



# LOCAL WORKS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

*“If we truly want to make aid inclusive, local voices need to be at the center of everything we do. We’ve got to tap into the knowledge of local communities and their lived experiences.”*

**-- USAID Administrator Samantha Power**

## **USAID ASSISTANCE**

USAID launched the Local Works program in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in 2017 to establish sustainable locally led development. Sustainable locally led development is the process by which local actors – individuals, communities, networks, organizations, private entities, and governments – set their own agendas for addressing local issues, develop their own solutions, and apply their own leadership skills and resources to make those solutions a reality.

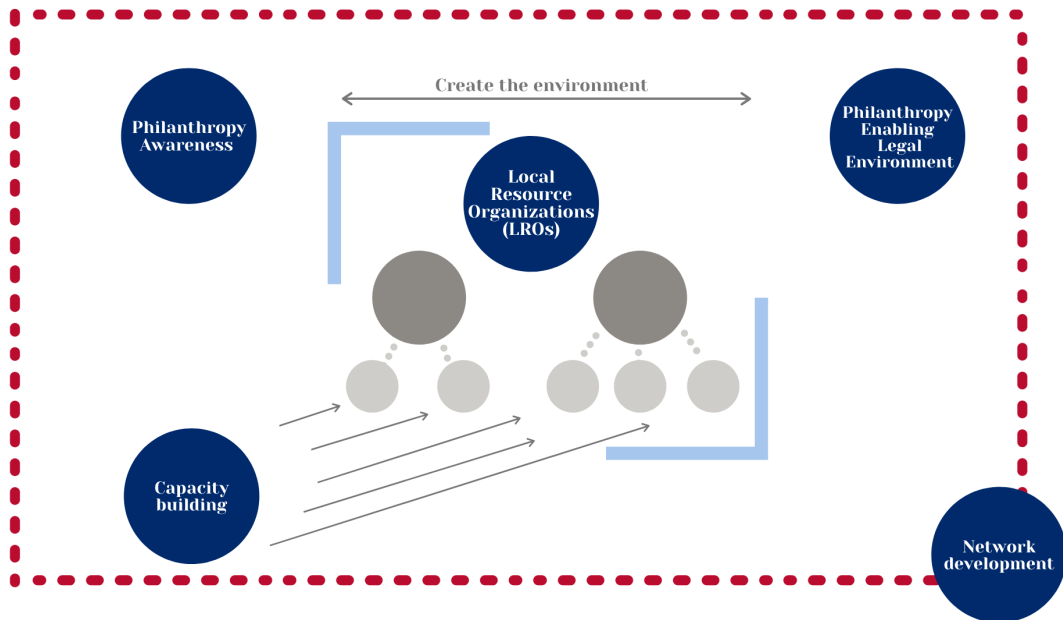
USAID’s approach to establishing sustainable locally led development in BiH is based on three pillars: building trust and networking among communities to shift the centers of influence from international to local actors; developing the capacity of local organizations so they can address the issues in their communities; and mobilizing local resources through philanthropy.

USAID recognizes that local leadership and ownership are essential for fostering sustainable development results. We also recognize that establishing locally led development is not achieved through a single approach but rather a range of ways in which we work hand-in-hand with our local partners and communities to shift agenda-setting and decision-making power into their hands.

The projects described below will empower local actors to lead community development initiatives themselves, and shift USAID's role to being a catalyst for local change.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

To implement the Local Works (*Snaga Lokalnog*) program in BiH, USAID first formed an internal cross-sectoral team of local staff to meet with community stakeholders in municipalities throughout the country. These listening tours helped USAID get a sense of community needs and challenges outside the donor realm, and ideas citizens had for solving them. Using the insights gained from the listening tours, USAID designed the interlinked program areas depicted below.



### NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

In 2019, USAID awarded the Network for Building Peace with a six-year Local Works grant to establish, strengthen, and consolidate a sustainable network to enable local partners to identify and address their own community development challenges. This project works with local actors – including civic leaders, citizens, private businesses, local governments, community organizations, and local resource organizations – to establish and strengthen relationships among local actors and communities. It also facilitates connections among all the other BiH Local Works projects and organizations that aim to strengthen the capacity and cooperation of its members.

### LOCAL RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

In 2019, USAID began selecting local resource organizations (LROs) that provide resources and services to other organizations and individuals to address community issues. LROs include but are not limited to NGOs, philanthropies, faith-based organizations, academic institutions, private companies, and professional associations.

In 2020, USAID awarded grants to two LROs – the Tuzla Community Foundation (TCF) and the Center for Civic Cooperation (CCC) in Livno. With USAID assistance, TCF expanded its geographic area of work to include all of Tuzla-Podrinje Canton, where it vigorously supports initiatives to build capacity, mobilize communities and resources, and encourage civic leaders and groups to take action to improve their own communities. The project implemented by CCC Livno brings together stakeholders in 10 municipalities from southwestern BiH to address community needs and concerns.

USAID will support an additional 10 LROs throughout the life of the Local Works program to strengthen their role as resource hubs in their respective communities. This activity strengthens broad-based participation in community development for local resource mobilization. The LRO project works in

cooperation with other BiH Local Works projects to strengthen connection and solidarity among various groups in society and mobilize them to improve locally led development.

#### **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM**

In August 2020, USAID/BiH awarded the Institute for Youth Development (KULT) with a five-year grant to strengthen the capacity of local partners. This platform works one-on-one with local development actors to help them to identify capacity needs, define performance improvement priorities, and create organizational development plans. Since then, this project has developed and implemented training for community-based organizations that promote responsible fiscal management, human resource development, advocacy and lobbying, and internal control systems.

#### **PHILANTHROPY – AWARENESS AND THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT**

USAID's Local Works program supports two projects to increase local giving and mobilize local resources to improve the legal and policy environment for community philanthropy and to increase philanthropic activity.

In 2020, USAID awarded its Local Works Improving the Legal Framework for Philanthropy project to Mozaik Foundation, which works with several local and regional partners (Pomozi.ba, Hastor Foundation, Network for Building Peace, Catalyst Foundation, and Trag Foundation). This four-year project will improve cross-sectoral collaboration on the legal and policy environment and legislative advocacy.

The second project, initiated in 2022, seeks to increase the culture of giving in BiH by promoting the transparency and accountability of LROs and the visibility of donor contributions for locally led initiatives. Through public relations and fundraising campaigns, the project will increase public awareness of successful philanthropic efforts and thus inspire and mobilize even greater resources in support of community development countrywide.