



# ASSISTANCE TO CITIZENS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

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CENTRI CIVILNIH AKTIVISTA  
CENTRE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



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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](mailto:protivkorupcije@ccibh.org)

# Map of anticorruption activists across Bosnia and Herzegovina




 Contact them via their FB pages!

Find our more at [antikorupcija.info](http://antikorupcija.info)

- 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"
  - The Association for Promotion of European Standards and Improvement of the Business Environment – Capital
  - Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka
  - ITEA Banja Luka - for Ideas, Education, Equality, and Affirmation
- 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 "Poriče"
- 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"
  - Association Fojničani
- 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 Kutī"
  - The Association for Improving Quality of Living – Futura Mostar
  - Association Bura info
  - ICG Stop Illegal Amendments to the Spatial Plan in Mostar"
- Petrovo**
  - ICG "Keepers of Ozren"
- Prijedor**
  - Consumer Protection Association "DON Prijedor"
  - ICG „Be My Voice“
- Sarajevo**
  - ICG "Hastahana park"
  - ICG "Initiative KCUS"
  - ICG "Zgrada"
  - 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)
  - ICG „We Want Drinking Water and Clean Air – against the Illegal Construction on Bjelašnica and Igman"
  - ICG "Stop Construction Threatening Citizens -Aleja lipa"
- Sanski Most**
  - ICG "Life on Coal -NO to Exploitation that Endangers Life"
- Šipovo**
  - ICG "Farmeri"
- Tešanj**
  - ICG "Non-transparent spending of budget funds for water supply to citizens"
  - ICG "Keepers of Usora"
- 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"
- Vlasenica**
  - ICG „Eco Activists Vlasenica“
- Zenica**
  - ICG "Air guards"
  - ICG "Movement for change"
  - ICG "The Illegible Unemployed"
- Zvornik**
  - ICG "STOP to illegal gravel pits on the Drina river"
  - ICG "Stop the Construction of an Asphalt Base in Tršić"
  - ICG "Justice for (Hotel) Drina"
- Žepče**
  - ICG "Stop illegal exploitation of gravel in the area of Žepče and Zavidovići"



## MARKED INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY



To mark International Anti-Corruption Day, civic activists took to the streets in nine cities across Bosnia and Herzegovina on December 9, 2022, engaging in various activities, such as press conferences, distribution of leaflets, and public discussions, to remind the public of the illegalities and irregularities fought against in local communities across the country. On this day, brave activists who have achieved significant success in their local communities by pushing boundaries, initiating legal actions to invalidate and revoke illegal permits, taking down floors of illegally constructed buildings, stopping investors from destroying natural resources, and changing legal regulations, marked the day by calling on citizens to join the fight against corruption and combat irregularities in local communities. Through their example, activists encourage citizens to raise their voices against corruption in their local communities.

### **Maja Štabek Gliga, ICG “Zgrada” (NGO “Building”).**

*“The fight against corruption is essential for building a society based on integrity and respect for the law. It represents continuous engagement in ensuring justice, transparency, and accountability, prioritizing public interest over private benefits. We believe these goals are achievable with active participation and engagement of citizens.”*

### **Srbo Škero, ICG Movement for Restitution Trebinje.**

*“Anything done outside the law is corruption. Anyone who knowingly violates the law by abusing their position and is aware that they will not face consequences is a product of the corrupt system. Corruption does not happen overnight; it is a lengthy process rooted in all spheres of life, and such a society is created by the people, the voters who have brought forth such evil, while honest, conscientious citizens suffer the consequences of such politics. Corruption can only be eradicated by changing citizens’ awareness and making citizens realize that they harm everyone and that we all suffer the consequences.”*

## **Anica Ramić, NGO “Stop Mobbing:”**

*“The fight against corruption, for me and the organization I lead, is a fight for the future of this country and our children. We cannot and should not consider it normal to give money and gifts for services in the health and education sectors or anything that represents humanity. If we have to pay extra for someone to treat us with dignity and humanity, I believe our society is facing a significant problem that we must raise awareness of as soon as possible before it’s too late.”*

## **Goran Jović, NGO “Accredited Higher Education Institutions – Recognized Degrees:”**

*“At the very beginning of this year, we identified corruption and the cases involving buying and selling university degrees in several higher education institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, and the Brčko District. The prosecution or clarification of all circumstances is very slow, and we use this day to emphasize that the BiH Prosecutor’s Office needs to be much more efficient when it comes to such cases, especially to deter others from committing criminal acts that undermine trust in the educational system in our country.”*

## **Nasuf Šarotić, NGO “Because We Care.”**

*“On International Anti-Corruption Day, various performances worldwide mark the fight against corruption and draw attention to the problems citizens face; however, we can only say that we do not need performances. Our performance means these cassettes where waste is dumped, visible from every point of the Bjelopoljka basin and beyond. Our performance also means the reports of the Public Health Institute of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on cancer patients, where the number of cancer patients in HNC is twice as high or even higher than in other cantons, despite the lack of industry and other environmental polluters in HNC. We will not add anything else to that list because, during four years of our fight, we’ve already shown enough. The authorities in Mostar do not want to solve the Uborak landfill problem, and the evidence is in the following facts: if somebody does not want to solve a problem, they form a committee; they then create a plan for closing the landfill, but in reality, it is a plan for the expansion of the landfill. And finally, they blame the other side, in this case, the Association, claiming they are to blame for the government not doing its job. The fight against the Uborak landfill is also a fight against corruption in Mostar and the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is our reality and the fight we will never give up.”*

## **Mario Ćosić, NGO “STOP Illegal Construction in Bijeli Brijeg:”**

*“For me, the fight against corruption is crucial for the survival of the youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the restoration of trust in institutions.”*

## **Admir Agić, NGO “Čuvari Usore” (Guardians of Usora):**

*“The fight against corruption represents a fundamental pillar in the mission of the Guardians of Usora, as we understand that corruption and dishonest practices pose a serious threat to the preservation of the Usora River. Our fight against corruption aims to achieve fair and sustainable management of the Usora River, ensuring its survival and beauty for present and future generations.”*

## **Kenan Memišević, NGO “Stop Construction to the Detriment of Citizens – Aleja Lipa:”**

*“Corruption as a social phenomenon is a direct blow to the constitutional order of the state. When municipalities, cantons, and the FBiH level, in their interest to accommodate alleged ‘prosperity’ or investors, turn a blind eye to deadlines, legal acts, and laws, they put the entire system in danger because our motto is ‘if he can, why can’t I.’ Misconduct and looking the other way undermine the sense of patriotism and the possibility of progress. Responsibility towards oneself, one’s work, family, and the broader community will lead to the much-desired retention of young people and families in our country. The fight for a better tomorrow begins with ourselves.”*

## **Momir Dejanović, NGO “For Legal and Controlled Gravel Exploitation in the Republika Srpska:”**

*„Once again we point out that even nine years after the catastrophic floods that claimed eleven lives, caused significant material damage and led to legal proceedings against the then Mayor and Head of the Civil Protection Administration, there has been no significant progress in addressing the issue of protection of Doboј and regulation of the Bosna Riverbed. We can agree that inspection authorities have been more conscientious in preventing illegal gravel exploitation and prohibiting construction in water areas, but still insufficient for citizens to feel more secure and protected from future floods.”*

## **Enisa Čahtarević, NGO “For Legal and Controlled Gravel Exploitation in the Federation of BiH:”**

*“We use this day, which marks the tough fight against corruption, to draw attention to the importance of cleaning our watercourses so that residents along the rivers Bosna, Drina, Una, Sana, and others are protected from future floods, which increasingly pose a great danger due to climate change. It is also important for us to raise funds from legally extracted gravel, thus improving the budgetary situation of the Federation of BiH and municipalities, to which portion of these revenues from natural resources extracted in their area also belongs.”*



## **Azra Šehić – Kustura, NGO “Resource Aarhus Center:”**

*“The fight against corruption is crucial for preserving the integrity of society, justice, and balance in resource distribution. Eliminating corruption promotes economic development, strengthens institutions, ensures equal access to justice, lays the foundation for a sustainable and just community, and restores citizens’ trust in institutions and society as a whole.”*

## **Božidar Jović, NGO “DEMOS:”**

*“The Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a local community where corruption is the major obstacle to community development. Here, the “what is my share” principle is well-known among decision-makers. We have succeeded in engaging the public in the fight against this plague, and we are moving forward even more intensively!”*

## **Milena Gradovac, Vanja Sredojević, Nevena Vučen, ITEA:**

*“Corruption, described as ‘moral depravity’ including the ‘abuse of entrusted power for personal gain,’ is a widespread problem in society. Unfortunately, as individuals, we cannot eradicate it, but by raising our voices, we can certainly reduce it for the benefit of all. Any resistance to corrupt practices, ranging from developing critical thinking and education to reporting observed corruption and practices to competent institutions, represents fighting against corruption. Corruption as a disease has undermined citizens’ trust in authorities, and every citizen’s voice against it is a remedy for the benefit of society, directly influencing the protection of human rights and freedoms.”*

## **Milanka Laković, UZOPI from Čajniče:**

*“The implementation of the project ‘Civil Society in the Fight against Corruption,’ which involves visits to local communities, has revealed numerous examples of corruption, such as partially implemented projects, despite spending the funding. The economic unreasonableness of certain investments is also evident. At the meeting on November 20, marking the beginning of the campaign for changes to the Law on Refugees from BiH and Displaced Persons in BiH, observers emphasized the need for legal changes in this area. The law is outdated and needs to be changed, including regulating a more significant role for civil society in decision-making on allocating public funds for sustainable return and integration projects. Legal provisions concerning the civil sector’s monitoring of project implementation, creating a unified database of investments, and re-registering displaced persons to obtain real data from the field are also necessary. Legal changes would enable more efficient control of fund usage and distribution criteria and contribute to transparent spending of public funds.”*

## **Besim Gurda, NGO “Fojničani:”**

*“The fight against corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a fundamental effort to preserve unique natural resources and a life worthy of a human being. Faced with serious pressures on nature and witnessing the sale of our forests, waters, and land, we must confront a corrupt state system that is destroying us under the guise of progress and development but for personal gain. And we remain silent, poisoning ourselves and disappearing. We have incredible and unique natural resources but a meager number of protected areas. Protection does not generate quick profit like sales; that’s the reason! This fight is not just a fight for nature but for the survival and prosperity of current and future generations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Building a transparent and responsible social system is crucial for ensuring long-term sustainability and preserving the identity of this beautiful country. Therefore, when asked what the fight against corruption means to me, I can say that it means a fight for life, nature, and survival.”*

## **Lejla Hukić, NGO “FEA – Forestry and Environment Action:”**

*“Every illegal activity has multiple impacts and consequences. For example, illegal activities in the forestry sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina have negative effects on society, the economy, and natural resources. The key role is to change individuals’ perspectives, recognize their responsibility, and engage in processes that support transparency and integrity. We all must understand that the fight against corruption begins with ourselves and our actions. Awareness that we are all part of a broader community and that our decisions have far-reaching consequences plays a crucial role in building a just and sustainable society. Therefore, the responsibility and engagement of each individual constitute the fundamental strength in the fight against corruption, building a path to a more prosperous future for all of us. Hence, the fight against corruption is a joint effort aimed at ensuring that our society becomes a fairer and more transparent environment for all.”*

## **Amila Tatarević, NGO “Baby Steps:”**

*“The fight against corruption is a fight for life and dignity. Corruption destroys the entire system and threatens all our rights, sometimes even life. Even if we preserve life, enormous consequences remain for us and future generations. Only by eliminating corruption from the system can we protect our lives and restore dignity to all citizens.”*

## **Bakir Morić, NGO “Poriče” Bugojno:**

*“I believe that the fight against corruption is a fundamental prerequisite for developing an open and democratic society.”*

## **Damir Radenković, NGO “Vermont:”**

*“The fight against corruption does not begin and end on December 9... On that day, we just sum up the results of the work of the previous 364 days... We go on...”*



## „ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS AND CITIZEN MOBILIZATION- EXPERIENCES OF CSOS AND INFORMAL GROUPS OF CITIZENS“ TRAINING WAS HELD

At the end of December, the training “Advocacy campaigns and citizen mobilization - experiences of CSOs and informal groups of citizens” was held in Sarajevo, intended for CSOs- beneficiaries of grants and representatives of informal groups of citizens who implement campaigns in the field of the fight against corruption.

The training was attended by 31 participants from as many as 26 CSOs and informal groups of citizens who, through specific examples and experiences of local CSOs and civil activists, were presented with various advocacy tools, and were shown the importance and ways of mobilizing citizens and involving the public in advocacy campaigns.





## **THROUGH FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS AUDITORS WILL DETERMINE THE AUTHORITIES' EFFORTS IN ADDRESSING IRREGULARITIES IN THE EXPLOITATION OF RIVER MATERIAL FROM THE DRINA RIVER**

Activists advocating for legal and regulated gravel exploitation in the Republika Srpska point out the lack of regulation and increasing circumvention of regulations and laws in the water management sector. They emphasize the illegal, non-transparent, and uncontrolled gravel exploitation, which has been a longstanding issue that has hindered improvements in this area. In line with this, activists have filed an initiative with the Supreme Public Sector Audit Service of Republika Srpska (the Audit Service) to include in its Work Program for 2024 the implementation of a follow-up review of the recommendations from the Performance Audit Report “Exploitation of River Material as a Segment of Integrated Regulation and Protection of the Drina River Watercourse.” It has been almost two years since the publication of that report. As a result of the initiative, the Audit Service pledged that in 2024, they will produce a report on the Follow-up Review of the recommendations from the mentioned audit report, covering the period from 2017 to 2020. The follow-up review of recommendations has been included in the Audit Service’s Activity Plan for 2024.

It is worth noting that the audit report, consistent with the previously assessed situation, clearly and unambiguously indicates that the authorities still need to take the necessary steps to address the issue of irresponsible conduct in managing water resources, riverbed cleaning, and mineral extraction from watercourses. Therefore, the decision to reassess the implementation of recommendations is crucial to determine the factual situation and how diligently the authorities have worked to rectify identified irregularities.

Once again, activists have demonstrated that their fight is vital and brings positive changes. They call on all citizens to join them and raise their voices against the illegal destruction of water resources, a threat to human lives, and the prioritization of individual interests over the community’s.



## CIVIC FIGHT YIELDS RESULTS: THE SANSKI MOST MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HOLDS A THEMATIC SESSION ON COAL EXPLOITATION!

The civic initiative “Life on Coal,” which fights against harmful coal exploitation in Sanski Most, filed a petition with the Municipal Council of Sanski Most demanding a thematic session. 800 residents signed the petition, and the group urged the authorities to discuss the challenges faced by residents due to coal exploitation and the exceeded limits specified in the concession agreement. Additionally, the aim is to reassess the benefits or damages this exploitation brings to the municipality and the local population.

The activists’ fight and the support of the residents have yielded results. On November 28, 2023, the Municipal Council decided at the 28th regular session to hold the proposed thematic session on coal exploitation. This session will mean an exclusive discussion about the issue, and representatives of all interested parties, investors, citizens, and other organizations and representatives of cantonal and FBiH authorities will be invited to resolve this problem.

This decision fulfills one of the demands of the civic initiative, sought through the petition and the filed initiative. In addition, citizens demand that municipal services urge the relevant institutions at the cantonal and FBiH levels to promptly address this problem, which is no longer just a concern for the mining site but the entire municipality of Sanski Most



*“The citizens of Sanski Most have endured the consequences of coal exploitation for too long. It’s time to take concrete steps to protect our environment and the well-being of our community,” says in the statement issued by the “Life on Coal” initiative.*



## COURT REVOKES ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT FOR UBORAK LANDFILL – ANOTHER VICTORY FOR MOSTAR CITIZENS

Following a lawsuit filed by the Citizens' Association "Because We Care," the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo annulled the environmental permit issued by the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism on January 16, 2023 to the Uborak-Buđevci regional landfill. The case is remanded back to the Ministry for further proceedings. In their long fight, the Association has stopped counting the verdicts made in their favor, but it is certain that without the courts and their decisions on lawsuits, the political parties in power would have long imposed their solutions, contrary to the interests of citizens led by the "Because We Care" Association. This is despite the fact that the landfill poses a severe threat to the health of citizens in the immediate vicinity and a much broader area.

The citizens have won another battle! What is certain is that authorities and politicians will not give up lobbying and attempting to accomplish their goals to continue polluting the environment and threatening the health of the people of Herzegovina. The Association says they hope the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo will not succumb to political pressure, as in the "Adaptation Plan" case. Regardless, the group will not give up; every life and every citizen is essential, and they will fight until the final victory i.e. the closure of the landfill in Vrapčići. Nasiha Pozder, the new Minister of Environment and Tourism in FBiH, says the Ministry received the Cantonal Court's verdict on December 21, 2023. She notes that the Ministry will act accordingly, ensuring follow-through of the procedure and consideration of the opinions of the Interdisciplinary Working Group and experts to ensure the production of a high-quality document. The Interdisciplinary Working Group concluded that improvements to the environmental permit could not be considered without updating or creating a new Environmental Impact Assessment and considering the analysis and professional opinions of the commission members from the report. "Because We Care" argues that the environmental impact study has already been conducted, and a new one is unnecessary. The study indicates that the landfill cannot be located where it is currently located; there is no guarantee of safety for people and plant life. They believe that the experts have spoken, and there is no need to seek their opinions again.

"We see no improvement regarding the landfill, even after a change in government, as concrete actions are unfortunately still lacking. The new environmental permit for Uborak is an absurdity, especially considering its previous rejection by the court. The Environmental Impact Study has clearly shown that the landfill cannot guarantee safety for life in this area, the Association stated. The Citizens' Association "Because We Care" pledges to continue their fight.



## **LIVNO RESIDENTS PERSIST IN THEIR FIGHT – THEY URGE CANTONAL GOVERNMENT AND ASSEMBLY TO INITIATE TERMINATION OF CONCESSION AGREEMENT FOR “WATER” EXPLOITATION IN LIVNO**

Over the past year, the NGO “Protect the Mandek Springs” (ICG) wrote dozens of letters and proposals requesting joint meetings and asked the cantonal Ministry of Economy and the cantonal government to initiate the termination of the concession agreement for the exploitation of “water” in Livno. Necessary and clear arguments and evidence supporting these activities were disregarded.

*“After being ignored by the Prime Minister and the Minister, we had no choice but to file criminal charges against those responsible in the Ministry of Economy and other relevant persons in the government and city administration. They exceeded their official duties to favor the investor, disregarding the rights of citizens in the local community of Vidoši. The group filed criminal charges with the Cantonal and FBiH Prosecutor’s Offices in early June 2023. “We expect the prosecutor’s office to decide on initiating proceedings in court because all arguments about irregularities are on our side,”* activists said.

For years, citizens have pointed out numerous legal violations and shortcomings and approached the Ministry of Economy and other institutions. These violations are easily observable since the Ministry issued the first permit for geological research near the sources of drinking water. What is concerning is that despite all the illegalities in the concession granting process, such as excluding citizens from public discussion, discrepancies in deadlines for task execution, and the concessionaire’s lack of conditions for carrying out the work, government representatives do not change their course of action. This is evident from the concession transfer process initiated in 2018. It is essential to highlight that because of all the illegalities and shortcomings the group pointed out, the Government of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton formed a Working Group in May 2021. The group’s task was to compile a report on the entire case, covering the period from 2006 to May 2021. The Working Group listed numerous irregularities in its report and determined that “procedures for the specific concession case had not been conducted in accordance with regulations.” The various irregularities ignored by the competent authorities include the disregard for the Geological Research Law, neglect of potential threats to the drinking water supply, and arbitrary and absurd concession transfers to a new concessionaire. Considering all the above, citizens emphasize that the listed irregularities are more than sufficient grounds for the Government of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and the Ministry of Economy to review the concluded concession agreement, along with its annexes, and finally terminate the citizen-detrimental concession agreement.

Learn more through the portal [antikorupcija.info](http://antikorupcija.info)



## **BRAVE CITIZENS OF MOSTAR UNITE TO HALT UNLAWFUL AMENDMENTS TO MOSTAR'S SPATIAL PLAN**

Residents of five neighborhoods in the City of Mostar have come together in an informal citizen group called “Stop Unlawful Amendments to Mostar’s Spatial Plan” to prevent the chaos caused by approvals of concessions for the construction of power facilities in the broader area of Mostar, a trend observed in recent years. The basis for these concessions lies in the City’s 2012 Spatial Plan, whose amendments related to power facilities were approved by the City Council in January 2022. Contrary to the claims of Mostar authorities, the local community was not consulted either in 2012 or in 2022 when the amendment to the Spatial Plan was adopted. This is just one of the many activities conducted outside laws and procedures.

The citizens have collectively addressed the public to inform them that the Mostar City Administration alters spatial documentation, often violating the Law, and that the cantonal government grants concessions without organizing public discussions. As a result, citizens in suburban areas often face situations where quarries or power facilities unexpectedly open on state-owned land adjacent to their property and estates without their consent or involvement. Additionally, they unanimously state that they are not against investments but believe that at this moment, the allocation of land for the construction of energy facilities is being done haphazardly based on planning documentation that is eleven years old, without a proper understanding of the current conditions on the ground, significantly altered by the return of people to their pre-war residences. On the other hand, it is a fact that the reassignment of state agricultural land under concession for any construction requires a land use change, which is not in line with the Law on the Temporary Ban on the Management of State Property. This and other laws have been violated, and there is evidence in specific cases that the public is already familiar with.

Furthermore, citizens informed representatives about the difficulties that residents of these settlements have faced for years. They particularly emphasize that out of all residential areas in Mostar, only Gubavice and Pijesaka have a “spatial marker” placed on private agricultural land exceeding 1000 hectares. With the implementation of the Spatial Plan, the City of Mostar will transform this plateau into a power plant, displacing the population. Considering all the above, residents believe that constructing solar facilities on the hills above their homes threatens their living space, quality of life, safety, and livelihoods, as most of them are engaged in agriculture and livestock farming.





## **BRAVE CITIZENS' FIGHT TO PRESERVE THE GREEN BELT OF USORA**

In the local community of Jelah, the construction of an asphalt base facility is planned near the tourist-recreational center, equestrian club, adrenaline park, residents' swimming area, close to settlements, and agricultural land. To protect this area and the interests of the residents while halting the planned activities of the investor, a group of activists has joined forces to form an informal citizen group called "Guardians of Usora," setting a goal to do everything possible to prevent the construction of the asphalt base.

The procedure for obtaining permits for the opening of this facility began in 2020 when the investor applied for an environmental permit from the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism. However, the Municipality of Tešanj, citizens, associations, and the Jelah local community contested the plans, leading to the refusal of the permit by the Ministry. Subsequently, the investor filed a lawsuit against the Ministry with the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo. In early 2023, the Cantonal Court ruled in favor of the investor, returning the case to the Ministry for reconsideration. The Ministry informed Tešanj Municipality of the verdict and granted the investor an environmental permit. During the procedure, a group of residents objected to the investor's application to build an asphalt base. As the Ministry did not consider the residents' objections, the citizen group filed an Administrative Dispute Lawsuit against the Ministry's decision to issue an environmental permit to the investor. After a series of activities, including contacting the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Traffic and Communications, and Environmental Protection of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, sending open letters and petitions against the construction of the asphalt base, activists decided to unite with environmental protection activists and citizen associations from the entire region, including associations from Teslić, Jelah, Tešanj, Doboj, and Maglaj. They filed a joint initiative against the construction of the asphalt base with the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Traffic and Communications, and Environmental Protection of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, giving even greater significance to the fight against the construction of the asphalt base on the Usora River and declaring a protected zone around this river.

The Guardians of Usora continues to fight against the construction of the asphalt base. *"We face a long and complex process, but we have the support of residents, some entrepreneurs, and non-governmental organizations, and the arguments are on our side, so we have confidence in the positive outcome of our fight,"* activists conclude.



## FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN MATERNITY HOSPITALS

Marking International Anti-Corruption Day, the “Baby Steps” Association filed an initiative with the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the chief prosecutors in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the education and prosecution of criminal acts of extortion, corruption, and related crimes in maternity hospitals.

Despite our research indicating that corruption is present in every second childbirth in Bosnia and Herzegovina (50%), criminal reports are nearly non-existent, and investigations, special investigative actions used to prove and convict such practices are scarce. Women testify that medical staff not only accepts money but also delays the provision of health services until they receive the money, causing pain, suffering, and health consequences. Sometimes, the lives of mothers and babies are threatened while waiting for bribes. Such practices must be prosecuted, and a clear message that maternity wards are safe places for mothers and babies must be conveyed.

In line with previous discussions and collaboration with all parties involved, including the judiciary, the initiative calls for:

- Due attention is to be paid to this unlawful conduct, which directly violates the most basic human rights: the right to life and health;
- Encourage reporting, prosecution, and publication of verdicts;
- Active investigation and prosecution of these types of criminal acts and public information;
- Initiation of education regarding the phenomenology of these criminal acts.

These demands stem from the conclusions of a round table conference on the fight against corruption in maternity hospitals, recently held in Zenica, which brought together representatives of relevant institutions responsible for preventing and prosecuting corruption. The “Baby Steps” Association has offered its capacities to the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina and prosecutors concerning the prosecution of corruption in maternity hospitals and encouraging victims to report it.



# Aplikacija Čuvajmo šume



## APPLICATION FOR ANONYMOUS REPORTING OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN FORESTRY WITH CITIZEN ASSISTANCE

The Forestry and Environment Action (FEA) achieved significant results at the end of 2023 with the campaign “Application for Anonymous Reporting of Illegal Activities in Forestry with Citizen Assistance.” Memorandums of Cooperation were signed with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management, and Forestry of the Tuzla Canton, the Public Enterprise “TK Šume,” and the Forestry Administration of the Tuzla Canton. Furthermore, an improved version of the mobile application “Čuvajmo šume” (Protect the Forests) was developed and launched for use in six cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Una-Sana, Central Bosnia, Herzegovina-Neretva, Sarajevo Canton, Zenica-Doboj, and Tuzla Canton. The goal is to utilize modern technical solutions and allow citizens to report unauthorized activities.

Additionally, an interactive/digital map has been created and put into use to display specific areas where illegal activities have occurred in the project-covered cantons ([cuvajmosume.ba](http://cuvajmosume.ba)).

**Aplikacija za anonimnu prijavu ilegalnih aktivnosti u šumarstvu uz pomoć građana – Faza II donosi:**

- Saradnju sa nadležnim institucijama u cilju unapređenja realizacije projektnih aktivnosti i poticanja dijaloga o očuvanju šumskih ekosistema i borbe protiv korupcije u šumarstvu

Podržano od:

**Šta ja mogu uraditi?**

**PODRŠKA LOKALNIM INICIJATIVAMA:** Pridružite se udruženjima i organizacijama koje se bore za zaštitu šuma i okoliša i podržite ih donacijama ili volontiranjem.

**GRADANSKA UKLJUČENOST:** Pratite planove i strategije za upravljanje šumama na lokalnom i državnom nivou, učestvujte u javnim raspravama i podržite inicijative za unapređenje politika upravljanja šumama.

**PROMOCIJA SVIJESTE:** Dijelite sa svojim okruženjem informacije o značaju očuvanja šuma.

Podržano od:



## **TRIUMPH OF COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT: CITIZENS AND AARHUS CENTER HELP SAVE CITY PARK “CRNI VRH” FROM CONSTRUCTION**

Crni Vrh has become a symbol of the collective engagement of citizens and civil society in protecting green areas. After strong opposition to the plans for building a residential unit in the area, the Municipal Mayor has issued a decision revoking the Proposal for Amendments to the Regulatory Plan for the park. The Aarhus Center, with the support of the Crni Vrh Local Community, led the initiative to preserve the park and transform it into a Forest Park. This action was about stopping the construction and highlighting the importance of green spaces for the health of citizens and the environment.

A public campaign involving experts, such as pulmonologists and architects, underlined the serious health implications of the lack of greenery in urban areas. The decision represents a victory for the community and underscores the importance of participatory processes in shaping the future of communities.

The Aarhus Center and the Crni Vrh Local Community thank citizens for their support and continue working to transform ‘Crni Vrh’ into a Forest Park to ensure the long-term protection of this valuable green area for future generations. Continuing to provide legal assistance, the Aarhus Center urges citizens to remain active participants in decision-making processes and advocates for transparency and inclusivity in all stages of urban development.



## DISAPPROVAL OF PLANS: JAHORINA IN THE BATTLE TO PRESERVE THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE

Jahorina is facing a dilemma between preserving its forests and allowing further construction. The draft Regulatory Plan for the sports and recreational area of Jahorina is criticized by the local population and relevant institutions due to the planned concrete works in a limited space of fifteen hectares. Residents express deep concern about the serious ecological consequences that such plans would bring. The UNIS Institute, responsible for drafting the proposal, has acknowledged the validity of citizens' and institutions' comments, providing an additional period for new feedback. The power company Elektro distribucija, Water Supply, and the Jahorina Olympic Center have also opposed the plans, emphasizing their inconsistency with the preservation of natural resources and infrastructure overload.

Residents highlight the importance of a high-quality plan and compliance with the law and their interests, calling for the protection of the natural landscape supported by the Law on Nature Protection of the Republika Srpska. They seek the support of the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction, and Ecology of the Republika Srpska in safeguarding Jahorina as a protected area.

The Aarhus Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina emphasizes the importance of preserving natural resources, expressing concern about the suspension of the process to declare the Jahorina Nature Park a protected area. It calls on all relevant institutions to act transparently and preserve valuable natural resources like Jahorina.





## EVERY YEAR BRINGS RENOVATIONS AND DEVASTATIONS TO THE STADIUM BUILDING IN BOSANSKO GRAHOVO!?

Every year for the past seven to eight years, public funds have been spent on the same renovation and improvement works on the building of the Grahovo Stadium in Bosansko Grahovo. UZOPI has identified an example of “money wasting” in one of the poorest and least developed municipalities in BiH. The first post-war renovation of the facility was carried out in the 2016/17 period. Subsequently, after each renovation, the building was vandalized by unknown perpetrators. And so, year after year, public money is spent, the facility is renovated, and shortly after that, it is vandalized, and the fixtures are removed. The police conduct investigations, but the perpetrators have never been identified, and even the donors are not informed of the facts.

In all previous election campaigns, party candidates talked and boasted about the renovation of the stadium, but the situation is getting worse. FC Grahovo almost ceases to exist. UZOPI notes that it is obvious that the facility has been used for “money laundering.” Approximately 55,000 KM was spent on the renovation of this facility in 2022.

The example from Bosansko Grahovo is one of many that speaks about the questionable spending of public money. Considering that Bosansko Grahovo is mostly a returnee community and one of the poorest municipalities in BiH, this example of money wasting is challenging to explain, except for suspicions of illegal activities.

The Union for Sustainable Return and Integrations (UZOPI) is implementing the campaign “Civil Society in the Fight Against Corruption” in twenty municipalities and cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through this campaign, civil society, and its representatives (observers, citizen associations, returnees), along with local authorities, analyze the (mis)use of public funds, examining how public money is spent and whether it serves its intended purpose.

# ANTIKORUPCIJA

Highlighting some of the most-read news on [antikorupcija.info](http://antikorupcija.info)



»DOES THE SECOND LINE OF THE SONG ‘WE ARE UNBEATABLE’ READ: I’M FONDER OF A RUSSIAN SHIT THAN AMERICAN CAKE? «

Indeed, the question arises of what to do in a situation where the rule of law is not functioning, when an alienated, criminal, and ready-for-anything government firmly holds all repressive and control mechanisms, when the drain of young and intelligent population to the West seriously undermines the protest potential of the masses, when all those free media, non-governmental organizations, and (real!) opposition (if it even exists) are mere exceptions to the rule and without real power, and dealing with them is not motivated by fear of the damage they can cause but by the foolishness of a self-centered dictator who does not tolerate criticism, and perhaps, not leaving any social outlets may mean his downfall.

More is available at [antikorupcija.info](http://antikorupcija.info).



»THE THIRD BLOCKADE OF THE ‘SFOR ROAD’ IN DOBOJ AND THE FIRST ARREST OF ORGANIZERS AND PARTICIPANTS, IS THE GOVERNMENT BECOMING NERVOUS?«

Unlike in the two previous cases where the police action was limited to making a police report, during today's protest, officers of the Doboj Police Department arrested and brought in Miroslav Borojević for questioning because, according to the explanation, he refused the order to remove the vehicle blocking the road.

More is available at [antikorupcija.info](http://antikorupcija.info).

»INSTEAD OF APOLOGIZING AND OFFERING COMPENSATION TO THE AFFECTED CITIZENS AND PROPOSING SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM CAUSED BY THE MINE, THE OWNER OF LAGER DECLARES HIMSELF A VICTIM OF TERRORISM AT THE SESSION OF THE SANSKI MOST MUNICIPAL COUNCIL «

The situation in Sanski Most in the area of Zlauše – Fajtovci – Gornji Kamengrad is alarming due to a coal mine operated by the Lager company from Posušje since 2015. In the last few months, mining has been carried out at a high speed, directly affecting the local population. Residents are concerned about their property and safety, and the situation is most severe in the village of Bašići, which is literally cut off. It has become almost impossible to use the destroyed local road, and locals have begun calling it the “Death Road.”



More is available at [antikorupcija.info](http://antikorupcija.info).

# “CRMA” AND THE PORTAL “PRATIMO TENDERE” (WE FOLLOW TENDERS): 77% OF RISKY PUBLIC PROCUREMENTS

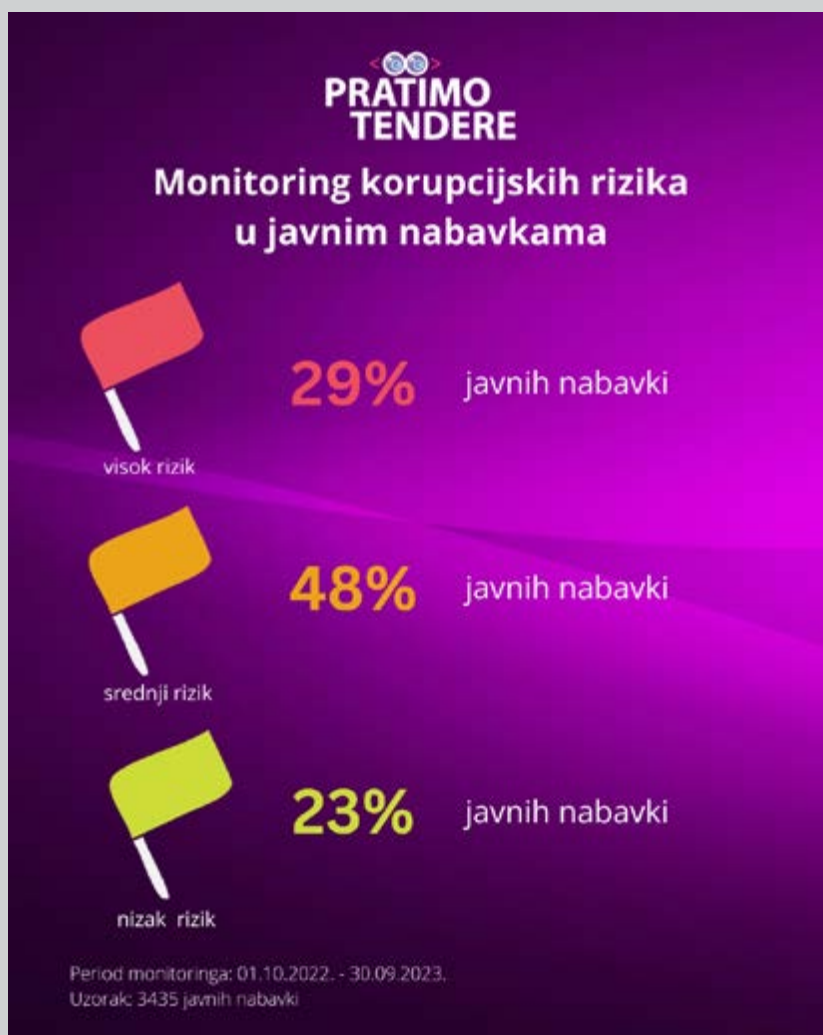
## 547 million KM spent corruptly and non-transparently

On the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, the Association “Center for Media and Analysis” (CRMA) and the portal “Pratimo Tendere” presented their annual report on anti-corruption monitoring of public procurement. The results of monitoring 3,435 public procurement procedures, totaling 590,197,863.75 KM (excluding VAT) from October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023, show that elements of corruption risk were identified in 2,654 (77%) of the monitored public procurement procedures with a total value of 546,890,567.88 KM excluding VAT.

The monitoring results for 2022/2023 indicate a decreasing trend in the total number of risky procurements - 77%, compared to the previous year's (October 2021-September 2022) - 90%. The number of high-risk public procurements (red flags) dropped to 29% from last year's 60%. These positive statistical trends can be interpreted as a result of changes in the Law on Public Procurement (enforced on December 10, 2022), which brought several improvements in terms of enhancing transparency:

- the obligation to plan direct contracting;
- the obligation to publicly announce the annual procurement plan on the Public Procurement Portal;
- the obligation to publicly announce reports on contract implementation.

However, these statistical indicators should be viewed as conditionally positive. Viewed in terms of money, the trend of high-risk public spending is continuous and exceeds 90%.





“Even the best laws and practices will not contribute to the fight against corruption unless investigative and judicial institutions get involved in the process, or if they do not start doing their job and prosecuting those responsible,” said Slobodan Golubović, Editor of the Pratimo Tendere portal.

Pratimo Tendere is a portal for monitoring and detecting risky public procurements, i.e., non-transparent, illegal, discriminatory, and corrupt public procurements. The portal was developed based on a specific methodology and software algorithm, serving as an innovative tool for detecting elements of corruption in public procurements, enabling the identification of risky public procurements, presenting identified irregularities, reporting suspicious public procurements, and communicating with users. The portal uses green, yellow, and red flags to identify and signal which public procurements are risky.

The monitoring identified characteristic negative examples: the Bosnia and Herzegovina Air Navigation Services Agency conducted procurements without a plan; the Municipality of Dobož East set illegal qualification criteria for bidders; the City of Stolac defined minimal qualification criteria and stifled competition by avoiding dividing procurements into lots; the RS Electric Company unlawfully consolidated the procurement of goods and services into one procedure and abused advertising; the Lottery of Bosnia and Herzegovina published tenders with a pre-known winner, etc.

The full annual monitoring report for 2022/2023 is available here (link: <https://crma-ppras.azureedge.net/public/1d359ab3-781b-401e-b036-ec053529f3dc.pdf>)

Follow tenders, Follow Your Money!





## THE TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (TI BIH) ANTI-CORRUPTION ACTIVITIES:

- TI BiH filed a report with the Conflict-of-Interest Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina against the new director of BH Telecom, Amel Kovačević, and a former advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Elmedin Konaković. Kovačević was appointed as the general director, although the Law on Conflict of Interest of Bosnia and Herzegovina prevents advisors to elected officials from managing public enterprises for six months after the end of their mandate.
- 
- TI BiH filed a report with the Conflict-of-Interest Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina against the publishing house “NAM” in Tuzla, owned by the current Minister for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sevlida Hurtić. “NAM” won two tenders totaling over 1.4 million BAM, even though private companies belonging to state officials are explicitly prohibited from entering into contracts worth more than 5,000 BAM with any budget-funded entity.
- 
- The Republika Srpska Conflict-of-Interest Commission halted the proceedings against Milan Tegeltija, advisor to the President of Republika Srpska and head of FC Borac, because the National Assembly of Republika Srpska amended the law, essentially legalizing the conflict-of-interest situation in which he was involved. The Commission failed to apply the law that was in force when TI BiH filed the reports against Tegeltija and five other leaders of football clubs in the Premier League of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- TI BiH files an official initiative with the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the adoption of a new Law on Conflict of Interest and a Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers. TI BiH also re-filed the initiative with the Cabinet of the Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nermin Nikšić, as these are two important anti-corruption laws belonging to the fourteen EU priorities the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina withdrew from the procedure in May of this year and has not reintroduced them to the Parliament.

- TI BiH, in collaboration with the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina and as part of USAID's Assistance to Citizens in the Fight against Corruption, organized the conference "Integrity of Political Financing in the Region," on December 13, 2023, in Sarajevo. Proposals for improving transparency in political financing include establishing clear

competencies of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina for monitoring party expenses, the obligation to use unique bank accounts, banning cash donations with an obligation to transfer donations to party bank accounts, expanding prohibited sources of financing, and increasing sanctions.

- Authorities in Republika Srpska have been among the most significant beneficiaries of projects funded by the EU and the US, receiving billions for development, the economy, and infrastructure support. However, with the new law, the authorities now seek to label all NGOs applying for projects from the mentioned donors as "foreign agents." USAID donated 620 million dollars to the Republika Srpska, but Milorad Dodik criticizes USAID for funding NGOs. The EU also donated hundreds of millions of euros to the Republika Srpska. TI BiH representatives demand the withdrawal of this law from the procedure, claiming that it violates fundamental human rights and the constitutions of Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the European Convention on Human Rights.





CENTRI CIVILNIH INICIJATIVA  
ЦЕНТРИ ЦИВИЛНИХ ИНИЦИЈАТИВА

# PUBLIC CALL

**FOR PROJECTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION!**

THROUGH YOUR WORK, YOU FIGHT AGAINST  
CORRUPTION IN VARIOUS FIELDS, SUCH  
AS HEALTH, EDUCATION, JUSTICE, ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION, PUBLIC SPENDING...?

**APPLY FOR A PROJECT!**

Podržano od:



**USAID**  
OD AMERIČKOG NARODA



## 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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