



## FACT SHEET

### Marginalized Populations Support Program

#### Project Snapshot

Total Funding: \$ 4.99 million

Project Duration: February 2015 – February 2022.

Implementing Partner: Institute for Youth Development KULT

#### The Challenge

While the international community has long supported activities that facilitate inclusion of marginalized populations in civic and political decision-making in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), these groups are often overlooked or ignored by the BiH Government. As a result, many citizens – youth, women, religious minorities, Romani, disabled persons, minority returnees and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons – remain unheard and excluded from mainstream social, cultural, economic and political life. Youth are disaffected. Romani, largely disenfranchised, are excluded from decision-making processes, while most cannot get the skills or training they need to join the labor market. Persons with disabilities are marginalized from early childhood. Many are institutionalized and lack access to basic education in mainstream schools. Women's participation in political and public life is extremely low. BiH society continues to abhor the idea of homosexuality and most institutions ignore discrimination or violent acts against LGBT persons. In fear for their physical safety, most of them stay hidden from the public sphere, and, as a result, LGBT activism is weak. A new marginalized group emerged in the aftermath of the 2014 floods, when 40,000 people were displaced. Assistance is still needed to provide economic and social stability to help flood-affected citizens from the most marginalized groups rebuild their lives.

#### Our Program

USAID's Marginalized Populations Support Program supports activities of local organizations that advocate for the rights, empowerment and dignity of underrepresented groups of BiH society, and builds the capacity of local NGOs, BiH institutions and USAID implementing partners to do so. Providing underrepresented groups with opportunities to participate in civic and political issues, through their engagement in civil society organizations, will ensure that the government recognizes them as necessary and respectable partners in policy development.

#### Implementation and Expected Results

The program provides grants to local organizations that promote the rights and dignity of marginalized populations and to enhance their performance and management capacity through formal classroom training, mentorship and one-on-one coaching. Training topics include legal structures, financial management, human resources, internal control systems, project performance management, procurement systems, organizational sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation. The program also builds the capacity of USAID partners, institutions and government leaders to promote and protect the rights of these underrepresented citizens. A component of the program is designed to respond flexibly and swiftly to public demand for humanitarian and other material assistance.

By the end of the project's life, the activity will:

- Strengthen the performance of at least 40 BiH NGOs and other organizations, including associations, civil society organizations, BiH institutions, and small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Enhance the performance of at least 75 current USAID local partners, to enhance their performance and management capacity through group trainings; and
- Build the expertise of at least 75 BiH Government leaders of municipalities and ministries collaborating with USAID.