

# LOD NEWSLETTER

Reinforcement of Local Democracy ★★★★★★ April 2015

FOURTH PHASE OF THE LOD PROJECT STARTED WITH RAPID INTERVENTIONS



Project is financed by  
European Union



Ministry of Justice  
Bosnia and Herzegovina



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★ Flooded areas in the focus of the fourth phase of the project ★ Stories with a happy ending from Bijeljina, Dobož, Domaljevac-Šamac, Maglaj, Šamac and Žepče ★ We lit up in blue for people with autism  
★ LOD strengthens the capacities of CSOs through training ★ Quality of LOD methodology recognized by the authorities of both Entities ★ What is the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)? ★

# FLOODED AREAS IN THE FOCUS OF THE FOURTH PHASE OF THE PROJECT „REINFORCEMENT OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY – LOD IV“

Performing results from the field motivated the donor, the European Union, for the LOD to get its continuation, i.e. the fourth phase, which began in June 2014 through the rapid intervention projects. It was one part of the European Union's response to the floods, which resulted in contribution towards gradual normalization of the disastrous situation in the field, whereas the benefits for the local community were multiple.

The project "Reinforcement of Local Democracy" (LOD), financed by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is being implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the fifth year in a row.

Three phases of the project that were successfully completed from 2009 to 2014 included 40 local self-government units (LSUs) throughout the territory of BiH. Over seven million KM has been invested in implementation of 224 projects which benefited 60,000 different users, starting from children with special needs, through displaced persons, marginalized minority communities, to elderly and disabled persons. In addition, through LOD implementation, civil society organizations (CSOs) were recognized as service providers to local governments, which hence got the partners for addressing some of the most pressing issues at the local level.

## Rapid interventions in flooded areas

Good results from the field motivated the donor, the European Union, for the LOD to get its continuation, i.e. the fourth phase, which began in June 2014. Due to the specific situation caused by floods in May last year, LOD Project Committee, consisting



of the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Delegation of the European Union (EU) in BiH and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), decided to perform the selection of six LSUs directly. These included Bijeljina, Doboj, Domaljevac – Šamac, Maglaj, Šamac and Žepče, which are the LSUs that suffered heavily from the consequences of flooding.

The emergency caused by flooding in these local communities required urgent intervention, and thus some of the projects were already implemented in the first six months of implementation of the fourth phase of LOD. These were the rapid intervention projects that represented one part of the European Union's response to the floods,

the implementation of which resulted in contribution towards gradual normalization of the disastrous situation in the field, whereas the benefits for the local community were multiple. In this issue of the LOD newsletter you can read some of the most interesting stories directly from the field, which initially resembled a tragedy, but at the end they all had a happy ending.

LOD project continuation was also welcomed by the EU Delegation in BiH, which also funded the previous three phases.

*"By providing support to the projects like this, the European Union shows its strong*

*commitment to the improvement of mutual cooperation between civil society and local self-government units and improvement of the situation directly in the field in these municipalities,"* said Natalia Dianiskova, Head of Operations Section for Social Development, Civil Society and Cross Border Cooperation at the EU Delegation in BiH.

In these six directly selected LSUs in October and November 2014, public calls for financing additional project proposals of CSOs were implemented, and total of 18 projects in the field of social inclusion, employment, sports, environmental protection etc., received financial support. It is important to emphasize that these six LSUs, due to their specific status, were exempted from participation in co-financing of project proposals, which was the practice in previous phases of the LOD project. Implementation of these projects started at the beginning of the current year and you'll get to read the success stories from the field already in the next issue of the newsletter.

## Everyone wants to be part of the LOD

Additional six local communities were selected through public call for participation in a new phase of LOD. It is interesting that as many as 20 LSUs applied to the public call, however after implementation of the procedure those that were selected included Berkovići, Cazin, Kotor Varoš, Novo Sarajevo, Šekovići and Visoko.

Furthermore, the two LSUs, Nevesinje and Brčko District, after expressing interest in participation in the LOD IV project, were offered to participate in the project in the capacity of associated members. Status of associated LSUs implies the possibility of receiving technical assistance from the LOD

IV project staff in relation to the introduction of transparent financing of CSOs and improving cooperation with the CSOs, as well as active participation of the LSUs officials at the training courses organized by the LOD IV project for the purpose of capacity building of the LSUs towards improved cooperation with the CSOs. On the other hand, the associated LSUs have no possibility of financing CSO projects through LOD IV project.

The successful practice from the previous phases will be also applied in the new, fourth phase of the LOD, therefore the activities with LSUs will include active work on accomplishing the previously identified objectives, as follows:

- ★ establishment of permanent partnership between CSOs and local governments by raising awareness of the cooperation benefits;
- ★ generation of unique and transparent mechanisms for allocation of budgets of local self-government units, foreseen for project activities of CSOs;
- ★ capacity building of civil society organizations for improvement of services provision to citizens.

In addition, through this project, the capacities of partner LSUs and CSOs are being developed in the field of project cycle management, and LOD IV provides additional synergies with other UNDP's activities in the field of local self-government, such as "Integrated Local Development Project" and the project "Municipal Training System". During implementation, LOD IV will provide assistance to the partner LSUs to adopt the LOD methodology, actually the mechanism

for transparent budget allocation for CSOs projects. In parallel, better communication will be promoted and the partnership will be strengthened between CSOs and local governments, but also an increase in the budget of LSUs will be lobbied for further development of services provided by CSOs.

At the time of preparation of this issue of the LOD newsletter, public calls were announced for CSOs in these six LSUs through which the CSOs were supposed to submit project proposals in line with the development objectives of the local community. We believe that in the next issues of the newsletter we will write about successfully implemented projects that will truly improve the quality of life at the local level.

## The region is buzzing about LOD!

In the past five years, through its activities, the LOD has demonstrated that it is a reliable partner in improving relations between local governments and civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is rightly expected that such practice will continue in the future. Stories of good results from the local communities, in which the LOD has been implemented so far, did not remain only within the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, so the ideas and initiatives can already be heard in terms of expanding LOD intervention also to the countries of the region, which would be additional recognition for all those participating in its implementation.

LOD IV is implemented in the period from June 2014 to June 2016, and financed by the European Union in the amount of two million euros, provided from the funds of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

## RAPID INTERVENTION PROJECTS

Rapid intervention projects were implemented in LSUs that were struck by floods. A total of six projects in six different LSUs were implemented, the value of which amounted to almost 295,000 KM. Some 10,000 people, including mostly children and young people, directly benefited from the projects, which mitigated the consequences of floods. Local offices, culture centres, stadiums, playgrounds and other infrastructure were refurbished, thus enabling a normal life to the local population.



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# RAPID INTERVENTION PROJECTS ONE PART OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S RESPONSE TO FLOODS

## Bijeljina: Amputees helping in the social life renewal

In May 2014, the area of Semberija was struck with the unprecedented floods. The outpouring of Sava River caused serious damage to a number of public institutions in Bijeljina and suburban areas. The facilities that suffered the damage were local offices in Janja and Brodac, as well as culture centres in Velino Selo, Balatun and Amajlije.



In order to be able to provide administrative services to the residents of Janja and Brodac and in order to revive cultural and social events in Velino Selo, Balatun and Amajlije, "Regional Association of Amputees Bijeljina" prepared a project proposal for the restoration of the aforementioned facilities.

Ever since it was established, this Association did not have an opportunity to implement such a demanding and big project, which was an additional motivation to complete the overall process within the deadline, to the satisfaction of the entire community. After successful selection of the contractor, the first activities were performed on restoration of the culture centres in Velino Selo and Balatun, because this is where the polling stations are located, and general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina were planned to take place in October.

Restoration was completed in due time and the residents of the aforementioned settlements were enabled to freely perform their civic duty. In addition, various folklore groups could continue with their work and with organizing various entertaining events.

Culture centre in Amajlije was also successfully restored and the local offices in Janja and Brodac were refurbished and thanks to this, more than 20 000 inhabitants from this area will no longer have to travel to Bijeljina to endorse a document or obtain excerpts from the registries. Within the implementation of projects in Brodac and Amajlije, access ramps for persons with disabilities were built, which makes an additional fulfilment for the "Regional Association of Amputees Bijeljina", because most of their members are actually persons with disabilities. From now on, the access to these facilities will be significantly facilitated.



*"Now that there is the access ramp in Brodac, where my family and I collect the appropriate documents, I find it easier to enter the premises of the local offices. Before the ramp was constructed, I had a fear from falling when passing the stairs, or slipping, thus breaking*



*my prosthesis. This would leave me incapable of movement and everyday activities for couple of months, which would pose a threat to my livelihood and that of my family",* said Miodrag Tomic, a disabled person from Velino Selo, who urged the government and other institutions to construct an access ramp for people with disabilities wherever necessary.

Upon completion of the project, a gala ceremony was convened in the refurbished culture centre in Amajlije. Cultural and artistic event, which attracted many residents, symbolically celebrated the reconstruction of the institutions, the functioning of which makes the life easier and more pleasant in these local communities.



## Doboj: People with disabilities are not forgotten

A great contribution in creating better living conditions for people with disabilities is also provided through the implementation of the project "Equipping the day care centre for children and youth with disabilities". Project activities implied equipping the premises of the Centre with the necessary means for work, purchase of teaching materials, as well as training of the centre staff.

When after the heavy rains in May 2014 the rivers in Bosnia and Herzegovina started to leave their beds and carry everything on their way, no one really expected that Doboj will be the one among the flooded cities. But the river Bosna was unstoppable. Only



in a few hours the entire city was under the water. The Day care centre for children and youth with disabilities was one among the flooded facilities and its construction was in the final stage. Since this is an institution that should take care of one of the most vulnerable groups of the society, local government and the international organizations got involved unconditionally in order to put this facility back to operation urgently.

A great contribution in creating better living conditions for people with disabilities was also provided through the implementation of the project "Equipping the day care centre for children and youth with disabilities" proposed by the Local Action Group of Doboj Region (LAG) within the framework of rapid intervention projects implemented by the LOD IV. Project activities implied equipping the premises of the Centre with the necessary means for work, purchase of teaching materials, as well as training of the centre staff.

*"Thanks to the donated equipment optimal conditions were created for the start of the work of the day care centre. We hope that in the coming period we will obtain additional equipment so that the centre could provide complete services to all of its beneficiaries accordingly",* said Slobodan Mitrovic, director of the Centre, who did not hide his delight after project completion.

The satisfaction with the accomplishment was also expressed by one of the parents of a child who uses the services of the Centre.

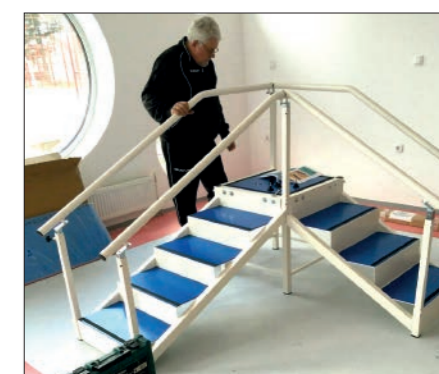
*"Day care centre is very important for inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in the society. I consider that its equipping contributes to providing diversified and better quality services to our children. I am particularly happy for equipping of the physiotherapy room, taking into account that in our city there is no institution that would provide adequate treatment to each child in need of the physiotherapist."*

This project is also a good example of synergistic and coordinated action and cooperation between several donors, such as the United States European Command (US EUCOM), which, through the Office of Defence Cooperation of the US Embassy in BiH in parallel worked on the refurbishment of



the Centre's building. With the opening of a modern equipped Centre, children and young people with disabilities, as well as their parents, will get a place where most of their needs can be met, which was not always the case.

Doboj Day Care Centre for children and youth with disabilities will be the part of the future project activities under the LOD IV project. Namely, through regular public call for civil society organizations published by the LOD IV together with the city of Doboj, the project "Our Children – Our Centre" was approved, and it is also implemented by LAG Doboj. One of the goals of this project is to develop a program that will systematically and in an organized manner develop a long-term policy to protect and support children and youth with disabilities, as well as their families through the daily activities of the Centre.



## Domaljevac-Šamac: Revived place of all cultural events

**When the Culture centre stopped functioning, the education of children and youth was jeopardized, including the work of cultural and artistic associations, various clubs and civil society organizations which used the premises of the Culture centre for organizing public debates.**

Last year's floods, unfortunately, did not skip Posavina. One of the local communities which suffered the heaviest destruction was Domaljevac-Šamac municipality. The flood wave of the river Bosna damaged the entire road infrastructure, and the vast damage was caused on all public facilities, such as Health centre, kindergarten and Elderly care Centre.



associations, various clubs and civil society organizations, which used the premises of the Culture centre for organizing public debates.

**“Water did not only destroy the walls. A number of artefacts, old costumes and antique items, a part of our history, were destroyed. Much to our dismay, the work of our association was disabled”, reluctantly recollected the flood Mato Rosic, President of the cultural and artistic association “Mladost”.**

Association “Sunce” from Domaljevac thus recognized the reconstruction of the Culture Centre as a priority in its local community, and thanks to the LOD IV project their positive idea has been implemented in practice.

Today the restored Culture Centre in Domaljevac is again in the service of the citizens who got the new chance to enjoy theatre performances, concerts, exhibitions

of paintings and photos and book promotions. Children and young people are given the opportunity to further fulfil their life by playing some of the instruments, enjoy folk dance or participate in workshops of literary writing.



*“Our Association is once again filled with songs, laughter and hope for a better tomorrow, which makes me extremely happy and grateful to those who enabled us to have our Culture Centre shining with the same glow as it used to glow before,”* said the president of the cultural and artistic association whose members make this building the happiest one in Domaljevac with their dancing and singing.



The bad memories of natural disasters that struck a large part of BiH in May 2014 will also remain with the residents of Žepče municipality. Torrents torn down and destroyed everything in its way, and hundreds of landslides were activated threatening the lives of residents of many rural settlements.

“However, the most damage was recorded on road infrastructure and agricultural crops, and floods have also heavily destroyed playgrounds for children and young people, the central meeting places for gathering and socializing of the youth.”

Many of the residents of Žepče were forced to leave their homes for a longer period of time and move to a new and safer location. Among the displaced persons there were many children who were forced by the circumstances to become accustomed to the new conditions of life, in a new environment, with the new peers. Most of the children were thus forced to spend their free time on the street or in makeshift premises for accommodation, which only led them more towards isolation and created a feeling of rejection.

With a desire to help the children, the Association for Sustainable Development “UzoR” Žepče designed a project called “Bring the smile back” with the idea of gathering all children around the joint action of arranging the space for play, which should ultimately cheer many children. Renovation and construction of the playground would create more appropriate and safer place where the children would socialize, rejoice and play, all in order to facilitate their transitional period, which was needed for normalization of life on the entire territory of Žepče.

The project went through three phases of implementation, and within the first phase the large landslide was restored and the fence was installed on the bridge in the local community Papratnica. In the second phase the

## Žepče: Refurbished playground brings the smile back to children's faces

waste and mud were transported from the children's playground in the local community Zenički put, and in parallel the works took place on arranging of the community house in the local community Orahovica.

In the third phase the final works were completed, which included installation of the seesaws, swings, benches and bins, and the lighting. In addition, a basketball and football fields were fixed up, including the volleyball court. A special touch to implementation of this project was given by the local residents and children who have been actively involved in the reconstruction of the playing area. It is important to point out that this exercise involved the children who live in Papratnica, Orahovica and Zenički put, including also the children who had to leave their homes and temporarily settle in these places.

Upon completion of the project, the opening ceremonies for the playgrounds were con-

vened, whereby the tournaments in football, volleyball and basketball were organized, and as for the young participants they were able to enjoy the games on the sand, or the new playground accessories. The conclusion is simple, the project “Bring the smile back” was definitely a success, and the refurbished playgrounds are again the places which will resound with the children's laughter and joy.

*“Through this project we managed to create a pleasant open-space environment for young people and children. The enthusiasm of adults and young people who participated in the reconstruction of the playground remained even after completion of the project, therefore the activities on maintenance of the playground are being organized regularly. Today these are the meeting places not only for the children, but also for their parents, who can spend time together and peacefully watch their children enjoy while playing,”* said Maja Mandić, associate for the youth from the Association Uzor.



## GLOSSARY OF EU TERMS

### SAA - Stabilisation and Association Agreement

The Stabilisation and Association Agreement represents a new generation of agreements on associated membership for the Western Balkan countries. The Agreement governs the rights and obligations of a country, future candidate for the membership in the European Union through adoption of specific laws and their implementation, as well as meeting certain standards to increase the quality of the state administration and capacities of the institutions. On the other hand, the European Union facilitates access to its market for the companies from the signatory country, and it provides technical and financial support from the accession funds of the Union.

### IPA - Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

Over years, the European Union has developed a wide range of external aid programmes, and in 2006 the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) was created to assist the countries in their efforts to become EU members. IPA is divided into five different components that cover the transition assistance and institutions building, regional and cross-border cooperation, regional development, improvement of human resources and rural development.

Since 2007, BiH, as a potential candidate country, was given the opportunity to use the IPA funds only for the first two components. In the period from 2007 to 2013, according to official data of the Delegation of the European Union to BiH, these funds amounted to nearly 625 million euros for transition assistance and institutions building, and more than 33 million euros for the development of cross-border cooperation.

## Šamac: Little football stars got even better football pitch

After the heavy rainfall, river Bosna has overflowed the flood protection embankment in Šamac and began to flood the city in the early morning hours of 16 May 2014. The day after, on the football stadium of FC "Borac" Šamac the water reached the level of the goal crossbar. The stadium of one of the oldest clubs in BiH was completely destroyed. The water also flooded the official premises of the club, as well as one part of the stands.

For nearly two weeks the water did not withdraw from the terrain, and when it finally drained it left behind the mud, garbage and other debris. Through rapid reaction of the local authorities and the management of the club, and with the help of donors, the mud, which on some parts of the terrain was up to a depth of half a meter, was removed manually by fifty volunteers. They were loading the mud from the terrain and transported it with the wheelbarrow to the gate of the stadium from where it was further transported by the heavy machinery, for which the access to football field was prevented in order to avoid damages to the surface and the drainage system underneath the pitch.

Only two months later, in early September, FC "Borac" Šamac and representatives of the local authorities, with the UNDP (LOD IV project), signed an agreement on the initiation of implementation of the project "Reconstruction and building of an auxiliary football field FC 'Borac' Šamac."

This project foresaw renovation of the auxiliary football field, procurement of equipment for irrigation, pitch maintenance, as well as sports equipment for 50 children who participated in the football school, "First football step" which was one of the project activities.



After machine soil tillage, around twenty volunteers manually started to prepare the ground for sowing and they have expressly fi-

nished the entire process. Day after day, with good irrigation, and only four months after disastrous floods, auxiliary field within the stadium in Šamac began to turn green with the newly grown turf. Reactions of the residents were overwhelmingly positive. Football fans came to the stadium and they sincerely rejoiced with what has been done in such a short time. In addition to the planned project activities, club management and the local government provided the necessary quantity of seeds also for the restoration of the turf on the main field of the city stadium, and it also started to turn green shortly.



The next step in the project was procurement of equipment for maintenance of the pitch. A new pump for irrigation arrived quickly, as well as supporting equipment so the grass growth was further boosted. Then the new, modern aluminium goals, meeting the highest standards set by FIFA and UEFA, started glowing on the field.

In the course of the second half of the implementation of the four-month project, it was the turn for the most beautiful planned activity, and this was the five-week football school for children aged six to nine years. Participants in the school had the opportunity to learn the basics of this sport, and some of them, who have participated in the earlier schools of football, had a chance to further improve their technique. During the school "First football step", the children were given the opportunity to go on a day trip to Banja Vrućica and feel the artificial turf under their feet, and in addition to cross swords with their peers from Teslić. For them, this was an impressive and important experience and they sincerely looked forward to the trip. Even the heavy rain that was falling all day long could not interrupt their desire to play. Completely wet, the kids were wholeheartedly running after the ball, thus demonstrating a strong competitive spirit and a desire to engage in football.

At the very end of the football school, the closing tournament was organized in the sports hall of the high school centre in Šamac, where four teams crossed the swords. Thanks to the awarded medals and certificates of appreciation for all the participants, everybody went out from the sports hall as a winner, and the best team, the best goalkeeper and the best player were additionally awarded with trophies.

The best player of the tournament, nine year old Nikola Dakić shared with us his experiences from the football school and tournaments:

*"Although I trained football before the flood in the children's school of football organized by FC "Borac", this school has enabled me to meet a lot of new friends. The trip to Teslić was also unforgettable, where for the first time we played football on the artificial turf. My team was the winner in this tournament and we were very happy. I managed to score most of the goals in the tournament and that is why I got the trophy. I am also glad that we again have the turf on our stadium and that I can continue to train football."*



Although the flood caused enormous damage to all the facilities in Šamac, good will and persistence of the citizens shows that life is slowly returning to its normal courses. One of the indicators is certainly the project of reconstruction of the auxiliary field. Short period from the disaster to completely reconstructed turf is a proof of how many things can be done with the generous support of donors, in this case the European Union. More than a hundred of football players of FC "Borac" Šamac from all age groups now train in the surrounding villages, and in spring they will finally return to their home stadium and continue to train in excellent conditions.

## Maglaj: Floods have not destroyed sporting spirit

Maglaj is another municipality in BiH that was completely sunk by the overflowing river Bosna. May 2014 will be remembered as one of the most difficult months in the history of this city, which was mentioned for the first time in 1408.



Despite the havoc that was created after withdrawal of the river to its bed, the local residents have not lost hope, and all the forces were focused at speedy normalization of the situation. Among those who suffered the greatest damage was also the local football club FC "Natron". The court was devastated, as well as premises of the club and the players lost their equipment and gear for training. In addition to all what was mentioned, the

club was left without the support of local government, whose resources were reallocated to the reconstruction of urban infrastructure, therefore every help from the outside was of the utmost importance. That is how the project "Organization of the football school through the mass involvement of children and young people from the flooded areas of the municipality of Maglaj" was created and its main goals were to organize football school (involvement of young people and children in sports activities) and the reconstruction of infrastructure (renovation of dressing rooms, sanitary facilities and supporting facilities on the football stadium in Maglaj).

Thanks to the European Union and the LOD IV project, this project was given the green light for implementation, and as a result 250 permanent members of the club, who compete in different age categories, could heave a sigh of relief. First the best contractor was selected, and then the activities started on the reconstruction of infrastructure of the stadium, as well as building of two sports grounds in the suburbs Misurići and Kopice. These sports grounds should improve and enrich the lives

of young people in rural areas of Maglaj municipality and create better conditions for sports activities.

As the project's icing on the cake, a football school was organized involving 180 children and young people from the flooded parts of Maglaj municipality, as well as the neighbouring municipalities. The school participants included a number of children who were given the opportunity for the first time to experience the charms of a real football training, and their joy and satisfaction with what has been made are the best indicator of the success of this project.



## We lit up in blue for people with autism

Autism is a biological developmental disorder of the brain, and its main characteristics are poor or none social interaction and communication, as well as restricted and repetitive behaviour patterns. Due to the lack of professional support, many people with autism and their families suffer isolation and face difficulties in their lives.

According to the estimates of the world organization "Autism Speaks", the autism is increasingly taking on epidemic proportions. It is believed that, worldwide, in the next few years there will be more children diagnosed with autism than with cancer, diabetes and AIDS altogether.

Due to such extraordinary increase in the number of people with this disorder worldwide, the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in 2007 adopted the Resolution 62/139 and declared 2 April as the World Autism Awareness Day. In the text of the Resolution the Assembly urged for the training of people from public administration, social workers, families and others so as to provide support in the best possible way for the inclusion of people with autism in the society in which they will be able to realize their full potential.

Moreover, this year the United Nations invited companies to concretely commit to employ people with autism who have enormous potential and provide them with a working environment where they can make a progress.

**"Recognizing the talents of persons on the autism spectrum, rather than focusing on their weaknesses, is essential to creating a society that is truly inclusive"**, said Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General.

The aim of the World Autism Awareness Day is to draw public attention to the needs of persons with autism, as well as send a message about the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention in autistic spectrum disorders. Thus, each April the 2nd is an opportunity to provide support and raise awareness on the needs of people with autism by illuminating in blue recognizable facilities, as well as streets and homes, in cities around the world or by wearing a piece of blue garment.

The staff of the EU Delegation and EU Special Representative in BiH, as well as the staff of UN agencies traditionally joined this year's global campaign "I Light It Up Blue", and in addition to the City Hall, National Theatre, Academy of Fine Arts, the UN building was also illuminated with the blue light in Sarajevo.



## LOD PROVIDES TRAINING

### Indispensable segment of LOD: Training for LSUs

**An important component in the fourth phase of the LOD, just as in the past years, is training of the LSU employees on project cycle management and the ways in which funds from the budget of LSUs can be transparently allocated to CSOs.**

Among the main objectives of the LOD project, which has been implemented for five years in BiH, is establishment of better relationships between local authorities and civil society. In order to raise this relationship to a higher level, that is, to make it a partner relationship, one of the project tasks is to improve the skills of LSU employees so that they could efficiently respond to increasingly complex development processes.



Therefore, an important component of the fourth phase of the LOD, just as in the past years, is training of LSU employees on project cycle management and the ways in which funds from the budget of LSUs can be transparently allocated to CSOs. Relying on the experiences from the previous project phases and the obvious need to expand the knowledge in this particular field, in this stage of the project three representatives will take part in the training from each

LSU whose terms of reference include cooperation with civil society. We believe that empowering LSU representatives will help in transferring of the skills and knowledge gained in training courses to other employees of LSUs, which will ultimately provide better starting points for the improvement of cooperation with CSOs.

Sanja Stojčinović, LOD IV project coordinator, city of Dobo, said the following about her experiences in training: *“One can never have enough knowledge, the life offers the opportunities in which it is being applied. The experience that I gained during this training, both from the instructor and the colleagues, is priceless. The methods that I learned and the project approach help me solve everyday problems at work.”*



Training of LSU representatives is conducted through five teaching modules covering

all cycles of project management, starting from the planning, project proposal writing, through implementation, monitoring and evaluation, to the last module that is specifically dedicated to the LOD methodology.



**LOD methodology is actually a set of documents regulating application process of non-government organizations for budgetary funds, and it is based on the EU methodology of project cycle management, which implies a transparent method of selection of the CSO projects, performed by the LSU Evaluation Committee, the composition of which also includes representatives of NGOs.**

This methodology introduces the standards and improves the quality of projects proposed by non-government organizations, and in addition the capacities of local governments become further strengthened.

Through the previous three phases of the LOD project these training sessions have proven to be a practical solution, which led to the faster establishment of cooperation between the LSUs and CSOs and more efficient implementation of local development strategies.



## LOD IV foresees training courses also for CSOs

Having learned from the experience of previous years, when the training sessions and courses were organized for LSU representatives, which contributed to faster establishment of cooperation with CSO representatives, LOD IV decided that in the latest project phase similar training sessions would be organized also for the civil society representatives.



The training sessions were organized for CSO representatives in 10 local communities and they were held in the period from October last year to March of the current year. Thanks to these training sessions the capacities of CSOs were enhanced in the field of project proposals writing with specific explanations of how to apply correctly for the funds that are provided in the fourth phase of the LOD.



Training participants were presented with a methodology of creating project proposals that they could use for applying to public calls published by other international donors, particularly the European Union. The acquired knowledge and skills are of crucial importance for the efficient functioning of the CSOs, as well as for the development and implementation of their projects.

Through these training sessions CSO representatives were encouraged to take a more active role in their local communities, to improve their services, and to operate in accordance with the local development strategies.

For the 193 training participants, who participated in the training sessions in Berkovići, Bijeljina, Cazin, Dobo, Kotor Varoš, Novo Sarajevo, Šamac (CSOs from Domaljevac were also present on the training), Šekovići, Visoko and Žepče (CSOs from Maglaj were also present on the training), the gained knowledge will facilitate them in identification of the problems in the local community, professional preparation of project proposals and their efficient implementation.



## Entity Associations of Municipalities and Cities true partners of LOD project

The complexity of the LOD project necessitated the active role of numerous actors involved in the work of local communities. Therefore, the cooperation was established with the Association of municipalities and cities of Republika Srpska (AMCRS) and the Association of municipalities and cities of Federation of BiH (AMCFBiH), which are the associations that bring together representatives of all local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After successful cooperation in the previous project cycle, both associations became actively involved in the implementation of the fourth phase of LOD, through the organization of regional workshops and round tables where the representatives of LSUs will be informed about the details and importance of

the project, and on the good practices from the earlier phases. Special attention will be dedicated to the promotion of LOD methodology, where the representatives of local self-government will get acquainted with the ways in terms of how the funds from the budgets of LSUs can be transparently allocated to civil society organizations based on the standards of the European Union.

Benefits of the LOD methodology were also recognized at the higher levels of government so the Government of the Federation of BiH, in April 2014, issued a Decision adopting the LOD methodology. In parallel, Government of FBiH recommended this methodology for adoption and application at the lower levels of government, namely the cantons and LSUs.

Adoption of this decision is the result of several months of activities of the LOD project and of the Association of municipalities and cities of FBiH, which, after consultations with the relevant ministries of the FBiH, prepared recommendations, which led to a positive reception in the Government of FBiH. Furthermore, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self Government of RS recommended the application of the LOD methodology to all LSUs in RS.

Through participation in the LOD project, AMCRS and AMCFBiH, through their activities, did a great work to strengthen mutual trust between the LSUs and CSOs, which ultimately contributes to accomplishment of development objectives of the local community for the benefit of all residents.

# WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT LOD:

## SAVO MINIĆ, Mayor of Šamac Municipality

"On behalf of the Municipality Šamac and I personally would like to express great pleasure for involvement of our local community in the project LOD IV in the period 2014-2016. Our commitment is to build partnerships with CSOs, through continuation of good cooperation with the EU Delegation and UNDP in BiH, as well as through this project, and to improve the living conditions of residents in the local community.

Primarily, we are honoured to participate in the LOD IV project and for having the opportunity to be in the company of the communities that are adopting or which have already adopted LOD methodology. In addition, it is also an obligation to ensure permanent partnership between CSOs and local authorities through raising awareness, cooperation and achievement of sustainable dialogue, to establish transparent mechanisms for allocation of municipal budget funds through project approach in financing CSOs and to encourage CSOs to professionalize their activities and to focus on the project approach in tackling the issues of their members.



In the area of Šamac municipality three projects have been successfully implemented through the LOD project. We would like to emphasize that implementation of planned activities through these projects resulted in great satisfaction of end users. Therefore, we expect continuation of cooperation with CSOs on the principles of the LOD methodology, all aimed at faster development of our local community. It is expected that the non-government sector, by participating in this project, will raise its own capacity to a higher level, develop a professional approach in project writing and management, and thus be prepared for the new projects and new grants from the European Union."

## NEDŽAD KOLDŽO, Mayor of Novo Sarajevo Municipality



"Novo Sarajevo Municipality is aware of the benefits offered by the application of LOD methodology for LSUs, and we see the participation in the LOD IV project as a possibility for improving municipal and CSOs capacities, which in the long run can be used for applying with project proposals to other available international and domestic funds. The municipality wants to systemically regulate this area, with the aim of resolving the issues of interest of the citizens of the municipality, taking into account jointly defined priorities and local needs.

For many years, Novo Sarajevo Municipality successfully cooperates with CSOs, both in the development of strategic documents, as well as in implementation of joint projects that are of importance for the local community and major drivers of local development. Years of positive cooperation with many CSOs resulted in the joint development of the Strategic Development Plan of Novo Sarajevo Municipality until 2015, Youth Strategy of Novo Sarajevo Municipality with the Action Plan 2012-2014, budgeting, and implementation of joint projects that contributed to improving of the quality of life of citizens in the municipality.

It is worth noting that the CSOs actively participated in the development of Integrated Strategy of Novo Sarajevo Municipality until 2023 starting from the establishment of the Municipal development team in which they are represented, through the work of the consultative body – the partner group, and the focus groups for specific areas, thus, together with the Municipality they identified strategic objectives and programmes by 2023. Cooperation between CSOs and the Municipality will continue also through the process of monitoring of implementation of the aforementioned Strategy."

## MATO ZOYKO Mayor of Žepče Municipality

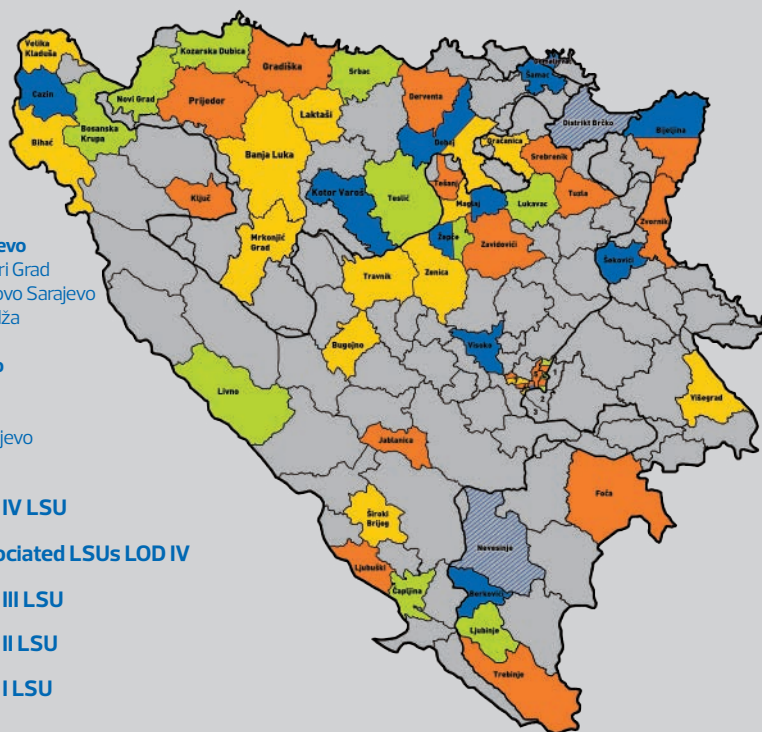
"It is my great honour and pleasure that the Municipality of Žepče was re-elected as a partner municipality in LOD IV project. As a mayor I have a very positive experience working with UNDP and representatives of civil society who participated in the LOD programme.

Žepče municipality was severely hit by the state of natural disaster in the past year, and direct participation in the LOD project led to development of a framework for cooperation with CSOs, the projects of which significantly contributed to the normalization of the situation in the areas affected by the floods. Joint work on the projects influenced awareness raising of the usefulness of mutual cooperation and the benefits of teamwork of the authorities and CSOs on strengthening local democracy, which is indeed the main objective of the project.



Through project activities that aimed at boosting agricultural production, reduction of unemployment and fighting poverty, Žepče municipality managed to accomplish certain effects in the area of social inclusion of the rural population and the population affected by the natural disaster.

I expect a continuation of the successful cooperation on the LOD IV project, because through the improvement of positive relations with the CSOs we contribute to the benefit of all the residents of our municipality."



## Look for more about the LOD project

If you are interested in activities of the LOD Project implemented so far, as well as our future, planned projects, please visit our website <http://www.ba.undp.org> or take a look at our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/ProjekatLOD](http://www.facebook.com/ProjekatLOD). The Facebook page of the LOD Project contains information on activities of LOD IV Project, partner LSUs, implemented projects and information on general activities of the non-government sector and youth organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is enough to click on „like“ and you will receive updated information on projects and on-going activities that you are interested in. Previous issues of the LOD newsletter can be found and downloaded on websites [www.ngo.ba](http://www.ngo.ba) and [www.ba.undp.org](http://www.ba.undp.org).

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