



Local First

“Empowering Citizens –
Building Communities”

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As Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) progresses from the Dayton era of peace implementation to an era of European and transatlantic integration, the importance of developing stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for minorities becomes increasingly relevant. These are as relevant to establishing the foundation for durable peace and stability as they are for meeting the Copenhagen political criteria. I am therefore very pleased to introduce the OSCE's *Local First* initiative, which I hope will make an important contribution in assisting BiH to consolidate what has been achieved to date and to meet the challenges of the future.

Local First is based on the premise that strengthening democracy begins at the local level by increasing the influence of local communities, ensuring that political power is fairly distributed across the whole of society and helping people to set and meet their own priorities. In this way democracy is strengthened by increasing citizens' participation. Of course, it is important not only to give people a greater say, but also to ensure that their voices are heard and that their views make a difference. This requires responsive and accountable local government and it places a particular responsibility on the shoulders of councillors to ensure that municipalities listen and respond to citizens.

There has been significant progress at the municipal level in BiH in recent years. However, this has not been uniform and some groups of citizens have therefore benefited more than others. We are still a long way from achieving the equitable distribution of political power and access to services that are the foundations of local democracy. *Local First* seeks to assist both municipalities and citizens to address these inequalities. It will support citizens to play an active role in their communities and to insist on relevant municipal policies and services. It will also support municipalities in the difficult task of responding to citizens' demands, which usually exceed the resources available, and to do so in an objective and transparent manner. Above all, *Local First* will encourage partnerships between citizens and municipalities in defining and meeting their communities' priorities.

This prospectus describes the seven components of the *Local First* initiative and how they will be implemented. While each component addresses a different issue, collectively they provide a flexible set of options to address the challenge of developing a genuinely inclusive and accountable form of local democracy. I look forward to working with you in this important task.



Ambassador Gary D Robbins

Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina



■ Introduction

Local First “Empowering Citizens – Building Communities”

The *Local First* initiative has been developed by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, in consultation with partners in both civil society and government.

In recent years the technical and financial assistance available to support the development of both civil society and local government in BiH has increased. However, it is also clear that some municipalities and citizens have benefited more than others and, as a result, progress in improving governance at the local level has been uneven. The EU integration process brings with it the prospect of further substantial investment and it is important that citizens and municipalities are able to take advantage of future opportunities. This requires efficient, effective and accountable local government and citizens committed to ensuring that such standards are upheld.

Improving the quality of local government and deepening citizens’ engagement have been goals of the OSCE’s work for some time. However, the *Local First* initiative represents a change of approach because it has been designed to provide a flexible programme of support that can be tailored to meet the different needs of both civil society and municipalities. This flexible approach will also ensure that the *Local First* initiative will be able to adjust and remain relevant as new sources of assistance become available.

While the *Local First* initiative contains many new features, it also focuses very strongly on ensuring that processes and procedures that have been developed through previous projects become sustainable, especially by improving the level and quality of citizens’ engagement with municipalities.



■ *Introduction*

Goal

The goal of the *Local First* initiative is to deepen citizens' engagement with municipalities as a means of ensuring an equitable and accountable allocation of public goods and services.

Objectives

- To promote the development of citizens' capacity to make demands of municipalities, hold them accountable for their performance, and to take action to benefit their communities.
- To develop municipalities that have the political will and institutional capacity to address citizens' demands, in an efficient, even-handed and transparent manner.



■ Introduction

Flexible Approach

Components The *Local First* initiative has been structured to provide a ‘menu’ of interventions, called ‘components’, to support the development of both civil society and municipalities and to encourage partnerships between them. The *Local First* initiative consists of **seven components**:

- Component 1 - Municipal Assembly/Council Support
- Component 2 - Municipal Management and Accountability
- Component 3 - Community Engagement
- Component 4 - Inter-Municipal Learning and Support
- Component 5 - Media and Communication
- Component 6 - Youth Access to Employment
- Component 7 - Project Management

Each component consists of a number of elements. Participants commit to complete all elements in order to finish the component. The number of components completed will be determined in consultation with OSCE field staff. There is no requirement to complete all seven components.

Standards and Criteria The prospectus describes the elements of each component in detail. Each element is broken down into a series of standards, with a set of criteria for each. These explain precisely what needs to be done in order to complete an element.



■ Introduction

Participation The *Local First* initiative is open to both municipalities and civil society organizations (both formal and informal). The implementation process has been designed to provide maximum flexibility and to enable participants to select the component, or components, that best meet their needs.

The implementation process consists of the following steps:

Assessment/Selection of Component(s)

An initial assessment will be conducted in conjunction with OSCE field staff. The aim of this assessment is to identify development needs and agree which components are most appropriate in meeting them. Since the *Local First* initiative has been designed to provide a flexible menu of interventions, deciding which components are the most appropriate is a critically important phase.

Implementation Agreement

An implementation agreement will be developed identifying how the selected component(s) will be achieved. In the case of participating municipalities, the implementation agreement will be signed by the Mayor and Speaker and ratified by the Municipal Assembly/Council. It will therefore represent a commitment by the municipality as a whole. The agreement will identify targets for a period of up to 12 months.

Action Plan

Action plans will be developed covering a period of at least three months. These will identify the activities to be undertaken during this period. Action plans must be realistic and achievable.

Implementation/Assessment

Assessments will be conducted at the end of each three month implementation period. These will consider progress against the action plan and lead to the development of a new action plan for the next three months. This process will then continue until the component has been completed. Participants will be required to publicize the results of the assessments to ensure that municipal assemblies/councils and citizens are kept informed of progress.

Component 1

Local First

**Municipal Assembly/
Council Support**



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

Elected bodies are crucially important at any level of government because they represent citizens and they are responsible for ensuring that citizens' views and opinions are translated into policies and services. This is a particular challenge for those elected to municipal assemblies and municipal councils (MA/MCs) because councillors are also members of the communities that they serve and they live and work alongside those who elected them. As a result, individual councillors and the MA/MC as a whole have a particular responsibility to work in the best interest of their communities and to ensure that public resources are used effectively and efficiently. Nevertheless, despite the importance of the MA/MC, municipal assistance programmes in BiH have primarily focused on strengthening executive functions, with comparatively little attention being paid to improving the work of elected representatives.

A constructive and professional relationship between the executive (mayor and administration) and the MA/MC is essential if municipalities are to function effectively. This requires a commitment by both to put the interests of citizens before political or personal gain and to focus on working in partnership to achieve common goals. The MA/MC has a key role to play in ensuring that the actions of the executive are consistent with the needs and wishes of the community. At a time of increasing municipal resources and stronger executive powers, it is even more important that councillors can monitor the work of the executive and hold it accountable for its performance.



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

What is the Purpose of this Component? MA/MCs must conduct their business in an efficient and effective manner and this requires careful planning, good management and streamlined procedures. It also requires councillors to understand the issues being discussed and to focus on achieving broad-based consensus and understanding, rather than narrow political victories. In doing so councillors must also be responsive to citizens and seek their views through regular consultation and dialogue. This is an essential ingredient of local democracy, because it strengthens both the legitimacy and effectiveness of decision making.

Aim The aim of the *Municipal Assembly/Council Support* component is **to develop the effectiveness of municipal assemblies/councils in representing citizens' interests.**



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

How Will it Work?

The *Municipal Assembly/Council Support* component will consist of three elements:

Element 1 – Improving Management of MA/MC Business

The aim of this element is to improve the capacity of the MA/MC to plan and manage its business, both in terms of the overall work plan and individual assembly/council sessions. This will focus on developing the capacity of MA/MC commissions and the expert service and provide support to key post holders such as the Secretary and Speaker, in addition to increasing the effectiveness of councillors. Streamlining MA/MC procedures will also be a priority.

Element 2 – Increasing the Accountability of the Executive

The aim of this element is to strengthen the capacity of the MA/MC to monitor and oversee the work of the executive. This will focus on improving the quality of reports submitted to the MA/MC and the quality and timeliness of the responses provided to councillors' enquiries. It will also introduce measures to improve MA/MC decisions since these are the key instrument through which the MA/MC gives direction. This will include incorporating the written opinions of the appropriate MA/MC commissions, in addition to providing details of the implementation process, and the introduction of an electronic database to track decisions.

Element 3 – Improving Communication with Citizens

The aim of this element is to improve communication between councillors and citizens. Councillors are elected to represent the interest of citizens for the duration of their mandate and this element will assist councillors to review and improve their communication with citizens in co-operation with local communities, NGOs and other interest groups. It will also strengthen councillors' direct involvement with constituencies and develop mechanisms for the public to provide feedback to the MA/MC.



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Improving Management of MA/MC Business

Standard	Criteria
1.1 MA/MC work plan adopted, publicized and implemented	<p>Relevant input from the Mayor's work plan, public institutions and existing municipal strategies reflected in MA/MC work plan</p> <p>Promotional activities developed and implemented</p> <p>Mid-year and annual report on implementation produced and presented to MA/MC and the public</p>
1.2 MA/MC sessions conducted legally and in accordance with Rules of Procedure	<p>Speaker and Secretary ensure that MA/MC sessions are run in accordance with Rules of Procedure</p> <p>Responsibility of MA/MC Secretary and expert service staff clarified in job descriptions</p> <p>At least two activities to improve relevant skills and knowledge attended by Speaker annually</p>
1.3 Preparations for MA/MC sessions completed	<p>Legality of the decisions submitted by the executive reviewed by the MA/MC Commission for Regulations and Secretary</p> <p>Collegium convened before the session and minutes are distributed to MA/MC</p> <p>Complete MA/MC session materials circulated on time in line with Rules of Procedure</p>



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Improving Management of MA/MC Business

Standard	Criteria
1.4 Councillors actively participate in MA/MC sessions	<p>Councillors' attendance and voting records (where possible) maintained and made public</p> <p>Decisions adopted by councillors in line with competencies of the MA/MC</p> <p>At least two activities to improve relevant skills and knowledge attended by councillors every year</p>
1.5 Selection criteria for external MA/MC commission members established	<p>Vacant positions for external commission members advertised publicly, clearly specifying the expertise required</p> <p>Councillors appointed to MA/MC commissions on the basis of their expertise and interest in the commission's work</p> <p>Commission membership broadly representative of the community</p>
1.6 Commissions' work plans developed and regularly reported against	<p>Commissions' work and reporting conducted in accordance with their Rules of Procedure/Terms of Reference</p> <p>At least 75 per cent of all commission meetings attended by commission members every year</p> <p>Sufficient municipal resources to support the implementation of commissions' work plans allocated</p> <p>At least two activities to improve relevant skills and knowledge attended by members of commissions every year</p>



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Increasing the Accountability of the Executive

Standard	Criteria
2.1 Procedures for MA/MC to monitor the executive established and followed	Executive's obligation to respond to councillors' questions and the procedures to address a failure to do so outlined in Rules of Procedure Rules of Procedure adhered to by executive
2.2 Standardized format for reporting to MA/MC developed	Format developed and agreed by MA/MC and parties that report to it Reports submitted in accordance with the agreed format
2.3 MA/MC decisions procedurally sound	Proposed decisions submitted together with the written opinion of the appropriate MA/MC commission Procedures for implementation specified in the decisions, including person(s) responsible, resources and timelines (where applicable)
2.4 Database of decisions created and maintained by MA/MC	Database of decisions created, used and maintained by a nominated individual Quarterly reports provided to MA/MC giving an overview of decisions adopted, implemented and reasons for non-implementation (where applicable) Database available upon request Implementation rate of decisions increased



■ *Municipal Assembly/Council Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – Improving Communication with Citizens

Standard	Criteria
3.1 Mechanisms for communication between MA/MC, councillors, working bodies and citizens established	<p>Mechanisms for communication between MA/MC, councillors and working bodies and citizens established in an internal document</p> <p>Communication mechanisms established should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">MA/MC sessions and commission meetings open to publicMA/MC discusses issues raised by citizensCitizens encouraged by MA/MC to apply for positions in MA/MC bodiesCouncillors given responsibility for particular MZs
3.2 MA/MC's and councillors' work evaluated by citizens	<p>Procedure(s) to evaluate MA/MC's and councillors' work by citizens established</p> <p>Feedback from citizens sought by councillors on a regular basis</p>
3.3 Citizen participation mechanisms used effectively	<p>Citizen participation mechanisms promoted and publicized</p> <p>Effectiveness of citizen participation mechanisms evaluated at least once every year</p>

Component 2

Local First

Municipal Management and Accountability



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

The purpose of the *Municipal Management and Accountability* component is to provide municipalities with the capacity to meet citizens' aspirations for modern, efficient, effective and accountable local government. Citizens' demands for more and better services place increasing pressure on scarce human and financial resources and this, in turn, requires municipalities to adjudicate in a transparent manner between those demands. This is a particular challenge for smaller municipalities and those that are situated in rural areas, far away from urban political centres.

While municipalities face significant challenges, new opportunities will arise when BiH progresses along the path towards EU integration. However, if municipalities are to take advantage of such opportunities, they must be able to demonstrate that they have the capacity to manage resources efficiently and work in the interests of their citizens. This includes the capacity to plan strategically, to implement those plans effectively, to manage financial and human resources responsibly and to reach out to and respond to citizens.

Aim

The aim of the *Municipal Management and Accountability* component is **to develop the core competencies required by an effective, efficient and accountable municipality.**



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

How Will it Work?

The *Municipal Management and Accountability* component consists of three distinct, but interrelated, elements:

Element 1 – Improving Planning Capacity

This element will develop the capacity for participatory development planning and implementation. It will involve the creation of a development plan or revision of an existing plan. This will provide the starting point for the development of annual action plans and the creation of systematic links between these and the budget process. Effective planning will also provide the basis for reviewing the municipality's need for human and financial resources and for establishing greater accountability to citizens.

Element 2 – Strengthening Management Capacity

This element will develop the municipality's capacity for transparent budgeting and human resource management. In terms of financial management this will involve the creation of clear and transparent budget documents and the establishment of a functional Budget and Finance Commission in the municipal assembly/municipal council (MA/MC). It will also involve the review of current expenditure and sources of income in order to identify measures to increase capital investment and to develop funding criteria for MZs and NGOs. Work to improve human resource management will concentrate on revising the existing municipal organizational structure and related job descriptions to ensure that they reflect current strategic priorities and legal requirements.

Element 3 – Increasing Accountability

This element will strengthen citizen participation mechanisms, implement the Freedom of Access to Information Act (FOIA), introduce a Code of Ethics for elected officials and improve reporting by the executive to the MA/MC. These are all important steps in strengthening the influence of citizens and in ensuring that municipalities work in their interests.



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Improving Development Planning Capacity

Standard	Criteria
1.1 Municipal development team (MDT) established and operational	<p>MDT established by MA/MC decision with terms of reference and membership broadly representative of the community</p> <p>MDT work plan created and progress reports produced at least every six months</p> <p>Responsibilities for the development and implementation of the municipal strategic plan included in job descriptions for Heads of Departments</p>
1.2 Strategic plan created/updated in consultation with citizens	<p>Awareness campaign on strategic plan and analysis to identify strategic priorities conducted</p> <p>Draft strategic plan created and revised following public consultation</p> <p>Strategic plan finalized and made available to the public</p>
1.3 Strategic plan implemented	<p>Formal body to oversee implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and updating of the strategic plan appointed by MA/MC</p> <p>Annual action plan published and budget funds allocated for selected priority project(s)</p> <p>Annual progress report published and presented to MA/MC and citizens</p> <p>Strategic plan revised in accordance with progress report (if necessary)</p>



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Strengthening Management Capacity

Standard	Criteria
2.1 Transparent budget process established	<p>Budget documents prepared and adopted in accordance with budget regulations</p> <p>Quarterly budget execution reports accepted/adopted by MA/MC</p> <p>Citizens proactively involved by municipality in the development and execution of the budget</p> <p>Mechanisms to obtain input from citizens to the budget developed by municipality and feedback to their proposals provided</p>
2.2 MA/MC Commission for Budget and Finance established and operational	<p>Budget and Finance Commission, consisting of members with appropriate expertise, appointed</p> <p>Written opinions on all issues that have financial implications provided by Budget and Finance Commission to MA/MC</p>
2.3 Development part of municipal budget increased	<p>Capital element of the budget increased in absolute and relative terms compared to previous year's budget</p> <p>Realized expenditures reviewed and measures for improvement prepared and submitted to Mayor</p> <p>Document on possible external funding sources prepared and related activities undertaken</p> <p>At least one proposal for capital investment developed by municipality</p> <p>Ratio of MZ and NGO funding based on projects (as opposed to unconditional lump sum funding) increased</p>



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Strengthening Management Capacity

Standard	Criteria
2.4 Municipal organizational review completed	<p>Decision to harmonize municipal organizational structure with legal requirements, strategic priorities, and available resources taken and appropriate body appointed</p> <p>Report with recommendations for revising the organizational structure developed and submitted to Mayor</p> <p>Implementation plan for revising the organizational structure developed and implementation begun</p> <p>Responsibilities for conducting an annual review of the organizational structure included in Heads of Departments' job descriptions</p>



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – Improving Accountability

Standard	Criteria
3.1 Mechanisms for citizen participation developed	Municipal policy documents identifying mechanisms for citizen participation adopted or revised At least one publication explaining citizen participation mechanisms developed
3.2 Citizen participation mechanisms effectively used	Citizen participation mechanisms promoted and publicized Effectiveness of citizen participation mechanisms evaluated at least once
3.3 Citizens' access to public information ensured by municipality	A post responsible for the Information Officer's duties identified by Rulebook on Internal Organization FOIA implemented and publicized



■ *Municipal Management and Accountability*

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – Improving Accountability

Standard	Criteria
3.4 Code of Ethics for elected officials implemented	Assessment to identify issues to be addressed by the Code of Ethics conducted Draft Code of Ethics approved by MA/MC and public hearing conducted Code of Ethics approved by MA/MC and Rules of Procedure amended accordingly Board of Ethics appointed, annual work plan developed and reflected in the municipal budget Report from Board of Ethics submitted to MA/MC at least twice a year
3.5 Standardized format for reporting to MA/MC developed	Format developed and agreed by MA/MC and parties that report to it Reports submitted in accordance with the agreed format

Component 3

Local First

Community
Engagement



■ *Community Engagement*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

The purpose of the *Community Engagement* component is to increase the level and quality of citizens' engagement with municipalities. While instruments of transparency and accountability are substantially in place in many municipalities, they are mostly new and their use by citizens is often limited. Increasing engagement by citizens is essential if these mechanisms are to become sustainable.

It is also important to broaden citizens' engagement with municipalities in order to include those groups that are reluctant or unable to make their voices heard and whose participation is currently very limited. Unless this happens there is little prospect of a genuinely inclusive local democracy and every likelihood that the views of those already in positions of influence will predominate. This component will therefore specifically target young people, rural communities and those who live at the margins of society and are under-represented in the democratic process.

Aim

The aim of the *Community Engagement* component is to **develop the capacity of citizens to initiate and take action to benefit their communities in partnership with municipalities.**



■ *Community Engagement*

How Will it Work?

The *Community Engagement* component will focus on increasing participation of three main target groups:

Rural Communities

Activities will focus on developing the capacity of rural communities to influence local policies. They will develop or strengthen structures through which rural communities can communicate with the municipalities which can also act as a means of identifying and addressing community concerns.

Hard to Reach Groups

The focus will be on supporting marginalized groups of citizens to become active in public life, bearing in mind that what constitutes 'hard to reach groups' will vary from municipality to municipality.

Young People

To encourage young people to become engaged in public life, youth groups will be supported to use specific mechanisms of youth participation and to lobby municipalities to address issues that are priorities for them.

In any community some groups of citizens will be more active than others as citizens will differ in their capacities, their level of motivation and their ability to access resources. The implementation of this component will therefore be based on three elements which contain a range of capacity building interventions. These elements provide a 'menu' of interventions that can be packaged to address the different needs of citizens.



■ *Community Engagement*

How Will it Work?

The three elements of the *Community Engagement* component focus on enabling citizens to take action to solve problems and to address issues of concern.

Element 1 – Action through Information

The aim of this element is to assist citizens to identify issues or problems and to obtain the information necessary to address them. It focuses on developing citizens' understanding of their legal rights and obligations and the mechanisms that are available at the municipal level to enable them to participate. Citizens will also be introduced to the basic skills necessary to plan and implement an initiative addressing an issue that is of concern to the community, using their own resources.

Element 2 – Action through Community Co-operation

The aim of this element is to assist citizens to address issues in co-operation with each other by pooling resources. It focuses on developing the capacity to form broad-based networks to address problems and to implement solutions. This will be achieved by supporting community groups to take action on their own behalf and to lobby municipalities to introduce policies or services that address community needs. This element also seeks to strengthen the role of local communities (mjesne zajednice, MZs) as a means of developing cohesive communities and as a way of influencing municipal policies and service delivery.

Element 3 – Action through Partnership

The aim of this element is to develop the capacity of citizens to work in partnership with municipalities to provide services, solve problems or implement municipal tasks. This element focuses on developing a capacity for joint problem identification, joint planning, joint implementation and joint evaluation. It will also encourage civil society organizations to take responsibility for promoting the importance and benefits of participation and partnership in order to stimulate greater and more inclusive involvement of citizens.



■ *Community Engagement*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Action through Information

Standard	Criteria
1.1 Rights and obligations regarding participation and accountability understood by citizens	Assistance and advice to ensure that citizens are aware of their rights and responsibilities provided to municipality by MZs and civil society organizations
	Information campaigns to explain the opportunities available for citizen participation developed, organized and implemented by MZs and civil society organizations
1.2 Mechanisms for participation established by municipality used by citizens	Assistance and advice to improve the information available to citizens about existing mechanisms for participation provided to municipality by MZs and civil society organizations
	Number of citizens taking advantage of opportunities for participation through, for example, public hearings, meetings, use of FOIA, increased



■ *Community Engagement*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Action through Information

Standard	Criteria
1.3 Increased understanding of the principles of volunteerism and increased commitment to volunteerism demonstrated by citizens	Number of citizens involved in voluntary actions to benefit their communities increased Role of the local volunteer services strengthened with their purpose and value better understood by citizens
1.4 Issues of concern to the community indentified and addressed by citizens	Co-operation to address issues of concern strengthened between citizen groups, especially youth, marginalized groups and rural communities Increased number of activities undertaken or problems solved using the community's expertise and resources Achievements regularly publicized in the local media



■ *Community Engagement*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Action through Community Co-operation

Standard	Criteria
2.1 MZs recognized and established as a focus for building cohesive communities	MZ regulatory frameworks developed/ revised in line with existing legislation, recognizing their accountability to citizens Information and communication strategies developed and implemented by MZs
2.2 Citizens assisted by MZs/civil society organizations in contributing to the development of the municipal budget	MZs gain citizens' views/opinions on issues to be included in the municipal budget MZs' proposals for inclusion in the municipal budget developed in line with citizens' views Priorities of youth, marginalized groups, and rural communities addressed in MZs'/civil society organizations' proposals



■ *Community Engagement*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Action through Community Co-operation

Standard	Criteria
2.3 Networks to address issues of their concern developed by citizens	<p>Citizens' views/opinions on issues of concern identified</p> <p>Collaboration of different citizen groups to address issues/problems established and action plans developed</p> <p>Projects/initiatives to address issues/problems planned and implemented by citizen groups/MZs</p> <p>Citizens' positive view of introduced changes evident and confirmed</p>
2.4 Municipality's performance actively monitored by citizens and actions to address shortcomings taken	<p>Monitoring groups to scrutinize the performance of the municipality in a selected issue area established by citizens/MZs</p> <p>Citizens' opinion of municipal performance publicized through reports, media and directly to municipality (as appropriate)</p> <p>Changes/improvements in municipal performance identified and lobbied for by citizens</p>



■ *Community Engagement*

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – Action through Partnership

Standard	Criteria
3.1 Basis for partnership established	Issues that can be addressed in partnership jointly identified by citizens, MZs, and municipality Partners with relevant capacity and interest identified
3.2 Partnership plan developed and implemented	Partnership agreement and/or implementation plan specifying responsibilities, resources, outputs and timelines developed Implementation conducted in line with the plan/agreement Regular reports on the implementation made available to partners and the public



■ *Community Engagement*

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – Action through Partnership

Standard	Criteria
3.3 Impact of the partnership initiative jointly evaluated by citizens/MZs and the municipality	Implementation evaluated by partners to determine whether the planned results were achieved and results publicized Citizens' opinion about success of partnership initiative sought
3.4 Partnership established as a common practice	Examples of successful participation and partnership promoted by citizens/MZs and municipality Lessons learned used as the basis for planning and implementing further partnership initiatives

Component 4

Local First

**Inter-Municipal
Learning and Support**



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

The purpose of the *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support* component is to encourage municipalities to identify and meet their own development needs. Many municipalities in BiH face similar problems and some have successfully met challenges and introduced improved or innovative practices. As a result, there is an opportunity to encourage municipalities to pool their expertise and experience to solve common problems, or to enable those facing difficult issues to benefit from those who have been successful in addressing them. Over time this type of inter-municipal learning and support will create the foundation for a sustainable municipal development strategy that is not dependent on international support. It will also encourage innovation in problem solving and provide municipalities with the capacity to identify and address issues together and in partnership with higher levels of government.

Promoting inter-municipal learning and support involves more than an exchange of good practices. It requires structured co-operation between two or more municipalities as it is a learning process with multiple activities and not simply a one-off event. A strategic approach is therefore needed that involves the identification of a problem or issue, agreement on a solution or end state, and a plan linking the two. This approach can take many forms. It may involve a relationship between two municipalities where the need for support or learning in a certain issue area is matched by the supply of knowledge in the same field. On the other hand, it may involve the creation of a network where municipalities work together to find joint solutions to common problems. Irrespective of the form it takes, the effectiveness of inter-municipal learning and support will be determined by the extent to which it leads to improvements in participating municipalities and increased satisfaction of citizens with municipal performance.

Aim

The aim of the *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support* component is **to enable municipalities to co-operate in meeting their own development needs.**



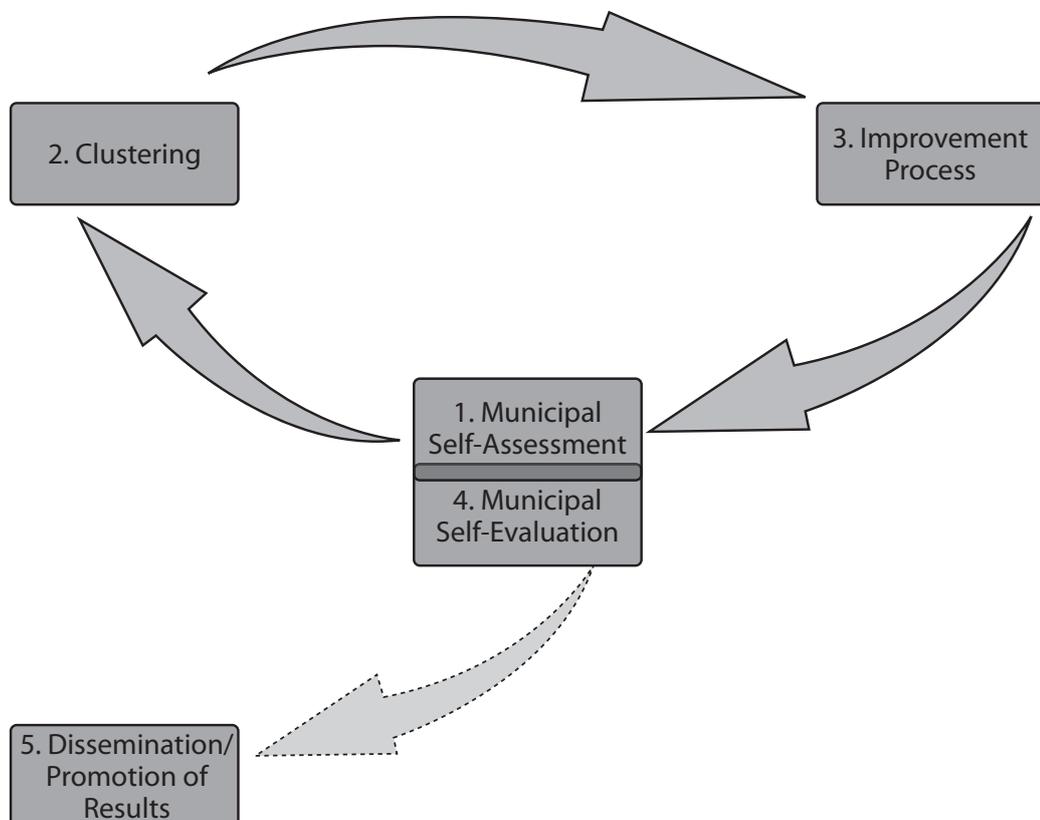
■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

How Will it Work?

The *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support* component will assist municipalities to form partnerships and networks to address issues of common concern. The aim is to consolidate and improve good governance standards that have been achieved, or to develop new approaches to address current and future challenges. The latter might include issues such as difficulties in delivering services, lack of citizen satisfaction with services, or problems in developing and implementing new policies.

The BiH Beacon Scheme, which annually recognizes municipalities across the country that have achieved high standards in certain themes, can reinforce learning and support initiatives. Beacon municipalities have an obligation to share their best practices with other municipalities. If municipalities select issues which have been Beacon themes they can take advantage of the expertise available in Beacon municipalities.

The *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support* component consists of a cycle with four core elements and an optional dissemination element:





■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

How Will it Work?

Element 1 – Municipal Self-Assessment

The aim of this element is to enable municipalities to identify the areas where improvement or consolidation is necessary, or where there is a requirement to develop new and innovative approaches. Municipalities will assess their performance against benchmarks of good governance in co-operation with OSCE field teams and identify areas requiring improvement, consolidation, or innovation. The aim is to identify areas that are of concern to both municipalities and citizens that can be realistically addressed through a learning network or partnership.

Element 2 – Clustering

The aim of this element is to link municipalities that have identified the same issues so that they can support each other. This will lead to the formation of a network consisting of several municipalities, or partnership between two municipalities, depending on the issue identified.

Once membership of the network or partnership has been agreed, municipalities will identify individuals to represent them. It is important that these municipal representatives are competent in the areas being addressed and are able to commit the necessary amount of time.



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

How Will it Work?

Element 3 – Improvement Process

This element seeks to identify the aim of the network or partnership and develop an action plan. The first step is to agree on the issue and define it in terms of its implications for the municipality and its impact on citizens. The desired result should then be agreed and an action plan developed and approved by mayors. Depending on the issue addressed, the municipal assemblies/municipal councils (MA/MCs) of participating municipalities will either be informed about the action plan, or asked to approve it.

Once agreed, the action plan will be implemented, using some of the mechanisms outlined in Annex A. Networks may appoint a chairperson and develop rules of procedure, but this is not obligatory. Municipalities can decide to host the network on a rotational basis, or devise some other arrangement. It is important that citizens are informed at every stage of the process. If issues require the involvement of higher levels of government, the feasibility of involving the relevant Cantonal or Entity authorities will need to be considered.



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

How Will it Work?

Element 4 – Municipal Self-Evaluation

The aim of this element is to enable municipalities to determine whether the desired result has been achieved. This element should consider what has been achieved in terms of changes in municipal practices and the impact on citizens. The results will determine whether there is a continued need to address the issue originally identified. Municipal self-evaluation can also lead to the identification of new issues and, therefore, constitute the basis for further self-assessment (Element 1). Municipalities must inform citizens about the results achieved and any further action planned.

Element 5 (Optional) – Dissemination/Promotion of Results

This optional element provides municipalities with the possibility of publicizing their results so that other municipalities and citizens that were not involved can benefit. One or more of the following mechanisms (for details see Annex A) can be used to disseminate the results and achievements:

- Case studies
- Toolkits/information packs
- Publications/articles
- Website
- CD – ROMs/multimedia
- Open days
- Seminars/conferences



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Municipal Self-Assessment

Standard	Criteria
1.1 Municipal learning/ development priorities reflecting citizens' concerns identified	Municipal self-assessment to identify issues requiring improvement, consolidation or innovation conducted Public opinion research to gauge the satisfaction of citizens in areas identified by municipal self-assessment conducted (if necessary) Results of self-assessment and public opinion research published



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Clustering

Standard	Criteria
2.1 Establishment and membership of network/ partnership agreed	Priority issue(s) agreed upon by municipality Municipality agrees to participate in a network/ partnership Municipal network representative(s) appointed



■ Inter-Municipal Learning and Support

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – The Improvement Process

Standard	Criteria
3.1 Network/ partnership action plan developed	<p>Identified issues, the desired result and an outline of how it will be achieved included in an action plan covering a period of at least six months</p> <p>Action plan approved by the Mayor and presented to/ approved by MA/MC (as appropriate)</p> <p>Citizens informed about municipality's involvement in the network/partnership</p>
3.2 Network operational and functioning and used by municipality to improve practices and increase citizen satisfaction	<p>Network procedures agreed where relevant (for example, the appointment of a chairperson and creation of rules of procedure)</p> <p>Network/partnership activities (meetings/learning events, etc.) held at least every four to six weeks in accordance with the action plan</p> <p>Network members updated by each other on progress and obstacles during network meetings</p> <p>Relevant municipal staff, the Mayor, and the MA/MC updated by participants on the progress of the network (at least every two months)</p> <p>Other relevant organizations involved as necessary (Cantonal/Entity/State authorities, Associations of Municipalities, Towns and Cities, etc.)</p>



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 3 – The Improvement Process

Standard	Criteria
3.3 New and improved practices introduced by the municipality and the satisfaction of citizens increased	Improved results shown in municipal self-evaluation



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 4 – Municipal Self-Evaluation

Standard	Criteria
4.1 Results of the improvement process evaluated	Results measured against action plan and initial self-assessment Public opinion research conducted and compared to initial research Effectiveness of network evaluated by members
4.2 Agreement on follow-up established	Measures to increase sustainability of achievements identified New issues identified by municipalities (if appropriate)
4.3 Results promoted/ disseminated within municipalities	Mayor, municipal staff, MA/MC informed about results Citizens/wider public informed about results



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

What Does it Involve? Element 5 (Optional) – Dissemination/Promotion of Results

Standard	Criteria
5.1 Results promoted/ disseminated externally	Optional: Dissemination tools used in order to promote results to all relevant stakeholders



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

Annex A

This Annex outlines some of the mechanisms that can be used by municipalities to support each other in consolidating standards of good governance, introducing improvements or developing new and innovative practices. The Annex identifies three types of mechanisms: group activities, one-to-one activities and publications.

Group Activities

Study Visits

Study visits are structured exchanges of experience and knowledge between individuals or small groups. Study visits can last for several days, but it is likely that most will be for one or two days. They involve visits to one municipality by staff members of other municipalities in order to gain first hand experience of the achievements and practice of the host municipality. Study visits should be structured to meet clearly defined goals and should involve a certain amount of hands-on experience such as spending time in a department or discussing issues with staff. Study visits can be planned for a range of participants, including municipal councillors and officials in addition to technical and managerial staff.

Seminars/Conferences

Seminars and conferences provide opportunities for municipal staff and guest speakers to discuss and analyse their experiences and achievements. They are particularly useful for analysing innovations. Seminars and conferences involve a wide range of participants representing diverse interests in the issue being discussed. These might include municipal representatives, regional development agencies, professors, local business leaders, NGOs and local community representatives.



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

Annex A

Group Activities

Open Days

Open days are large events providing intensive learning sessions that put the host municipality in the spotlight and offer attendees ideas which they can put into practice in their own municipalities. Presentations by the host municipality at these events provide detailed insight into their experiences. Open days offer a platform for networking as inter-municipal relationships can be forged at these events, allowing municipalities to work closer together in the future. The number of participating municipalities can be large at these events.

Discussion Forums

The internet provides an ideal forum for discussion through e-mail lists or web-based discussions that enable rapid sharing of ideas and information.



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

Annex A

One-to-one Activities

Shadowing

Shadowing involves an employee from one municipality visiting another municipality in order to learn from the work of an employee in the host municipality. The visiting municipal representative acts as an observer and does not carry out any operational tasks. The visiting municipal representative views, records and questions, and reflects on and analyses what has been observed at the end of the visit in order to implement appropriate practices of the host municipality. The arrangements for shadowing are flexible and should be agreed between the municipalities involved.

Peer-to-Peer Reviews

Peer-to-peer reviews involve one municipality reviewing, assessing or commenting on an aspect of the work of another. The municipality that conducts the review usually has a skill, knowledge, understanding or achievement that the other municipality wishes to obtain. The reviews allow the more advanced municipality to provide advice to another municipality on how to improve performance.



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

Annex A

One-to-one Activities

Technical Consultancies

Technical consultancies involve one municipality providing advice to another on a particular issue over a period of time. Consultancies are particularly useful when two or more municipalities plan to establish a long-term partnership.

Mentoring

Mentoring takes place when a municipality that is performing well or has good practices supports another municipality (or municipalities) that wish to emulate what has been achieved. The municipality acting as a mentor provides advice, support and encouragement to municipalities which would like to learn more. This can be in a specific issue area, including areas of a highly technical nature. A mentor is like a teacher or adviser who leads through guidance and example. Mentoring can also provide a basis for two or more municipalities to establish a long-term partnership.



■ *Inter-Municipal Learning and Support*

Annex A

Publications **Case Studies**

Case studies are an analysis of particular issues where municipalities have special achievements. Case studies can focus on a single issue or cover a broad area, such as a whole service or department. The 'case' is analysed to highlight what has happened, the strengths and weaknesses, lessons learned and the extent to which what has been achieved in one municipality can be transferred to another.

Toolkits/Information Packs

While case studies attempt to analyse the underlying dynamics, toolkits/information packs focus on more technical issues and provide a step-by-step guide to the practices of municipalities. Toolkits/information packs can be used as reference guides by municipalities seeking to improve performance.

Publications/Articles

Publications and articles can take many forms and they provide a useful way of communicating about practices and innovations. Municipal websites can be an appropriate platform for publishing articles.

Information Technology (IT)

IT provides many channels for information exchange. It is useful when large amounts of information need to be transmitted quickly, but it is obviously limited to those who have the necessary connections and equipment.

Component 5

Local First

Media and
Communication



■ *Media and Communication*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

The purpose of the *Media and Communication* component is to strengthen the capacity of the media to act as a vehicle of communication between municipalities and citizens and as a forum for the expression of citizens' views and opinions.

The media provide an important link between municipalities and the public. Developing the capacity of municipalities to use the media effectively as part of an integrated strategy to communicate with citizens is therefore important. Effective use of the media can increase citizens' participation in government, but only if the media report accurately and only if journalists act responsibly. At the same time, municipalities should exploit the full potential of the media to inform citizens and gather the views of the public.

This component will therefore support the development of local media that operate according to acceptable professional and ethical standards and build the capacity of citizens to insist that reporting is balanced, accurate and relevant. It will provide assistance to support municipalities to work in partnership with civil society and local media and to develop communication strategies. These will provide the basis for improving communication with citizens, especially via the media. Training in basic communication and outreach techniques will develop the skills necessary to put these strategies into practice.

Aim

The aim of the *Media and Communication* component is **to develop the capacity of the media to act as responsible interlocutors between local government and citizens.**



■ *Media and Communication*

How Will it Work?

The *Media and Communication* component will consist of two elements:

Element 1 – Media in My Community

The aim of this element is to strengthen dialogue between media, local authorities and citizens in smaller communities in order to improve the quality and relevance of local reporting. This element will focus on the development of ‘community-based journalism’ where the media report issues that are of concern to citizens and where citizens draw attention to cases where this does not happen. In this way citizens set standards and hold journalists accountable for their performance. They also assist journalists to create features that accurately reflect their communities. Public discussions will be held to identify problems and then solutions developed and implemented to address them. This element will also focus on ensuring that publically funded media in particular provide value for money in the eyes of citizens. Incentives will be provided to encourage local broadcast media operating in smaller communities to cover stories that promote community cohesion, citizen participation and highlight positive developments in these communities.

Element 2 – Public Outreach

The aim of this element is to strengthen the capacity of municipalities to communicate with citizens, especially through the media. It will focus on developing an understanding of communication mechanisms, effective public information strategies, image development, corporate identity, media relations, and public appearance. This element involves the development of municipal communication strategies in partnership with local media and civil society. In many municipalities such strategies exist but have not been implemented and ensuring that they are will therefore be a priority.



■ *Media and Communication*

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Media in My Community

Standard	Criteria
1.1 Co-operation between municipality, media and citizens established	<p>Public consultation undertaken and working group to identify what needs to be done to improve local reporting established</p> <p>Action plan based on the results of public consultation developed and responsibilities for implementing improvements identified</p> <p>Commitment of working group members to the implementation of the action plan reflected in its formal endorsement</p> <p>Improvements to local media and amendments to communication strategy introduced in line with the action plan</p> <p>Implementation of the action plan evaluated and judged positively by citizens</p>
1.2 Issues of relevance and concern to citizens addressed by local media	<p>Improvements in local media reporting achieved via citizen initiatives</p> <p>Satisfaction of citizens with local media increased</p>



■ *Media and Communication*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Public Outreach

Standard	Criteria
2.1 Municipal communication strategy developed	<p>Municipal representatives trained in communication skills and outreach techniques</p> <p>Public consultation undertaken by municipality and views of citizens and local media incorporated into communication strategy</p> <p>Action plan adopted explaining how strategy will be implemented and activities outlined reflected in the municipal budget</p> <p>Focal point responsible for public relations in the municipality appointed and professional development needs identified</p>



■ *Media and Communication*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Public Outreach

Standard	Criteria
2.2 Municipal communication strategy implemented	<p>Monitoring of the implementation of the communication strategy co-ordinated by public relations focal point</p> <p>Progress reports provided to MA/MC and citizens at least every six months</p> <p>Database of relevant regular contacts and media developed and maintained by municipality</p> <p>New and improved methods of communication between municipality and citizens; municipality and the media; and internally within the municipality established, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Municipal official templates developed and used• Regular press conferences held by municipality• At least five press releases issued by municipality annually• Municipal website developed and updated at least monthly

Component 6

Local First

Youth Access
to Employment



■ *Youth Access to Employment*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

The purpose of the *Youth Access to Employment* component is to strengthen the capacity of young people to take advantage of employment and business opportunities.

Although young people in BiH suffer from a multitude of problems, most place unemployment at the top of their list of concerns. Young people feel impotent in the face of a depressed economy and a lack of understanding about how to compete more effectively for limited employment opportunities compounds their frustrations. Only by overcoming such obstacles will young people feel that they have a future in BiH and only then will they feel that there is any value in becoming active in public life. The economic empowerment of young people is therefore necessary if they are to become active citizens. It is also important in promoting local economic development.

This component will pursue a strategy that has already brought some success – that of improving co-operation among agencies responsible for employment and local economic development by encouraging them to pool their resources and expertise and to put these at the disposal of young people. Training will be provided for young people wishing to start a business and a support network for young entrepreneurs will be created. In addition, municipalities will receive assistance to create strategies to encourage youth employment as integral elements of their plans for local development.

Aim

The aim of the *Youth Access to Employment* component is **to develop the capacity of young people to take advantage of employment and business opportunities.**



■ *Youth Access to Employment*

How Will it Work?

The *Youth Access to Employment* component will consist of two elements:

Element 1 – Access to Jobs

The aim of this element is to assist young people to compete for employment opportunities. Support will be provided to organize job fairs where young people can meet potential employers, employment bureaus and other specialist sources of assistance. These events will present young people with job opportunities and, by bringing them face to face with potential employers, begin to break down the prejudice that the latter often have about young people's supposedly negative attitudes to work.

Element 2 – Access to Business

The aim of this element is to assist young people to start their own business. It will provide training for young people wishing to start a business. It will also create a support network for young entrepreneurs in partnership with specialist organizations, such as regional development agencies, business associations and micro-credit agencies. In addition, municipalities will receive assistance to develop strategies to encourage the creation of new businesses by young people as integral elements of their plans for local development.



■ Youth Access to Employment

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Access to Jobs

Standard	Criteria
1.1 Opportunities for young people to access employment created	<p>Events, such as job and information fairs, bringing young people into contact with employers, organized in partnership with municipality, employment bureaus, regional development agencies and other specialist organizations</p> <p>Training in job search skills, CV writing and interview skills provided to young people</p> <p>Applications accepted and jobs offered to young people by potential employers</p>
1.2 Job creation for young people supported by municipality	<p>Initiatives, such as job fairs and information events, to support young people's efforts to find jobs planned and implemented by municipality</p> <p>Young people provided with opportunities to gain work experience by municipality and other employers</p> <p>Creation of jobs for young people acknowledged by municipality as a priority in its development strategy</p>
1.3 Inter-agency co-operation to address youth unemployment strengthened	<p>Co-operation established among regional development agencies, employment bureaus, chambers of commerce, youth NGOs, micro-credit institutions and municipality to develop and implement initiatives addressing youth unemployment</p> <p>Recruitment of young people to fill vacant positions prioritized by the business sector</p>



■ Youth Access to Employment

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Access to Business

Standard	Criteria
2.1 Young people's understanding of the procedures for establishing new businesses improved	Procedures for self-employment presented to young people by relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies
	Training and information on registering and running new businesses and writing business plans provided to young people
2.2 Businesses established or developed by young people	Business plans developed by young people
	Young people's access to specialist support and funding for business start-up and development improved
	Number of businesses registered by young people increased



■ Youth Access to Employment

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Access to Business

Standard	Criteria
2.3 Young people encouraged by municipality to open businesses	Support for business development provided by municipality via incentives for young people Business creation by young people acknowledged by municipality as a priority in its development strategy
2.4 Inter-agency co-operation to address youth unemployment strengthened	Co-operation established among regional development agencies, employment bureaus, chambers of commerce, youth NGOs, micro-credit institutions and municipality to develop and implement initiatives to support young entrepreneurs Relevant advice on establishing and running new businesses provided to young people

Component 7

Local First

Project
Management



■ *Project Management*

What is the Purpose of this Component?

The purpose of the *Project Management* component is to strengthen the capacity of municipalities and citizens to co-operate in identifying issues of common interest and concern and to plan, implement and evaluate a project in response. By developing the knowledge and skills required for effective project planning and implementation, this component will assist municipalities and civil society organizations to improve their capacity to design effective projects.

Many municipalities have adopted strategic development plans and many have identified the projects that need to be implemented in order to achieve the plans' objectives. However, realizing these projects requires careful planning and design, effective implementation and thorough monitoring and evaluation. Experience shows that effective projects are developed and implemented with the participation of those who will be affected by, or have an interest in, their implementation. Failure to take account of the environment in which projects are implemented can lead to risks not being identified. This can compromise the impact and effectiveness of the project.

Project management is more than a technical activity of writing proposals, constructing a budget and developing a plan. It also involves building relationships and achieving compromise and agreement about what needs to be done and how to do it. In this way effective project management can be instrumental in strengthening communication between citizens and municipalities and in building consensus. It also provides the basis for strengthening partnership between citizens and municipalities.

Aim

The aim of the *Project Management* component is **to develop the capacity of municipalities and citizens to work in partnership to identify and meet their community's development needs.**



■ *Project Management*

How Will it Work?

The *Project Management* component will consist of two elements:

Element 1 – Training in Project Management

The aim of this element is to provide municipalities and citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and plan an effective project. The training will be a combination of presentations and practical exercises designed to develop skills and knowledge in problem identification, stakeholder analysis and project design. The latter will focus on the development of the logical framework as a basis for project design and management.

Element 2 – Project Design and Implementation

The aim of this element is to support municipalities and citizens in the design and implementation of a project to address an issue identified by them. It will focus on ensuring that the skills and knowledge provided through the training element are put into practice.



■ Project Management

What Does it Involve? Element 1 – Training in Project Management

Standard	Criteria
1.1 Knowledge and skills necessary to develop and implement effective projects developed	Participants with relevant expertise and interest and able to commit to regular attendance of training sessions identified
	Project management training course planned and agreed with participants
	Training in problem and stakeholder analysis, project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation provided
1.2 Knowledge and skills gained demonstrated in practical exercises	Training simulations in problem and stakeholder analysis, project design and implementation successfully completed by participants



■ *Project Management*

What Does it Involve? Element 2 – Project Design and Implementation

Standard	Criteria
2.1 Project designed in accordance with the principles and practice of effective project management	Issue to be addressed by the project identified in accordance with the principles of participative problem solving At least one project designed based on appropriate use of project management techniques
2.2 Projects implemented in accordance with the principles and practice of effective project management	At least one project implemented Internal or external evaluation undertaken in accordance with the principles of project management



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