



Center for Civic Cooperation, Livno, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Project: “Towards Local Government Accountability: Improving Local Community Communication”

Recommendations for better communication and cooperation between local communities and municipal government:

I. Enhancing Representation in Local Communities (LCs/MZs)

1. The municipal administration and the Municipal Council will **organize and conduct free elections** in LCs i.e. allow citizens themselves to propose its candidates for the Council of their local community. If the Council members of local community are elected at citizen’s public meetings, ideally voting for the proposed candidates is secretly.
2. Since there are very few **women in the bodies of local communities**, it is recommendable that municipality promotes the development of a local strategy to draw more women into the process of MZ elections, focusing especially on the participation of women councilors who will facilitate this process using their own examples. Municipality will support the inclusion of women when it comes to implementing and planning in the MZ.
3. Municipal council will regularly **invite and urge representatives of local communities to participate in the sessions of the Municipal Council** and, when necessary, allow them to speak there in order to directly represent and defend the interests of the inhabitants of their MZ;
4. Representatives of the local community volunteer their work for the benefit of all inhabitants. In order to support this voluntarily work, municipality could establish a **professional workplace in each local community** or a professional workplace for several local communities;

I. Improving information, communication, cooperation

1. In order to improve the work of MZ, information sharing, communication and cooperation between MZ and municipal administrations, solidarity and more expeditious solutions to problems, **regular meetings will be held between the municipal administration and representatives of the LCs** (every one or three months). It would be desirable that these meetings be held with officials from the Department for Development, Municipal commission for the local communities and, where possible, with the Mayor or Municipal Council President also taking part. The meetings will be organized by the coordinator for MZs. In order to support this, municipality will give to coordinator for MZs a clear description of his / her work obligations in order to facilitate and coordinate the work of all MZ. In addition, municipality will support the establishment of a coordinating body of MZs which acts in some priorities and urgent situations that require coordination;
2. Municipality will create opportunities for municipal officials **to conduct structured visits to local communities** each year. Furthermore, municipality will work with the Municipal Council commissions for Local Communities and develop an outreach program that will kick-start the



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organization of local planning meetings and increase citizens' direct access to municipal officials, particularly to municipal councilors.

3. The municipal administration will enhance **consultation with and involvement of the MZ leadership in the planning and realization of the local projects and activities**; Likewise municipality will remind higher political-administrative levels such as e.g. the canton, federation or state, about their legal obligation to inform MZ representatives about planning and implementation of projects within respective MZs;
4. Municipality will support the development of **the profile / identity card of all local communities** and set them on the official municipal website, regularly update the changes in the MZs and implemented projects / initiatives;

III. Municipal budget and MZs financing

1. When making decisions about the allocation of budgetary funds, Municipal Councils will ensure the participation of LC representatives in order to increase transparency and citizen confidence in the work of municipal administrations; Municipality will send a copy of the drafted budget to the MZ representatives in appropriate time to give them the possibility to reflect and comment on it and propose amendments to the budget lines; municipality will also send them a copy of the approved budget and give feedback if and why (not) their proposition have been respected;
2. The budget of the Municipality has no items for the operational costs of MZs nor for the implementation of their projects. Two budgetary items will be introduced as part of the municipal budget:
 - a. for LC material costs (which shall be paid to LCs at the start of the fiscal year), furthermore, municipality should pay a yearly compensation fee for MZ presidents;
 - b. for LC projects (the municipality shall launch a public tender for projects, LCs shall submit project proposals and a special municipal commission shall allocate funds to LCs, in line with pre-determined criteria);
3. If the budget does not have the item "projects of local communities," then the projects that local communities identified as priorities need to be include in the Municipal capital investment;
4. If local communities have other (external) funding sources, such as e.g. international or domestic donors, they will inform municipality to ensure transparent and well-coordinated funding.

IV. The media and non-governmental organizations / associations

1. Municipality will encourage local media to report positively about the activities and initiatives of local communities and raise awareness among population to contribute positively to improving living conditions in the LC as well as about the openness of the administration towards local self-government;
2. Municipality will support and encourage local NGOs and the LC Councils to cooperate with each other (e.g. by calling for joint meetings or by establishing and updating a calendar showing all activities in the municipality) and to develop and implement joint projects of interest to the local population. Furthermore, municipality will encourage local NGOs to get approval of the LC council for the activities planned for implementation in the local communities;



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