



ASSISTANCE TO CITIZENS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

QUARTER IV 2022



USAID
OD AMERIČKOG NARODA



CENTRI CIVILNIH AKCIJA I
CENTRI CIVILNE AKTIVNOSTI



TRANSPARENCY
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CRM



Description of the Project

The program “Assistance to Citizens in the Fight against Corruption (ACFC)” is implemented by the Centers for Civic Initiatives, the lead implementer, and Transparency International (TI BiH) and the Center for Media Development and Research (CRMA), the implementing partners. The project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The implementation period is from September 2019 to September 2024.

The program aims to increase citizens’ participation in combating corruption, and all of its activities are designed to encourage strong and sustainable anti-corruption activism across the country and across all levels. The purpose of the ACFC project is to help civil society become representative and credible in the fight against corruption.

The following activities are realized within the project:

- Monitoring and advocacy for anti-corruption legislation in the following areas: conflict of interest, whistleblower protection, public procurement, and abuse of public resources in election campaigns;
- Engagement of citizens and building a culture that rejects corruption;
- Coordination and building capacities of organizations involved.



CORRUPTION IS NOT AN INDIVIDUAL PROBLEM !!!



Are you a group of citizens facing corruption in your community and because of that you cannot exercise your own right or that of a broader group of people?

Do you suffer the consequences of bad decisions made amid the misuse of power or unlawful government conduct?

More information about how to receive assistance for your anti-corruption initiatives is available at the following link:

063 396 536

protivkorupcije@ccibh.org

Map of anti-corruption activities across Bosnia and Herzegovina



 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
 INFORMAL GROUP OF CITIZENS

 Contact them via their FB pages!

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- Banja Luka**
 - CA "Restart Srpska"
 - Union of the Employers' Association of Republika Srpska
 - Association "Think good"
 - CA "Road of Justice"
 - ICG "Save Karanovac"
 - Center for Education "Pro Educa"
 - The Association "Perpetuum Mobile – Institute for Youth and Community Development"
- Bijeljina**
 - Helsinki Committee for Human Rights
 - ICG "Stop illegal exploitation of gravel in Bijeljina"
- Bjelašnica**
 - ICG "To Stop Illegal Construction on Bjelašnica and Igman"
- Brčko**
 - ICG "For Transparent Financing of Non-Profit Organizations from the Budget of the Brčko District"
 - Youth Center Vermont
 - CA "Demos"
 - ICG "For recognized diplomas from accredited higher education institutions in the Brčko District of BiH"
- Breza**
 - ICG "To Remove an Illegal Waste Dump in Nedići, Breza"
- Bugojno**
 - ICG "Poriće"
- Bužim**
 - The Association of Dystrophics Bužim
- Doboj**
 - ICG "For the legal exploitation of minerals from the Bosna river"
 - ICG "STOP to unaccredited universities in the RS"
 - ICG "Remove Hexane from Kotorsko"
 - Center for Humane Politics
 - Citizens Association Tolerance of Diversity (ToPeeR)
- Drvar**
 - ICG "Drvar Without Italian Waste"
- Foča**
 - ICG "Drvar Without Italian Waste"
- Goražde**
 - ICG "Save Drina"
 - ICG „Goražde Without Pesticide“
- EastSarajevo**
 - NGG "Stop izgradnji mHE na ICG "STOP to the Construction of mHps on the river Kasindolska"
 - Women's Interactive Rural Center (ŽIR)
- Jablanica**
 - ICG "For Doljanku"
- Konjic**
 - ICG "Neretvica - Let Me Flow"
- Kozarska Dubica**
 - ICG "React Against Irregularities Threatening the Health and Environment"
- Kreševo**
 - ICG "Stop Quarries Without Permits"
- Kakanj**
 - ICG "Nature Park Trstionica and Boriva"
- Livno**
 - CA "the Center for Citizens' Cooperation"
- Maglaj**
 - ICG "For Legal Exploitation of Minerals in the Upper Section of the river Bosna"
- Mostar**
 - CA "Because We Care"
 - ICG "Initiative against the construction of Buna 1 and 2 mHp"
 - ICG "Stop to illegal construction in Bijeli Brijeg"
 - ICG "No to construction on Buna and in my Blagaj"
 - ICG "Citizens' Initiative Kuti"
 - The Association for Improving Quality of Living – Futura Mostar
- Petrovo**
 - ICG "Keepers of Ozren"
- Prijedor**
 - Consumer Protection Association "DON Prijedor"
 - ICG „Be My Voice“
- Sarajevo**
 - ICG "Hastahana park"
 - ICG "Initiative KCUS"
 - ICG "Illegal construction in the municipality of Stari Grad"
 - Association „Ja BiH u EU“
 - Employers' Association in the Federation of BiH
 - BIRN BiH
 - Association "Baby Steps"
 - Association Union of the Fund's Employees
 - Forestry and Environment Action
 - Aarhus centa
 - ICG "Last minute rescue – Let's save Dobrinja"
 - The Union for Sustainable Return and Integrations in BiH
 - Association of Public Procurement Professionals, Trainers and Officers in BiH (UPTIS)
- Šipovo**
 - ICG "Farmeri"
- Tešanj**
 - ICG "Non-transparent spending of budget funds for water supply to citizens"
- Trebinje**
 - CA "Stop mobbing"
 - ICG "Movement for Restitution Trebinje"
- Trnovo**
 - ICG "Stop to Disposal of Illegal Waste at the Krupačke stijene Waste Dump"
- Tuzla**
 - The civic movement "Waking Up"
 - ICG "Initiative against the landfill for slag and ash from the thermal power plant in local community Šićki Brod"
 - The Association "Forum of Tuzla Citizens"
- Visoko**
 - ICG "To Prevent Abuse in Issuing Operation Permits to Organizers of Games of Chance (betting, lotteries, etc)."
- Višegrad:**
 - ICG "Defend the Rivers of Višegrad"
 - ICG "Remove Illegal Waste Dump on the Outskirts of a Tourist Town"
- Vitez**
 - ICG "Courageous Women of Kruščica"
 - Initiative "Illegality of Spending the Building Maintenance Funds in Vitez"
- Zenica**
 - ICG "Air guards"
 - ICG "Movement for change"
- Zvornik**
 - ICG "STOP to illegal gravel pits on the Drina river"
 - ICG "Stop the Construction of an Asphalt Base in Tršić"
- Žepče**
 - ICG "Stop illegal exploitation of gravel in the area of Žepče and Zavidovići"



OBSERVING INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY



On the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, on December 9, 2022, in eleven cities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, civil activists took to the streets and through various activities, such as press conferences, distribution of leaflets, launching petitions, reminded the public of the irregularities they are fighting against in their local communities. This day was also marked by those brave activists that achieve significant success in their local communities - moving borders, canceling illegal permits, demolishing floors of illegally built buildings, stopping investors from destroying natural resources, or changing legal regulations. On this particular day, they symbolically called on all citizens to join them in the fight against corruption and to fight together against irregularities in local communities. By their example, they encourage citizens to raise their voices against corruption in their local communities.



“And what motivates and inspires us is the very thought that the Kasindolska River will flow freely, undisturbed in its bed as it has flowed for hundreds of years and that corruption will come to an end.”
Sara Tuševljak, initiative “Stop the construction of Small Dams on the Kasindolska River.”

“Corruption is responsible for why the residents of the Kuti community fear every day that a quarry will open 137 meters from their homes. This is why we, the locals, joined together in an informal group of citizens, in the fight for the realization of our rights.” Aner Omanović, the Kuti initiative.





“Even though we have been hindered, belittled, and disrespected in the hope that we would give up, it has been a tailwind for us to continue to fight for our health, and our family and to prevent the ecological disaster that threatens us.” Davor Nujić, initiative “Kreševo Civic Movement.”

Today, on International Anti-Corruption Day, I would like to point out that our fight to close Uborak depends on corruption in our country, and I would like to add that Uborak, although it affects the health of the people around it and the health of people in the city of Mostar and perhaps people who live in the Neretva River basin, we should all together ask ourselves how we can succeed and close the Uborak waste dump.” Fuad Hujdur from the initiative “Because We Care.”



“The informal group of citizens “Protect Mandek Springs” from Livno has been fighting for years against illegal exploration and drilling around the sources of drinking water that supply our households.” Marijana Brešić, initiative “Protect Mandek Springs”

“Because of corruption, there has been an illegal landfill on the outskirts of Višegrad for 28 years. We decided to stop it!” Emin Karčić, from the initiative “To Remove the Illegal Waste Dump on the Outskirts of Višegrad.”



“My motive to join the campaign against the illegal exploitation of gravel was personal. And in addition to this motive, I can point out that there are other reasons for it, which is certainly the destruction of the banks of the Drina River here in Zvornik.” Dušan Aćimović, the initiative “Stop illegal Gravel Pits on the Drina River.”



“My motive for fighting corruption is injustice. Therefore, corruption is equal to injustice in society. Because, due to corruption, some rights are given to those who do not deserve them, and at the same time those rights are denied to those who should have them.” Hajrija Čobo, “Trstionica and Boriva Nature Park” initiative

“The belief that the institutions, from the lowest to the highest level, there are professional and honest people that want the best for this country and its citizens, and the belief that justice is slow but achievable, motivates us to fight against irregularities until we achieve the ultimate goal- banning construction of any facility in this location.” Maja Štabek Gliha, initiative “Zgrada”



“What motivated me to get involved in the fight against corruption? Mainly the fact that uneducated and incompetent people, due to circumstances, get into power because of having large amounts of money, and then they start to manage all processes in society, and this led to the fact that society began moving backward, and this will be my motive in the future, to fight against such phenomena, to lead our society on the right path” Pero Šarčević, the initiative “For the Legal Exploitation of Minerals from the Bosna River.”

“What motivated us in the fight, above all, was to protect the health of our children, our families, all the citizens of Sarajevo, and to protect the drinking water of the City of Sarajevo. Another motive is to show the system, which is not invincible, that we do exist and that we will fight for our health and the health of our children and to show our neighbors and fellow citizens that the fight is worth it.” Amar Taso, from the initiative “Saved by the Bell -Save Dobrinja “



“Those who should serve us as an example of how to respect the laws, knowingly violate them by abusing their positions and influence.” Srbo Škero, “Movement for the Restitution of Trebinje”

“The ninth of December is marked as International Anti-corruption Day. Corruption is one of the major problems in our society and in our country as a whole. This is why we must all have an additional motive in the fight against corruption and say no and put an end to corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” Rusmir Hrnjica, the initiative “Poriče, Bugojno.”





AT LAST!

Two Small Dams on Bunski Kanali Deleted from the City of Mostar Spatial Plan

It took almost a year for the City Council of Mostar to realize the decision to delete the Buna 1 and Buna 2 small dams from the spatial plan of the Municipality of Mostar. This was realized at the 27th session of the City Council when the Council amended the document and deleted the location from the Spatial Plan. However, for the permanent protection of the Bunski kanali to be achieved, there is still one important fight to be fought, and that is the termination of the concession contract.

Activists launched an initiative to terminate the concession contract between the Government of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and the investor, but the request has been rejected because of several pending applications submitted by the investor, and the residents of Buna will have to repeat their request for the termination of the concession contract.

Since the concession contract is within the jurisdiction of the cantonal government, after the constitution of the Cantonal Assembly, activists started organizing meetings with members of the Assembly. They also participated in the filming of a promotional video for marking International Anti-Corruption Day and in a joint press conference with two other civic initiatives from Mostar. In addition, the group was active in the public by organizing public events or exerting additional pressure on decision-makers through the media to make the local government respond positively to their request and take the first step towards the permanent protection of the Bunski kanali.



Elektroprivreda BiH Abandons Construction of Small Dams on the Neretvica River

The end of 2022 was a meaningful period for activists and locals fighting against the construction of 15 small hydroelectric plants on the Neretvica River in the municipality of Konjic. On December 16, 2022, the Department for Spatial Planning, Construction, and Reconstruction in the Municipality of Konjic issued a decision suspending the procedure for approving the construction of the Sirijanski Most and Gorovnik small dams on the Neretvica River. The suspension will continue until the FBiH Ministry of Energy, Industry, and Mining makes a decision on the Elektroprivreda BiH application for energy permits.

It should be noted that earlier, due to the issuance of building permits without a submitted energy permit, the Association “Neretvica – Let Me Flow” filed criminal charges against the responsible persons in the Municipality of Konjic. After that, on December 28, 2022, General Manager of Elektroprivreda BiH Admir Anđelića, who at one time called the activists anarchists, foreign mercenaries, and destroyers of the state, said in the BHT1 live program that “Neretvica will remain as it is,” considering that Elektroprivreda BiH has abandoned the construction of fifteen small hydroelectric plants.

A little earlier, in November 2022, Elektroprivreda BiH removed the project of building 15 small hydroelectric power plants on the Neretvica River basin from the “Capital Investments” section of its website.





REVOKED ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT FOR THE KUTI QUARRY

Although activists have repeatedly alerted the competent institutions that the opening of the Kuta quarry would endanger the lives of the local population, because the quarry is located in a mined area and at a distance of only 137 m from their houses, the authorities showed no understanding. The authorities did not want to review the initiative to delete the quarry from the Spatial Plan of the Municipality of Mostar, justifying it with the existence of a lawsuit filed by the activists against the environmental permit issued by the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism. Activists' appeal filed with the Constitutional Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was accepted, which shortened the procedure for passing the verdict. In the last days of 2022, the verdict was made, the lawsuit was accepted and the decision on the environmental permit was annulled.

Because the City Council of Mostar has adopted the conclusion that binds them to initiate amendments to the spatial plan and delete the quarry from it if the verdict is in favor of the citizens, the activists now have the task of submitting a request for the realization of this conclusion and submitting a request for the termination of the concession contract. While waiting for the verdict, the activists held a couple of meetings with the responsible persons, and the continuation of the group's activities is expected at the beginning of 2023. One of the activists participated in a joint press conference with two other civic initiatives from Mostar on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day. In addition, they used every possible opportunity to participate in local and national media to talk about their problem.

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FBIH INSPECTION CLOSES DOWN KREŠEVO QUARRY

On October 3, 2022, the FBiH Water Inspection closed and sealed the quarries “Rastovice” and “Krčevina” in Kreševo. Because of not having a water permit, “BFS” d.o.o is prohibited to operate the quarries and use the facilities for the processing of limestone and dolomite mineral raw materials, from which technological wastewater is discharged.

It should be noted that the quarries and the lime factory production facilities were closed before, but the owner ignored all prohibitions and continued operations in violation of the law. Back in 2019, the Mining and Geological Inspection of the Ministry of Economy Central Bosnia Canton banned the company BFS d.o.o. to carry out mining operations in the localities of Rastovica and Krčevina until it obtained approvals for exploration and exploitation, as well as other approvals prescribed by the Law on Mining. After BFS d.o.o. repeatedly violated the FBiH Water Inspector’s decision prohibiting the company to use the facilities for processing mineral raw materials, limestone, and dolomite,” the Inspector sent information on inspection supervision from April 2021 to the Prosecutor’s Office of the Central Bosnia Canton. The information stated that the quarry located in Rastovica and Krčevina lacks a water permit from the Agency for the Sava River Basin.

Due to the suspicion that the criminal act of removing or violating the official seal was committed, and after the report was submitted by the FBiH Urban and Environmental Inspector, an investigation was initiated by the Prosecutor’s Office of the Central Bosnia Canton.





CITIZENS' LAWSUITS ACCEPTED – REVOKED PLAN OF ADJUSTMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT FOR UBORAK WASTE DUMP

In the past year, the civic initiative “Because it concerns us” filed two lawsuits against decisions issued by the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism. After the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo annulled the Adjustment Plan for the landfill d.o.o. Mostar, a press conference was organized where activists called on the City of Mostar to abandon the Adaptation Plan and close the existing one and identify and register a new location in the Spatial Plan.

The second verdict followed soon after the first verdict, annulling the environmental permit, and activists repeated their demands through a press release. To exert additional pressure on the decision-makers, they highlighted their demands on posters that they put up around the city and a billboard with messages erected in front of the City Hall.

To mark International Anti-Corruption Day, the group's activists took part in the filming of a joint video with other civic initiatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the joint press conference organized by three civic initiatives from Mostar.



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Citizens Continue Their Fight to Relocate an Illegal Waste Dump on the outskirts of Višegrad

After spending the summer collecting signatures for their petition to relocate the transfer station, in September, members of the informal group filed the petition with the Višegrad Municipal Assembly. During the petition signing efforts, the activists sent an Open Letter demanding to attend the regular session of the Municipal Assembly to present their problems to the councilors. At the session of the Assembly, held in August 2022, the activists were promised that a committee would be formed to investigate the problem and solve it in the interest of the citizens. A representative of an informal group of citizens should be included in the committee as a member.

Concerned about the delay in the formation of the committee and the postponement of solving this problem, activists took to the streets on November 16, 2022, to once again emphasize the problem of the waste dump. They distributed material with more information about this problem, the solution, and the responsibilities of the authorities. At the same time, they repeated the call to councilors to form a commission as soon as possible and start solving the problem.

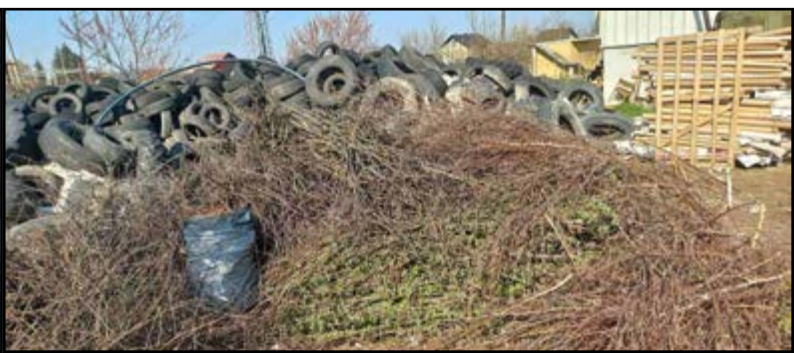
“It is unacceptable that in the 21st century, an illegal waste dump is allowed outside a tourist town, such as Višegrad, the operation of which endangers the lives and health of residents of the entire Višegrad. Clouds of smoke and toxic fumes during frequent burning go in the direction of the city center, so this is not only a local problem but also the problem of all the residents of Višegrad,” - the members of the group said.



Petition to Relocate Waste Transfer Station from Downtown Kozarska Dubica

On November 18, 2022, the informal group of citizens “React - for Health and the Environment” submitted the signatures to the Municipal Assembly of Kozarska Dubica, as part of a petition for the relocation of the waste transfer station. The transfer station is currently located in the center of Kozarska Dubica, next to households. The petition was signed by 447 citizens. In addition to the petition, activists also demanded that the Municipal Assembly organize a special thematic session on the topic “Solving the problem of the transfer station-waste sorting plant in the town center.”

“The transfer station has been endangering our health for years because the location where the waste is transferred and disposed of is only separated by yard fences from the yards where our family houses are located. The danger to citizens’ health comes from different types of waste being handled and disposed of at that location, and to our knowledge, the waste is not sorted. The appearance of rats and snakes is not unusual, and we have had situations where snakes appeared in front of our doors. The fact that the street where the transfer station is located is full of children is even more worrying. We have already had encounters between pest and children, and it was only by sheer luck that there were no fatal consequences” - was pointed out by the citizens who are directly affected by the existence and proximity of waste.





Several Irregularities in Water Inspection Controls on rivers in RS

In addition to the residents of the areas affected by floods in recent years, NGO activists have also pointed out the illegal exploitation of gravel from the rivers Drina and Bosna. The activists launched a campaign to draw the attention of the authorities and the public to the damage caused by gravel thieves.

Although the Public Institution “Vode Srpska” tried to downplay the presence of irregularities in this area referring to them as being present “to a lesser extent,” the acting assistant director of the RS Administration for Inspection Affairs - the RS Chief Water Inspector, confirmed before the end of the previous year that in recent years, “more irregularities have been recorded” in the controls.

“Controls included both physical and legal persons that were required to have a water permit in accordance with the current Water Act. Controls, as in previous years, were carried out according to the operational plan, based on reports and complaints from citizens and notifications from the Public Institution “Vode Srpske” and other bodies. During these inspections, inspectors found irregularities in 36 percent of cases and imposed fines in the amount of 90,500 KM,” Mičić said and added that in ten months of 2022, about 700 inspections were carried out.

Mičić says that the inspection controls are mostly related to persons that exploit river sediments on the rivers throughout the RS. Certain irregularities were found in 35 percent of the controls that related to the exploitation of river sediment, and the subjects were adequately sanctioned. A total of eight misdemeanor orders worth 45,000 KM were issued. The most frequently observed irregularity was related to not having a water permit.

According to him, in 2023, according to the available capacities, the RS Water Inspection will try to increase the number of inspections of persons engaged in the exploitation of river sediments. They expect that they will have the full cooperation of the Public Institution “Vode Srpska,” as it has been until now. Also, the control of other companies that use water in their work will continue, as well as controls of those liable to pay water fees.

Gravel Thieves Continue Attacks on Waterways



Summarizing the past year, activists that deal with the problem of inadequate, uncontrolled, and corrupt exploitation of gravel in the basin of the rivers Drina and Bosna, concluded that their activities contributed to the reduction of the illegal activities of gravel thieves. However, gravel thieves have not backed down; they continue to exploit natural resources- they illegally extract gravel from riverbeds, the banks, and surrounding agricultural land.

Activists for the area of Doboj, Vukosavlja, Modriča, and Šamac in the Bosna River basin, for the area of Zvornik and Bijeljina in the Drina River basin, and activists involved in the campaign for the area of Maglaj, Zavidovići and Žepče believe that what they have been doing in the past year has received the attention of citizens and those responsible for the adoption of legislation, supervision over watercourse management and control.

Activists consider the discovery of the “Osječani Case” to be particularly important. The video and photo documentation shows the state of the watercourse and the destruction of land in the Doboj area, and on the last working day in 2022, the Doboj District Public Prosecutor’s Office received material for another case, including three filed and confirmed charges for up to 1.4 million KM. A gravel company from Doboj is accused of making an illegal profit.

Summarizing the year 2022, the activists state that, after receiving information about new locations of legal gravel exploitation, they organized Info stands, distributed leaflets, and put up posters with maps across local communities along the Bosna and Drina rivers. Also, they organized exhibitions of photographs of the land destruction in the basin of the Drina and Bosna rivers using specific messages to address citizens, authorities, and the public. Activists also used web banners and billboards both in the targeted municipalities and in front of the head offices of competent institutions. Civic activists jointly organized a roundtable conference in Doboj, which brought together activists, representatives of the inspection authorities, and other interested citizens.



THE INSPECTORATE RE-EXAMINES THE CONCRETE PLANT IN TRŠIĆ NEAR ZVORNIK

Since June of last year, activists from Tršić have been pointing to the absence of an environmental impact assessment study, greater involvement of citizens, corrupt favors in the issuing of permits, and the use of outdated technology for the construction of the asphalt plant in Tršić near Zvornik. However, these efforts were met with disregard on the part of the institutions. Activists filed a lawsuit against the RS Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction, and Ecology for issuing an environmental permit contrary to legal provisions, disregarding the factual situation, and exceeding the limits of authority. The lawsuit has not been resolved yet, which is not surprising, knowing the slowness and traditional inertness of the judiciary in BiH. However, this did not discourage the activists from the group called “Protect Tršić near Zvornik from the Harmful Effects of the Asphalt Plant.” They ordered expert opinion, which according to the first findings confirms the claims that the Asphalt Plant was built on the coastal area, next to the river Drina. The authorities, the representatives of the PC “Vode Srpske,” the urban and construction inspection of the city of Zvornik, “Vodovod and Komunalije,” the Police Department Zvornik and “Elektrodistribucija” Zvornik had the opportunity to see this, had they not disregarded the invitation to attend the certificate of acceptance event, after which a usage permit for plant operation was issued. According to the report of the committee that carried out the technical acceptance of the building, the technical acceptance was attended by the representative of the investor, while the representatives of the other invitees did not attend the technical inspection. The Zvornik Spatial Planning Department stated this in its Decision on Granting the Operation Permit, which was also submitted to the informal group by the municipal administration. The group requested the opinion and action of the competent Sector of Urban-Building and Environmental Inspection, Department in Bijeljina to carry out special inspection control. And this institution sided with the investor and submitted a report that the measurements were carried out within the limit values, thus dissociating itself from providing an opinion for the legitimacy of the construction of the plant, property-legal relations, cadastral plots, and construction. “From the beginning, we have pointed out favoritism and the elements of corruption, aware of the difficulty of proving them. Our main arguments are the evidence from the sites and the fact that the plant was built on the very bank of the Drina River, in a place where any type of construction is prohibited. And if it is not a problem for Serbia that part of the plant covers its territory as well, which we claim and prove all the time, also by looking at the maps, then it is not a problem for us either. But we will not allow wastewater to be discharged into the Drina River, because our water supplies come from artesian wells” - this is the reaction of the ICG as it is waiting for the verdict of the District Court in Banja Luka on their lawsuit for further steps.



ACTIVISTS DEMAND A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE NOVI GRAD MUNICIPAL COUNCIL TO DISCUSS THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CONTESTED FACILITY IN DOBRINJA

On December 9, 2022, the informal group of citizens “Saved by the Bell - Save Dobrinja” filed the initiative with the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo requesting a thematic session on the issue of the facility that contains a kerosene terminal, a gas station, a gas filling station and a car wash built in Dobrinja.

In their request, the residents of Dobrinja informed the Municipal Council about all of the observed irregularities in this case. Namely, on January 22, 2020, the municipal Department for Urban Planning, Housing, Property-Legal, Geodetic Affairs and the Real Estate Cadastre granted the planning approval for the contested facility, and on August 20, 2021, the same department issued a construction permit, violating the set permitting procedure. At the time of issuing the planning approval, the mandatory environmental permit was not submitted in the investor’s application, because it was in July 2021 by the Ministry of Communal Economy, Infrastructure, Spatial Planning, Construction and Environmental Protection of Sarajevo Canton, just one month before the issuance of the construction permit. In addition, the interested public, primarily the residents of Dobrinja, were not timely informed about these procedures and the permits issued, which is in violation of the law.

“Symbolically, on International Anti-Corruption Day, the group filed the initiative with the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo with a request to schedule a thematic session within 20 days to discuss the construction of the Hifa-Oil d.o.o. Tešanj facility in Dobrinja and allow citizens to share their opinions about this issue. In addition, a request was made that the competent municipal service before the session prepares and delivers to the councilors and interested citizens all the documentation related to the issuance of permits by the Municipality for the construction of the facility and that citizens and the interested public be included in the thematic session. Finally, the group asked the Municipal Council that, bearing in mind the public’s suspicions that omissions have been made during the issuance of permits, the Municipal Council orders the competent authorities and the Office of the Attorney General of the Municipality to review the issued permits,” - members of the group stated in their address.



NO DIALOGUE BETWEEN LIVNO RESIDENTS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF CANTON 10

The residents of Livno, which point out numerous omissions in the procedure for approving the concession for the exploration and exploitation of “water” in the Vidoša community, have launched their efforts in 2018. Every time the machines started to conduct exploration, the locals would block the road voicing their arguments that the whole process was suspicious from the beginning, that no public discussion took place, that their opinions were not sought, and that the disputed exploration was planned on private properties and near the source of water, which would lead to the disappearance of the water springs. During this period, the group collected all the documentation, decisions, approvals, and all other acts that had been passed and the whole process started back in 2006 when the investor submitted an application to the Cantonal Ministry of Economy for exploration and exploitation of mineral raw materials - underground water for industrial purposes (more precisely, water exploitation and the construction of a water bottling plant). The residents demand the invalidation of the contested Agreement and the Annexes to the Agreement for granting the concession for the exploration and exploitation of mineral raw materials - underground water for industrial purposes, as the concession was granted to one investor and then transferred onto another. The group also created a Facebook page and published important documents, texts, and messages to inform the public of Livno and beyond about the problem and to gain support for their activities. The group created a video about the campaign and a survey of the citizens of Livno. Also, during this period, the activists prepared flyers and distributed them to the citizens of Livno during a street action on December 13, 2022, during the week of International Anti-Corruption Day. “The support of fellow citizens was considerable, but every attempt to open a dialogue with representatives of the cantonal government and the departmental Ministry of Economy ended with silence on the part of the administration. Requests were sent to the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Economy to organize a meeting and open a dialogue, but even after urgent calls and calls on several occasions, no dialogue has been established,” the activists of the informal group “Protect Mandek Springs” said. “In the coming period, the group intends to organize several events to gather all the actors, especially the representatives of the cantonal authorities, open a public dialogue, and present arguments that indicate that many irregularities and omissions were made in the concession awarding procedure, that the entire process was compromised, and that it’s time to end it in favor of the locals,” - Livno activists concluded.

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DESPITE DISREGARD BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF BUGOJNO AND THE CENTRAL BOSNIA CANTON MINISTRY, RESIDENTS LAUNCH INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FIGHT TO ANNUL THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL'S DECISION ON THE APPROVAL OF A QUARRY IN THE VICINITY OF RESIDENCES

At the beginning of October 2022, the representatives of the informal group of the Poriče local community met the Minister of Economy Nisvet Hrnjić and presented their arguments and opinions that the procedure for awarding the concession to the company “Kvatro” d.o.o. Bugojno was not transparent and legal because a public hearing was not held with the residents of the local community, which the Law on Concessions stipulates. The activists also pointed out that the Municipal Council of Bugojno made a Decision on granting preliminary water approval to the investor without any documentation, plan, program, or financial plan. It was granted on the basis of one sentence. The Minister's answer was that everything was carried out according to the Law, that the Agreement was signed based on the Decision of the Municipality of Bugojno, and that the Municipal Council is the place to which locals should turn and claim their rights.

After the meeting with the minister, the group officially sent the request for review and annulment of the concession contract to the relevant Ministry of Economy and engaged in an institutional and legal fight for the annulment of the concession. The ministry has not officially respond to the request sent.

At the beginning of November, the Institution of the Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina sent a memo to the chairman of the Municipal Council of Bugojno asking for a statement regarding the initiative of the residents of the Poriče community, and the Municipal Council's to make a statement and submit it to the Institution of the Ombudsman within seven days. The Municipal Council did not make a statement according to the request of the Institution of Ombudsmen within the deadline, so the ombudsmen repeated the request and this time asked for a statement from both the Municipal Council and individual statements from all councilors. The residents of the Poriče community have not received the requested statement. Further, in early November, the public company Ceste Federacije BiH submitted information to the group regarding the possible approval of permits for the connection to the main road Bugojno - Kupres. In their answer, Ceste Federacije states that the investor has applied for a permit, but has not been issued one, because according to the Law, the investor should contact the competent municipal body, which will then, ex officio, send the application to Ceste Federacije BiH.



After “Driving Away” the Illegal Concrete Plant from Kakanj, Activists Launch Efforts to Establish Responsibility of Local Government in Kakanj for the Destruction of the Environment around Trstionica and in the Vicinity of the Source of Drinking Water

In early October, the activists of the informal group prepared a video report “What Happened in Mehorić and Who is Responsible,” which was published and sponsored on the Facebook page and the local portal of Radio Kakanj. The key message of the video was - “Who is Responsible for the Destruction in the Mehorić Area.” To get the support of as many locals from that area as possible, the group organized a meeting and the support of the locals and citizens of Kakanj was secured to start a process against those responsible in the local administration of Kakanj. The meeting was also an opportunity for the local population to join the informal group and strengthen the group for activities in the coming period. The group sent a memo to the municipal, cantonal, and FBiH inspection authorities requesting site inspection. The Cantonal Administration for Inspection Affairs and the Inspectorate for Agriculture and Water Management said that they were doing everything to rehabilitate the area, however, they did not state that the question of responsibility for the destruction had been raised. During this period, requests were sent to the municipal mayor and the competent services for a meeting with the representatives of the group and the opening of a dialogue, to comply with the conclusions of the Municipal Council from July. Even after urgent calls, Facebook posts, and messages, the meeting has not taken place and the municipal government has ignored every initiative of activists to point out the problem of responsibility. The municipal company JP Vodokom, based on the Conclusions of the Municipal Council of Kakanj, submitted regular reports on water quality and the presence of heavy metals in water, and so far there have been no findings indicating any pollution of the drinking water in the areas. Activists do not agree with the findings made by a company from Pale and they express doubts about the credibility of the data and wonder why nobody from Sarajevo, a certified company for these jobs, conducted water testing. Activists constantly warned about the consequences of the exploitation of precious metals in the area of Rupica-municipality of Vareš, and the dangers for watercourses in that area, which are important sources of the drinking water supply for the municipality of Kakanj. It was noticed that the stream and the river Trstionica became turbid, and that fish died in the lower sections of Trstionica. The news about the deaths of fish was reported by all major media. During November and December, activists prepared information leaflets and distributed them to citizens to mark International Anti-Corruption Day. The street action gathered a large number of locals and citizens of Kakanj, but the event was not covered by local media despite the media invitation. A press release was sent, in which the local authorities are once again invited to take responsibility for the events in Mehorić. An activist filed a lawsuit against Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Secretariat of the Berne Convention at the Council of Europe. The Secretariat accepted the lawsuit and ordered the authorities in BiH to respond to the allegations of the lawsuit by mid-July 2023 at the latest.



TREBINJE RESIDENTS HAVE FOUGHT FOR TWO YEARS AGAINST CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND INTO CONSTRUCTION LAND

In this case, the land consolidation carried out in 1963 in Trebinje aimed at consolidating the property for the benefit of the agricultural business. It was carried out for the sole purpose of agricultural production and the conversion of the land is not possible. Regardless, the City of Trebinje plans to build facilities in Pridvorci, even though, in addition to legal irregularities, there are many reasons why the construction should take place in another location.

Since the Government and the RS National Assembly and local institutions are trying in every possible way to obtain building permits on this land and, contrary to the law, transfer the ownership of the mentioned location from the state to the entity of the RS, citizens informed the BiH Prosecutor's Office about these illegal actions and initiated criminal charges against officials and responsible persons in the Trebinje Office of the Attorney General of the Republic of Srpska and the Trebinje Regional Unit of the RS Administration for Geodetic and Property Legal Affairs Banja Luka.

For the same reason, they filed an appeal with the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina and are waiting for an answer. Because of these activities and a strong media campaign, the problem attracted considerable publicity, and additional pressure was exerted to stop the use of state assets because it is prohibited by law.





BETTER COOPERATION BETWEEN ENTITY AND STATE AGENCIES

At the very beginning of 2023, the RS Agency for Higher Education posted on its website a report on the external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs that are in the final phase of the accreditation process. In this way, as pointed out by this institution, students are instructed when choosing the university for their studies to check whether the higher education institution is in the register of accredited higher education institutions and to review the complete accreditation report, as well as the report on reviews of the study program.

“It is very important that students find information on whether a higher education institution is accredited or not, but also to read the reports, to see how certain criteria were evaluated during accreditation, because it is not the same whether a higher education institution is rated three or four, to learn what negative and positive sides were observed in the accreditation process itself. In the previous period, there was a pronounced difference in the registers maintained by the RS Agency and the register of the Agency for the Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are no problems now, that is, since the arrival of the new management of HEA BiH, cooperation has been renewed, all disputed issues have been resolved, and all the procedures and decisions on accreditation, are registered in the register maintained at the BiH level” – the RS Agency said in their statement.

The Entity Agency informed the group that there were longer no discrepancies between the entity and national register and that the intense cooperation between the two Agencies and the resolution of the disputed issues has brought great relief to students, who were most affected by the discrepancies in the two registers.

However, the ICG points out that in 2023, three higher education institutions were entered into the entity register but are not yet registered in the National Register of Higher Education Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are the Prijedor College of Economics and Informatics, the Banja Luka College of Cosmetology and Aesthetics, and the Trebinje College of Tourism and Hotel Management.



Konjuh is Calling – After more than 13 years, Konjuh Could Be Saved and Corruption Stopped and Processed Thanks to Activists

How much activism can do in the fight against corruption is best illustrated by an example from Tuzla Canton. In early December, citizens sent a proposal to the Tuzla Canton Assembly to amend the Law on Declaring Part of the Konjuh Mountain a Protected Landscape. This step was preceded by dozens of meetings with university professors, experts in the field of environmental protection, and law, representatives of public institutions, relevant ministries, the Government of Tuzla Canton, as well as other relevant entities. Civic initiatives that were directly supported by over 400 hundreds of citizens from the entire Tuzla Canton, support from lower levels of government, and a strong media campaign seen by millions of people are additional proof of the strength and quality of civic initiatives.

In this way, for the first time after 2009 and the adoption of the Act on the Declaration of Part of the Konjuh Mountain as a Protected Landscape, the omissions made at that time will be considered and legal prerequisites will finally be created to stop the anarchy, which resulted in the destruction of Konjuh and uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources.

It is important to note that in the last quarter of 2022, the initiative to establish joint supervision between the activist movement Karton Revolucije and the “Protected Landscape” Konjuh gave concrete results. At the end of 2022, the legal team representing the activists submitted three reports to the competent cantonal inspection that indicate the presence of corruption during the exploitation of timber on the premises of the Konjuh Protected Landscape,” which is currently being investigated by the aforementioned institution according to written confirmations received from the cantonal inspection.

TOGETHER FOR ORTHOPEDIC AND OTHER AID WITHOUT CORRUPTION

In the previous three months, the Bužim Association of Dystrophists has realized a series of activities to present the issue of corruption and non-transparency in the process of procurement of orthopedic and other aid in Una-Sana Canton. Through these activities, the association tried to present to the general public a series of negative phenomena that cause corrupt and non-transparent practices, which are best visible in complicated procedures and poor quality of orthopedic and other aids. During the months of October, November, and December, activists of the Bužim Association of Dystrophists and the Bužim Amputees Association realized six street actions (Bužim, Cazin, Velika Kladuša, Bihać, Bosanska Krupa and Ključ) distributing promotional material and informing the public about the problem of corruption in the procurement of orthopedic and other aids in Una-Sana Canton. During the street actions, the association collected signatures of support for the initiatives that had been submitted to the Una-Sana Canton Health Insurance Institute: Initiative for the adoption of anti-corruption acts, Initiative for amending and supplementing the Decision on the single list of orthopedic and other aids, Initiative for the inclusion of representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities in the competent Committee and Initiative for amending and supplementing the Instructions on the manner and procedure of issuing orthopedic and other aids. During six street actions, the association received considerable support from citizens and collected a total of 500 signatures. The groups also received support from numerous other organizations of persons with disabilities, which helped them organize street actions. At these activities, the citizens complained the most about the complicated procurement procedures for orthopedic and other aids, and the poor quality of the aids, which often do not meet the basic needs of the users. To make it easier for users of orthopedic and other aids to obtain aid, the association recently created a Guide on the procedures and procurement of orthopedic and other aids in Una-Sana Canton, where they systematically presented the current procedures for obtaining aids. The guide is distributed to citizens, institutions, and organizations of persons with disabilities, and is available in an online format. Also, the Association presented this problem to the general public through three video stories, where users of orthopedic and other aids had the opportunity to share their experiences from their point of view. These videos increased the interest of citizens from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina. All the mentioned activities were completed with the installation of billboards and city light posters in Bihać and Cazin. In the coming period, the Association will insist on the adoption of all submitted initiatives, which will improve the supply of orthopedic and other aids in Una-Sana Canton.





Together against Corruption in Maternity Wards

In the last quarter of 2022, the problem of poor conditions in maternity wards in Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized by the international community. The European Commission Report states that “Bosnia and Herzegovina must improve conditions in hospitals and maternity wards, and prohibit obstetric violence, following its obligations under the Istanbul Convention.” In addition to the already existing research on the presence and forms of corruption in maternity wards and hospitals, Baby Steps also conducted research on women being allowed a company during childbirth, which was consolidated and published in the publication “Enabling Company during Childbirth in Maternity Wards in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” The publication includes an analysis of the collected answers about the experience of (not) being able to have company during childbirth, an analysis of the collected responses of maternity wards about their practices and internal acts related to this matter, recommendations, and practices of leading world organizations and associations regarding the company at childbirth, legal provisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina that refer to this issue, and recommendations for the introduction of a company at childbirth. In addition to improving conditions in maternity wards, a company at childbirth is also an anti-corruption mechanism, because the woman in labor is not left alone at times when most often bribes are demanded from the mother or family. The publication was delivered to the entity ministries of health, along with a petition with 10,000 signatures, which demands that the authorities provide the possibility for women to be accompanied at childbirth in all maternity wards in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In October, in cooperation with the Association “Oštra nula” from Banjaluka, Baby Steps organized a panel discussion in Sarajevo the focus of which was childbirth rights and corruption in maternity wards. The panel showed the Slovak documentary film “Invisible,” which deals with the topic of obstetric violence. The director of the film joined the panel via video conference, giving her comment and experience of the positive social change that happened just by opening this topic. At the end of December, a round table was held in Bijeljina on the topic “Corruption in maternity wards - legal basis and anti-corruption mechanisms.” In addition to representatives of the BABY STEPS Association, representatives of the “Sveti Vračevi” Hospital in Bijeljina, the Center for Social Work in Bijeljina, the Police Department of Bijeljina and the “Lara” Foundation from Bijeljina also attended the roundtable conference. At the roundtable conference, participants discussed the framework for treating corruption in the maternity wards and how the interaction of different sectors can be utilized to reduce it. The year was rounded off with the creation of the first version of the web-based system for rating maternity wards and the anonymous reporting of corruption, which will be implemented in three maternity wards in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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TRANSPARENT FINANCING OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS FROM THE BUDGET OF THE BRČKO DISTRICT

The main focus of the group “Transparent financing of non-profit organizations from the budget of the Brčko District of BiH” in the past three months was on the regulation of donations of sports teams in the Department for Economic Development, Sports and Culture, through which almost two and a half million KM were distributed. The reason for insisting on the regulation of this area is that there are no clear criteria for allocation.

The “Vermont” Youth Center held meetings with the Department of Economic Development, Sports and Culture to obtain information about the criteria for allocating funds, but the Department representatives chose silence. Activists sent requests for information addressed to the Commission for Allocation of Financial Resources, Donations, and Projects, to get the information necessary for monitoring Public Calls, but the information was never provided. Activists sought support from the Ombudsman for Human Rights and received a positive response confirming their support in our attempts to resolve the case and obtain the required data from the Department for Economic Development, Sports and Culture. For three months, even the office of the Ombudsmen has not been able to get the requested information, which proves that we have cause for concern.

By appealing to the public, using advocacy activities, letters, initiatives, and cooperation, activists succeeded in stopping the allocation of donations in the Department for Economic Development, Sports, and Culture. The Government refused to adopt the decision approved by the head of the Department for Economic Development, Sports and Culture based on the committee's proposal. The public invitation was temporarily suspended and returned to the competent Department for further processing. The Administrative Inspection seized the documents from the Department and initiated the procedure. The suspended call was published again on November 28, 2022, on the website of the Government of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was originally planned to last until December 7, 2022, but then it was extended until December 31, 2022.

Progress in work during the previous period was observed through the application of criteria for justifying funds at the level of all departments, due to the expressed dissatisfaction. The Project Justification Committee requires more detailed information on the use of funds, compliance with the reporting requirements listed in the Ordinance on Financing, and the method of implementing activities and monitoring deadlines. Progress was also achieved in the presence of the committee in the activities of the organizations supported by the project. What is required and continues to be advocated for is that the committee monitors the implementation of projects supported through budget funds.

During November, as part of the monitoring of the adoption of the Budget for 2023, Vermont activists attended public hearings for the Budget for 2023, monitored the allocation of funds for non-profit organizations, and expressed dissatisfaction with the introduction of donations as a new type of financing of non-profit organizations in the Amendments to the Law on Citizens' Associations and Foundations of the Brčko District of BiH. There is an evident increase in allocations for non-profit organizations for 2023 compared to 2022 due to donations.





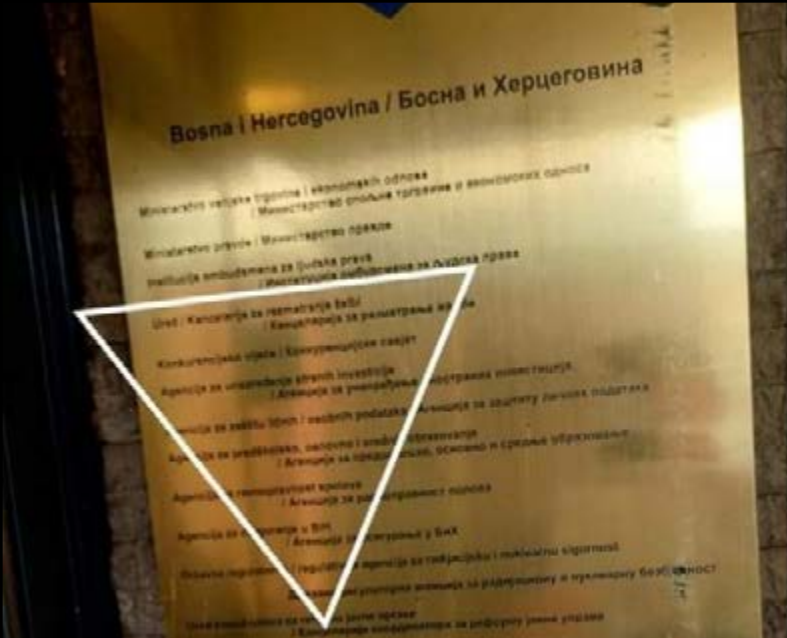
A WORKING MEETING TO DISCUSS PROTECTION OF FORESTS AGAINST ILLEGAL LOGGING IN PROZOR - RAMA

Having learned that the Municipality of Prozor-Rama has been encountering the problem of illegal logging for years, the Aarhus Center contacted the Municipality of Prozor - Rama and arranged a meeting with the mayor and other stakeholders. The municipality reported these problems to all competent state and judicial institutions and international organizations, demanded inspections, and held a thematic session of the Prozor - Rama Municipal Council. All this had no effect on illegal logging. Thus, a mutual agreement was reached where the Aarhus Center would prepare and submit all the necessary requests for information to obtain information on logging in this area to launch initiatives aimed at solving this problem.



WRITING AMENDMENTS TO THE FBiH LAW ON FORESTS

Following the public call for experts to write amendments to the proposal of the FBiH Law on Forests and the selection of relevant experts on this subject, the Aarhus Center representatives met with the experts. Since the Federation of BiH does not have forest legislation, Aarhus Center filed an initiative to enact such a law. Once the amendments are complete, other relevant actors will be engaged to propose high-quality laws to be enacted.



CAMPAIGN TO DETECT AND PREVENT PROBLEMS IN THE WORK OF THE BIH APPEALS REVIEW OFFICE

From October to December 2022, UPTIS worked intensively on the analysis of the documentation on the work of the BiH Appeals Review Office. During the work on the project, they learned that the Sarajevo Office makes one solution for one problem, and the office in another department/branch makes a different solution for the same problem, which leads to legal uncertainty. In the course of the project, they have noted that in the process of legal protection in public procurement, there are also complainants who abuse the process and repeatedly file complaints, possibly intending to slow down the process and seek contacts from other suppliers in order to withdraw their complaints. In this quarter, a survey was conducted to measure the satisfaction of the participants in the public procurement process with the work of the Office. The results of the survey about the level of trust in the work of the Office are currently very unsatisfactory. When asked the question “Do you have confidence in the system of legal protection before the Office,” only 23% of the respondents said they had confidence in the system of legal protection. Also, to the question “do you consider the Office’s work as efficient?,” only 18% of respondents answered positively to this question.

During this quarter, UPTIS organized three different focus groups and brought together tens of employees of contracting authorities and bidders to discuss the problems caused by the inefficient work of the Office. UPTIS staff also learned that during 2021, an administrative dispute was initiated against the Office’s decisions for the cases from 2021 and the cases received in late 2020, an administrative dispute procedure was launched in 9.28% of cases (375 lawsuits)) in relation to resolved appeals received in 2021 and appeals received at the end of 2020, which could not be resolved in 2020.

On the occasion of anti-corruption day, UPTIS sent a special request to the Office and the Court of BiH, requesting answers to various questions and aiming to complete the analysis of the work of this institution. Upon receiving the answer, they will make an analysis and draw certain conclusions and inform the public accordingly.

ANTIKORUPCIJA

Some of the top stories on antikorupcija.info are:



»THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE HAS FINALLY, AFTER EIGHT AND A HALF YEARS, REVEALED WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CASUALTIES AND MATERIAL DAMAGES SUFFERED IN THE FLOODS IN MAY OF 2014. ALL THIS TIME, IT WAS IN THE CHP'S REPORT.

In its report to the RS Public Prosecutor's Office, the Center for Humane Politics named possible culprits among the authorities, starting from the top management of this entity, through the director of the RS Administration of Civil Protection and the public company "Vode Srpske," and down to the local authorities.

Find out more at www.antikorupcija.info



»UNCLEAR STATUS FOR SEVEN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN RS – ENTITY REGISTER IN DISHARMONY WITH THE STATE REGISTER «

Even though it has been emphasized that all problems in relations between the state and the RS agency for the development of higher education have been resolved and that the problem of unequal treatment of higher education institutions in the context of accreditation no longer exists, the latest data show that this is not quite the case.

Find out more at www.antikorupcija.info

»SDA COUNCILORS AGAINST THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS FROM PORIČE: WHAT IS BEHIND THE BLIND SUPPORT FOR THE CONTROVERSIAL INVESTOR? «

The SDP, SBB, and NiP councilors tried to include the topic of the quarry on the agenda of the Council session and proposed that a decision be made on annulling the previously adopted Decision on granting prior consent to the company "Kvatro" to commence the procedure for obtaining a concession for exploration and exploitation of stone at the Bukovački Potok location in Bugojno.

However, the vote of the SDA councilor made this impossible.

More about this can be found at antikorupcija.info





PRATIMO TENDERE PRESENTS ITS ANNUAL REPORT

Risk of Corruption in 90 percent of Public Procurement

More than 90% of public procurements are marked as risky in the annual Monitoring report of the Pratimo tendere portal. Contracting authorities misused public funds for financing sports clubs, failed to publish public procurement plans, procured advertising services in a non-transparent and ineffective manner, set discriminatory technical specifications, and illegally exempted themselves from the application of the Law on Public Procurement. Pratimo tendere, a portal for detecting corruption risk in public procurements, and the CRMA Association presented on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, the annual Monitoring report (for the period October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022), which contains the results of monitoring 8,006 public procurement procedures, the total value of 306 million KM.

“And this time the situation is not better compared to previous years. The data we have obtained is truly catastrophic. The fact is that out of 10 procurements, only one can be said to be non-risky, that is, not susceptible to some form of corruption. This is information that should worry us” - said Eldin Karić, executive director of CRMA.

Slobodan Golubović, the editor of the Pratimo tendere portal, pointed out that the value of risky public procurements amounts to almost 280 million KM. “Through our work, we have identified at least ten modus operandi, that is, ways to commit abuses of public procurement,” Golubović said.

The results of the annual monitoring report are available at the following link:

<https://crma-ppras.azureedge.net/public/ed7ea01d-87db-4bf4-89ea-617d38c624ff.pdf>

PRATIMO TENDERE AWARDS

“Green Flag” for the Municipality of Čitluk

The Pratimo tendere portal and the CRMA Association presented an award for good practices in public procurement. The winner of the Pratimo tendere “Green Flag” is the Municipality of Čitluk which demonstrated a high level of transparency and openness to competition in public procurement procedures. By awarding a “Green Flag,” the Pratimo tender portal and the CRMA Association give symbolic recognition to public institutions, institutions, and companies that have demonstrated good practice in the implementation of public procurement.

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ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL BIH

Conference “Priorities in the Fight Against Corruption in BiH“

On the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, Transparency International in BiH (TI BiH) organized the conference “Priorities in the Fight against Corruption in BiH” on December 1, 2022, in Sarajevo. The conference was an opportunity to present the Good Governance Agenda 2025, i.e. TI BiH’s recommendations for approaching the systemic challenges of governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as anti-corruption priorities set before BiH in the upcoming mandate.

“The paralysis of institutions caused by systemic political corruption managed by senior holders of public office has brought Bosnia and Herzegovina into a situation of complete captivity of political, social, and economic processes” is the key message of the conference attended by representatives of embassies, decision-makers and representatives of relevant institutions (CEC, Ministry of Justice, HJPC, Prosecutor’s Office of BiH, AJN, etc.), international organizations, civil society, the media, etc.

Conflict of Interest

After Transparency International in BiH (TI BiH) reported Amela Mehmedović from Živinice, who, as a councilor in the local parliament, also performed the function of an assistant minister in the Government of Tuzla Canton, the Ministry where she is employed initiated disciplinary proceedings against her. In addition, based on the report filed by TI BiH, the Committee on Conflict of Interest in the authorities of the Republika Srpska determined the conflict of interest of Bogoljub Sančanin, who was a councilor in the Municipality of Prnjavor and the president of the Veterans’ Organization that received about 120 thousand KM annually from the Municipality’s budget.

Elections

Political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina reported 11.3 million KM in election campaign expenses in their post-election financial reports, and this is the highest amount ever reported to the Central Election Commission. However, data from Transparency International in BiH (TI BiH) show that eight parties reported unrealistically low campaign costs, at least 1.5 million KM less than estimated by TI BiH. Considering that TI BiH did not have available data on the costs of advertising on portals and the YouTube platform, printing and distribution of advertising material, or numerous other types of advertising, the parties had to report much higher amounts, because TI BIH’s monitoring included only four components. Parties reported 933,000 KM for internet advertising, and publicly available Facebook data show that parties and candidates spent about 491,000 KM on political advertising on this platform alone. Since data for other platforms are not available, it is not possible to check the accuracy of this data.

Training – Protect Persons that Report Corruption

Transparency International in Bosnia and Herzegovina (TI BiH) organized training on the implementation of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers in Republika Srpska to help those responsible in health institutions with 15 or more employed persons to create conditions for safe reporting of corruption, act efficiently on reporting corruption, and ensure the protection of persons who report corruption.

In addition to providing know-how and concrete steps for efficient handling of corruption reports, the training was also focused on the protection of whistleblowers, that is, persons who report corruption in the work environment.

The training took place in Trebinje on November 15, 2022, East Sarajevo on November 16, 2022, Bijeljina on November 17, 2022, and Banja Luka on November 18, 2022.

Training – Monitoring Public Procurement and Open Data in Public Procurement Processes

The USAID ACFC and E-Government projects organized joint training in Vitez on December 15-16, 2022. During this two-day workshop, volunteers and civil society organizations had the opportunity to learn more about international standards and best practices in monitoring public procurements, improving transparency through open data standards, and monitoring public procurement using tools such as the portal www.pratimotendere.ba developed with the support of USAID.



**TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL**
Bosna i Hercegovina



CENTRI CIVILNIH INICIJATIVA
ЦЕНТРИ ЦИВИЛНИХ ИНИЦИЈАТИВА

PUBLIC CALL

FOR PROJECTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION!

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AS HEALTH, EDUCATION, JUSTICE, ENVIRONMENTAL
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APPLY FOR A PROJECT!

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CONTINUOUS CALL FOR ANTI-CORRUPTION PROJECTS, CIVIC INITIATIVES AND CAMPAIGNS

The Call for BiH CSOs (associations of citizens and foundations) to submit their project proposals is geared toward fighting corruption and solving specific local-level problems or toward advocacy initiatives addressing the higher government levels.

The applicants are required to submit the application form and other documents, as requested in the application, exclusively via the online application platform available at

<http://tender.protivkorupcije.ba/>



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