a timely manner and lead to adoption of various policy options relevant to citizens. 2) Municipalities should ensure their budgets align with these strategies and plans. 3) Organize through the *mjesne zajednice* at least three annual extensive consultations on the most important policy issues. Organize regular civic consultation activities through cooperation between local communities and NGOs working with marginalized groups. Then, forward citizen input to municipalities. 4) Cooperate with TV, radio and other media in order to broadcast several public consultations. 5) Monitoring and evaluation tools need to ensure meaningful use of citizen input. Additionally, administrative triggers must prevent adoption of certain regulations without consultations. 6) The rules of public participation have to be visibly displayed on all municipality and local community websites. 7) Alongside offline consultations, develop and apply online consultations, activism, and social media.

WHO

The Municipalities of Stari Grad Sarajevo, Novo Sarajevo, Novi Grad Sarajevo and Center, including the *mjesne zajednice* of each municipality.

WHEN

One year

INDICATORS

Number of public participation events held or tools used; number and social background of citizens who participated in consultations; amount of and extent to which citizen input was used in formulating policy options; efficiency of the system.

HOW MUCH

15 – 20,000 USD.

PROPOSAL #3: FOSTER THE ROLE OF MUNICIPALITIES IN LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Many participants in FGs and IDIs believe that municipalities should be more proactive in fostering local economic development, attracting investments and creating jobs. They found that municipalities do not offer special support to social entrepreneurs and companies employing persons with disabilities. It is particularly difficult for marginalized groups and small entrepreneurs to access assistance and financial funds from government institutions.

Overall goal: Improve municipal support of local economic development.

Vision

- ✓ Municipalities support social entrepreneurs and companies that employ persons with disabilities.
- ✓ Increased employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- ✓ Municipalities are economically developing and growing.
- ✓ Decreased unemployment.

Specific Actions

WHAT	Establish a public fund that supports social entrepreneurs and small companies employing persons with disabilities. Aside from public funding, municipalities can grant access to training, registration assistance and administrative tax cuts to these small businesses.
HOW	1) Before calls for applications are issued, funding priorities will be determined based on prior analysis of citizens' needs (feasibility studies and consultations). 2) A Municipal Rulebook on the Fund needs to be issued, with clear rules, timelines, and responsibilities including the monitoring and evaluation process. 3) Publish online guidebooks for starting small businesses, applying to the Fund, etc. 4) These funds should be clearly earmarked, with information and preparation support widely disseminated both online and offline. 5) Promote the Fund, beneficiaries, and success stories in public spaces as well as through TV, radio and new media content.
WHO	Selected municipalities in Sarajevo.
WHEN	Annual cycle
INDICATORS	Number of supported projects; number and type of persons with disabilities that were employed through the project(s); number of social entrepreneurs supported through the projects; public visibility of allocated funds, etc.
HOW MUCH	The pilot project could be implemented in one to two municipalities with a budget of 15-20,000 USD.