

## Regional Seminar on Promoting Local Government Reform and Good Governance at the Local Level, 7-8 December 2011, Kiev

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**“Deepening citizens’ engagement with municipalities as a means of ensuring an equitable and accountable allocation of public goods and services”**



## OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina's (OMBiH) – mandate and focus

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- Mandate - assisted BiH to meet its OSCE commitments and to progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration by developing democratically accountable institutions that respect diversity, promote consensus and respect the rule of law.
- Focus - Support to all levels of government, but focus on local governance as strengthening democracy starts at level closest to citizens
- Achievements - Last 10 years implementation of large –scale local governance projects – UGOVOR, MAP, Beacon Scheme – establishing basic mechanisms of transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness



## Local Governance – Remaining Challenges

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- Increasing governance disparities among municipalities
- Fragile sustainability of already achieved good governance standards
- Weak checks and balances- councils/assemblies
- Low civic involvement in municipal affairs
- Unstable policy and regulatory framework



## Local First Initiative – Goal and Objectives

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### Goal

Deepening citizens' engagement with municipalities as a means of ensuring the equitable and accountable allocation of public goods and services

### Objectives

To promote the development of citizens' capacity to make demands of municipalities, to hold them accountable for their performance and to take action to benefit their communities.

To develop municipalities with the political will and institutional capacity to address citizens' demands in an efficient, even-handed and transparent manner.



## Local First Initiative – a ‘Menu’ of Interventions

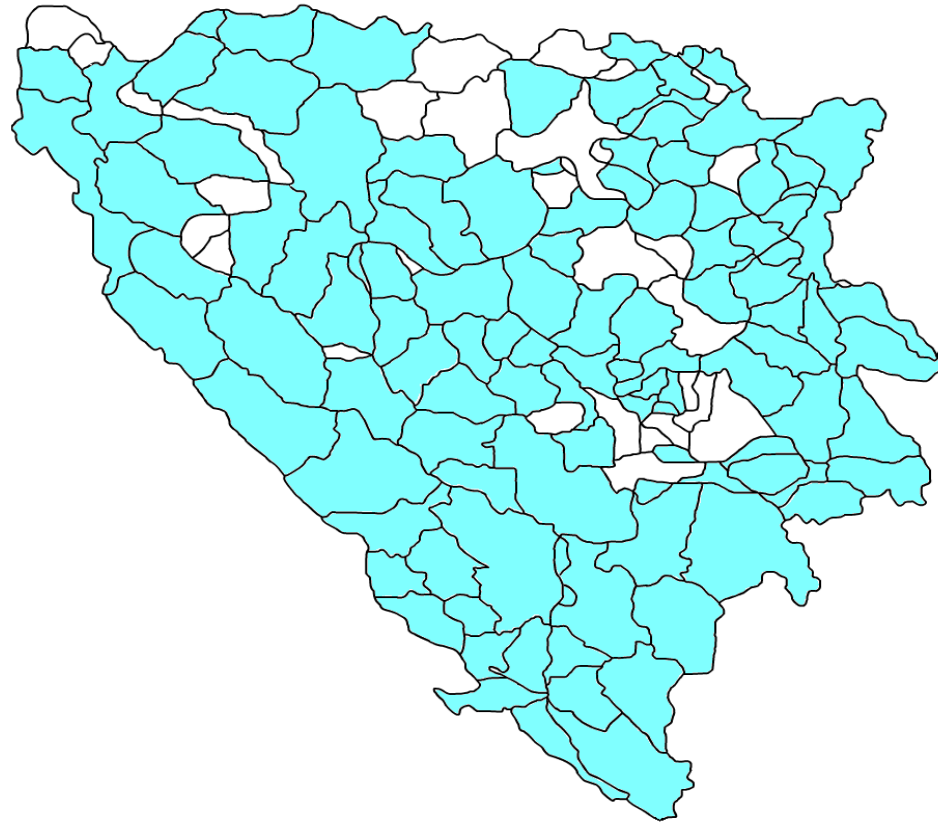
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- Municipal Assembly/Council Support
- Municipal Management and Accountability
- Community Engagement
- Inter-municipal Learning and Support
- Media and Communication
- Youth Access to Employment
- Project Management

## Local First Initiative – Scope and Implementation Status

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Around 80 per cent of the 143 BiH municipalities participate in various components aimed at tackling their municipal governance needs.





## Openness, Responsiveness and Accountability – Selected tools and mechanisms

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- Mechanism for communication between municipal council, councillors, working bodies and citizens established and used
  
- ✓ Municipal council sessions and commission meetings open to public
- ✓ Councilors given responsibility for local community
- ✓ Municipal council discusses issues raised by citizens
- ✓ Citizens encouraged to apply for positions in council bodies
  
- Municipal councils work evaluated by citizens - watchdogs
- Code of ethics for elected officials developed and adopted
- Procedures introduced to monitor the executive
- Planning and reporting functions strengthened



## Openness, Responsiveness and Accountability – Selected tools and mechanisms

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- Citizens participation mechanisms established and used
- Information on key municipal policies published on municipal websites and info-boards
- Feedback mechanisms introduced
- Freedom of Access to Information Act implemented
- Participatory development and implementation of key municipal processes and policies (strategic planning and budgeting)
- Municipal Communication Strategies developed and implemented





# Citizens Academy – Building Sustainable Local Government

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## Why Citizens Academy?

- To support municipalities in outreach towards citizens
- To enable citizens to improve their knowledge on local government structures and operations
- To further strengthen the citizens participation in decision making at the local level



# Citizens Academy – Building Sustainable Local Government

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## How does it work?

- Municipalities issue a call for citizens to apply for the project
- Lectures on local governance delivered by municipal employees
- Retain interest through alumni network

## Results

- High demand from citizens - 390 applications received, 306 citizens accepted, 244 citizens regularly attended the courses



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# Thank you for your attention

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