



Institute for  
Population and  
Development

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT

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**INSTITUTE FOR  
POPULATION  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT**



*Dear Readers,*

*It is with great pleasure and pride that we present to you our Annual Report for 2024. The past year has been a year of significant progress in our efforts and dedication to improving health and quality of life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our goal remains steadfast: building healthier and more connected communities through evidence-based approaches, strong partnerships, and advocacy for sustainable change.*

*One of the key milestones this year was the launch of the project "Healthy Communities in BiH," which focuses on the health of the population in local communities. As in previous years, we have emphasized the importance of local action and, together with our partners, are working to create spaces for dialogue, education, and capacity-building to ensure that health becomes a priority in all policies.*

*We are particularly proud of empowering the role of civil society organizations in shaping strategic planning for healthcare in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through this engagement, we aim to enhance the healthcare sector in line with the highest European standards, laying the groundwork for sustainable and high-quality healthcare services accessible to all citizens.*

*We have established the Salus Health Coalition, which will serve as a key platform for enhancing the quality of healthcare services, with a particular focus on emergency medical assistance.*

*Furthermore, we continue to invest in empowering local communities through education and strengthening institutional cooperation, as demonstrated by tangible results and new partnerships. Our work is grounded in inclusivity, innovation, and collaboration, as we firmly believe that sustainable change can only be achieved through collective action.*

*Our vision is a society where every individual in Bosnia and Herzegovina has equal opportunities to live a quality life in dignity, security, and with equal access to the right to health. In this spirit, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who recognized the importance of our vision, supported us, and contributed to our success. Your support makes a difference.*

*We look forward to new challenges and opportunities in the coming year, confident that together we can build a healthier Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*Thank you for your trust and support.*

*Sincerely,  
Prim. mr ph Emina Osmanagić  
Director*

## IPD Friendly Health for Center

Donor: IPPF EN  
Project duration: 2004 - ongoing

### ABOUT THE FRIENDLY CENTRE FOR HEALTH (FCH)

This year, the Friendly Health Center (FHC) of the Institute for Population and Development celebrated its 20th anniversary. FHC is a unique place where young people, especially the most vulnerable, receive answers to their questions, quality services and support they need in a friendly environment.

Professionals working in FCH use a non-judgmental, friendly approach in working with young and vulnerable people, they are sensitized to recognize and respond to the specific needs of young people, respecting the principles of privacy, confidentiality and diversity.

In 2022, our team of experts provided high-quality services in the field of health, reproductive health, growing up and healthy lifestyles for **5,406 people**. The largest number of people who received some of the services are young people, including vulnerable and socially excluded youth. Thanks to the support of the parent organization, IPPF EN, all services for our clients **are free**.

The FHC expert team consists of a gynecologist, psychologist and nurse and uses a friendly approach in their work, which clients have recognized as a key characteristic of our center. The services of the **gynecological ordination** are adapted to the specific needs of girls up to 26 years of age.

Again, in 2024, the IPD Counseling center recorded an increase in clients. In the past year, 326 clients received counseling services, of which 32 were male (9.82%), and 294 (90.18%) were female.


In addition to a large number of young people, high school students and students, adults, often parents of younger children and adolescents, as well as clients from vulnerable and socially excluded groups, including people without health insurance, seek for support.

We have observed that both young people and adults are increasingly prioritizing their mental health, recognizing it as a vital component of overall well-being.

Young people who reach out to the IPD Counseling Center often face various psychological and emotional challenges. Among the most common issues are anxiety disorders, including social anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, and depressive disorders. A lack of self-confidence, reflected in a negative perception of themselves, their potential, abilities, and knowledge, can significantly impact their daily functioning. Additionally, emotional difficulties such as panic, anger, shame, and challenges in romantic and family relationships require extra support and professional attention.

Young people also frequently face issues related to sexual identity, sleep disorders such as insomnia and parasomnia, as well as difficulties with learning and decision-making. Eating disorders, substance and alcohol abuse, and challenges in expressing and managing emotions further burden their daily lives. Adolescent crises and challenges linked to hypochondria, the loss of a loved one, the grieving process, or prolonged illnesses of family members further elevate stress levels and complicate coping with these challenges.

Particularly concerning is the rise in nonsuicidal self-harming behaviors, as well as self-harm accompanied by suicidal thoughts among young people.



In such cases, individuals are referred to the relevant Mental Health Center, which is also the protocol for eating disorders, substance and alcohol abuse, and other serious symptoms that require the intervention of a neuropsychiatrist.

**Parents**, in addition to the challenges of raising children, which often present numerous obstacles, frequently turn to us for help with difficulties within the broader family context. The most common reasons include divorce, domestic violence, job loss, and severe socioeconomic situations.

To improve the accessibility of information and deliver educational content, the Facebook page "IPD Parent Advisor" is active, where thematic articles, video content, and podcast episodes tailored to the specific needs of parents are regularly published.

During 2024, the IPD Counseling Center organized a series of workshops for high school students, addressing topics related to mental health. The need for such activities is continually growing, particularly given the rise in violence, juvenile delinquency, and serious criminal offenses in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the IPD Counseling Center also provides online counseling services, making support available to young people across Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to those studying or living abroad.

Positive comments of our clients further motivate us to improve our services and adapt them to their specific needs.

**IPD supports and empowers girls, young men, women and men to regularly take care of their mental and physical health and well-being.**

# Health in Center – Promoting Healthy Lifestyles Among Youth in Centar Municipality, Sarajevo



Donor: UNDP BiH and Centar Municipality, Sarajevo

Project duration: 01.05.2024. -31.10.2024.

Total project budget: 38.883,00 BAM

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

In 2024, the Institute for Population and Development continued its dedicated investment in the health and well-being of young people, addressing their specific needs while strengthening support systems through the development of competencies among parents and school staff in secondary schools in Centar Municipality. These efforts have resulted in improved communication, better understanding of the challenges young people face, and the creation of a safer and more supportive environment for their growth and development.

The "Health in Focus" project successfully raised awareness among youth about healthy lifestyles, mental health, and the prevention of risky behaviors. Educational workshops and training sessions targeted secondary school students, teachers, and parents, equipping them with tools and knowledge to enhance health and well-being.

## MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

### YOUTH EDUCATION THROUGH WORKSHOPS

More than 300 secondary school students participated in interactive workshops held at the Center for Sports and Recreation. Topics included mental and reproductive health, proper nutrition, physical activity, and violence prevention. Students engaged in practical tasks, discussions, and educational stations during 57 workshops conducted throughout the project. Particularly impactful were the workshops on analyzing dietary habits and stress management techniques, which participants rated as highly beneficial.



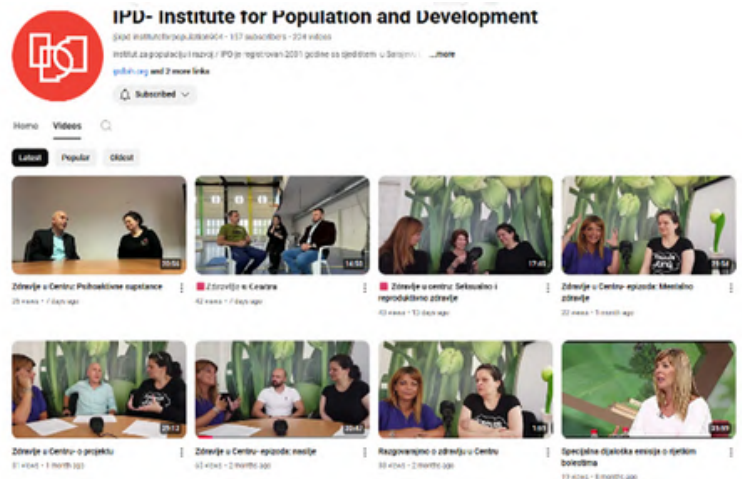
### SUPPORTING TEACHERS FOR SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

To ensure project sustainability, 45 teachers and school staff from 14 secondary schools attended training sessions to independently implement educational programs. Training topics included the prevention of psychoactive substance use, physical activity, healthy eating habits, sexual and reproductive health, violence prevention, and mental health preservation. Participants received manuals and certificates as additional resources for their work.



## EMPOWERING PARENTS THROUGH SUPPORT AND ADVICE

The project provided significant support to parents through interactive podcasts, psychosocial counseling services, and the "Youth Health" brochure. Through seven podcast episodes, parents received expert advice and engaged in discussions on critical topics such as stress management and preventing risky behaviors. The brochure, enriched with QR codes for additional resources, offers easy access to essential information about youth health.



## EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION THROUGH IPD COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

During the reporting period, the "Health in Focus" project significantly increased the visibility of the Institute for Population and Development through various communication channels, reaching 43,102 people. Intensive promotion of the Parent Counselor services and educational content led to a rise in visits to social media platforms, the website, and the platform itself, as well as an increase in psychosocial counseling services to 228—a notable growth compared to the previous year. These results underscore the importance of continued efforts to raise parental awareness about the health and well-being of their children, as well as the need for further development and expansion of community support services.

## ADDITIONAL PROJECT VALUE

The "Health in Focus" manual was developed, containing six educational modules for working with secondary school students. The manual is designed for long-term use in schools and local institutions, ensuring the continuity and application of health programs.

Despite challenges such as frequent anonymous bomb threats that disrupted activity implementation, the project was successfully carried out thanks to the commitment of the team and collaboration with secondary schools and their professional services in Centar Municipality.

The Institute for Population and Development established a network of teachers and professional staff from schools in Centar Municipality to strengthen collaboration and support for promoting youth health. By collecting data on professional competencies through surveys, areas for improvement were identified, and communication was enhanced by creating a Viber network for coordinating activities. This network serves as a foundation for continuous support to schools and further development of collaboration even after the project's completion.

# Contribution of CSOs to the strategic planning of health care in Bosnia and Herzegovina in accordance with EU standards



Finansira  
Evropska unija

Donor: European Union  
Project duration: 1.2.2024. - 1.2.2027.  
Total project budget: 667.137,00 EUR

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project is implemented by the Institute for Population and Development in partnership with the Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Republic of Srpska. The goal of the project is to empower civil society organizations in order to contribute to better health care and emergency medical assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina through cooperation, knowledge exchange and dialogue with government institutions.



## MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS



The project is implemented in **11 bh. cities/municipalities: Sarajevo, Tomislavgrad, Mostar, Goražde, Travnik, East Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Rudo, Bijeljina, Foča and Brčko**. In this area, civil society organizations that operate in the field of health and which will be the backbone of the entire project were identified, **25** of them in total, which resulted in a comprehensive **document Mapping and comprehensive assessment of civil society organizations in 11 municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina that deal with health issues**. As members of the Health Coalition Salus, which was founded in 2024, the organizations will advocate for a better quality of health services in their local communities in accordance with European Union standards.

The coalition will act as a unique platform for advocacy, knowledge exchange and capacity building of civil society organizations, enabling organizations to collaborate more easily on improving access to health services, advocating political dialogue and changes for the better in health care in the local community.

Picture: Document "Mapping and comprehensive assessment of civil society organizations in 11 municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina that deal with health issues."

During 2024, the first planned project education/training was organised for representatives of civil society project organizations - associations of patients, persons with disabilities and professional organizations. The education was on the topic of public health, the organization of the health system with a special focus on the organization of emergency medical services.



Education in the field of public health for civil society organizations, November 2024, Hotel Hollywood; Sarajevo

It is in the interest of the entire health care system that emergency medical assistance functions in accordance with the law, and that patients receive timely and appropriate assistance, especially in situations where their lives are at risk. The above is not possible without adequate additional education. The Institute for Population and Development therefore sent the Federal Ministry of Health an advocacy initiative for the establishment of a referral educational center in the field of emergency medical assistance in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The detailed conditions for conducting the education are prescribed by the Ordinance on the conditions, organization and working methods of emergency medical assistance ("Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina", no. 98/13, 82/14, 51/17 and 22/19) which was adopted on the basis of the Law on health care ("Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina", no. 46/10 and 75/13).

By accepting the advocacy initiative, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is provided with an authorized health institution in charge of providing education in the area of emergency medical health care.

Consequently, on the basis of the aforementioned Ordinance, Decision dated November 4, 2024 was issued, which determines that the Public institution Institute for Emergency Medical Assistance of Sarajevo Canton Prim. Ph.D. Silva Rizvanbegović from Sarajevo fulfills the requirements for education in the field of emergency medical assistance.

Information on the authorization of the Institute is available on the website of the Federal Ministry of Health <https://fmoh.gov.ba/stranica/36/hitna-medicinska-pomoc>

By strengthening the partnerships of **the Health Coalition Salus**, local authorities, health institutions and communities, the project will enable the sustainability of the achieved results and the permanent improvement of health care and emergency medical assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this way, the project not only contributes to the improvement of the health system, but also to the strengthening of democratic processes, participatory management and social cohesion in the country.



# Improvement of the Social Support System for Children and Youth at Risk in the Central Bosnia Canton

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The challenges faced by local communities and society, as well as supporting communities in reaching their full potential, are key guiding principles that have shaped the work of the Institute for Population and Development over the past 23 years. Fostering genuine partnerships with representatives of local communities and institutions, the Institute regularly monitors and analyzes the issues faced by communities and individuals and collaborates with them to develop and integrate systemic and sustainable solutions that continue to operate even after the completion of projects.

Investing in the capacity building of health and social care institutions has been a long-standing priority of the Institute for Population and Development. In the implementation of projects in the Central Bosnia Canton, the Institute collaborates with educational, health, and social care institutions, with a special focus on establishing new and improving existing partnerships with institutions, associations, and other stakeholders relevant to the region.

## MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

### IMPROVEMENT OF THE SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH



The project "Improvement of the Social Support System for Children and Youth at Risk in the Central Bosnia Canton" aims to strengthen the capacity of the social welfare system, educational system, and mental health services to enhance support for youth within formal education and beyond.

In the initial phase of the project, the project team conducted an analysis of available research on proven effective methods for building the capacity of the social welfare system, educational system, and mental health services.

This analysis allowed for the identification of good practices that were integrated into the capacity-building model for the support system.

During the reporting period, the project team held four online coordination meetings with partners from the Society for Psychological Assistance from Zagreb. These meetings ensured timely coordination and detailed planning of project activities.

## CONSULTATIONS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Additionally, consultative and preparatory meetings were organized with representatives from the Ministry of Education, Youth, Science, Culture, and Sport of the Central Bosnia Canton. During these meetings, the project was presented, and the timing of individual activities was agreed upon. Notably, a preparatory meeting was held with the Mayor of Vitez, Mr. Boris Marjanović, during which the project activities were presented in detail, and the benefits of such a project for the community were emphasized.

## DEVELOPMENT OF A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAM FOR THE SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS

eljka Čolović Rodik, an expert from Croatia, developed a methodological training program for professionals working in social welfare centers, educational experts, and mental health center staff. This program is part of a broader model for building a proactive and reactive social, educational, and health care system, designed to improve the integration of various sectors in providing community support. The three-day educational program is based on the best international practices as well as proven effective practices from Croatia, with the goal of providing practical tools and methods to improve work in these key sectors.

The training program includes a system for measuring knowledge changes – to assess the level of knowledge of participants before and after the training. These questionnaires provide precise evaluation of the effectiveness of the training and help measure the achieved results, ensuring that the training is targeted at the specific needs and challenges faced by teachers, educational staff, and workers in social welfare and mental health centers.

## TRAINING FOR IPD AND SOCIETY FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE STAFF FROM ZAGREB



The training held in Zagreb from 02.12. to 05.12. 2024, was significant in enhancing the competencies of representatives from the Institute for Population and Development and the Society for Psychological Assistance. Through intensive sessions, participants acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to independently replicate best practices from Croatia in strengthening the social and health care system in the Central Bosnia Canton. The training covered a wide range of topics crucial to improving mental health and community well-being, including adolescent and child psychology, as well as psychological techniques and strategies to support children, youth, and parents.

In addition to theoretical foundations, the training included practical exercises and case studies, allowing participants to enhance their skills in applying the knowledge gained. Special focus was placed on responsible parenting and developing effective programs to support families in crisis situations. This training facilitated the development of competencies that will enable the creation of sustainable programs and policies, which will have long-term positive effects on social protection and healthcare in the region.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION ON PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Public information about the project's activities was communicated through official channels of the Institute for Population and Development. These announcements emphasized the significance of the project in building social cohesion and contributing to the improvement of the support system for youth and parents.

The activities carried out during this phase of the project have laid the foundation for the successful implementation of the next steps, and the collaboration with key partners and donors confirms the strategic importance of this project for the Central Bosnia Canton.

# Future 4 Youth



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Donor: CARE International Balkans, BAWAG, MES, ADH

Project duration: 01.08.2024. - 31.01.2026.

Total project budget: 91.200,50 EUR

Strategic and long-term regional cooperation with the organization CARE International Balkans has started more than a decade ago, and it has been continued in 2024. Together with partners from Banja Luka - Institut Perpetuum Mobile and Belgrade – Centre E8, IPD is committed to the implementation of a revolutionary gender-synchronized program for young people - Young Men Initiative (YMI) that received an Innovation Award by Global Education Network.

The first phase of Future4Youth project is aimed at introducing and institutionalizing life skills education in formal education systems in the Balkans. Life Skills Education is urgently needed in formal education to build skills of future generations to develop healthy relationships based on gender equality, to help them understand their physical and emotional development and to prevent all forms of violence in their everyday lives. These skills are crucial for preserving the physical and mental health of young people.

Through building life skills, youth will be enabled to make informed decisions leading to positive and healthy behaviours, attitudes and life values. However, educational systems in the Balkans are still sluggish, and primarily based on the reproduction of knowledge.

The introduction of life skills in the formal education system enables national-level sustainable solutions that encourage functional literacy, critical thinking, and active development of young people and contribute to the overall social development of the young people in the Balkans.

## MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

### BMC RE-START

Be a Man Clubs gathering young boys and young girls showed to be very effective not just in violence prevention interventions among youth but also in empowering youth and increasing their life skills. During BMC meetings, best practices in managing and operating the Be a Man Club were shared, beginning with targeted recruitment of participants, their active involvement in project activities, and club engagements. The discussion also highlighted strategies for motivating and supervising members, alongside a broader view of youth participation in club activities and outreach.

This engagement model empowers members to actively contribute to shaping campaigns, fostering a sense of ownership and creativity so that Be a Man Club not only supports youth development but also creates a dynamic environment where young members are encouraged to take an active role in social initiatives.

### BASELINE RESEARCH CONDUCTED

Prior to the implementation of Program Y thematic workshops, baseline research was conducted in Secondary Dental School in Sarajevo among the students of second and third grade who will be involved in different interventions throughout the project.

## WORKSHOPS WITH A PSYCHOLOGIST

On September 21, on the occasion of the International Day of Peace, 83 students of the High School of Applied Arts participated in workshops dealing with the problem of peer violence and emotional intelligence. The topic focused on prevention of peer violence in such a way that students proposed activities that would prevent violence, that is, forms of response and support when it happens. Through interactive workshops, the occurrence of violence was viewed from the perspective of the perpetrator, the victim and the observer.



What the students were interested in was how to react effectively, that is, who to report to. The students address the topic of emotional intelligence, socio-emotional competencies, including the techniques and methods that could be used to develop them. The students expressed their feelings through drawings, followed by a discussion about so-called "negative emotions" and the effective on how to "control" them.

## TOT (TRAINING OF TRAINERS IN PEER EDUCATION)

A five-day training for peer education trainers was held aiming to improve the methods of implementing peer education through interactive sessions, a friendly approach, and workshop simulations. Participants were 14 most active peer educators with prior experience working with youth from BMC Sarajevo, BMC Banja Luka, and BMC Belgrade. The youth demonstrated exceptional motivation and a strong desire to learn, and their knowledge grew day by day. The participants improved their knowledge, enhanced their communication and interpersonal skills, which are key elements in any peer education process.



. During five days of intensive work and collaborative learning, the participants significantly enhanced their skills in facilitating interactive educational workshops, particularly within the themes covered by Program Y.

## REGIONAL CAMPAIGN: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

During the 16 Days of Activism, we organized a campaign aimed at raising awareness about online violence, with a particular focus on hate comments. The central event was the exhibition "I Am Only...", which remained open until December 10, 2024, at the Europe House in Sarajevo. The exhibition garnered attention from numerous media representatives, while the online campaign #16Me, featuring 16 different educational messages, achieved significant engagement on social media, reaching a total of 76,646 people. Through articles published on our websites and social media platforms, as well as on the Be a Man Club Sarajevo pages, we encouraged young people to take concrete actions in the fight against gender-based violence. These actions included caring for mental health, promoting gender equality, educating others, supporting victims of violence, volunteering, and recognizing vulnerable groups of young people in our society.



PICTURE: "I AM JUST"... AN INTERACTIVE SESSION WITH YOUTH

"Joining the Be a Man Club is one of the best decisions of my life. It's a wonderful group of young people who surprise you at every gathering with their positive energy and new ways to enjoy life. Since becoming a member of BMK, my self-confidence has reached astronomically high levels that Adi from just three years ago would never have believed possible, let alone implemented in his daily life. Meeting new people from all over the world, speaking publicly in front of a group of a hundred young people, conducting workshops in school without a trace of stage fright or fear of failure or judgment – and that's just the beginning of building the mental foundation of my personality. One day, it will transform into the most beautiful structure ever built on this planet."

**ADI FERIZOVIĆ, Member of the Be a Man Club, IPD Sarajevo**

# Healthy Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina

## ABOUT THE PROJECT



Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading cause of death, poor health, and disability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As in other parts of the world, NCDs in BiH are driven by well-established behavioral risk factors: unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, smoking, and alcohol abuse. Addressing these factors significantly reduces premature deaths and disability. Socially excluded populations are disproportionately affected by NCDs. An effective response to the substantial burden of NCDs, addressing both medical and social determinants of health, requires a systematic, comprehensive, and integrated approach. To this end, the health authorities in BiH—namely, the Federal Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Republika Srpska—have initiated, in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Institute for Population and Development (IPD), the development of a long-term project. The project aims to reduce risk factors for NCDs by enhancing preventive care at the primary healthcare level, increasing health literacy, and improving access to state-provided health services.

The project's overarching goal is to contribute to reducing the burden of disease and improving the health status of women and men in BiH. This goal will be achieved through the following outcomes:

1. Health-literate women and men actively and meaningfully participate in and advocate for health promotion and prevention activities while adopting healthier lifestyles, with a special focus on socially excluded groups.
2. Municipalities/cities take proactive steps to improve the health and well-being of their citizens, engaging in health promotion and disease prevention efforts.
3. Health and non-health authorities collaborate in designing and implementing integrated and sustainable reforms to enhance the health and well-being of citizens.

The project is planned to span 12 years across three four-year phases. The first phase commenced on November 1, 2023, and will continue until October 31, 2027. It is being implemented across Bosnia and Herzegovina in 25 municipalities/cities<sup>1</sup>, in collaboration with partners, including the Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of BiH and the Association of Municipalities and Cities of Republika Srpska. Significant results have already been achieved during the first year, aligning with all three program outcomes and enhancing project visibility.

Based on the criteria developed in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republika Srpska, as well as the Association of Municipalities and Cities of Republika Srpska (SOG RS), the Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SOG FBiH), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the following municipalities/cities were selected to participate in the first phase of the project (25): Bihać, Bijeljina, Čelinac, Doboј, Foča, Goražde, Grude, Iliđža, Kakanj, Kiseljak, Livno, Laktaši, Mrkonjić Grad, Pale, Prnjavor, Stari Grad, Stolac, Šamac, Tešanj, Tomislavgrad, Travnik, Tuzla, Vlasenica, Zvornik, and the Brčko District of BiH. The project's Management Board approved the selection during its session held on March 26, 2024.

## MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The mapping of civil society organizations with the capacity to implement health promotion and prevention programs in selected municipalities/cities is nearing completion. Additionally, a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) analysis has been finalized, providing key recommendations that will serve as the foundation for local action plans. Social campaigns, including an anti-smoking initiative and activities marking World Mental Health Day, have been organized in collaboration with mental health service user associations. These efforts focused on raising awareness of human rights and reducing stigma against individuals with mental health conditions.



Initial Project Conference, May 2024.

Capacity-building activities to enhance health promotion and disease prevention across 25 municipalities/cities have been launched through educational mini-conferences. A total of 24 mini-conferences were conducted, engaging 423 professionals (57% women) and emphasizing the significance of gender-sensitive and inclusive services, as well as multisectoral collaboration. At the Initial Project Conference in May 2024, mayors of the selected municipalities/cities signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, demonstrating their commitment to active participation in the project.

All mayors underscored the project's importance for their communities, highlighting that disease prevention and the promotion of health and healthy lifestyles are priorities for all municipalities/cities. Official health coordinators were appointed by the selected municipalities/cities. During their first workshop—jointly organized for both entities and in collaboration with the respective municipal associations—the coordinators were introduced to their planned roles in promoting health and preventing diseases at the community level. The workshop also covered the multisectoral approach, the "health in all policies" concept, and core public health principles.

As part of the project, a program fostering collaboration between mental health centers and family medicine teams (FMTs) for the timely detection of depression in the general population has been completed. The program aims to include all 410 FMTs across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Preparatory activities have also begun to develop a unified research methodology for defining comprehensive health profiles for all municipalities/cities. These profiles will provide a "health snapshot" of local populations, serving as the foundation for designing and implementing effective disease prevention and health promotion programs. Additionally, they will reinforce local governments' commitment to improving the health and well-being of their citizens.

To create a legislative framework for health promotion and disease prevention, detailed analyses of legal and strategic frameworks in both entities have been conducted, and preparations for drafting related by-laws are underway. This will facilitate the establishment of disease prevention and health promotion centers within primary healthcare settings in the Federation of BiH. These findings were shared with healthcare decision-makers at a workshop titled "Developing Interventions to Establish Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Services at the Primary Level in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina," where it was concluded that establishing dedicated centers within healthcare facilities is feasible using existing human resources rather than new hires. It was also recommended to introduce a coordination position for preventive programs.



"Development of Interventions for Establishing Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Services at the Primary Level in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina"

UIn Republika Srpska, where a legal framework for such centers already exists, a working group is refining existing solutions and proposing organizational models aligned with population size.

To achieve Outcome 3.5—preventive programs (including those addressing sexual and reproductive health and mental health) promoting healthy lifestyles in educational and preschool institutions—a series of consultative meetings were held in the first project year to familiarize key stakeholders with project activities and ensure a multisectoral approach to planning. Following a comprehensive review of available literature, a methodological framework and instrument were developed, based on best international practices in health promotion through formal education. The development process ensured active participation from healthcare and educational institutions according to their respective expertise.

Officially appointed working groups, composed of representatives from health and education ministries, analyzed existing educational programs and content. They provided guidelines and recommendations for improving educational programs aimed at preventing non-communicable diseases and promoting health and healthy lifestyles in preschool, primary, and secondary education.

The project features a strong GESI (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion) component that incorporates the "Leave No One Behind" principle, focusing on older individuals with non-communicable diseases, Roma women, and youth in rural areas. According to the project plan, programs will provide information on sexual and reproductive health, mental well-being, healthy lifestyles, and disease prevention. The strategic document "Communication and Visibility" provides the foundation for communication and public relations within the project, defining the methods, channels, and visibility elements to be utilized during implementation. Project visuals have been created, and the project's visual identity has been established. Using the reframing methodology, the animation "Healthy Communities" was developed, depicting various age groups practicing healthy lifestyles. The project has been heavily promoted through mini-conferences in project locations, with each municipality and city receiving individual promotion in the media and on social networks. The accompanying press clippings included 45 media releases, reaching approximately 20,000 individuals with project information. Mini-conferences were also promoted on social networks, with a total of 27,868 people reached.

Additionally, video clips featuring all local community mayors, local coordinators, and key project partners were recorded. Through IPD communication channels (Facebook, Instagram, Website), information about the "Man is Human" exhibition, held on World Mental Health Day, reached 11,174 people. Promotion via external media (TV, web portals, print) disseminated information about the exhibition to approximately 55,000 individuals. The total number of people informed about the Project during the reporting period through all communication channels amounts to 122,720.





IPD continues to contribute to building trust and social cohesion (“bridge building”) in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the “Healthy Communities in BiH” project by actively supporting harmonized and systemic approaches to interventions in both BiH entities and strengthening relationships among project partners and key stakeholders—both horizontally, among groups, and vertically, between government representatives and the population. Specifically, legislative revision processes are underway simultaneously in both entities to create conditions for establishing or improving preventive services in primary healthcare. A joint meeting of all municipal health coordinators was held in collaboration with both entity health ministries and both SOGs. This meeting resulted in excellent collaboration between coordinators in municipalities/cities, particularly among neighboring municipalities and cities, regardless of the entity. Moreover, parallel efforts are underway in both entities to introduce educational content on disease prevention and health promotion. The same instruments are being used, and joint roundtable discussions are planned to discuss the findings of the analysis and next steps. The health profiles of municipalities/cities will follow the same research methodology and data monitoring protocols identified by a joint working group composed of professionals from both entities and the Brčko District of BiH.

"The Healthy Communities Project we are participating in will, I hope, significantly impact the health of the citizens of Tomislavgrad. From early childhood education in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, to providing mobile home care for our elderly population, and through the development of children's parks, green spaces, city beautification, streets, and facades, we are actively working to improve the health and quality of life for our citizens. I am confident that our participation in this project, alongside 25 other local governments from across Bosnia and Herzegovina, will greatly contribute to an even better life for the residents of Tomislavgrad."

**Mayor of Tomislavgrad Municipality, Ivan Buntić, on the "Healthy Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina" program.**

"What I want to emphasize, and what many people are unaware of, is that health is not just about visiting doctors or having access to hospitals. On the contrary, our health is greatly influenced by our own actions, as well as the community we live in. Research has consistently shown that healthcare systems themselves ultimately contribute less than 50% to an individual's overall health, while personal and environmental risk factors have the greatest impact.

Therefore, through this project, or rather this vision, we primarily aim to change people's awareness, not only in the context of protecting personal health but also the health of the entire community. We plan to work on this together with all policy-makers, including mayors, teachers, businesspeople, doctors, and other members of the community. Together, we can and should create an environment where both the youngest and the oldest have access to and benefit from everything that makes life more comfortable and healthier, contributing to overall well-being."

**Assistant Federal Minister of Health, Dr. Goran Čerkez**

**"The Assistant Minister of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Srpska, Milan Latinović, stated that the idea behind the project is to work collaboratively within communities on programs for health promotion and disease prevention. These activities involve not only healthcare professionals and institutions but also the broader community and individual citizens.**

'Prevention and health care must start with the individual, and to achieve this, we need to jointly develop a high level of awareness about the importance of health care and the practice of healthy lifestyles. It is essential to extend health care efforts beyond healthcare institutions to include other stakeholders. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republic of Srpska has incorporated this approach to health care into the new Health Protection Law, which outlines a type of transformation within health centers and the establishment of centers for health promotion and disease prevention. This will also contribute to the implementation of this project.'

**"The Deputy Head of Mission and Director of Cooperation at the Embassy of Switzerland in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Siroco Messerli, stated that Switzerland has been an important partner in improving the health system in BiH for over 20 years.**

'We are focused on primary healthcare and reducing non-communicable diseases. The "Healthy Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina" program aims to enhance health literacy for more than one million citizens, promote healthy lifestyles, and improve healthcare services. Over the next four years, Switzerland will allocate 10.7 million BAM to advance disease prevention and health promotion in 25 municipalities across BiH. We commend health authorities, local governments, schools, and people in local communities for their dedication to healthcare reform and expanding services to all citizens, especially the marginalized and vulnerable,' Messerli said.'

# Two Million People Informed About the Work of the Institute for Population and Development Through Media and Social Networks

The annual report on communication and visibility of the Institute for Population and Development highlights a significant media and digital reach achieved over the past year.

- **Media Reach:**

The Institute attracted the attention of domestic and regional media that supported programs, projects, and activities important for the broader community. A total of 300 unpaid features were published on TV, radio, web portals, and in print media, with the largest portion coming from web portals and electronic media (82%).

- **Prominent Media Outlets:**

The majority of publications were recorded on platforms of the Federal News Agency (FENA), Radio Television of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RTVFBiH), SRNA, and BHRT. Other public and private media outlets, including regional ones, also showed interest.

- **Value of Media Publications:**









The estimated value of all publications amounts to 255,253.56 BAM, with a total audience of approximately 1.5 million people informed about the Institute's work through media.

- **Social Networks:**

On platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, the Institute reached 450,000 people, with 26,000 followers and a total of 3 million views. These channels played a crucial role in daily communication with the audience, ensuring interaction and awareness.

- **Conclusion:**

Transparency and efficient information flow have positioned the Institute as a trusted partner in the field of health and healthy lifestyles. Digital and media channels ensured that key messages and service information reached a large number of people, including 450,000 via social media and 1.5 million through media publications.

Category	Details
 <b>Total Number of Media Publications</b>	300 (unpaid contributions: TV, radio, web portals, print media)
 <b>Most Prominent Media</b>	Web portals and electronic media (82% of publications), FENA, RTV FBiH, SRNA, BHRT
 <b>Media Publication Value</b>	255.253,56 BAM
 <b>Number of People Informed via Media</b>	1.500.000
 <b>Social Media Reach</b>	450.000 people
 <b>Total Number of Followers</b>	26.000
 <b>Views of Social Media Content</b>	3.000.000
 <b>Most Used Social Media Platforms</b>	Facebook, YouTube, Instagram

