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Patrizia Poggi, Mirsada Muzur, Dino Djipa, Snjezana Kojic-Hasanagic, Xavier Bougarel

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Bosnia and Herzegovina

Local Level Institutions and Social Capital Study

Vol. 1

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Acknowledgements

This study on *Local Level Institutions and Social Capital* in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been conceived to help the definition of a full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, currently carried out by the Government, as well as other Bank sector projects. The study supports the CAS objective to develop strategies and policies promoting inclusion through dissemination of public information, community based activities and strengthening of the local NGO sector.

The qualitative part of this research, based on focus group discussions and interviews with key informants, was carried out in April and May 2001 in six selected municipalities (Tuzla, Banja Luka, Bihac, Zvornik, Brcko, Gornji Vakuf). A total of 25 focus groups discussions and 67 face-to-face interviews were conducted in that period. A nationwide opinion survey meant to check the validity of the qualitative part was carried out in June 2001, shortly after the end of the fieldwork. The opinion survey was based on a representative sample of 675 persons.

The research was carried out under the leadership of Patrizia Poggi. The field work was carried out by PRISM Research, a Sarajevo-based survey agency. Mirsada Muzur, Dino Djipa and Snjezana Kojic-Hasanagic conducted the field work and the first data analysis. Xavier Bougarel designed the questionnaire and conducted most of the face-to-face interviews, carried out the literature review, and wrote the first draft of the report. Esad Hecimovic provided precious informations and contacts. Deborah Davis edited the first draft. Paula F. Lytle helped in the last phases of the work to sharpen the main messages. Thanks also go to Xavier Devictor and Colin Scott (Peer reviewers). Alexandre Marc and Simon Gray provided comments and direction throughout the research and kept on soliciting this report.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABiH	Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina (<i>Armija Bosne i Hercegovine</i>)
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CCI	Center for Civic Initiatives (<i>Centar za Civilne Inicijative</i>)
CIPP	Legal Aid and Information Center (<i>Centar za Informativnu i Pravnu Pomoc</i>)
CRPC	Commission for Real Property Claims
ESI	European Stability Initiative
HDZ	Croat Democratic Community (<i>Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica</i>)
HVO	Croat Council of Defense (<i>Hrvatsko Vijece Odbrane</i>)
IBHI	Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IEBL	Inter-Entity Border-Line
IPTF	International Police Task Force
JOB	Unified Organization of Veterans (<i>Jedinstvena Organizacija Boraca</i>)
KM	Convertible Mark (<i>Konvertibilna Marka</i>)
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Survey
MZ	Neighborhood Community (<i>Mjesna Zajednica</i>)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHR	Office of the High Representative
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDP	Party of Democratic Prosperity (<i>Partija za Demokratski Prosperitet</i>)
PEIR	Public Expenditure and Institutional Review
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RRTF	Return and Reconstruction Task Force
RS	Serb Republic (<i>Republika Srpska</i>)
SCAT	Social Capital Assessment Tool
SDA	Party of Democratic Action (<i>Stranka Demokratske Akcije</i>)
SDP	Social Democratic Party (<i>Socijaldemokratska Partija</i>)
SDS	Serb Democratic Party (<i>Srpska Demokratska Stranka</i>)
Sfor	Stabilization Force
SNSD	Party of Independent Social Democrats (<i>Savez Nezavisnih Socijaldemokrata</i>)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
VRS	Army of the Serb Republic (<i>Vojska Republike Srpske</i>)

Executive Summary and Key Findings

This study evaluates social capital and local-level institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina six years after the end of the war, which caused the death of about 200,000 people, the displacement of more than 50 percent of the population,¹ and a profound disruption of the country's social, institutional, and economic fabric. Although the violence and ethnic cleansing formally ended in December 1995, the progress toward lasting peace has depended on the close involvement of international actors and on large infusions of international aid. The country still faces many difficulties, including massive poverty and unemployment, shattered and neglected infrastructure, deteriorated public services, organized crime, corruption in public institutions, and a pervasive lack of trust not only between citizens and public institutions, but also among different ethnic groups, as shown by the relatively low level of minority returns.² This lack of trust—a central element of social cohesion, or social capital—is one of the main constraints to recovery and development, as Bosnia-Herzegovina undergoes the double transition from war to peace and from a centrally planned to a market economy.³ **The purpose of this study, therefore, is to analyze the nature of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and how it relates to the functioning of local-level institutions, which are critical for actors in conflict resolution, effective public service delivery, and sustainable development.**

This study is part of the World Bank's current program of analytical work on Bosnia-Herzegovina, which also includes (1) a Poverty Assessment; (2) a Public Expenditure and Institutional Review (PEIR), to assess fairness and effectiveness in the use of public resources; (3) a Local Government Study, to assess local governance and financial and institutional capacity; and (4) a Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), to provide a broad view of poverty and social indicators. In addition, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently formulating a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). All of these studies are being carried out in parallel in order to set the stage for a comprehensive development program, the design of which will benefit from this study's findings on how Bosnian citizens and institutions act at the local level. The study also supports the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS)⁴ objective of developing strategies and policies that promote inclusion through community-based activities, strengthening of formal voluntary associations, and dissemination of public information.

¹ In 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina had about 4.4 million inhabitants. During the war, 1.2 million became refugees abroad, and 1.3 million became displaced persons (IDPs) in Bosnia-Herzegovina itself.

² Since 1996, the UNHCR has registered about 700,000 returns of refugees and IDPs in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole, but only 150,000 returns of refugees and IDPs to areas where they are not of the local ethnic majority (so-called minority returns).

³ For a more detailed discussion of the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the last decade, see Annex 1.

⁴ World Bank, 2000b.

Conceptual and Policy Context

Social capital—broadly defined as the *networks, norms, and values that enable people to act collectively to produce social benefits*—has been increasingly recognized as an essential element of peacebuilding, reconstruction, poverty reduction, and sustainable development.⁵ The literature distinguishes three types of social capital:

- **Bonding social capital** refers to kinship and other intra-group networks or formal associations. It serves as a collective coping and risk-management mechanism when money, physical resources, and social safety nets are absent, and helps reduce violence and other problems by reinforcing group values. However, bonding social capital can lock the poor into long-term poverty by acting as a barrier to outside opportunities and resources, can deepen social cleavages and conflicts, and thus can perpetuate exclusion and undermine development.
- **Bridging social capital**, on the other hand, refers to those networks or formal associations linking individuals and groups beyond major social categories and cleavages. It provides the poor with the potential to leverage new resources, and fosters generalized trust and reciprocity. Thus bridging social capital plays an important and long-term role in sustainable development.
- **Linking social capital** refers to the links people have with higher levels of decision-making and resource allocation, and thus provides the poor with potential access to additional resources and political voice.

Methodology

In accordance with the Social Capital Assessment Tool (SCAT), this study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods.⁶

Qualitative Work: The fieldwork was carried out in April and May 2001 in a representative sample of six sites, which provided a wide range of social and political situations⁷: Bihac, Gornji Vakuf, and Tuzla in the Federation; Banja Luka and Zvornik in the Serb Republic; and Brcko, a district with special status.

Depending on the local political context, three or four basic focus groups were held at each site, taking into account the ethnic and urban/rural cleavages. In addition, some specific focus groups were held with vulnerable groups such as IDPs living in collective centers and Serb refugees from Croatia; veterans, who have a strong collective identity and a high potential for collective mobilization; and young people, whose participation in local life is particularly important for the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In all, 25 focus

⁵ For a more detailed discussion of the evolving thinking on social capital, see Annex 2.

⁶ Krishna, Anirudh and Shrader, Elizabeth, 1999; Bamberger, Michael, 2000. For a more detailed discussion of the methodology, see Annex 3.

⁷ For more details on the six sites, see Annex 4.

groups were conducted. As part of the qualitative work, the team also carried out 67 in-depth interviews with key informants, including, in all sites:

- the mayor or one of his close associates (except in Banja Luka⁸),
- representative of the local ethnic minorities,
- representatives of neighborhood communities (MZs),
- representatives of formal voluntary associations,
- local representatives or field officers of international organizations.

Quantitative Work: The quantitative work consisted of an opinion survey carried out in June 2001, based on a representative sample of 675 persons covering all of Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁹ The survey documented:

- the evolution of interpersonal relations at the local level,
- the assessment by Bosnian citizens of public services and local-level institutions,
- forms of collective action related to local public services,
- participation in formal voluntary associations.

Organization of the Study

The first part of the study, *Interpersonal Trust, Social Cleavages and Formal Institutions*, describes the general evolution of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina, at both the micro level (bonding and bridging social capital) and the macro level (linking social capital). It also describes the links among these different kinds of social capital. It explores the way interpersonal trust and social cleavages (micro-level of social capital) have been affected by the population movements of the war and post-war periods, and how formal institutions such as new property laws, social protection and social assistance mechanisms, and local level institutions, are now affecting trust and social cohesion. Part I is divided into four sections (Decline and Changes in Interpersonal Trust; Social Cleavages and Personal Movements; Social Cleavages and Social Welfare System; and Fragmentation of Local Level Institutions).

The second part of the study, *Attitudes toward Local-Level Institutions, and Forms of Collective Action*, describes relations at the local level between citizens and formal institutions, in a context of impoverishment and decline of social capital. It explores the practical attitudes of Bosnian citizens (resort to private connections and bribery, membership in voluntary associations, participation to local collective action), and how this behavior influences the evolution of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Part II is divided into four sections (General Assessment of Public Services and Formal Institutions; Relationships between Citizens and Local Level Institutions; Relationship between Citizens and Formal Voluntary Associations; and Forma of Collective Action Related to Local Public Services). What follows is an abstract of the main findings, by section.

⁸ For a discussion of the difficulties encountered during the fieldwork, see Annex 3.

⁹ The sample and the questionnaire are presented in Annex 5 and Annex 6.

Part I. Interpersonal Trust, Social Cleavages and Formal Institutions

A. Decline and Changes in Interpersonal Trust

Changes in social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina manifest themselves in terms of a decline in the level of interpersonal trust, and in the related practices of socialization and mutual help. There is variation among the three ethnic areas on how the war has affected social capital. For instance, 43.9 percent of the residents of Bosniac majority area say there has been no decline in socialization with old neighbors of different nationality, showing a higher level of bridging social capital. Conversely, bonding social capital appears slightly more resistant to decline in the Croat majority area: 90.6 percent of the residents of this area say there had been no decline in socialization with relatives. The opinion survey shows a greater decline in social capital among the poor and IDPs, as measured in invitations and material assistance. The main forms of material assistance are monetary assistance, donations of food and commodities, sharing of collective charges, cooperation in building and repair of houses, and cooperation in maintenance of apartment buildings. Decline in interpersonal trust (micro-level of social capital) affects formal institutions and civic values (macro-level of social capital).

B. Social Cleavages and Population Movements

Focus group participants and key informants consider ethnic cleavages important, but also say that tensions have decreased in the few last years. Focus group participants and key informants confirm that the cleavage between rich and poor has been reinforced by the specific circumstances of the war and post-war periods. At the local level, the most pervasive cleavages remain those among locals, IDPs and minority returnees. These cleavages are nurtured by the ongoing restitution and return process, and general competition for scarce resources. IDPs are more often unemployed than locals, and minority returnees are excluded from the local labor market. Although cleavages among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees have a strong socioeconomic dimension, they are interpreted in terms of cultural, moral, or political categories. Willingness to return and sustainability of return are also closely linked with socioeconomic issues like employment and access to public services.

C. Social Cleavages and Social Welfare System

The social safety net has become limited. Social welfare system remains spatially and ethnically fragmented. Tensions occur between ethnic groups on distribution of benefits based on legal status or political aims, and not on actual need. Similarly, tensions among members of the same ethnic group occur due to IDPs receiving certain benefits for which local residents are not eligible. International donations are also a source of similar tensions. Respondents express strong preferences for transparent and known criteria for allocation of donations and benefits.

D. Fragmentation of Local Level Institutions

In addition to the social welfare system, all other formal institutions and public services in Bosnia-Herzegovina were divided along ethnic lines during the war. The most obvious aspect of this ethnic and spatial fragmentation was the creation of entities and cantons,

but it is also clearly perceptible at the local level. Ethnic fragmentation of local level institutions has often resulted in the territorial split of municipalities, or the creation of parallel municipal institutions representing local ethnic minorities, and in conflict over public infrastructure. Despite the persistence of parallel municipal institutions, many IDPs consider themselves as not being adequately served by either. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, trust among people living in the same place (bonding social capital) takes precedence over trust toward people from outside (bridging social capital), affecting a range of civic values and confidence in formal institutions (linking social capital).

Part II. Attitudes toward Local-Level Institutions, and Forms of Collective Action

A. General Assessment of Public Services and Formal Institutions

The study found that respondents consider the quality of public services as having declined or as being non-existent in certain cases. Public services that are considered as having declined in quality include issuance of official documents, public transport, health care, education, garbage collection. Non-existence is mentioned more often for social assistance, youth and cultural activities, housing for IDPs and returnees. Infrastructure is in poor condition. High prices for public services such as health care, public transport, official documents and education is considered a major problem by both surveyed respondents and participants in focus groups. High prices are also lamented for utilities such as water, electricity, and phone. Corruption is also a major concern, especially for health care, public security, issuance of official documents, housing, and social assistance. Focus group participants have a nuanced assessment of police and education, but do not trust the local justice system.

Survey results show that over half the respondents consider problems with local public services due to inadequate funds. Yet nearly half the respondents also consider local politicians as not serving citizen interests, and the focus groups criticize local politicians for their lack of accountability. In focus groups, participants characterize civil servants and employees of public companies as too highly paid, lazy, careless and rude. On the other hand, many participants are willing to excuse their behavior—especially for policemen, teachers, and doctors—by the fact that they are not paid enough. The few formal institutions and civil servants praised by participants are those that respond to citizen questions and complaints and help citizens understand the legal and administrative labyrinth of post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. The best example is three institutions in Bihac: the cantonal Ombudmen’s Office, the municipal Department for General Administration and Social Affairs, and the Center for Social Work.

B. Relationships between Citizens and Local-Level Institutions

General mistrust toward formal institutions influence the way Bosnian citizens try to solve their disputes with these institutions in relation to the provision of public services. Reactions range from disengagement to threats of violence, and many key informants and participants in focus groups describe the use of private connections or bribes. The new institution of ombudsman shows signs of having taken root while the older institution of the neighborhood community (*mjesna zajednica*, or MZ) is in decline, having lost

financial and administrative autonomy. In a few cases, MZs have transformed themselves into NGOs, but the government-societal link of the MZ is not clearly defined.

C. Relationship between Citizens and Formal Voluntary Associations

Nearly a third of survey respondents say they belong to some type of voluntary association. Participants in focus groups and key informants distinguish between two main types of voluntary associations: citizens' associations and non-governmental organizations. According to survey results, membership in traditional citizens' associations, such as interest-based, leisure or community associations, is more common than membership in new NGOs funded by the international community. Funding by the international community has affected the balance between the two types of organizations. Some spatial differences in organizational membership exists as well.

Most focus group participants express negative attitudes towards voluntary associations, and half of the survey respondents who claim membership in associations are not actively involved. The main link between citizens and voluntary associations is not one of active participation, but most often of individual requests and one-way delivery of various public services and social benefits. Traditional interest-based associations tend to have close ties with ruling political parties and stronger links with the municipalities than new NGOs. However, relationships between new NGOs and the municipalities have improved from the initial post-war period. Voluntary associations contribute to the formation of bridging and linking social capital, but there is no straightforward correlation between the percentage of affiliation with voluntary associations and the amount of social capital.

D. Forms of Collective Action Related to Local Public Services

Thirty percent of the survey participants made a financial contribution for local public services. Nineteen percent engaged in collective works related to local infrastructure, and twenty percent participated in some form of clean-up action. Rural residents are more likely to participate in collective works and citizens' gatherings, while urban residents are more likely to participate in collective protests (petitions, street demonstrations) or complain to the local media and international organizations.

Money collections and collective works appear to be much more common in the Bosniac majority area than in the Croat majority area, while the Serb majority area has a rather high level of money collections, but a low level of collective works. Local residents are more involved in voluntary works than are IDPs, but important differences also appear among IDPs themselves. Those willing to return to their pre-war place of residence often participate in money collections, collective works, citizens' gatherings, and petitions, whereas those willing to settle in their new place of residence are more likely to take part in street demonstrations and road blockades.

Level of participation to collective actions is related to differences in gender, age, income, and education. Men take part more often in voluntary works, delegations and street demonstrations, while women take part more often in money collections and clean-up actions. Middle-aged people participate more often in money collections and collective works, and old people participate more often in clean-up actions and citizens'

gatherings. Young people are less involved in collective actions in general. Respondents with a higher level of income more often take part in citizens' gatherings and money collections, while those with a higher level of education take part more in clean-up actions. Those with higher incomes and education both participate more in collective protests, those with a low level of income are more likely to participate in clean-up actions, and those with a low level of education are more likely to participate in collective works.

Survey results show a link between readiness to help neighbors (linking social capital) and readiness to participate in local infrastructure projects or collective protests related to local public services. The success of collective actions is linked to the mobilization of the entire local associative landscape, including leisure and interest-based associations close to the nationalist parties. Where there is low level of interpersonal trust, lack of confidence in formal institutions and an absence of civic values, collective action is less likely to occur.

When asked about the kinds of local projects they would be most ready to support, rural residents show more interest than urban residents for the repair of roads, water and sewerage systems, and school building, while urban residents are more interested in clean-up actions, repair of sport and cultural facilities, and opening of youth centers. Young people are particularly interested in the opening of a youth center, and IDPs in construction of a collective center for homeless people.

Many focus group participants consider that money collections and collective works related to local infrastructure projects were more frequent before the war. Participants state that these forms of collective actions still exist, but have declined in number and scope, due to the decline of MZs. Many participants and key informants complain about lack of response from formal institutions. In particular, they consider petitions and delegations to be useless, since representatives of formal institutions do not take them into consideration, or only make empty promises. As a result, many of them are more prone to resort to individual violence, private connections, or emigration—an exit strategy often favored by the younger generation.

INTRODUCTION

This study evaluates social capital and local-level institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina six years after the end of the war, which caused the death of about 200,000 people, the displacement of more than 50 percent of the population,¹⁰ and a profound disruption of the country's social, institutional, and economic fabric. Although the violence and ethnic cleansing formally ended in December 1995, when the Dayton Peace Agreement established the current institutional framework of the country—the mainly Croat-Bosniac *Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine* (the Federation) and the predominantly *Serb Republika Srpska* (the Serb Republic)¹¹—the progress toward lasting peace has depended on the close involvement of international actors and on large infusions of international aid. The country still faces many difficulties, including massive poverty and unemployment, shattered and neglected infrastructure, deteriorated public services, organized crime, corruption in public institutions, and a pervasive lack of trust not only between citizens and public institutions, but also among different ethnic groups, as shown by the relatively low level of minority returns.¹² This lack of trust—a central element of social cohesion, or social capital—is one of the main constraints to recovery and development, as Bosnia-Herzegovina undergoes the double transition from war to peace and from a centrally planned to a market economy.¹³ **The purpose of this study, therefore, is to analyze the nature of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and how it relates to the functioning of local-level institutions, which are critical for actors in conflict resolution, effective public service delivery, and sustainable development.**

Conceptual and Policy Context

Social capital—broadly defined as the *networks, norms, and values that enable people to act collectively to produce social benefits*—has been increasingly recognized as an essential element of peacebuilding, reconstruction, poverty reduction, and sustainable development.¹⁴ Both theoretically and in terms of practical application, this study reflects the work on these issues that the Bank has produced over the past few years. In particular, the work of Christiaan Grootaert,¹⁵ and of Nat Colletta and Michelle Cullen,¹⁶ has made a distinction among three main types of social capital, all of which have different effects on poverty, economic development, and conflict resolution:

¹⁰ In 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina had about 4.4 million inhabitants. During the war, 1.2 million became refugees abroad, and 1.3 million became displaced persons (IDPs) in Bosnia-Herzegovina itself.

¹¹ The Federation is further divided into ten cantons (four Bosniac, four Croat, and two of mixed ethnicity).

¹² Since 1996, the UNHCR has registered about 700,000 returns of refugees and IDPs in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole, but only 150,000 returns of refugees and IDPs to areas where they are not of the local ethnic majority (so-called minority returns).

¹³ For a more detailed discussion of the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the last decade, see Annex 1.

¹⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the evolving thinking on social capital, see Annex 2.

¹⁵ Grootaert, Christiaan, 1998.

¹⁶ Colletta, Nat and Cullen, Michelle (eds.), 2000.

- **Bonding social capital** refers to kinship and other intra-group networks or formal associations. It serves as a collective coping and risk-management mechanism when money, physical resources, and social safety nets are absent, and helps reduce violence and other problems by reinforcing group values. However, bonding social capital can lock the poor into long-term poverty by acting as a barrier to outside opportunities and resources, can deepen social cleavages and conflicts, and thus can perpetuate exclusion and undermine development.
- **Bridging social capital**, on the other hand, refers to those networks or formal associations linking individuals and groups beyond major social categories and cleavages. It provides the poor with the potential to leverage new resources, and fosters generalized trust and reciprocity. Thus bridging social capital plays an important and long-term role in sustainable development.
- **Linking social capital** refers to the links people have with higher levels of decision-making and resource allocation, and thus provides the poor with potential access to additional resources and political voice.

There is a two-way relationship between social capital and development: the existence of social capital can facilitate or impede poverty reduction and sustainable development, but economic crisis or growing inequalities can deplete it. Thus a key lesson for policymakers and practitioners is the importance of identifying and using existing pockets of social capital; taking care to not destroying this social capital by disabling partnerships or breaking down social cohesion; investing in social capital through participatory project design and implementation; and helping the poor to transcend their closed networks in order to access additional resources.

Colletta and Cullen have demonstrated the relevance of these concepts to multicultural and war-torn societies, where the unequal distribution of power and resources decreases trust among ethnic groups (turn away from bridging social capital) and causes them to look inward (turn toward bonding social capital), thus raising the potential for violent inter-group conflict. But while war generally depletes all types of social capital by destroying the values, norms, and institutions that underlie cooperation, it can also reinforce the existing bonding social capital embodied in extended families, clans, and ethnic groups. It can even lead, in some cases, to the creation of larger and cross-group coping mechanisms such as self-help organizations, local governments, and markets.

The relationship between social capital and violent conflict thus has important implications for peacebuilding and reconstruction. In particular, economic and social development will be hindered unless local governments and international actors understand how to use the social threads remaining after the conflict to facilitate the peace process. While cross-cutting ties are being established, assessments must also be made of existing bonding capital bases, and care must be taken that external efforts do not erode them, but rather incorporate them into the reconstruction process, with special sensitivity to the local context.

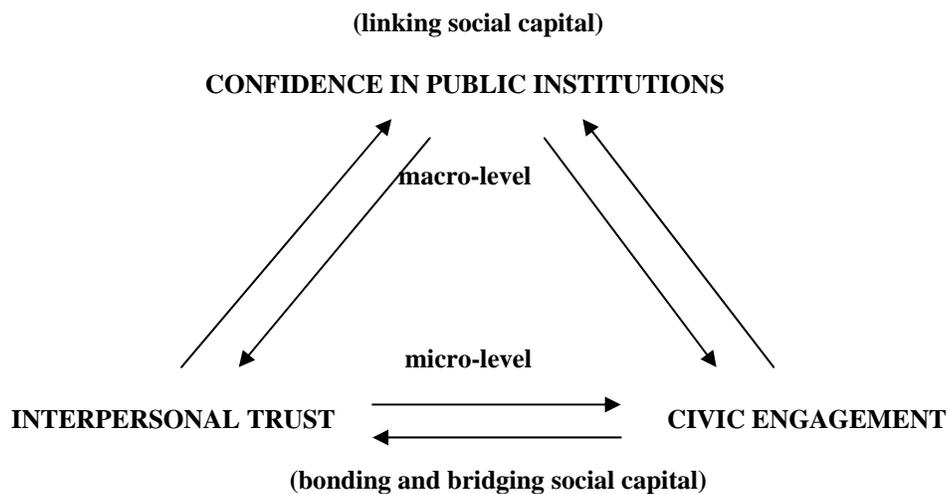
Current World Bank Work on Bosnia-Herzegovina

This study is part of the World Bank's current program of analytical work on Bosnia-Herzegovina, which also includes (1) a Poverty Assessment; (2) a Public Expenditure and Institutional Review (PEIR), to assess fairness and effectiveness in the use of public resources; (3) a Local Government Study, to assess local governance and financial and institutional capacity; and (4) a Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), to provide a broad view of poverty and social indicators. In addition, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently formulating a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). All of these studies are being carried out in parallel in order to set the stage for a comprehensive development program, the design of which will benefit from this study's findings on how Bosnian citizens and institutions act at the local level. The study also supports the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS)¹⁷ objective of developing strategies and policies that promote inclusion through community-based activities, strengthening of formal voluntary associations, and dissemination of public information.

The Study's Operational Definition of Social Capital

While many studies of Bosnia-Herzegovina have analyzed social capital through a general assessment of interpersonal trust and confidence in public institutions, this study extends the concept to include civic engagement—as reflected by membership in formal voluntary associations—and examines the influence of social capital on the capacity of Bosnian citizens to act collectively and bring about positive change in the delivery of public services. Therefore, it focuses not only on the interactions among several constitutive and related elements of social capital (see Figure 1), but also on how interpersonal trust, civic engagement, and confidence in public institutions influence the frequency and scope of collective action and, conversely, are influenced by its practical forms and results.

Figure 1. The Relationship Between Micro and Macro Levels of Social Capital



¹⁷ World Bank, 2000b.

The study's emphasis on collective action as an outcome and source of social capital can, at the most basic level, help identify ways to rebuild trust and cooperation within and across groups where they have been diminished, as in societies that continue to suffer from the aftermath of conflict. In terms of operations, this approach allows us to draw a number of tentative conclusions and recommendations for policy dialogue, which could lead to the identification of projects in municipal and community-driven development, health, governance, public services, and other areas affecting poverty, social and political stability, and quality of life.

Specific Objectives of the Study

To this end, the study aims to describe the practical behaviors of Bosnian citizens and institutions and analyze interactions at the local level. Its three main objectives are to:

- qualitatively assess the nature of **interpersonal relations** in Bosnia-Herzegovina—levels of trust, forms of cooperation, and forms of conflict among individuals and groups, such as ethnic groups, poor and rich, urban and rural residents, locals and internally displaced persons (IDPs) or minority returnees;
- identify the **local-level institutions**, both formal (municipalities, neighborhood communities—MZs,¹⁸ citizens' associations, non-governmental organizations¹⁹) and informal (personal connections with local leaders), to which people turn to cope with poverty and improve their access to local public services;
- identify the frequency and forms of **collective action**—that is, self-organization and public protest—used by people in relation to local public services; and analyze their social and institutional determinants.

Methodology

In accordance with the Social Capital Assessment Tool (SCAT), this study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods.²⁰

Qualitative Work

The fieldwork was carried out in April and May 2001 in a representative sample of six sites, which provided a wide range of social and political situations²¹:

¹⁸ Neighborhood communities (*mjesne zajednice*, MZs) are the smallest administrative unit in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They encompass an urban neighborhood, a large village, or a few small villages, with a population ranging from 500 to 4,000 inhabitants. On the legal status of MZs, see Part IIB and Annex 1.

¹⁹ In Bosnia-Herzegovina the term "citizens' association" (*udruzenje gradjana*) refers most often to state-subsidized formal associations dating back from the Communist period or linked to the nationalist parties; and the term "non-governmental organization" (*nevladina organizacija*) to the new formal associations funded by the international community. See Part IIC.

²⁰ Krishna, Anirudh and Shrader, Elizabeth, 1999; Bamberger, Michael, 2000. For a more detailed discussion of the methodology, see Annex 3.

²¹ For more details on the six sites, see Annex 4.

Bihac, Gornji Vakuf , and Tuzla in the Federation; Banja Luka and Zvornik in the Serb Republic; and Brcko, a district with special status.

At the time of the fieldwork, Gornji Vakuf was still divided between the legal Bosniac municipality of Gornji Vakuf, and the Croat split-municipality of Uskoplje. Brcko had also been a divided municipality (Serb municipality of Brcko in the Serb Republic, Bosniac split-municipality of Brcko-Rahic and Croat split-municipality of Ravne-Brcko in the Federation) until the creation of an unified and neutral District in March 1999.

Depending on the local political context, three or four basic focus groups were held at each site, taking into account the ethnic and urban/rural cleavages. In addition, some specific focus groups were held with vulnerable groups such as IDPs living in collective centers and Serb refugees from Croatia; veterans, who have a strong collective identity and a high potential for collective mobilization; and young people, whose participation in local life is particularly important for the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In all, 25 focus groups were conducted (Table A).

Table A. Focus Groups in the Six Study Sites

Bihac	Gornji Vakuf (divided municipality)	Tuzla
<p>Basic focus groups</p> <p>1. Urban residents, ethnic majority (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>2. Urban residents, ethnic minorities (<i>Croats and Serbs</i>)</p> <p>3. Rural residents (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>Specific focus group</p> <p>4. Veterans (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p>	<p>Basic focus groups</p> <p>1. Urban residents from the Bosniac and the Croat parts (<i>Bosniacs and Croats</i>)</p> <p>2. Rural residents from the Bosniac part, ethnic majority (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>3. Rural residents from the Bosniac part, ethnic minority (<i>Croats</i>)</p>	<p>Basic focus groups</p> <p>1. Urban residents, ethnic majority (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>2. Urban residents, ethnic minorities (<i>Croats and Serbs</i>)</p> <p>3. Rural residents (<i>Bosniacs and Croats</i>)</p> <p>Specific focus groups</p> <p>4. IDPs living in a collective center (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>5. Young people (<i>mixed</i>)</p>
Banja Luka	Zvornik	Brcko (formerly divided municipality)
<p>Basic focus groups</p> <p>1. Urban residents, ethnic majority (<i>Serbs</i>)</p> <p>2. Urban residents, ethnic minorities (<i>Bosniacs and Croats</i>)</p> <p>3. Rural residents (<i>Serbs, Croats and Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>Specific focus group</p> <p>4. Refugees from Croatia (<i>Serbs</i>)</p>	<p>Basic focus groups</p> <p>1. Urban residents, ethnic majority (<i>Serbs</i>)</p> <p>2. Rural residents, ethnic minority (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>3. Rural residents (<i>Serbs and Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>Specific focus group</p> <p>4. Veterans (<i>Serbs</i>)</p>	<p>Basic focus groups</p> <p>1. Former Serbian part, ethnic majority (<i>Serbs</i>)</p> <p>2. Former Serbian part, ethnic minorities (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>3. Former Bosniac part, ethnic majority (<i>Bosniacs</i>)</p> <p>4. Former Croat part, ethnic majority (<i>Croats</i>)</p> <p>Specific focus group</p> <p>5. Young people (<i>Serbs</i>)</p>

The team carried out 67 in-depth interviews with key informants, including, in all sites:

- the mayor or one of his close associates (except in Banja Luka²²),
- representative of the local ethnic minorities,
- representatives of neighborhood communities (MZs),
- representatives of formal voluntary associations,
- local representatives or field officers of international organizations.

Quantitative Work

The quantitative work consisted of an opinion survey carried out in June 2001, based on a representative sample of 675 persons covering all of Bosnia-Herzegovina.²³ The survey documented:

- the evolution of interpersonal relations at the local level,
- the assessment by Bosnian citizens of public services and local-level institutions,
- forms of collective action related to local public services,
- participation in formal voluntary associations.

Organization of the Study

The first part of the study, *Interpersonal Trust, Social Cleavages and Formal Institutions*, describes the general evolution of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina, at both the micro level (bonding and bridging social capital) and the macro level (linking social capital). It also describes the links among these different kinds of social capital. It explores the way interpersonal trust and social cleavages (micro-level of social capital) have been affected by the population movements of the war and post-war periods, and how formal institutions such as new property laws, social protection and social assistance mechanisms, and local level institutions, are now affecting trust and social cohesion.

- **Part IA** describes post-war Bosnia as a society characterized by a strong decline in social capital (especially bridging), and its uneven distribution among ethnic areas and social groups (poor vs. rich, IDPs vs. locals). It describes the ways that interpersonal trust, and the related practices of socialization and mutual help, have been reshaped by the circumstances of the last decade; and focuses on the concrete forms of material assistance and collective work that exist among colleagues or neighbors in residential settlements and apartment buildings.
- **Part IB** describes the main social cleavages in post-war Bosnian society and shows that, at the local level, the central cleavage among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees is fed by conflicts of interests concerning scarce resources such as housing and jobs—which cause the poor to compete among themselves. This

²² For a discussion of the difficulties encountered during the fieldwork, see Annex 3.

²³ The sample and the questionnaire are presented in Annex 5 and Annex 6.

section shows how these conflicts are further compounded by cultural and moral interpretations, which tend to conceal their strong socioeconomic dimension.

- **Part IC** focuses on the disappearance of the social safety net in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, and on the high level of fragmentation of its social welfare system. It shows that social benefits and international donations dedicated to specific social groups such as veterans, IDPs, or minority returnees have a disproportionate importance in the coping strategies of an impoverished population, and therefore tend to perpetuate social cleavages created by the war.
- **Part ID** focuses on the spatial and ethnic fragmentation of municipalities, MZs, and local public services, and shows how these problems relate to the strong parochialism of Bosnian society, the parochial behaviors and clientelistic practices of municipal authorities, and the imbalances in the spatial distribution of public infrastructure.

The second part of the study, *Attitudes toward Local-Level Institutions, and Forms of Collective Action*, describes relations at the local level between citizens and formal institutions, in a context of impoverishment and decline of social capital. It explores the practical attitudes of Bosnian citizens (resort to private connections and bribery, membership in voluntary associations, participation to local collective action), and how this behavior influences the evolution of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

- **Part IIA** shows that Bosnian citizens have a generally negative assessment of public services (low quality, high prices) and formal institutions (corruption, lack of commitment and professionalism), but that important differences exist among different ethnic areas and public services. It also reveals that Bosnian citizens partly accept the justifications for these problems put forward by local politicians and public employees (lack of legal and financial means, inadequate salaries).
- **Part IIB** describes the practical attitudes of Bosnian citizens toward local formal institutions, and their resort to face-to-face relations, private connections (*veze*), and bribery (*mito*). It shows that such informal practices are reinforced by the disintegration of the main institutional forms of mediation and participation—the MZs—and by the limits of the new mediation and participation mechanisms promoted after the war.
- **Part IIC** focuses on associative life in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. It shows that associative life is declining; that the most frequent link between voluntary associations and citizens is not active membership, but one-way delivery of public services and material assistance; and that traditional citizens' associations (leisure or interest based) are closer to Bosnian citizens than are the new NGOs. It underlines the fact that both new and traditional voluntary associations can contribute to the creation of social capital.

- **Part IID** discusses the main forms of collective action related to local public services (infrastructure projects, clean-up actions, collective protests). It shows that the number and scope local collective actions have declined, together with social capital, but that their frequency and achievements are linked to factors such as the skills of local leaders and mobilization of the associative landscape. Finally, this section shows that collection action helps to create new bridging and linking social capital at the local level.

The *Annexes* should be read as an integral part of the study:

- **Annex 1** discusses the political and economical situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the last decade, and its influence on local-level institutions;
- **Annex 2** discusses the evolving thinking on social capital;
- **Annex 3** provides a detailed description of the study's methodology, the difficulties encountered, and adaptations made during the fieldwork;
- **Annex 4** describes the main characteristics, and the wartime and post-war experience, of each of the six study sites;
- **Annex 5** presents the opinion survey's sample;
- **Annex 6** presents the opinion survey's questionnaire;
- **Annex 7** presents the tables showing the main results of the opinion survey;
- **Annex 8** presents the bibliographical sources used for this study.

I. INTERPERSONAL TRUST, SOCIAL CLEAVAGES, AND FORMAL INSTITUTIONS

A. Decline and Changes in Interpersonal Trust

Main Changes in Micro-Level of Social Capital

Changes in social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina manifest themselves in terms of a decline in the level of interpersonal trust and in the related practices of socialization and mutual help. There is variation among the three ethnic areas on how the war has affected social capital. In the survey, 43.9 percent of the residents of Bosniac majority area said there has been no decline in socialization with old neighbors of different nationality, showing a higher level of bridging social capital. The opinion survey shows a greater decline in social capital among the poor and IDPs, as measured in invitations and material assistance. Decline in interpersonal trust (micro-level of social capital) affects formal institutions and civic values (macro-level of social capital).

Decline in Bridging Social Capital

At the micro level, the changes in social capital have to do with a decline in the level of interpersonal trust, and in the related practices of socialization and mutual help. In focus groups, nearly all participants say that Bosnia-Herzegovina is characterized by a low level of interpersonal trust. Many attribute this to the climate of generalized mistrust created by the uncertainties and disappointments of the war and post-war periods. This low level of interpersonal trust has led to a decline in socialization and mutual help:

As far as I can remember before the war people spent more time together and cared more about the problems of others. – representative of the Center for Civic Initiatives, Tuzla

Relations are fairly OK until a bigger problem arises and then everyone is out for themselves. Relatives look out for each other and real friends. Those who had a real friendship, that has remained, but any that was at all patchy has disappeared. – woman, Bihac

The results of the opinion survey confirm this last statement, and show that socialization has declined much more among colleagues (35.12 percent) and neighbors—especially those of another nationality (47.4 percent)—than with relatives (15.5 percent) and closest friends (19.1 percent) (Table 1). This withdrawal to a limited number of close personal relationships means that social capital has experienced a general decline in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and that bridging social capital has been more affected than bonding social capital by the events of the past decade.

Different Impact of the War and the Post-War Periods

Focus group participants and key informants note important differences between the war and the post-war periods. War has first of all affected interpersonal trust between

members of different ethnic groups (bridging social capital); as some participants say euphemistically, “*the war has done its deed*” (“*rat je ucinio svoje*”). At the same time, war has often reinforced trust between people belonging to the same ethnic group, the same place, or the same family (bonding social capital).²⁴ The war period is remembered, in part, as a time of closeness and solidarity:

When I look at my building, my neighbours, we all spent days together in the cellars and the only important thing was whether you would survive. It was different, we were together non-stop. – representative of the Center for Civic Initiatives, Tuzla

In war, we are all vulnerable, or at least 90 percent of the population. Then a fundamental human solidarity rises in people, so if you have something today and you share it with your neighbour, you figure that he will do the same for you tomorrow if he has something when you don't. – representative of the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (IBHI), Banja Luka

The new circumstances of the post-war period have had a different impact on interpersonal trust. According to many participants, the vanishing of war solidarities, the growing importance of material preoccupations, and the emergence of new inequalities have all contributed to a general climate of jealousy, competition, and selfishness:

Now people have turned to themselves, generally everyone is looking out for their own interests. The difference between the rich and poor keeps growing. The whole society is moving toward people being valued for what they have, what they own materially and not on their own personal values and qualities. – president of local NGO “Bospo”, Tuzla

Poverty and housing problems, unemployment or double occupation have also rendered socialization and mutual help more difficult, leading to a further narrowing of personal relations, and endangering even relations with closer friends and relatives (bonding social capital). In the opinion survey itself, the main reasons for the decline of socialization with neighbors of a different nationality (spatial distance, lack of will, intolerance) can be directly related to the war and ethnic cleansing, but material difficulties play a more important role in the case of relatives and closer friends (Table 1).

Spatial Differences in Amount of Social Capital

Social capital has been differently affected in the three ethnic areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Bosniac majority area seems to have kept the highest amount of bridging social capital. In the opinion survey, more residents of this area say there has been no decline in socialization with old neighbors of different nationality (43.9 percent, compared to 31.3 percent in the Croat majority area and 30.2 percent in the Serb majority area), and fewer mention intolerance as the main reason for decline in socialization (4.1 percent, compared to 6.6 percent in the Serb majority area and 19.5 percent in the Croat area). Bonding social capital appears slightly more resistant to decline in the Croat majority area: 90.6 percent of the residents of this area say there had been no decline in socialization with relatives, compared to 85.5 percent in the Bosniac majority area and 78.9 percent in the Serb majority area.

²⁴ See Macek, Ivana 2000, pp. 105-121.

This difference among ethnic areas can also be seen through the readiness to assist other people: residents of the Bosniac majority area are more likely to say that they are ready to help other people in any case, residents of the Serb majority area are more likely to say they are unable to do so; and residents of the Croat majority area are more likely to say that they are unwilling to help colleagues and neighbors (Table 2).

Interpersonal trust among members of different ethnic groups is also more often mentioned in the focus groups held in Tuzla and Bihac (Bosniac majority area) than elsewhere. In both cases, this reflects some local specificities. During the war, the non-nationalist municipality of Tuzla strove to preserve local inter-ethnic relations. In Bihac, inter-ethnic tensions were overshadowed by fighting between Bosniacs themselves.

Generally, the higher amount of bridging social capital in the Bosniac majority area can be explained by the fact that ethnic cleansing there was less systematic, and the higher level of bonding social capital in the Croat majority area is probably due to its better economic situation and its strong political and religious cohesiveness. The Serb majority area, for its part, is characterized by an almost complete ethnic homogeneity, a lasting institutional and political crisis, and a particularly difficult economic situation.²⁵

Invitations and Material Assistance as Indicators of Social Capital

One way to analyze more precisely the available social capital in post-war Bosnian society is to focus on invitations and material assistance as concrete forms of socialization and mutual help, and thus interpersonal trust. The opinion survey reveals that both invitations and material assistance remain frequent occurrences in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Tables 3 and 4).

Uneven Distribution of Social Capital

A detailed analysis of the frequency of invitations and material assistance shows clearly that the poor have less social capital than the rich. Many more respondents with a minimal level of income say they did not invite relatives (44.3 vs. 7.1 percent for respondents with a high level of income), friends (43.0 vs. 19.6 percent), colleagues (79.7 vs. 46.4 percent), old neighbors (same nationality: 65.2 vs. 35.7 percent; different nationality: 74.1 vs. 57.1 percent), and new neighbors (same nationality: 74.1 vs. 50.0 percent; different nationality: 82.3 vs. 62.5 percent). Thus, it appears that the poor have fewer possibilities of developing new personal relationships, and much more difficulty maintaining closeness even with their relatives (bonding social capital).

This finding is confirmed by the fact that more respondents with a minimal level of income also mention the lack of time or money as the main reason for declining socialization with closest friends (13.9 vs. 12.5 percent), colleagues (18.4 vs. 14.3 percent) and old neighbors (same nationality: 14.6 vs. 8.9 percent; different nationality

²⁵ About the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the last decade, see Annex 1.

10.8 vs. 7.1 percent); and for the low level of socialization with new neighbors (same nationality: 12 vs. 3.6 percent; different nationality: 10.8 vs. 3.6 percent).

Reshaping of Social Capital

The frequency of invitations and material assistance also shows how social capital has been reshaped in the last decade. On the one hand, war and ethnic cleansing have not completely destroyed personal relations between members of different ethnic groups (bridging social capital). In the three months preceding the opinion survey, more than one in five respondents (22.2 percent) had invited to their home, and one in eleven (8.6 percent) had assisted an old neighbor of a different nationality. Focus group participants and key informants also mention that, at the individual level, practices of “good neighborliness” (“*komsiluk*”) still exist:

I alone, in my neighborhood, am of Bosniac ethnicity, and they, as Serbs or as Catholics, have never treated me badly, but rather have always tried to help me if they can. For example, they do some work for me with a tractor if needed. I really cannot say that I have ever felt that they look at me differently. – man, Banja Luka

I live near Cerik, an orthodox Serb village, while over here we are Catholics. There was the war, there were front lines there and my house was on the front line as well as the houses of those Serbs who were my friends before the war. Now we associate normally. Those who left, who were expelled, their houses burned, and who are now returning home, no matter what they might come and ask me for I would give it to them, and vice versa. This is what is happening already. Now we want to help them a bit more until they get settled, and then we will all live the same, we will visit each other, we will go hunting—we already went hunting together, and that is a lot of trust for 5 Serbs and 3 Croats to go hunting together. – informal representative of MZ Dubrave, Brcko

On the other hand, many minority returnees complain about the lack of interpersonal trust and personal relations with members of the local ethnic majority:

Now it is impossible for a Muslim to go to the wedding of a Serb. There is no question, we understand this, this is something that needs time to heal, but I think that things will never be the way they were. – woman, Brcko

The opinion survey finds that invitations and material assistance to new neighbors of the same nationality (27.9 and 9.5 percent, respectively) are slightly more frequent than invitations and material assistance to old neighbors of a different nationality (22.2 and 8.6 percent) (Tables 3 and 4). This shows that an intense process of creating new personal relationships is taking place along ethnic lines, within each ethnic group and ethnic area.

IDPs More Affected Than Locals

The decline in interpersonal trust is most pronounced in the case of IDPs, who have been affected by violence, change of place and environment, loss of job, and loss of housing. In the opinion survey, many more IDPs say that they now socialize less than before with relatives (30.7 vs. 12.1 percent for locals), closest friends (34.2 vs. 15.8 percent), colleagues (47.9 vs. 31.9 percent) and old neighbors (same nationality: 63.3 percent vs.

23.1 percent; different nationality: 76.0 vs. 40.9 percent). In focus groups, many IDPs complain about the hostility of locals:

If you say that you are a refugee there is no chance that [locals] will help you with something. – man, Tuzla

Conversely, locals accuse IDPs of disturbing interpersonal trust in their neighborhoods:

Urban people, born in Banja Luka or raised in the city, prefer to withdraw from the influx of such people, who are uncivilized. They have come onto the asphalt and forced on us their traditions, their way of life. I think that normal people close themselves off in the circle of their family, in their homes. They do not wish to meet with such people because of the possibility of conflict of opinions, conflicting reactions in various situations. Those people who have come here from somewhere else are now more powerful than the locals, than the city folk. – woman, Banja Luka

Even for IDPs, however, the loss in social capital is only partial. IDPs from one place are frequently concentrated in the same municipality or region, and thus can maintain their former relationships and networks in the situation of exile. In the opinion survey, a large majority of IDPs say that they socialize as much or even more than before with relatives (68.4 percent) and friends (65.8 percent), and about a fourth of them (29.1 percent) say the same about old neighbors of the same nationality. At the same time, IDPs tend to compensate for the loss of social capital due to exile by developing new relationships in their new place of residence, as illustrated by the fact that more IDPs say they socialize enough or a lot with new neighbors of the same nationality (45.3 vs. 41.7 percent). The integration of IDPs into their new place of residence depends on their own will to settle there or return, their former acquaintances and networks, and their material situation.

The creation of new personal relationships along ethnic lines is more pronounced in the case of IDPs. In the three months preceding the opinion survey, 35.9 percent invited a new neighbor of the same nationality to their home at least once, but only 17.1 percent invited an old neighbor of a different nationality. Similarly, 8.6 percent assisted a new neighbor of the same nationality at least once, but only 4.4 percent assisted an old neighbor of a different nationality. IDPs tend to replace the bridging social capital they have lost (especially in regard to interethnic relations) by a new social capital with a strong bonding dimension. This is consistent with the fact that more IDPs mention intolerance (8.6 vs. 5.2 percent for locals) or unwillingness (23.1 vs. 6.9 percent) as the main reason for their low socialization with new neighbors of a different nationality.

The bonding dimension of new social capital created by IDPs can be seen in the case of those living in the collective center of Mihatovici (Tuzla),²⁶ or collectively settled in the suburb of Klanac (Brcko) or the village of Krizevici (Zvornik),²⁷ where common local origins, similar war experience, material difficulties, and indifference or hostility of the local environment have led them to develop a strong feeling of community:

²⁶ The collective center of Mihatovici is one of the most important in Bosnia-Herzegovina : it is located in the MZ Siki Brod, was opened in 1995, and gathers about 1,300 Bosniac IDPs from Eastern Bosnia.

²⁷ For details on the main characteristics of the MZs discussed in this study, see Annex 4.

[In 1996, people came from] *Kakanj, from Vares, from Ilijas—there were a whole lot of these people that I did not even know, but we got to know each other because our life problems united us. We grew close and as they say, we breathed as if with one soul, and still today that is the way we are, a compact, strong community that nobody can split. Even today we have remained united in our intention.* – president of the Serb MZ board, Klanac, Brcko

Local Factors Influencing the Reshaping of Social Capital

At the local level, where most people belong to the same ethnic group, the balance between locals and IDPs appears to be the central factor influencing the type and amount of social capital. Neighborhoods where population changes have been more limited, and pre-war social identities and networks preserved—such as the central neighborhood of Slatina (Tuzla) or the worker suburbs of Sicksi Brod (Tuzla) and Ada (Banja Luka)²⁸—seem to have retained a higher level of interpersonal trust and interpersonal relations.

In places settled by compact groups of IDPs, like the suburb of Klanac (Brcko) or the village of Krizevici (Zvornik), the bonds of trust between IDPs are more intense than between the locals of Slatina, Sicksi Brod, or Ada, but also more limited in scope and time, since they are based on a common situation that is expected to be temporary.

A similarly intense, and probably more durable feeling of community is also present among minority returnees in the suburb “4. Juli” (Brcko) or the villages of Krizevici (Zvornik), Martin Brod (Bihac), and Bistrica (Gornji Vakuf), who share the feeling of being stuck between two hostile environments—their place of exile and their place of return, which turns out to be very different from the one they remembered and idealized.

The places with the lowest level of interpersonal trust and intensity of personal relations are those where a large part of the locals has been replaced by a scattered population of IDPs. In such places, IDPs have more difficulty maintaining former relationships and networks; personal relations and interpersonal trust with the locals remain relatively low:

Informal Practices of Material Assistance and Cooperation

All of these changes and differences in interpersonal trust have direct implications for informal practices of material assistance and cooperation. Most focus group participants agree that these practices remain common between relatives and closer friends, but have sharply declined between neighbors and colleagues, due to both a lack of will (mistrust) and possibility (poverty). The opinion survey, however, shows that material assistance still exist beyond the narrow circles of relatives and friends. In the three months preceding the survey, one in five respondents (20.3 percent) assisted a colleague, and almost the same proportion (18.1 percent) assisted an old neighbor of the same nationality (Table 4). The importance of material assistance is also clear from the fact that many more respondents say they would turn to personal acquaintances than to formal institutions for help in a serious financial crisis (Table 7). Informal practices of material

²⁸ For details on the main characteristics on the MZs discussed in this study, see Annex 4.

assistance contribute not only to the survival of the poorest, but also to the functioning of the community by softening tensions and creating inter-dependencies.

Main Forms of Material Assistance

In focus groups, participants mention three main categories of assistance: monetary assistance, donation of food and commodities, sharing of collective charges according to income.

Monetary assistance is most frequently related to traumatic events such as fire, illness, accident, or death. In such cases, money is collected from neighbors and colleagues to cover the cost of the rehousing, the hospital, the burial ceremony. This practice dates from the pre-war period, but is more limited now due to the material and moral circumstances of the post-war period :

Everyone figures how they will have a mark to order a coffee. The standard has fallen, people do not have money, and we all know that the basic thing in life is financial existence. As far as help goes – I will help my neighbor, if it is an older lady I will help her carry her basket, bring in the firewood – that does not cost me anything. I cannot help her by going to the store and buying her lunch with my money because I have to take care of my mother, buy something for my son, for myself. I cannot share what I have with others because it is very little.(...) In everything, people are angry with themselves, so how could they not be angry with their neighbors ? They themselves need help; they cannot help themselves, so how could they help someone else ? – woman, Bihac

Donations of food and commodities are more closely linked to the impoverishment of the post-war period. In some buildings and residential streets, neighbors give money and commodities (food, clothes, etc.) to the poorest members of the community, such as single mothers, pensioners, or IDPs. Most of this assistance is self-organized, although monetary assistance also comes from remittances and loans from the diaspora:²⁹

I work in a store where there is a lot of traffic. Almost every day someone comes in asking for help for someone. When we are in a position to, we give 2, 3, 5, 10 marks, as do the customers that happen to be there. Customers are usually private business people as we work in parts for trucks – some give 5, some 10 or 20 marks. There are such cases but they are self-organized, it is not at the level of some organization. – man, Bihac

I have this one old woman, her husband worked with mine. Her husband died and she is left alone, no children. Every month I take her 200 to 300 dinars, whatever I can, 500 or whatever or food or clothes. This is one form of humanitarian assistance to this old woman who is at risk. It is not only her, this is how we help each other if we are able to. – woman, Zvornik

Sharing of collective charges can be found in apartment buildings and collective centers (Mihatovici) for the payment of taxes and utilities; the share of each resident is calculated

²⁹ In the 1999 *Social Assessment*, nearly 10 percent of the households interviewed mention remittances of the diaspora as a source of income (see World Bank 1999a, p. 12). The UNDP's *Early warning System* notes that "more people receive financial support from cousins [relatives] living abroad than are helped in the various ways by the state" (see UNDP 2001, p. 36).

according to his income, or the better-off pay for the poorest In collective centers and apartment buildings, where water and electricity bills are often calculated and paid at the collective level, this sharing principle enable residents to avoid the disruption of basic utilities. Circumstances of the war and the post-war periods have rendered it more difficult to implement:

When I go to collect the money for cleaning the stairwell, this person says they don't have the money, the next says that he is not working, I don't know how to collect 50 marks to pay the woman who cleans the stairwell. – man, member of a condominium council, Tuzla

Thus, the sharing principle can also bring about tensions, and lead to implicit forms of constraint and negotiation between the better-off and the poorest. In the collective center of Mihatovici, for example, the informal leader of the IDPs explains that those with a regular income (wage, foreign pension, etc.) often pay the share of the others. In the long run, this situation endangers the cohesion of the community:

Everyone says that there is no money. If you take two marks from someone today, it may be two marks that they have to survive the day. But you can't keep asking from those who do have incomes. Those who have incomes cannot constantly be our donors, we cannot always ask of them, give, give. – man, Tuzla

Cooperation in Building and Repair of Houses

People living in villages or residential suburbs help each other to build or repair their houses. Such reciprocity is traditional in Bosnian society, and involves neighbors, friends, and nearby relatives.³⁰ It seems to be well developed among IDPs (Klanac, Krizevici) and returnees (“4. Juli”, Krizevici, Martin Brod, Bistrica), in areas where houses have been destroyed. The leader of the Serb IDPs in Klanac (Brcko) remembers:

We helped one another, I have never been a manual worker but I installed the electricity for a relative, then another, and again, and so we helped each other out. I would work for someone for five or six days, and then he would come and help me. I clearly remember 1996 when there was never a worse winter, a lot of snow and really cold, ice, it was hard to believe how everything was against us. In all that suffering we sort of united with others and helped each other out and solved problems. – president of the Serb MZ board, Klanac, Brcko

An important difference from the pre-war situation is that collective works no longer involve neighbors of various nationalities: Serbs in Brcko (“4. Juli”, Klanac) and Zvornik (Krizevici), or Bosniacs in Gornji Vakuf (Bistrica) do not help minority returnees to rebuild their houses. Similarly, people no longer participate with money or work in building the places of worship of other ethnic groups, as was usual before the war. The only exception found during the fieldwork is in the village of Dubrave (Brcko), where the informal representative of the MZ mentions that Croat inhabitants of Dubrave are helping Serb returnees in the neighboring village of Cerik to rebuild their houses. This situation,

³⁰ See Bringa, Tone 1995.

however, can be explained by the fact that during the war, Serb houses had been occupied by Bosniac IDPs, with whom local Croats had bad relationships.

Cooperation in Maintenance of Apartment Buildings

Smaller collective works are also organized in apartment buildings around the regular cleaning and repair of the common areas (stairwells, parking lots, green areas, etc.). The frequency of these practices is closely related to the existence of condominium councils. These councils were part of the Yugoslav self-management system, and played an important role during the war (civil protection, distribution of humanitarian aid). Many have disappeared after the war, especially in buildings where significant population changes occurred. Collective works in apartment buildings are also diminishing because of privatization of public apartments, legislative changes concerning common areas and condominium councils, and lack of means to restore obsolete building infrastructure.

Links between Micro-Level and Macro-Level of Social Capital

The example of condominium councils and care for common areas illustrates how the decline in interpersonal trust (micro-level of social capital) affects formal institutions and civic values (macro-level of social capital). Collective works related to house building and repair, or to maintenance of common areas in apartment buildings, also clearly show the impact of interpersonal trust on the frequency and scope of collective action. Many focus group participants perceive negligence of common areas as a consequence of declining civility:

Some people are not from the city, they have not been raised to care whether the entrance where they live is painted or not, or whether there is rubbish in front of their door, and these are the small things that create an entire lifestyle. – woman, Banja Luka

This link between micro and macro-level social capital is also apparent in the opinion survey. In particular, residents of the Bosniac majority area are the most willing to help both neighbors and local formal institutions in any case. Residents of the Croat majority area, by contrast, are the least willing to help neighbors or formal institutions in any case, with the one exception being local parishes. In both cases, residents of the Serb majority area are somewhere in between (Table 5).

If readiness to help neighbors is considered an indicator of bridging social capital, and readiness to help formal institutions as a first indicator of linking social capital, it then appears that their spatial redistribution is similar.³¹ This spatial correlation between bridging and linking capital, and the strong mutual influence between interpersonal relations and formal institutions, can also be described concretely, by examining the relationship between the main social cleavages in Bosnian society and factors such as

³¹ This reality is confirmed by the data of UNDP *Early Warning System*, according to which respondents in the Bosniac majority area have, in general, the highest level of confidence in political institutions, and respondents in the Croat majority area have the lowest one. See UNDP 2001, p. 12.

population movements, social protection and assistance mechanisms, and local-level institutions.

B. Social Cleavages and Population Movements

Focus group participants and key informants consider ethnic cleavages important, but also say that tensions have decreased in the few last years. Focus group participants and key informants confirm that the cleavage between rich and poor has been reinforced by the specific circumstances of the war and post-war periods. At the local level, the most pervasive cleavages remain those among locals, IDPs and minority returnees. These cleavages are nurtured by the ongoing restitution and return process, and general competition for scarce resources. IDPs are more often unemployed than locals, and minority returnees are excluded from the local labor market. Cleavages among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees have a strong socioeconomic dimension, but they are interpreted in terms of cultural, moral, or political categories. Willingness to return and sustainability of return are also closely linked with socioeconomic issues like employment and access to public services.

Main Social Cleavages in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The 1999 *Social Assessment* of Bosnia-Herzegovina found that the main causes of social cleavages in Bosnian society were ethnicity, area of origin, war experience and income level. The cleavage between poor and rich seemed to be even more acute than the one between ethnic groups.³² The present study confirms this general picture.

Evolution of Ethnic Cleavages

Focus group participants and key informants consider ethnic cleavages important, but also say that tensions have decreased in the few last years and that incidents are rare, except for limited flare-ups due to political events. Even in the divided municipality of Gornji Vakuf, some participants insist on the peaceful everyday relations between Bosniacs and Croats:

People spontaneously communicate where there they have an interest in doing so. We have cases where people associate through jobs—they do one another favors, they work for one another, this is pure interest. On Wednesdays, Croats all go to the market where it was before the war. It is on the Bosniac side and there are no problems there—they come, buy with their money, the merchants sell to them and serve them nicely because it is in their interest. – local representative of the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ), Gornji Vakuf

³² In the *Social assessment*, 38 percent of the respondents reported high social distance between rich and poor, and 32 percent reported high social distance between members of different ethnic groups. See World Bank 2000a, p. 22.

However, ethnic cleavages are difficult to assess at the local level: key informants and participants may downplay them as a matter of courtesy or self-censorship, especially in focus group with members of local ethnic minorities.³³ Ethnic cleavages can also take indirect forms. Many Bosniac participants, in particular, tend to deny any serious ethnic conflict at the local level, but insist on the tensions between people who were on different sides of the front line, though these two types of cleavages amount largely to the same thing. In the focus group with young people in Tuzla, for example, the participants praise “our” Serbs—those who remained—as a symbol of the tolerant spirit of the town, but denounce those—a large majority of the local Serbs—who left during the war.

Participants do not agree among themselves about the relative importance of ethnic cleavages in the evolution of interpersonal relations. The question provokes a polemic between two participants in the focus group with Bosniac minority returnees in Brcko :

Woman: *We have all grown unused to socializing. In that time [before the war], you grew close to people you worked with, you talked, went out together, went on outings, but now...*

Man : *For what reason?*

Woman : *I don't know.*

Man : *Sure you know, say, don't be scared.*

Woman : *What do you think.*

Man : *Religious nationalism [sic].*

Woman : *No.*

Man : *It is, I swear.*

Woman : *I do not agree with the gentleman at all. The financial situation is such, the battle for a dinar, the struggle for existence. This is the problem that distances people because everyone is struggling in their own way to survive.*

Impact of War on the Rich-Poor Cleavage

Focus group participants and key informants confirm that the cleavage between rich and poor has been reinforced by the specific circumstances of the war and post-war periods. In particular, many participants denounce those who got rich during the war. Other state that only poor did fight, while the rich and the intellectuals escaped mobilization:

During the war there was plunder of other peoples' property, black market, misuse of humanitarian aid. Some people grew rich here in the city, misusing convoys [of humanitarian help], while we were bleeding in the war. Everyone knows this. One cannot easily forgive if he knows that his neighbour has stolen from humanitarian aid while he was on the front line without anything to eat. – man, Tuzla.

Of the 1,340 military war invalids in the area of the municipality of Bihac, there is only one with a masters degree and 17 with university education. That says it all. It is not only Bihac that is this way but all of the cities in Bosnia and Herzegovna. – man, Bihac

³³ The tendency of members of local ethnic minorities to downplay ethnic cleavages also appears in the opinion survey: only 1.1 percent of them say that they socialize less with old neighbors of another nationality because of ethnic or political intolerance, as compared to 8.9 of respondents belonging to the local ethnic majority.

Among Bosniac participants,³⁴ there is animosity between those who stayed during the war and those who left for abroad, and have now returned to Bosnia-Herzegovina:³⁵

Look at what they have done to us, instead of helping us because we are the ones that have assured their return, they have come back with bags full of money, buy apartments, buy jobs. – man, Bihac

Impact of Economic Crisis on the Rich-Poor Cleavage

With regard to the post-war period, nearly all participants mention unemployment and poverty as their most important problems. Lack of housing is also a central concern, and contributes to a general feeling of insecurity. Many participants even consider that their material situation is worse than during the war: according to them, people are now overloaded (“*opterećeni*”) with material difficulties, can only live from day to day (“*od danas do sutra*”), and think that life is mere survival (“*preživljavanje*”).³⁶ This widespread feeling that the economic situation has worsened since 1995 is due to the weakening of the social safety net inherited from the Communist system (see Part IC), and to the centrality of material problems in post-war everyday life:

Now it is harder than it was in the war. In the war we knew that it was war, it was hard for everyone, but now this is harder to deal with. – man, Bihac

Growing inequalities leads participants to describe post-war Bosnian society as divided between a large majority of poor and a small number of rich, with no middle class left. As shown in the *Voices of the Poor* study,³⁷ the general impoverishment of the population and the emergence of visible and illegitimate inequalities result in strong feelings of injustice, and exacerbate the hostility against “war profiteers” (“*ratni profiteri*”) and “thieves” (“*lopovi*”). Moral accusations against the rich are apparent in the Serb majority area, where participants insist on the opposite moral values associated with rich and poor:

If you seek help among the poor, they will help one another as best they can in some way, but the rich do not see anyone. – man, Brcko

The importance of the rich-poor cleavage, however, should not be overstated. Its frequent mention in the focus groups is also due to the fact that an abstract and consensual

³⁴ During the war, many Bosniac refugees went to Western countries while most of the Serb and Croat refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina remained in Serbia or Croatia.

³⁵ In the UNDP *Early warning System*, 36.4 percent of the respondents belonging to the local ethnic majority, and 35.3 percent of the respondents belonging to local ethnic minorities consider that there is a strong intolerance or tension between returnees and those that spent the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. See UNDP 2001, p. 41.

³⁶ In the opinion survey, 11.3 percent of respondents said that they are “*on the brink of existence*”. In the UNDP *Early warning System*, 15.1 percent of respondents in the Federation and 21.7 percent of respondents in the Serb Republic state that they do not have enough money to buy food. 46.3 percent of respondents in the Federation and 53.9 percent of respondents in the Serb Republic state that they have enough for food, but face difficulties purchasing clothes. See UNDP 2001, p. 33-34.

³⁷ See World Bank 1999b, pp. 14-17.

denunciation of the rich is an easy way to circumvent other cleavages among the poor themselves, like the one opposing locals, IDPs and minority returnees

Population Movements and Local Social Cleavages

At the local level, the most pervasive cleavages remain those resulting from forced population movements during the war. In urban settlements, demographic growth and economic crisis have put locals, IDPs, and minority returnees in competition for scarce resources such as housing and jobs—with different results. Among respondents to the opinion survey, 24.5 percent of the locals—including minority returnees³⁸—and 37.6 percent of the IDPs are unemployed or laid-off; 7.1 percent of the locals and 14.5 percent of the IDPs have a precarious job; and only 29.9 percent of the locals and 18.8 percent of the IDPs have a stable and formal job.³⁹ The discrepancy between local and IDPs with respect to housing is also a primary source of tension.⁴⁰

The ongoing process of restitution of houses and flats to their pre-war owners or beneficiaries, and the eviction of illegal occupants, is probably the most important source of tensions among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees.⁴¹ Local politicians also mention the relocation of evicted people and the general lack of housing as one of their most burning problems, especially in municipalities where the number of IDPs and returnees is high, and the implementation of the new property laws well advanced:⁴²

A fundamental cause of distrust [between people] is certainly the opposite legal status of those who wish to regain their property and those who are occupying someone else's property and have nowhere to go. This is particularly the case in the Brcko district. There are a high number of occupied houses, return is not flowing the way we had imagined, and the problem remains. – deputy mayor, Brcko

We have a large number of refugees who have now become domicile residents – we have a real demographic boom, but the municipality has a very small budget relative to the real needs and problems that exist. Up until now we have partly been helping people who have been evicted and who are in a difficult material position – we supplied them with some building materials to fix their homes. However, all of this has now stopped, there is no international assistance, and those being evicted are increasingly difficult cases. The provision of housing is becoming one of the most serious social problems. – mayor, Tuzla

³⁸ In the opinion survey, minority returnees are included in the larger category “Locals”. See Annex 5.

³⁹ In addition, 20.8 percent of the locals and 11.1 percent of IDPs are pensioners; 11.2 percent of the locals and 12.0 percent of IDPs are housewives; 5.3 percent of the locals and 3.4 percent of IDPs are students.

⁴⁰ The dimensions of this discrepancy are apparent in the following findings: 82.4 percent of the locals and 15.4 percent of IDPs own their present accommodation; 2.9 percent of the locals and 14.5 percent of IDPs rent their present accommodation; and 9.6 percent of the locals and 68.4 percent of IDPs occupy someone else's property.

⁴¹ See Cox, Marcus 1998; UNHCR 1999a; CRPC 2000.

⁴² About the situation in the six study sites, see Annex 4.

IDPs and Minority Returnees

The conflicting interests of IDPs and minority returnees are the most obvious, since the return of the former depends largely on the eviction of the latter.⁴³ The tensions between them are also due to the fact that IDPs and minority returnees experience different kinds of difficulties and uncertainties. Many IDPs are concerned about possible eviction, and have a strong feeling of social downfall linked to the loss of their pre-war assets and jobs:

Before the war I too had much, now I have nothing. – woman, Bihac

I had property and everything, but here I am a refugee and I literally do not have a dinar.
– woman, Zvornik

Minority returnees, for their part, are pleased and proud to again be in a house of their own (“*svoj na svome*”). However, they are excluded from the local labor market.⁴⁴ In most cases, the restitution of pre-war accommodations is not followed up with a restitution of pre-war jobs, which have often disappeared in the meantime:

Discrimination on the basis of ethnicity can be felt most in relation to employment in the municipal offices, or in public enterprises owned by the municipalities, where the national structure of employees is de facto mono-ethnic. – three ombudsmen’s regional officers, Bihac

Locals and IDPs

Conflicting interests are also apparent between locals and IDPs.⁴⁵ Serb IDPs from Sarajevo living in Klanac (Brcko) or Krizevici (Zvornik) say they were compelled to settle in destroyed Bosniac houses in 1996, because empty flats in the city center had already been grabbed by locals during the war. More generally, locals complain that IDPs are better protected by the new property laws, while IDPs accuse locals of escaping eviction by using their connections with local politicians and civil servants.⁴⁶ Both groups also accuse each other of monopolizing jobs:

There exists a certain tension between the refugee population and the local population, especially here in Banja Luka, because they are supposed to be employed in accordance with a certain law from 1993 when Brdjanin was in power. He brought a law that a refugee finding himself in this region has priority in employment. If refugees have such status here, how can any local resident accept them when they can get jobs but locals cannot? – president of the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, Banja Luka

⁴³ In the UNDP *Early warning System*, 55.0 percent of the respondents belonging to the local ethnic majority, and 61.0 percent of the respondents belonging to local ethnic minorities consider that there is a strong intolerance or tension between returnees and those living in their home. See UNDP 2001, p. 41.

⁴⁴ See OSCE –Human Right Department 1999.

⁴⁵ In the UNDP *Early warning System*, 33.0 percent of the respondents belonging to the local ethnic majority, and 40.7 percent of the respondents belonging to local ethnic minorities consider that there is a strong intolerance or tension between returnees / IDPs and the resident population. See UNDP 2001, p. 41.

⁴⁶ In the opinion survey, many more IDPs than locals say that the main problem related to housing for IDPs and returnees is discrimination (13.7 vs. 4.3 percent) or corruption (16.2 vs. 8.0 percent).

The problem is that we are sidelined and we cannot get employment easily because it is taken up by the local population. I have the good fortune of being permanently employed but I have enormous problems from older colleagues because I am taking up a job while their children are in need of work. They say to me that I should go home so that their child can have the job. – man, Tuzla

These tensions explain why many IDPs feel rejected by locals, despite belonging to the same ethnic group. Some participants believe also that locals would like to get rid of the IDPs, and replace them with their former neighbors, even those of different ethnicity:

People [in Zvornik] do not tolerate their refugees, the same way as they do not tolerate us in Tuzla and they say bring me back my neighbors, no matter what ethnicity, the only important thing is that we lived better with them. – man, Zvornik

Minority Returnees and Locals

While minority returnees complain about the behavior of IDPs, they often praise the behavior of locals, or explain their distant attitude by their fear of IDPs:

We have contacts with the pre-war locals regardless of their ethnicity. Of the refugees we don't know them and so it is just a cursory greeting. – man, Brcko

It is only an exchange of greetings because they [the locals] are afraid of certain Serb refugees and so they are afraid to socialize with us the way they used to when we would visit each other for Easter and Christmas, religious holidays, and weddings. – woman, Brcko

Such statements may represent an attempt by minority returnees to mobilize against IDPs, whom they perceive as illegitimate intruders, the local identity they shared with locals before the war. It is indeed true that conflicts of interest between minority returnees and locals are less direct than with IDPs, and former practices of “good neighborliness” (“*komsiluk*”) can help to soften tensions. In Brcko, the return of Bosniacs seems to be easier in suburbs populated by a majority of Serb pre-war residents, such as Grcica, than in former Bosniac suburbs settled by Serb IDPs, such as Klanac. Some locals also occupy houses and flats of minority returnees, and many of them do not welcome the return of their former neighbors:

I am from Bratunac by birth, and I went there. You have to keep your head bowed in order for your neighbor, with whom you had worked, not to recognize you. You only want to get out of there because they do not consider you to be a man at all. – man, Tuzla

Variety of Local Situations

Cleavages among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees are intricate, and concrete forms vary from place to place. In the village of Krizevici (Zvornik), Bosniac minority returnees seem to have better relations with Serb IDPs from Sarajevo in their village, than with Serbs living in the neighboring village of Kitovnice. Bosniac returnees mention the common experience of exile as the reason of their good relations with Serb IDPs:

There have not been any excesses or arguments—really, nothing. We go to their houses, they come to ours, we sit together, drink together. We drink, barbecue meat—really. We understand each other. – man, Zvornik

At the same time, Bosniacs are quite hostile to their former neighbors, whom they suspect of having participated in the killings in 1992:

Those are our former neighbors who brought genocide, but from their talk they did not. A hundred civilians from this MZ are missing, but nobody wants to say 'Neighbor, I saw this person, I buried him there.' They offer no information. All of the evil deeds came from them but they keep saying that it was not them but that people from Serbia came and did it all. – man, Zvornik

Socioeconomic Dimensions of Local Social Cleavages

Generally, the high level of poverty and unemployment in Bosnia-Herzegovina is exacerbating the conflicts between IDPs and minority returnees around the restitution process by lessening the spatial mobility of IDPs, and thus reinforcing their will to resist eviction. Thus these conflicts are most often conflicts among the poor.

Socioeconomic Dimensions of the Restitution Process

IDPs with better material resources, professional skills, and private connections have more often succeeded in resolving their housing problems, and are less exposed to eviction (or only as double occupants). Among the respondents to the opinion survey, 78.8 percent of IDPs with a minimal level of income occupy someone else's property, as opposed to 72.7 percent of those with a low level of income, 60.9 percent of those with an average level of income, and only 42.9 percent of those with a high level of income.

Due to the strong socioeconomic dimension of the restitution process, the municipalities willing to implement the new property laws are faced with strong social tensions and dramatic individual situations. The lack of municipal alternative accommodations, the high price of private housing, delays in property restitution, and the scarcity of donations for repair and reconstruction also mean that many evicted IDPs have to go back to collective centers or destroyed houses—a situation that often reminds them of their first exile. Such social problems are one of the reasons why many municipal authorities try to slow down the rhythm of evictions.⁴⁷ Even municipalities and voluntary associations that support the restitution process believe that only an increase in local housing capacity will permit a rapid and peaceful implementation of the new property laws:

We consider that not enough attention has been devoted to these problems by the local authorities, government offices, or even the international community. We are convinced that there does not exist a mechanism to create a balance so that the family and the individual do not suffer. If one Bosniac or Croat needs to come back but in that space there is an entire family that may have been expelled from Bosniac or Croat territory, then there needs to be a solution found. The worst solution is for the people to be thrown out onto the street. It was our suggestion that a refugee settlement be erected, but as a

⁴⁷ See ICG 1999b.

transition settlement, in the sense that if the conditions are met for the Bosniac or Croat to return to their home but the Serb who is living there has no alternative accommodation, then he would move to the settlement and live there until another solution is found. In this way things would pass relatively painlessly; later the settlement could be sold or given to someone long term. In this way tragic situations would be avoided. – president of the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, Banja Luka

Socioeconomic Dimension of the Return Process

Return itself has a socioeconomic dimension. Several studies⁴⁸ have found differences in the attitude toward return of Bosniac, Serb, and Croat IDPs. This difference is also clearly perceptible in the opinion survey carried out for this study: 81.3 percent of IDPs living in the Bosniac majority area, 50.0 percent of those living in the Croat majority area, and only 28.4 percent only of those living in the Serb majority area say they are willing to return. Factors of employment, age, housing status, and level of education influence IDPs in decisions of whether or not to return to their former place of residence.

In the opinion survey, level of income and professional status do not seem to have a strong influence on the will to return. In the focus groups, however, many IDPs mention loss of job and fear of unemployment as the main reasons they do not want to return:

They call a Serb to go and live in Sarajevo but he has no work there, and here he is working. How can he want to return to Sarajevo ? He can't ! I did not work there [in my place of exile], I came here and still do not work, so it is all the same to me. Here I know of a case where in one family three men work in four workplaces. How can they want to leave here ? If they make them go back to Sarajevo or wherever, over there the three of them will not have four jobs. How can they have any desire to return ? – woman, Brcko

In the opinion survey, two main factors seem to influence IDPs' will to return: age and level of education (Table 6). The influence of these two related factors (young people are more educated than old ones) is reflected in the fact that, in many places, most minority returnees are older people of rural origin, with a low level of education, who had more difficulty adapting to their new environment.

There is also a link between housing status and will to return (52.5 percent of IDPs occupying someone else's property are willing to return, as opposed to 35.3 percent of those renting their present accommodations and 22.2 percent of those who own their houses), but it is difficult to say whether finding legal accommodation reduces IDPs' will to return or whether desire to stay has driven them to regularize their housing status.

In the focus groups, some minority returnees are IDPs who have been evicted or were threatened with eviction. In such cases, return is experienced less as a free choice than as a constraint and a new exile. Poverty and unemployment are also endangering the sustainability of return itself :

⁴⁸ In the *Social Assessment*, 74 percent of the Bosniac IDPs, 29 percent of the Croat IDPs and 19 percent of the Serb IDPs state that they wish to return to their pre-war place of residence. See World Bank 1999a, p. 26.

They say : go back. I am going back to my own property, but nobody cares what it is like for someone my age here. This is manipulation of people. – man, Brcko

Even a house is worthless if you have nothing to eat. – man, Brcko

I am safe, nobody bothers me, since I have been up there I have had no problems with the refugees, the Serbs, or the Croats. But what are we to live on. – man, Brcko

The preoccupation of IDPs and minority returnees with economic issues shows a change in attitude since 1999, when participants in the *Social Assessment* considered fear for personal security as a main obstacle to return.⁴⁹ This change is probably due to acceleration of the return process and progressive improvement of the overall security situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Interpretations of Local Social Cleavages and Impact

Cleavages among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees have a strong socioeconomic dimension, but are compounded by the fact that they are interpreted mainly in terms of cultural, moral, or political categories.

Cultural Prejudices between Locals and IDPs

The cleavages between locals and IDPs, for example, are reinforced by lasting prejudices between the urban and rural populations (see also Part ID). In focus groups, many urban locals insist on the cultural differences between themselves and rural IDPs:

Only city folk used to live here—urban Orthodox, Muslims, and Croats. These people that have come here are all uncivilized. – woman, Banja Luka

Their way of life is different from ours here in the city. When that gets mixed up, it is not a pretty sight. Those habits, traditions, culture, you know what I mean. – man, Tuzla

Urban residents accuse rural IDPs of breeding animals in their bathroom and on their balcony, throwing refuse out the window, relieving themselves in the common areas. They attribute these behaviors to primitiveness and lack of culture.⁵⁰ At the same time, they also say that IDPs do not want to return to their former place of residence because they are accustomed to the urban way of life:

In reality, however, many IDPs are of urban origin, the desire of many IDPs of rural origin to settle in urban settlements is, among others, due to the fact that they have there a

⁴⁹ In the *Social Assessment*, 68 percent of the IDPs mention personal and property security as the main precondition for return. See World Bank 1999a, p. 27.

⁵⁰ Differences between urban and rural populations in Bosnia-Herzegovina are indeed important, but cannot be reduced to an opposition between “culture” and “non-culture”. About the rural/urban cleavage before and during the war, see Denich, Bette 1974; Simic, Andrei 1983; Bringa, Tone 1995; Bougarel, Xavier 1999; Macek, Ivana 2000. About the popular use of the categories “culture” and “non-culture”, see Bringa, Tone 1995.

better access to basic public services (see Part IIA), and their alleged negligence toward common areas can be related to their precarious housing status. Conversely, the hostility of the urban population toward rural IDPs is also fed by the feeling that villagers were less affected by the circumstances of war and economic crisis:

They have the conditions to be able to supply themselves with food, they do not have problems with evictions, they are secure where they are, they have the housing issue resolved, while people living in the city are largely without work—that is, they do not have the basic conditions for existence. – woman, Tuzla

Moral and Political Grievances between IDPs and Minority Returnees

Conflicts of interests linked with the restitution and return process are often interpreted in terms of moral and political categories. In focus groups, all participants agree that illegally occupied private properties must be returned to their pre-war owners. This consensus is significant, since nationalist parties had promised IDPs and veterans that they would retain the houses and flats they were occupying. It shows that the new property laws enforced by the UN High Representative, and the information campaigns organized by international organizations and local NGOs, have been efficient. This consensus obscures more concrete and lasting disagreements. While the restitution of private properties does not give rise to discussion, the case of public apartments is already much more controversial: some participants think that the former occupants have a legitimate right to these apartments, since they had been financed by the enterprises for which the former occupants had worked; others think that the apartments should be allocated according to need and other social criteria.

Many participants also criticize the criteria by which evictions are decided and alternative accommodations allocated, and deplore the fact that even vulnerable persons, including war veterans and invalids, are evicted from properties which then remain empty or are sold by former owners and beneficiaries:

One burning problem that may result in violent excesses in the coming year is that of housing for the veteran population. In Tuzla at a [municipal] assembly I got up and asked what was the purpose of evicting a soldier who was four years in the war, who has nowhere to live and then the apartment remains empty. There are any number of apartments in Tuzla that are empty, sealed, locked, sold. I do not know where those people are living, it is a terrible situation. It is not a completed task where the apartment is empty and someone is out on the street. – president of the Unified Organization of Veterans (JOB), Tuzla

Widespread corruption and clientelism in the implementation of evictions and assigning of alternative accommodations also contribute to the mutual grievances and the general feeling of injustice related to the restitution process:

At the municipal level, problems are resolved only for those who have the money to give. It means if I am the person who is to decide who will get the apartment that was built with money from the international community, I will take from the person who is supposed to move in some 5 or 10 thousand marks for him to get the apartment—that is the only criterion. The needs of the family of a fallen soldier, or an invalid, or whatever—none of that makes any difference. This building down there that is open, how did people

get to move in ? There are a few people who should be there, but mainly it is some sort of money laundering. I know a man who gave 15 thousand marks and he was given a two room apartment. – man, Zvornik

Other complaints about the restitution process are more closely linked with ethnic and political conflicts. Serb IDPs, for example, claim their right to settle in their new place of residence, and criticize the fact that, under the new property laws of the Federation, restitution of occupancy rights on public apartments is conditioned on their actual occupancy during at least two years. More generally, they consider that minority returnees have more rights than they have, and accuse international organizations of encouraging only return for political reasons:

Our people are being thrown out onto the streets while [Bosniacs and Croats] return to their homes peacefully. – man, Banja Luka

[International organizations] only help people of other nationalities here, and the same goes for Serbs in the Federation. This means they help only those who want to return. It is in their interest to keep Croats here and that is why they build them houses for return. – man, Banja Luka

Bosniac minority returnees criticize the fact that Serb IDPs get their pre-war property back without having to return to their place of origin, and at the same time obtain plots of land or public apartments in their new place of residence. Bosniac minority returnees also accuse Serb authorities of trying to consolidate the results of ethnic cleansing

They give 5 million marks for the Serbs to remain, they divide all the public property along the Drina River, or they usurp Bosniac property and the papers are made so that it becomes Serb. Then they build houses [for Serb IDPs], they intervene and give help to these people so that they stay. The fact is that the entire demographic structure of this region has changed. It is a political plan created by politicians. In the Federation there is no such case, in the Federation I cannot get one square meter of land, they push me out, and tell me to get away from them. – president of the MZ board, Krizevici, Zvornik

Recognition of Conflicting Interests and Practical Compromises

The political use of displaced populations is indeed one of the main problems of post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, and has been denounced in many studies and reports.⁵¹ In Brcko and Zvornik, for example, public protests against return or violent attacks against returnees have been most often encouraged by nationalist forces. But, even in such cases, informal and formal compromises have led to a progressive depoliticization of the return process, and to a more or less peaceful coexistence between IDPs and minority returnees, as illustrated by the case of Klanac, a suburb of Brcko (see Box 1).

⁵¹ See, among others, ICG 1999b.

Box 1. Klanac: From Confrontation To Compromise

The MZ of Klanac is a residential suburb located in the southwestern part of Brcko city. In 1991, about 80 percent of its 5,500 inhabitants were Bosniacs. During the war, Klanac was located on the Serb side of the front line, and was emptied of its pre-war population and destroyed by heavy fighting. The Bosniacs who left registered an MZ board in exile in the Bosniac municipality of Brcko-Rahic. In January 1996, following the transfer of the Sarajevian suburb Ilijas to the Federation, about 400 Serb families from Ilijas and neighboring municipalities controlled by the Bosnian army since 1992 (Visoko, Kakanj, Breza, etc.) settled in Klanac. They took over and repaired some Bosniac houses, rebuilt basic local infrastructure, and formed their own MZ board in March 1996.

From June 1998 to April 2000, the impending start of the return process in Klanac led to a direct and violent confrontation between the two groups: Serb IDPs organized demonstrations and road blockades, preventing Bosniac pre-war residents from recovering their houses and demanding the allocation of plots of land so they could build their own houses. In May 2000, discussions among the Office of the High Representative, the District authorities, and the two MZ boards led to an agreement: one hundred plots of land were allocated to Serb DPs in the suburb of Ilacka, on which one hundred four-flat houses are expected to be built. IDPs can get plots at no cost if they have no property in the Federation, or if their property was destroyed during the war. They will also be compensated by the District for the cost of repairs they made to Bosniac houses. The Serb IDPs, for their part, agreed to allow the return process, and to return occupied houses to their owners as soon as they have the possibility of settling in Ilacka. Finally, in order to prevent the creation of a monoethnic settlement in that suburb, one hundred plots of land will also be allocated to Bosniac families, and one hundred to Croat families.

This compromise recognizes the right of Serb IDPs to settle in Brcko, and thus OHR and District authorities have been criticized by some Bosniac political parties and IDP associations for consolidating ethnic cleansing. District authorities have also negotiated with ethnic MZ boards that have no legal existence and that they had first tried to circumvent (see Part ID). But this pragmatic approach has made it possible to have a peaceful return process in Klanac, and has helped to change relations between Serbs and Bosniacs.

We cannot talk about common interests given that Bosniacs are returning to Klanac and citizens of Serb ethnicity are leaving this area, but if they need that building [of the MZ Klanac], we support them, the same way they support us in building [a new MZ building] in Ilacka. As far as the leadership is concerned, generally everything that is done is done on agreement. We have found a common language insofar as they are aware that with our leaving they will come back to their own homes. That is why their president says it is more important to him to make 100 houses in Ilacka [than in Klanac] because then he is not resolving 100 housing issues but 200 – 100 of us go there while 100 of his people come here. – president of Serb MZ board, Klanac

The two MZ boards meet regularly, and jointly exert pressure on the District for rapid implementation of the agreement. An important obstacle to the return process in Klanac, and a real threat to cooperation between the two groups, is indeed its slow implementation:

We are the first MZ that has opened up to Bosniacs, we initiated the shared realization of a project [building of a refugee settlement], with the aim of resolving the problems of Bosniacs and Serbs and in this way surprised the international community and municipal officials. We even agreed that our leadership will present together the interests of Bosniacs and Serbs, and organize common protests if the need arises. It turns out that we can serve as an example to other MZs in Bosnia-Herzegovina of how we can resolve many problems through agreement. But I think that our achievements would be greater still if the District authorities had supported us – they did support us, but it was only with verbal promises. If their words had passed into action then the achievements would have been far greater on both the Bosniac and the Serb side. – president of the Serb MZ board, Klanac

In the cleavages among locals, IDPs, and minority returnees, clashes of interests, opposite war experiences, and widespread prejudice reinforce each other. General mistrust among

these three groups contributes to each of them feeling neglected, and accusing the others of being dishonest and having hidden agendas. Such interpretations reflect the low level of bridging social capital characterizing post-war Bosnian society, and diminish its capacity to manage conflicts. At the same time, the positive changes taking place in the relations between Serb IDPs and Bosniac minority returnees in Klanac (see Box 1), and, more generally, the changing role of the IDPs associations in Brcko (see Part IIC), show that the recognition of conflicting interests can facilitate practical compromises, and help to transform bonding social capital into bridging social capital.

C. Social Cleavages and Social Welfare System

Ethnic and Statutory Fragmentation of the Social Welfare System

The social cleavages in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina are influenced not only by the population movements of the war and post-war periods, but also by the specificities of the social welfare system.⁵² Benefits are delivered by local social insurances (health insurance, pension and invalid funds, etc.), and material assistance is delivered to the most vulnerable persons by local Centers for Social Work.⁵³ Other social assistance takes the form of humanitarian assistance delivered by charitable organizations and NGOs, and of donations of construction material and agricultural goods linked with the return process—all of which play an important role in the coping strategies of the population. This fragmentation of the social welfare system perpetuates the main social cleavages of post-war Bosnian society, and explains in particular why, in the post-war period, ethnic cleavages take more often the form of legal and statutory cleavages.

Perpetuation of Ethnic Cleavages

The best illustration of this problem is the spatial and ethnic fragmentation of local social insurance,⁵⁴ which leads to various types of discrimination and explains why minority returnees often are not affiliated with the health insurance or pension fund of their place of return.⁵⁵ Most Bosniac returnees living in Krizevici (Zvornik), for example, are insured in the Tuzla canton, and most Serb returnees living in Martin Brod (Bihac) are insured in the Serb Republic. Even in the Brcko District, where a unified health insurance has been created, pensions remain within the competence of the entities, and inhabitants of Brcko have thus to choose between the pension funds of the Federation and the Serb Republic.

The perpetuation of ethnic cleavages by the social welfare system also takes indirect forms. Along with the restitution process itself, donations for repair and rebuilding of

⁵² See Stubbs, Paul and Gregson, Kendra (eds.) 1998; Stubbs, Paul 2001.

⁵³ In the Federation, Center for Social Works depend most often on cantonal authorities. In the Serb republic, they depend on municipal authorities. See IBHI 1998a; IBHI 1998b.

⁵⁴ Each entity and, in the Federation, each canton has its own social insurance system. See Stubbs, Paul and Gregson, Kendra (eds.) 1998; OSCE –Human Right Department 1999a.

⁵⁵ See UNHCR 1999a; UNHCR 1999d; UNHCR 2000b.

houses are a contentious issue between IDPs and minority returnees. In Krizevici (Zvornik), each group accuses the other of favoritism from the international community :

We see that Serbs get the key in the hand [a completed house], but Muslims get only building material, and not even enough of it. – Bosniac president of the MZ board, Krizevici, Zvornik

[Bosniac] returnees get donations, they get everything imaginable from the Tuzla canton or the international community, but we 40 [Serb] families get nothing, we did not get any donations, not a single sack or load of firewood, nothing. – man, Serb DP, Zvornik

Such remarks underline the limits and possible counter-productive effects of donation policies based on political objectives or legal categories, and not actual social needs. In particular, some international donations, intended to encourage the reintegration of Bosnian society, can perpetuate the ethnic cleavages produced by the war. The priority given by donors to minority returns is often perceived as implicit discrimination by members of the local ethnic majority, and can indeed result in discriminatory practices:⁵⁶

USAID immediately asked us the question whether it is a purely Croat village, because they primarily support minority returns. I said to him, I'm sorry, sir, but it is not our fault that our village does not have Bosniacs or Serbs, there were none before the war either. Now because we have none we do not get help and the help goes somewhere where it is [ethnically] mixed but where maybe there is no one left. – president of a rural MZ board, Brcko

Perpetuation of Wartime Social Cleavages

The social welfare system can also create tensions among members of the same ethnic group—especially if they have different legal status. One of the striking features of all focus groups is that every participant, no matter his or her social identity and legal status, claims to be a “second-rank citizen” (“*gradjanin drugog reda*”), a member of the “most vulnerable category” (“*najugrozenja kategorija*”). This is linked with the fact that the criteria by which benefits and donations are granted reproduce the social identities and legal statutes produced by the war.

Refugees were given some donations of building materials and food, while the local population was left to fend for themselves. – woman, Tuzla

Refugees have used all the possibilities of humanitarian organizations. The next part of their job is [getting more aid] upon their return. It is part of their business now. – man, Tuzla

Veterans have similar grievances about the social benefits and donations given to war invalids and families of fallen soldiers. Some veterans consider themselves to be more vulnerable than members of these two groups:

⁵⁶ In relation to this issue, Paul Stubbs note that “securing rights where people are, and tackling their immediate concerns of poverty, unemployment, lack of access to benefits, discrimination, and so on, should no be neglected, regardless of whether, ultimately, their futures lies in being repatriated” (Stubbs, Paul 1999, p. 45).

What hurts most is that they try to differentiate by saying that families of fallen soldiers are in the hardest position and so they help them somewhat more, more than invalids, and they help invalids more than other demobilized soldiers. If I survived but do not have a job, cannot earn anything, cannot get medical care for my children, then my child is in the same position as the child of my brother who was killed—neither he dead nor me alive is able to do anything. – man, Zvornik

Withering of the Comprehensive Social Safety Net

The growing importance of legal and statutory cleavages in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina reflects the general impoverishment of the Bosnian population, and the disappearance of the pre-war social safety net. Health insurance and pension funds are in a deep financial crisis; public enterprises have lost their legal competence with regard to housing, health care, and leisure activities; and even Centers for Social Work no longer have the financial means to carry out their mission. In Brcko, for example, the president of a rural MZ board says that the will to reach a strict budgetary equilibrium has led District authorities to suppress all forms of material assistance provided by the Center for Social Work:⁵⁷

In the budget of the District, there is no line for social cases, no care for those socially at risk. It absolutely does not exist in the budget, which means there is no possibility of affiliation with social insurance, no payment of invalid benefits, etc., for those not already affiliated on the normal way. – president of a rural MZ board, Brcko

The decline in humanitarian aid, which during the war represented a kind of minimal social assistance mechanism,⁵⁸ contributes also to the withering of the social safety net:

During the war we were somehow the same on this issue, there were a lot of [public] kitchens, there were humanitarian aid parcels, it was easier then. Now they give only according to some kind of social categories. – woman, Tuzla

Exclusion from the Social Protection and Social Assistance Mechanisms

The withering of the social safety net means that large parts of the population are excluded from the remaining social protection and social assistance mechanisms. Focus group participants who are unemployed, moonlighting in the private sector, or working for enterprises that do not pay their social security contributions, complain about being excluded from health insurance:

Even though I am employed I do not have health insurance. I spoke to the director, he said there is no money. So I went to beg at the Center for Social Work and they said to me, you are capable of working so we cannot give you any assistance. There is nobody to turn to for assistance in the municipality. Everyone says, ask your employer—so what now? – man, Banja Luka

⁵⁷ In reality the 2001 District budget for the year 2001 foresaw a total budget of 1,045,000 Km for the Division for Social Work, and 420,000 marks of individual grants for vulnerable persons, but this last sum did not appear as a specific budget line in the project presented to the local population.

⁵⁸ See Bougarel, Xavier 1995; Macek, Ivan 2000

I went to the Employment Bureau to register for health insurance, because you never know when you may need it. I have no right, it turns out. Why not ? Simply, I do not have a right, they tell me. What can you do ? Only turn around and leave again. – woman, Bihac

This feeling that there are no social protection or social assistance mechanisms also appears clearly in the opinion survey. Social assistance is the local public service most often considered to be nonexistent (Table 12), an opinion shared by more than one third (34.8 percent) of all respondents, and half (51.7 percent) of those belonging to local ethnic minorities. In case of a serious financial crisis, very few respondents would turn for help to any formal institution, and even Centers for Social Work are rarely seen as a source of help (Table 7). Most people would rather turn for help to their personal acquaintances (relatives, friends or, to a lesser extent, colleagues and neighbors)—a finding that confirms the importance of informal forms of material assistance (see Part IA), and the predominance of private connections and informal networks as opposed to formal institutions (see Part IIB).

A more detailed analysis of these results shows that IDPs would turn more often than locals to humanitarian or non-governmental organizations (7.7 vs. 3.1 percent) and to Centers for Social Work (6.8 vs. 2.7 percent), whereas locals would turn more often to their enterprise (4.0 percent for locals vs. 1.7 percent) and colleagues (13.2 percent vs. 8.5 percent). Respondents with a minimal level of income are more inclined to turn to Centers for Social Work (6.3 percent); those with a low level of income to humanitarian or non-governmental organizations (7.8 percent); and those with a high level of income to closest friends (75.0 percent) and influential persons (8.9 percent). These data confirm that the poor have less social capital than rich (see Part IA), and suggest that Bosnian citizens turn for help to formal institutions only when they lack private connections to wealthy and influential persons (see also Part II-B).

Reversal of Vulnerability Factors

The lack of any comprehensive social safety net means that social benefits or donations for specific social groups or legal categories have a disproportionate importance, since they are used as a kind of substitute social assistance mechanism.⁵⁹ In an economic context where a majority of people are unemployed or receive their salaries after long delays, this leads to the paradoxical situation that locals or healthy adults can appear to be the most vulnerable, since they do not get any specific social benefits or donations. Several key informants underline this reversal of vulnerability factors:

[Humanitarian] organizations give medication free of charge only to displaced people, while the local population remains at risk. Thus the locals are even more vulnerable at this time than the refugees and returnees, because they have no way of getting their medication free of charge in Tuzla at this time. – president of local NGO “Bospo”, Tuzla

⁵⁹ In the Brcko District, for example, the budget for the year 2001 foresees a total sum of 5,241,000 marks in individual grants for vulnerable persons. From this total sum, 4,500,000 marks (85.9 percent) are individual grants related to the housing of IDPs and minority returnees, compared to 420,000 marks (8.0 percent) related to social work and 200,000 marks (3.8 percent) related to education.

[The most vulnerable are] *those people who have lost their work status, the category of people who have been left without employment but do not meet the requirements of age or years of work to receive a pension. These people are in a position of social need—for women they are not 60 years old and men not 65 years of age, and therefore we cannot provide them with social assistance.* – deputy director of Center for Social Work, Bihac

Institutional Fragmentation and Financial Exhaustion

The fragmentation of the Bosnian social welfare system along ethnic and statutory lines is compounded by the fact that social benefits and donations are handed out by a broad spectrum of formal institutions, including state administrations, municipalities, MZ boards, international or local NGOs, IDPs' and veterans' associations, and political parties (see Part IIC). This fragmentation weakens state institutions, prevents the restoration of any comprehensive social safety net, and makes the system for allocating social benefits and donations extremely complex and unclear.⁶⁰ The scarcity of financial resources in comparison with the actual needs of the population further exacerbates this fragmentation, and has negative effects on social cohesion and interpersonal trust.

Partial and Belated Implementation of Legal social Rights

The financial exhaustion of the social welfare system means that the legal social rights of various groups by far exceed available public budgets, and thus are not implemented.⁶¹ Many veterans, in particular, denounce the fact that their rights are only “dead letters on paper”, which feeds their grievances and frustrations (see Box 2) :

The whole time they talk about us war invalids and families of fallen soldiers having the right to free medical care. However, whenever you go to get anything done, for example me as a war invalid and my family, we have to pay. If you don't pay they won't serve you. If it is the case that you have to pay, then at least they should stop saying that you don't. People in the street say, what more do you want, you get free medical care, you get this and that, when in fact we get nothing. – presidents of two MZ boards, Rahic and Maoca, Brcko

⁶⁰ About this issue, Paul Stubbs notes that “many NGOs offer a kind of ‘own brad’ service which, before the war, would have been offered by local authorities or public institutions. The dangers of parallel, residual, and relatively unregulated social welfare provision is a particular problem of the large-scale involvement of ‘multi-mandated’ international NGOs” (Stubbs, Paul 1999, p. 31). See also Deacon, Bob and Stubbs, Paul 1998.

⁶¹ According to the UNDP *Early Warning System*, “the state is not in a position to respond to the great demands and cover all social benefits. Very often, even traditional beneficiaries of social welfare have problems exercising their rights. According to data from the poll, the number of those receiving social welfare or child allowance is negligible.” (UNDP 2001, p. 35).

Box 2. Veterans: Between Collective Frustration and Individual Violence

Veterans are one of the most important social groups created by the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to a World Bank study, “there are over 202 000 beneficiaries of current veterans’ programs in the two entities of the country, and if one considers extended family members, at least one third of the population is directly affected by veterans’ affairs” (Gregson, Kendra 2000, p. 1). The influence of veterans as a social group is due not only to their large number, but also to their strong collective identity originating in a common war experience; to the financial and institutional strength of their associations (see Part IIC); and to their legal status. Veterans, war invalids, and families of fallen soldiers get specific cash benefits, have priority in housing and employment; and are given free access to various public services (health care, transportation, mobility aid, etc.).

In focus group discussions, however, many veterans and war invalids complain that nobody worries about demobilized soldiers. They denounce the fact that some of them are evicted and become homeless (see Part IB), that their legal rights are not respected, that their cash benefits are low and payments are delayed (see Part IC). Some of them also protest the fact that overdue wartime pay has been converted into worthless privatization vouchers. Finally, war invalids denounce the lack of adaptations to facilitate their mobility and access to public buildings (pedestrian crossings, reserved parking places, suitable lifts and doors, etc.).

All these material frustrations feed an intense feeling of injustice and social downfall. Veterans consider that their social influence and prestige have declined rapidly after the war:

While the war was on I could walk in [to the municipality] with a gun and stamp my foot and say that my child has no bread to eat. For soldiers there was flour and oil, everything could be found. All that lasted until the war ended. Even after the war stopped, until about two years ago, we could get some things done, we were still somebody then, if nothing else at least those in government were afraid because they knew they came to power through us. Now we are of no use to anyone. – man, Zvornik

Veterans complain that their sacrifice has already been forgotten, and that people have now more consideration for those who succeeded in getting rich during the war, such as war profiteers or refugees coming back from Western countries (see Part IB). They also accuse politicians of caring about them only during electoral campaigns:

Everyone talks about the families of the fallen soldiers, the war invalids, that they will be assured of this and that. But once the elections are over and the politicians settle into their positions, then there are no more war invalids, no more families of fallen soldiers, no more demobilized soldiers. – presidents of two MZ boards, Rahic and Maoca, Brcko

Some veterans say they were cheated, and that they would not fight again if a new war should start in Bosnia-Herzegovina:

I am now simply ashamed that I ever put on the uniform and was a member of the army. This is because when the war stopped and I went to seek some help, I had eight children to school, I turned to the mayor, my daughter and son were excellent pupils and I thought to educate them further, and I asked for one-time assistance. But it is not easy to get to the mayor, you have to make an appointment, get a yellow card. As demobilized soldiers we did not get anything. Some people got something, but we got nothing. I was ashamed and am still ashamed to have ever put on that uniform. – man, Tuzla

I would prefer that I had gone abroad, but instead in 1992 I came back from Germany in order to fight for this country. At that time I was working in Schwarzwald as an assistant chef and had a salary of 2000 DM. Even now I ask myself why I came back, what kind of country did I fight for? I do not see my future here, I do not see the future of my child, I do not see the future of any of us here. – man, Bihac

Some veterans attending the focus groups say they have taken part in demonstrations organized by veterans’ organizations against delays in the payment of social benefits, or evictions of veterans and war invalids. Some of them have also been involved in collective actions related to local public services (see Part IID). However, many accuse veterans’ associations of being politicized and corrupt (see Part IIC), and

share the skepticism of many Bosnian citizens about the effectiveness of collective action. In Bihac, where the number of veterans and war invalids is especially high, one official says that:

Veterans and pensioners are two of the most unsatisfied categories. These are people whom life has disillusioned, life has destroyed their expectations. They try hard, knock on a lot of doors, they draw attention to their problems, but to little effect. – director of the Department for General Administration and Social Affairs, Bihac

And the president of a local sports club for war invalids—a former member of the cantonal parliament—complains about the complete ineffectiveness of their protests:

We are seeking our eight pensions, it is not even a pension but a pittance and even this we cannot get because the state has no money. So we turned to the Assembly, to the President, or others ten times over. Then we saw that we could not get our money, we tried to see if we could get free electricity, and even this we could not get. Our judges who did not go up there [to the front lines], who are not invalids, can get paid their back pay, they can get 20 thousand marks, but we cannot get our three thousand. That is shameful, I cannot even bear to talk about it. – man, Bihac

Many veterans share the resignation and passivity of the population. But some are tempted to resort to individual violence (see also Part IID):

I will not allow them to throw me out of my apartment. I know how I am, I will ignite. – man, Bihac

Day by day the time for force is coming. We soldiers of this war and people who gave parts of their body are completely dissatisfied and the time is coming when we will have to find other means [of action]. – man, Zvornik

More generally, the partial and belated implementation of legal social rights contributes to the feeling of material insecurity and social downfall shared by many Bosnian citizens, and increases the competition for scarce financial resources among people belonging to different legal categories. Demonstrations and road blockades organized by pensioners' or veterans' associations, for example, are often related to overdue social benefits, and thus represent an attempt to influence the actual use of public budgets. Similar competition also exists among state institutions, which try to monopolize the few available financial resources and, at the same time, transfer to other institutions the responsibility for various social groups or legal categories. In the Serb Republic, the ability of each local Center for Social Work to carry out its mission depends heavily on how much money it succeeds to get from the municipal budget:

The work of each Center depends on how much its management is able to fight for its status in the municipality, in the municipal budget, how much it can fight for the resources that the municipality is obliged to earmark for social protection. – representative of the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (IBHI), Banja Luka

At the same time, local offices of the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons try to transfer responsibility for these categories to the Centers for Social Work:

By law, refugees and IDPs should be the worry of the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons. However, people also turn to the Centers for Social Work, and those from the Centers for Social Work send them to the Ministry. The Ministry is not able to meet all of their needs, but sends them back to the Centers for Social Work in the hope they will be able to realize at least some of their rights there, and so on. The responsibilities of each agency are still not clearly defined, given that the new law on the social protection has not been brought down. – representative of the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (IBHI), Banja Luka

Lack of Continuity and Balance in International Donations

Institutional fragmentation and financial exhaustion also affect the policies of international donors. International organizations frequently change their priorities, and often support only small and short-term projects. Some participants or key informants involved in the return process criticize the lack of continuity and balance in international donations.

In Martin Brod (Bihac), the leader of the Serb minority returnees regrets that this MZ was separated from the municipality of Drvar and joined to the municipality of Bihac,⁶² since the former receives a much higher level of donations due to its symbolic status:⁶³

We fared badly here. I look at Drvar, there the Italians and some other organizations gave the Serb returnees credits and donations. It is unbelievable. Whoever is doing some sort of small production, whether carpentry, locksmithing, livestock, they would give 15 thousand marks, non-repayable, while we here did not receive anything except a little bit from CRS [Catholic Relief Services]. – informal leader of the Serb minority returnees, Martin Brod, Bihac

In Krizevici (Zvornik), the president of the MZ board says that Bosniac minority returnees received a lot of donations in 1999, when Zvornik was the first municipality in the Eastern part of the Serb Republic to accept minority returnees, but that donors have now moved to other symbolical municipalities, such as like Bratunac and Srebrenica:

All these humanitarian organizations are moving on. We had 150 houses built, for example, but not a single one has water, not one has a bathroom completed, we are sentenced to failure but it is considered that the houses are complete. No bathroom, no electricity, what have you done for this man, what kind of help have you given ? – president of the MZ board, Krizevici, Zvornik

Many projects financed by international donors encompass a limited number of beneficiaries, creating tensions at the local level, not only between NGOs implementing these projects and potential beneficiaries, but also among the local population itself:

One part of our village has electricity and the other does not. I do not know what kind of game is being played here, which Dutch organization works only for five houses and not the rest – that is the way it is, and that is the way it has stayed, there are two villages here and only half one has electricity. The electricity cables pass over my house but are not run into my house. I would pay for the cable but I do not have the money because I have no work. That is the way we are manipulated with all the time. Whether that is up to this Dutch organization, or up to our local representatives, I don't know. I blame our representatives in the MZ, partly. They brought the electricity to the village. There are 20 or 30 houses there, you can't go putting electricity in 5 houses and not in the rest. – man, Zvornik

⁶² See Annex 4.

⁶³ Before the war, Drvar was a municipality inhabited almost exclusively by Serbs (97 percent). In 1995, it was taken over by Croat forces, included in the Federation (canton of Livno) and settled by Croat DPs from Central Bosnia. It is the first municipality of the Federation where Serb DPs began to return in 1998, and the only one in Bosnia and Herzegovina where “minority returnees” represents almost one half of the total local population.

Negative feelings about donor policies are exacerbated by the fact that the criteria used for allocating donations are not clear. Attempts to draw up lists of beneficiaries also give rise to complaints about clientelism and corruption:

There is no transparency about where that money is going. They can publish data about where a part of the money was spent, but there is no transparency to the point that people can actually see whether this was the case or not. Citizens have no insight into the way those donations were spent, how and why. – man, Zvornik

When you go to the municipality and ask for material to fix your house, you reach an agreement [with the competent civil servant] that you will give him 500 or 1,000 marks, and then you get the material within seven days. But if you don't offer him anything then you may as well never have gone there, it is as if you never applied. – man, Bihac

In Klanac (Brcko), the president of the Serb MZ board describes all the difficulties and tensions related to the drawing-up of lists of beneficiaries:

I have gotten to know every family in the MZ, not only me but all MZ board members, and we are familiar with the social structure of the residents. Unfortunately, even when we did receive [humanitarian aid], we would never get enough for everyone, but rather we would get only a part that we then had to divide. But it is impossible to share in a way so that everyone gets something. You still have to leave half out, even though you think you are giving to those who are most in need. You give to those who are unemployed, who do not have pensions, and when you distribute the aid you have a pensioner who comes and shows you that he has 20 or 30 marks and asks "What I am supposed to live on, why didn't I get something?" Or they say that someone else is better off than me even though he is unemployed. It is hard to determine how to distribute, who is better or worse off, and at the end of the day I do not have a right to make the determination. – president of the Serb MZ board, Klanac, Brcko

The most frequent demands expressed by participants with regard to social benefits and donations is adoption of clear, comprehensive and well-known criteria for allocation. Participants also want a reduction in the number of intermediary organizations:

By the time the milk comes, the cream has been taken off it five times. – man, Bihac

While some participants suggest an end to all international donations, saying that they do no good, direct beneficiaries of such donations say that donors should establish direct contacts with local-level institutions such as parishes or MZ boards. The higher level of confidence of Bosnian citizens in these two small and parochial formal institutions—as far as material assistance is concerned—can be seen in the opinion survey (Table 5).

Role of Local Level Institutions in Social Policy Implementation

Some key informants, for their part, believe that donors cannot afford to circumvent local intermediaries, due to their lack of knowledge about the local situation:

Here the humanitarian organizations come to the site and they decide which houses they will work on, they say we will take such and such a house regardless of who is the owner.

Here it is important to stress that there were people who, before the war, had really nice, big houses that have been devastated, but wherever there needed to be a big investment, [these organizations] simply did not want to take it up – they consider that this person was rich and still has money. Nobody asks what it is like for that man now because he used to work but now he has no job. – president of the local Croat association of war invalids, Gornji Vakuf

At the MZ level, some MZ boards try to soften the tensions that can arise from the allocation of international donations. In Krizevici (Zvornik), the president of the MZ board says that the board organized a citizens' gathering (*zbor gradjana*) to share donations among the villages and the inhabitants of this MZ. He also says that the board gave a part of the humanitarian aid they got from the Tuzla canton to the group of Serb IDPs living in Krizevici; and that Bosniac MZs in the municipality of Zvornik barter among themselves the construction materials they get from international organizations.

At a higher level, the municipality of Tuzla has launched an interesting project that aims to overcome the institutional fragmentation and financial exhaustion of the social welfare system. Municipal authorities are establishing a comprehensive social map (*socijalni karton*) of the local population, in cooperation with the Center for Social Work, the Red Cross, and the MZ boards, in order to better coordinate the activities of the various agencies, charity organizations, and NGOs dealing with vulnerable populations. At the same time, MZ boards are mobilizing all available forms of material assistance, including informal and interpersonal assistance (see also Part IA):

In one MZ they do this in the following way – they collect donations in cafes, from small firms, well-off individuals, they discreetly tell which professor does not have enough to eat from his pension, they have a retired nurse who visits the sick. That is, they have to develop that solidarity between neighbors through their own efforts. For various occasions they will bring a parcel of food themselves, unrelated to the budget, because there is not enough money in the budget for this type of thing. This initiative has opened our eyes that certain things can be resolved outside of the budget, pensioners can help pensioners, professors help professors, neighbors help neighbors when we get well organized. – the mayor, Tuzla

The first MZ to experiment with this new kind of social policy is the central MZ Slatina:

The social map of this area is exclusively urban residents who have only pensions and nothing else, then workers who are laid-off or receive minimal personal incomes, and the third category are those who work in public institutions such as education, and do not receive regular salaries – thus social problems are prevalent. We here do not have land or gardens that could bring additional income. We are also different to other MZs in the sense that we have one permanent humanitarian activity. Firstly, during the war and just after French humanitarian organizations made donations to us through the pensioners' association and all those who were alone or socially disadvantaged came there and could get a warm meal and we have continued this practice as much as we are able. For example, through the action "Pensioners for Pensioners", pensioners who are better off gave some donations for those who are vulnerable. Then, from enterprises that are in a somewhat better position we collect various donations and put together packages and visit those who are sick or socially disadvantaged. We have a permanent team for providing care for the elderly, sick, house bound, and socially disadvantaged. This goes through the Red Cross. We have one medical nurse, and three other women that are prepared to do this humane work. It is necessary to understand that this is a multi-ethnic

community, now we have also some returns, but there have not been any incidents because we have kept the interpersonal relations at a high level thanks to our activities, constant communication and contacts with citizens. We try and bring people closer together through humanitarian activities, for people to be closer to one another. – president of the MZ board, Slatina, Tuzla

Although the municipality of Tuzla presents this MZ as exemplary, people in the suburb of Sicki Brod complain that the criteria for the elaboration of the municipal social map are not clear, and that the experimental function of the MZ Slatina is just a new sign of the privileged status of the town center. Tentative efforts to overcome the institutional fragmentation and financial exhaustion of the social welfare system are overshadowed by another reality of post-war Bosnian society—its strong parochialism (see Part IID).

Limits of Social Policy in a Context of Massive Poverty and Unemployment

The Tuzla case illustrates also the difficulties and limits of every social policy, in a context of massive poverty and unemployment. In focus groups, many participants understand that the deficiencies of the social welfare system are a consequence of the country's economic problems. Many say that, more than social benefits or international donations, what they really want are jobs and higher salaries:

I am not asking anything of anyone, I don't need the international community, I don't need anyone, all I need is one good employer who will give me a job and a salary and nothing more than that. – woman, Bihac

A stable job and sufficient salary are perceived as the only way to ensure an acceptable standard of living and a secure future. They are also seen as the only way to recover individual autonomy and dignity, to get a new and positive social identity, and to restore some sense of justice, since the income from work is considered the only legitimate source of income by a large majority of participants. In the meantime, however, the fragmentation of the social welfare system perpetuates the social identities and cleavages produced by the war, while the restoration of a comprehensive social safety net would help to overcome them, and thus facilitate the creation of new bridging social capital.

D. Fragmentation of Local-Level Institutions

Impact of War on Local Level Institutions

In addition to the social welfare system, all other formal institutions and public services in Bosnia-Herzegovina were divided along ethnic lines during the war. The most obvious aspect of this ethnic and spatial fragmentation was the creation of entities and cantons, but it is also clearly perceptible at the local level.

Divided Municipalities and Neighborhood Communities

In 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina had 109 municipalities; ten years later, there are 145, plus a few unofficial split-municipalities such as the Croat municipality of Uskoplje (the Croat

part of Gornji Vakuf).⁶⁴ In most cases, these new municipalities are located along the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL). In the Federation, some new municipalities have also been created along the former front line between the Bosnian army and the Croat Council of Defense (HVO), or according to ethnic criteria. This split of pre-war municipalities implies a corresponding split of public infrastructure and services. In Gornji Vakuf, the police and the judiciary were reintegrated in May 2001, but all other public services are duplicated: the Bosniac and the Croat split-municipalities issue their own official documents, manage their own health care centers, and schools,⁶⁵ and are connected to different water, electricity, and phone networks.

Similar situations can be seen at the MZ level. During the war, numerous MZs split into separate ethnic MZs. In Brcko, the number of MZs increased from 24 in 1991 to 83 in 1996. Since December 1999, the Statute of the Brcko District defines it as an indivisible administrative unit (see Box 3) and, therefore, does not recognize the existence of MZs. MZs still exist and have semi-legal status.⁶⁶ Moreover, the former division of Brcko into three ethnic municipalities is still visible at this level. So-called “double MZs”, often located in urban suburbs (about Klanac, see Part IB, Box 1), remain ethnically divided:

In the formerly federal part of the municipality of Brcko there were MZs that were formed ex-territorially; that is, they did not have their own territory but rather only refugee residents in the southern region of the District, so they organized themselves in order to ease the process of return. However, in the [northern] part of Brcko, which belonged to the Serb Republic prior to the formation of the District, MZs were established that had their territory but did not have local residents because they were established by [Serb] refugees and displaced people. With the establishment of the District, we now have double MZs that lay claim to the same territory, that deal with issues in this territory, but that represent the interests of different ethnic groups. – director of department in charge of cooperation with MZs, Brcko

Double MZs can also be found in Zvornik. In Divic, Serb IDPs and Bosniac minority returnees have elected two distinct MZ boards. In Krizevici, Serb IDPs did not participate in the election of the MZ board, but send their own representatives to citizens’ gatherings (*zbor gradjana*). Duplication of MZs often results in conflict about public infrastructure. In many double MZs of the Brcko District, the Serb MZ board refuses to share its building with its Bosniac counterpart. The MZ board of Krizevici (Zvornik) cannot reopen its former medical unit, because it is occupied by a Serb family.

⁶⁴ About the political situation in Gornji Vakuf, see Annex 4.

⁶⁵ Three primary schools and one secondary school are under the control of the Bosniac split-municipality, one primary school and one secondary school under the control of the Croat municipality.

⁶⁶ Since the Brcko District has not its own law on local self-management, MZs in Brcko still implement the law of the entity they belonged to before the creation of the District in March 1999.

Parallel Municipal Institutions

Another aspect of the ethnic fragmentation of local level institutions is the persistence of parallel municipal institutions. Officially, “municipalities in exile”⁶⁷ created during the war have been abolished. But IDPs and minority returnees are still linked to parallel municipal institutions of some kind—departments in the ministries in charge of IDPs, state-subsidized IDPs’ associations, or informal networks of municipal councilors with the same ethnic background.

Religious charitable organizations also play a key role as providers of substitute public services to members of local ethnic minorities.⁶⁸ In Banja Luka, the Islamic charitable organization “Merhamet” distributes humanitarian help and donations for repairing recovered flats, manages its soupkitchen and medical unit (financed by the Federation budget), and helps ensure that local Bosniacs are treated in Federation hospitals.

Persistence of Parallel Municipal Institutions After the War

During the war, the main reason for the creation of parallel municipal institutions was to support territorial claims, and help IDPs maintain their will to return. The permanency of such parallel institutions after the war is primarily due to the fact that local ethnic minorities are still discriminated against, that only a small number of minority returnees have returned to their former place of residence, and that IDPs are not well integrated in their current residence.

Lasting Discrimination Against Ethnic Minorities

In many municipalities, members of local ethnic minorities still experience discrimination, and their representatives are still marginalized in municipal bodies, despite strict monitoring by the Office of the High Representative (OHR)⁶⁹ and the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE).⁷⁰ The strong commitment of international organizations has caused the most obvious forms of discrimination to fade, but has also led to the emergence of more indirect and subtle forms:

Of course there is discrimination on an ethnic basis, it is only a question of whether it is subtle or out in the open. There are ever fewer cases of open discrimination but more and more of subtle discrimination. – three ombudsmen’s regional officers, Bihac

⁶⁷ During the war, municipal counsellors belonging to local ethnic minorities had to flee with the people they were representing, and created “municipalities in exile” in their place of exile. These were abolished after the first post-war municipal elections in September 1997. See also Annex 1.

⁶⁸ About the role of the Catholic charitable organization “Caritas” for the Croat minority in Sarajevo during the war, see Macek, Ivana 2000, pp. 153-209.

⁶⁹ The Office of the High Representative (OHR) is the international agency tasked with implementing the civilian aspects of the General Peace Agreement.

⁷⁰ See Rogan, James 2000.

Such statements are confirmed by the results of the opinion survey, which show that members of local ethnic minorities are more likely to view discrimination as the main problem related to some local public services (Table 8).⁷¹

Due to these subtle but persistent forms of discrimination, contacts between members or representatives of the local ethnic minorities and legal municipal authorities are rare. In Martin Brod (Bihac), the informal representative of the Serb minority returnees has fewer contacts with the municipality of Bihac than with the neighboring municipality of Drvar, whose municipal council is dominated by Serb political parties.⁷² In Krizevici (Zvornik), the Bosniac president of the MZ board feels excluded from local institutional life:

As far as the municipal services are concerned, on the Serb side there is no contact, only registration is conducted and this very slowly. I have had more contact with the mayor of Tuzla, who is more willing to see me than with these guys over here. They simply say to us that we are not registered in the municipality of Zvornik. – president of the MZ board, Krizevici, Zvornik

In focus groups, members of local ethnic minorities have similar complaints:

Our representatives in the municipality say that they are only puppets here. – woman, Brcko

I have gone to Banja Luka fewer than five times in five years. Thank heaven I did not need any services, so that I cannot say what it is they do and how they do it. – man, Banja Luka

Limits and Paradoxes of the Return Process

The permanency of parallel municipal institutions representing local ethnic minorities is also due to the fact that only a small number of IDPs have returned to their pre-war place of residence, and that, in many cases, municipal councilors and leaders of IDPs' associations did not follow. Bosniac minority returnees, in particular, complain that their representatives have settled in the Federation, bought plots of land and built new houses, while at the same urging people to return to the Serb Republic:

We have our municipal office that was supposed to move back to Zvornik so that things could function somehow, but I see that there have been no moves, that it is all still in Tuzla. So who can we turn to? It should not be just a push for the villagers to return into the thorns to prick their hands, but rather to bring back these institutions, municipal officials to their work places. But very few of them will return there from the city. This is the problem, they have grabbed a good, comfortable position in Tuzla and things are rosy for them. They don't want to push and shove, they leave this to the villagers, they just wait for some bricks and mortar to be delivered. – man, Zvornik

⁷¹ In the UNDP *Early Warning System*, 5.8 percent of the members of local ethnic majorities and 29.2 percent of the members of local ethnic minorities say that civic and ethnic rights of minorities are endangered in the municipality in which they live. 13.1 of the members of local ethnic minorities say that, in the year preceding the opinion survey, they were discriminated against or felt they had fewer rights than others due to ethnicity or religion (UNDP 2001, p. 38-39).

⁷² About Drvar, see footnote 53.

Many minority returnees feel neglected by both legal and parallel municipal institutions:

We do not know what is being offered to us currently, the health center, public services, not even God can control all of that. When you go to ask for something, they just send you from place to place. Where we live, there is no water and electricity is illegally connected.(...) It is impossible to solve anything, there are dual MZs and you do not know whom to turn to, whom to tell about the injustice. It is as if we are neither in the sky nor on the earth. – woman, Brcko

The frequent feeling of minority returnees of being “neither in the sky nor on the earth” (“*ni na nebu ni na zemlji*”), “neither there nor here” (“*ni tamo ni ovamo*”), is compounded by several factors. While the return process aims to bring together former neighbors, it also creates—at least in the short term—an additional division between IDPs who decide to return and those who stay behind. In the suburb “4. Juli” (Brcko), Bosniac minority returnees are very resentful of those who stayed in Rahic, on the territory of the former Bosniac municipality, particularly the members of the MZ board.

Moreover, in many cases, return is only partial, with some members of the family staying behind. Most often, men go back to repair the houses, while women remain where children can follow the curriculum corresponding to their nationality:

You have returned but you do not have a stable life, you don't know where you are, neither there nor here. You transfer the children to a school somewhere but the tickets are too expensive. It is a hard life. You have returned home but you have no conditions for living even at home. The children remained there, you have come here. If you are not a Serb they do not want to take you back [at work], they do not want to accept you. Leave your children there, come here—it is not at all easy. – woman, Zvornik

Even in cases where complete families have returned, adults continue going to their former workplace, and children to their former school. Bosniac minority returnees in Krizevici (Zvornik) still send their children to the village of Memici (municipality of Kalesija, Federation).⁷³ Many minority returnees get official documents and visit health care centers in their former place of exile, not only because of discrimination, but simply because they are afraid to go the town center, as happens in Brcko and Zvornik.

Returnees can also use institutional fragmentation to their own advantage. In Bihac, refugees coming back from Croatia try to keep their affiliation with Croat social insurance. In Zvornik, many Bosniac minority returnees refrain from registering their return and getting a new certificate of residence, although it is compulsory and a precondition for getting other personal documents, accessing the local health care system, and sending children to the local schools:

There are legal regulations, but few people adhere to them, usually because of the desire to maintain some benefit in the place where they lived. For example, you work, or you want to keep enjoying someone else's property, so when you regain your property you do not deregister in the place where you lived earlier. – president of the NGO Legal Aid and Information Center (CIPP), Zvornik

⁷³ An other problem is sometimes that, in the place of return, all public infrastructures are destroyed. For example, Bosniac majority returnees in the villages of Ripac and Orasac (Bihac) still send their children to schools located in the town because the schools in the villages have been destroyed during the war.

Competition between IDPs and Locals

Finally, the permanency of parallel municipal institutions also reflect the lasting cleavages that exist between IDPs and the local residents of their place of exile, despite the fact that they belong to the same ethnic group. In many municipalities, IDPs do turn to other institutions and public services than locals. In each municipality of the Serb Republic, a local office of the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons is in charge of the IDPs, including issues related to eviction and alternative accommodations. Similar offices exist also in the Federation. The existence of separate institutions and public services for IDPs is due to the fact that population movements have overloaded public infrastructure in host municipalities:

The [municipal] service for refugees and displaced persons always has work to do because these are people who have nowhere else to turn. They turn to us for health insurance, for enrolling their children in school, for the right to temporary accommodation, for humanitarian aid. – director of Department for General Administration and Social Affairs, Bihac

Prior to the war there were around 120 thousand people in Banja Luka. Currently there are more than 250 thousand people, and this results in intense pressure on communal infrastructure, which has not been renewed and maintained but rather has suffered from a lack of investment. – president of the local Eco-Movement, Banja Luka

Municipal authorities often try to relieve the pressure on their infrastructure and services by reserving them for the locals, and handing over the care of IDPs to international organizations. In the Bosniac majority area, the fact that most IDPs still vote in their pre-war municipality also contributes to such behavior by municipal authorities.

In focus groups, many IDPs feel therefore rejected by their host municipality:

I was a recipient of social assistance in the municipality of Tuzla for a certain time, later the UNHCR program started and I was transferred to this program. The UNHCR gave me as much as they had, and that is what I lived on, but now you do what you can, if you plant something that is what you live on. There was a public soup kitchen but only for the local population, not for refugees. These are transparent things, people are playing with the lives of other people. I led a humanitarian action in Tuzla with the secretary of a certain MZ, and when they realized that they could not get rid of me, then they said that the warehouse [containing food and supplies] had burned down. – man, Bosniac minority returnee, Zvornik

Such feelings of rejection are also perceptible in the opinion survey. IDPs are more likely than locals to mention corruption as the main problem related to some local public services (Table 9), which may be due to their lack of private connections (*veze*) with local politicians and public servants (see Parts IIA and IIB).

At the same time, some parallel municipal institutions still channel international aid to their own populations. They too are not immune from parochial and discriminatory attitudes. In the collective center of Mihatovici, some IDPs who spent the war in Srebrenica criticize its municipality in exile for having distributed international

humanitarian aid only to the pre-war residents of Srebrenica, and not to survivors of this former enclave who arrived during the war, fleeing from other eastern Bosnian municipalities taken by the Serb forces.

Consequences of Separate Institutions and Public Services

Such institutional divisions between locals and IDPs can feed their mutual grievances and rivalries, as illustrated by the contrasting situation of two MZs in Tuzla, both having a high number of Bosniac IDPs from eastern Bosnia.

In the MZ **Sicki Brod**, about 1,300 IDPs live in a collective center near the village of Mihatovici.⁷⁴ This center has its own elementary school, medical unit (*ambulanta*), and canalization system, and IDPs have less contact with the MZ board of Sicki Brod than with the management of the center and the cantonal ministry in charge of IDPs:

We never had the opportunity to reach an agreement with them. They have their own local self-administration, they have their official up there who goes directly to the municipal council. – member of MZ board, Tuzla

It is not surprising that conflicts about public infrastructure have arisen between IDPs and villagers. According to members of the MZ board, the presence of the IDPs creates additional infrastructure problems, especially with drinking water and sewerage:

Those people do not have water, sewerage is unresolved, sewage is open and pours into the area where the local population lives. – member of MZ board, Tuzla

New canalizations were, in fact, laid for the collective center, but the road leading to the village was destroyed during the excavation works. Members of the MZ board accuse IDPs of diverting the spring which supplies Mihatovici with water. IDPs have a completely different version of the story:

[The villagers] wanted to connect to our piped water supply network but we were against that because we are bearing all of the costs, the repairs. We set a condition: let's change the pump, so that more water would be pumped, and then both we and you will have water. If they were to connect to our existing reservoir, we won't have water at all because they are lower down than us and all the water would go there and not even make it up to us. – man, informal leader of the IDPs living in the collective center of Mihatovici, Tuzla

This situation has resulted in the IDPs and the villagers blaming each other for their problems, and instituting a mutual road blockade. Both sides, however, are suffering from the marginalization and decay of this peripheral worker suburb (see Part IIA and IID).

In the MZ **Simin Han**, by contrast, IDPs have settled in the houses of the local Serbs who left at the beginning of the war, and their children attend the local elementary school. The common use of the school by IDPs and locals has facilitated their integration:

⁷⁴ About the collective center of Mihatovici, see footnote 17.

Coming to this school [at the beginning of the war], the first thing I did not want to do was to create segregation, and I encountered big problems. At the start we even had the situation where we were supposed to have one department for children of local residents, and a separate department for displaced pupils, and I simply could not come to terms with this.The less we divide people, the fewer the problems, but that is a question of attitude, a question of making a start, later it is harder to change things. If I now wanted to segregate local and displaced people, I would not be able to. The school is now a single whole that can no longer be divided, the children do not notice [the differences] at all. – school director, Simin Han, Tuzla

The interactions of children in the classrooms and of adults in the parents' associations (see Part IIC) has even led to the school being a mediating factor between IDPs and the MZ board of Simin Han, which is still controlled by locals:

Every fifteen days at the level of the MZ there is a meeting attended by all the [local] actors—humanitarian organizations, school representatives, parents' associations, and the MZ board with its technical staff. All things noticed and all initiatives undertaken in those fifteen days are presented at this meeting and together decisions and conclusions are made. – school director, Simin Han, Tuzla

Parochialism as an Obstacle to Institutional Reintegration

At the local level, the institutional fragmentation of Bosnia-Herzegovina is not only due to its division into entities and cantons, or to discrimination toward local ethnic minorities, but also to various social cleavages and individual strategies linked with the access to public infrastructures and services. Another factor in continuing fragmentation of local-level institutions is the traditional parochialism of Bosnian society, a clear sign of the primacy of bonding social capital over bridging social capital.⁷⁵

Parochialism in Post-War Bosnian Society

Continuity of parochialism can be seen in that inhabitants of the Federation and the Serb Republic now complain about their respective capitals (Sarajevo and Banja Luka), as Yugoslav citizens did about Belgrade. Mutual resentments and prejudices between the urban and rural populations are an other example of a traditional parochial attitude, which has been exacerbated by the population movements of the war and period (see Part IB).

In focus groups, many participants express mistrust, or even hostility, toward outsiders. This attitude is typical for rural societies, but it can also be found among urban residents, where it takes paradoxical forms. In Tuzla, participants in the focus group with young people praise the “tolerant spirit of Tuzla”, before accusing outsiders of destroying this spirit, and showing their own parochialism. Appearing at first to be an example of bridging social capital, this also has a strong bonding dimension.

⁷⁵ Many social scientists consider parochialism to be a central characteristic of all Balkan societies, and during the Communist period, some have been interested in the way Yugoslav federalism and self-management have reinforced this traditional feature. See Allcock, John 200; Sekelj, Laslo 1993.

Still we like it better when someone comes from Zenica or Sarajevo, for example, than when they come from Kalesija or Srebrenica. What is that person from Srebrenica here for – he is a peasant. We know automatically that if someone is from a village that he is less worthwhile than if they come from Zenica. I would have a coffee with anyone rather than with certain people from Srebrenica. – young woman, Tuzla

Parochial attitudes are also perceptible among people living in different MZs of the same municipality. Urban residents complain that municipal bodies are monopolized by people coming from the surrounding villages:

In Bihac, people in power are not from Bihac. They are most often people from smaller places. – man, Bihac

Now our municipal structures are being governed by people who are not from Banja Luka and now we can raise the question: to what degree do they belong to Banja Luka and to what degree do they understand the city of Banja Luka, and what can pass them by? – president of the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, Banja Luka

Villagers and inhabitants of peripheral suburbs, however, say that municipal structures are controlled by people from the city center (*carsija*), who are only interested in the problems of that limited area:

Before, it was better because the municipal assembly was structured so that every MZ had to have a representative in the assembly.^[76] Now it can happen that all municipal counselors are from the center, so that some small place [outside of the center] is not at all represented in the assembly. There is nobody for these residents to turn to because they do not have their own representative in the assembly. – man, Banja Luka

Institutional Impact of Parochialism

Parochialism influences the way Bosnian citizens conceive of political representation, and citizenship. Many participants and key informants complain that the taxes they pay are not directly used in their MZ, or that enterprises settled there are employing people from outside. Many Bosnian citizens believe that the only way to solve local problems is to turn their village or neighborhood into an MZ or municipality of their own:

In Brcko, some MZs encompassing only Croat villages have split into several MZs because the villages could not agree about the maintenance of common infrastructure. In Tuzla, an attempt by the MZ Gornja Tuzla to transform itself into a separate municipality in 1999 was probably related to the fact that its MZ board was under the control of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), while the municipality was led by the Social Democrat Party (SDP). In Banja Luka, the president of the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, defending the interests of three suburbs located on the right bank of the Vrbas, describes them as “a part of the town that maybe should become a municipality in the future.” And the president of “Homeland Spring” (“*Zavicajno vrelo*”), another local

⁷⁶ In the Communist period, each MZ sent a delegate to the Chamber of the Neighborhood Communities (*Vijeće mjesnih zajednica*), one of the three chambers forming the municipal assembly. See also footnote 86.

NGO supporting the development of the area around Krupa na Vrbasu, in the southern part of the municipality, mentions a similar project.

The issue of parochialism illustrates how different kinds of social capital influence each other. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, trust among people living in the same place (bonding social capital) takes precedence over trust toward people from outside (bridging social capital), affecting a range of civic values and confidence in formal institutions (linking social capital).

Spatial Unbalances in the Allocation of Resources

This relationship, of course, is two way, and the desire of Bosnian citizens to withdraw into small-sized local communities is also a result of the behavior of municipal authorities and of inequities among MZs in terms of public infrastructures and services. Many focus group participants insist on the role of informal networks, private connections, and face-to-face relations in the work of municipal authorities. Some of them are aware of the impact on the spatial distribution of public infrastructure:

We do not have anyone of our own in the [local] government that could push us forward a little. It would be different if we had our own man down in the government. I see this in other MZs, where there are people from there in the government, there are results, things are being built, donations are given, and they direct them toward their own MZ. – man, Gorni Vakuf

This uneven access to public budgets and international donations can be seen in Tuzla. Several members of the municipal assembly live in the MZ Slatina, and many local and canton institutions are also located in this central MZ.⁷⁷ It is thus not surprising that the president of the MZ board praises his good relations with municipal authorities and mentions that, in 2000, eleven renovation projects (central heating, street lighting, road surfacing, etc.) were carried out with the help of various international donors. By contrast, only one municipal counselor comes from the MZ Sicksi Brod, a peripheral worker suburb, and members of its MZ board complain about their bad relations the municipality, as well as the complete lack of investments and donations.

The opinion survey reveals also a clear deficit in public infrastructure and services in rural areas (see Part IIA). Existence of local level spatial unbalances at the local level is confirmed by several key informants:

[Local politicians] generally worry only about the area that they come from. I experienced in one village that the government of the District forgot us because there was nobody from this village sitting in the municipality. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

There are vast differences in the level of development of areas that are within a few kilometers of each other. You have a highly urbanized area where there is electricity and

⁷⁷ Among others, the cantonal government, the cantonal health care center (*dom zdravlja*), several faculties of the Tuzla university and the main municipal stadium are located in the MZ Slatina.

water, and a few kilometers away there is no electricity or water. – former leader of UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

Attempts of Institutional Reintegration at the Local Level

Parochial attitudes and clientelistic practices make efforts at reintegration of local level institutions more difficult. At the same time, unbalanced or excessive intervention by international organizations in local public life can reinforce these features of Bosnian society and thus perpetuate the fragmentation of local level institutions.

International Mediation between Minority Returnees and Local Authorities

Minority returnees often ask the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), International Police Task Force (IPTF) and, in Brcko, Office of the High Representative (OHR) to mediate between them and local authorities. These organizations also play an important conciliatory role when minority returnees have problems with the local population. They influence allocation of international donations and the work of international NGOs. The UNHCR sometimes provides alternative public services such as transportation, provisional housing, and basic health care. These mediating and substitutory functions of international organizations are essential to success of the return process and to its peaceful character. In the long term, however, they can perpetuate fragmentation of local level institutions and public services, and feed the grievances between locals and minority returnees. In Bihac and Zvornik, representatives of minority returnees have more contacts with UNHCR and OSCE than with municipal authorities. These authorities complain that they are not informed about infrastructure projects financed by international donors and implemented by international NGOs in the areas of return.

International Monitoring and Reintegration of Municipalities

International organizations are involved in various efforts to reintegrate divided municipalities. The OSCE and the IPTF are monitoring municipal authorities and local police forces, with emphasis on inclusion of members of the local ethnic minorities. The OHR has facilitated several agreements on shared use of school buildings, such as the one reached in Gornji Vakuf about use of the former secondary school building.⁷⁸ In some cases, the OHR has used more direct means of pressure: several local politicians and public servants have been dismissed by the High Representative, and some divided or sensitive municipalities have been put under international tutelage.⁷⁹ The most ambitious attempt to reintegrate local-level institutions has been in the Brcko District, created in March 1999 (see Box 3).

⁷⁸ Reached in January 2001, this agreement foresees the renovation of the former secondary school building “Jura Mikulic”, which was destroyed during the war, and its joint use by the Bosniac and the Croat secondary school structures.

⁷⁹ See Annex 1.

Box 3. The Main Stages of the Institutional Reintegration in the Brcko District

In 1991, the municipality of Brcko had about 87,000 inhabitants (44.4 percent Bosniacs, 25.4 percent Croats, 20.8 percent Serbs, 6.4 percent Yugoslavs, and 3.0 percent others). During the war, it was divided into three split-municipalities: the Serb split-municipality of Brcko (Serb Republic), the Bosniac split-municipality of Brcko-Rahic, and the Croat split-municipality of Ravne-Brcko (Federation). During the peace negotiations in Dayton, no agreement could be reached about the status of Brcko, so a final decision was not reflected in the General Peace Agreement, but was entrusted to an international arbitration commission.

In February 1997, the High Representative put the Serb municipality of Brcko under the tutelage of an international Supervisor, to enforce the creation of a multi-ethnic local police and facilitate minority returns. In September 1997, local elections took place in this municipality, and a new multi-ethnic municipal assembly was elected. Local elections were not held in Brcko-Rahic and Ravne-Brcko, in order not to prejudge the decision of the international arbitration commission. In March 1999, this commission turned the whole pre-war municipality of Brcko into a unified and neutral District, placed under strong international tutelage. The Statute of the Brcko District was adopted in December 1999, and a provisional assembly (29 members) and a government (11 members) were appointed by the Supervisor in March 2000. Thus, inhabitants of the Brcko District did not participate in the local elections of April 2000. The Mayor of the Brcko District is a Serb, its Deputy Mayor is a Croat, and the president of its assembly is a Bosniac. Special commissions that include local and international experts are in charge of elaborating a new common legal system (*Brcko Law Revision Commission*) and monitoring the finances of the District (*District Management Team*).

Modernization of the District administration has been carried out simultaneously with reintegration. With the dismantling of the former municipal administrations, the number of public employees in the Brcko District was reduced from 3,100 to 2,400, but salaries were substantially increased to fight corruption and demotivation. Only people having their legal residence in the District were allowed to apply for new public sector jobs, with ethnic quotas taken into account in hiring (40 percent Serbs, 40 percent Bosniacs, 20 percent Croats). By May 2001, several public services had achieved reintegration (electricity distribution, public transportation, health care), and others were in the process (water distribution). Issuance of personal documents, pension and invalidity funds, and telecommunications remain within the competence of the Federation and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The most sensitive issue in regard to public services remains elementary and secondary education. Until 2001, pupils belonging to different ethnic groups attended separate schools with different curricula. A first attempt to bring together Serb and Bosniac pupils in the same school building in the urban area has been canceled in October 2000, due to incidents which led to pupil's street protests. At the same time, the Orthodox church launched a petition against the creation of a common curriculum for the whole District. Two educational boards for primary and secondary education have been created with representatives of the District authorities and teachers to work on a reintegrated education system for the school year 2001 / 2002. The activities of the board were focused on harmonization of the three existing curricula, work with parents and pupils, and public information. Numerous discussions about the proposed Law on education were held in the District assembly, but no agreement could be found and, in July 2001, the Supervisor decided to enforce the Law. The new Law on education ensures and equal usage of languages and alphabets, as well as the use of a common curriculum for the whole District. Separate classes are maintained for so called "national subjects" (mother tongue, history, musical culture). Since September 2001, pupils of different ethnic background attend the same schools in the areas that have had minority returns. In October 2001, a single incident between Bosniac and Serb pupils has been recorded in a secondary school.

Limits of Top-Down Approach to Institutional Reintegration

The Brcko case shows that authoritative measures are sometimes necessary to overcome deadlocks and deliberate obstructions, but that a top-down approach to reintegration can also ruin some opportunities to stress common interests and develop cooperation at the local level. In 1999, during the discussions about the Statute of the District, MZ board leaders of the three Serb, Bosniac, and Croat split-municipalities had reached a tentative agreement, and were actively cooperating to preserve their legal existence and financial autonomy (see Part IIB). This common initiative was not taken into account in the final version of the Statute, creating a great deal of bitterness:

I am interested in knowing why this was done this way when we had a discussion and when the OSCE and the OHR led all these meetings with us. They were there, they gave some instructions and introduced us, they led us all to find common aims, since there were problems. There were [representatives of] former MZs there, of double MZs, ... There were a lot of problems in bringing all of us to an agreement and for us to say, 'now this suits us all.' We succeeded in this, we invested a lot of effort, a lot of people took part, but then simply all of this was lost. – president of a rural MZ board, Brcko

After the adoption of the Statute in December 1999, MZs ceased to have a legal existence in Brcko, and the District authorities have first tried to circumvent ethnic MZ boards in the resolution of local problems, or at least to remove those MZ leaders who were deemed to be hardliners. In Grcica, District authorities organized the election of a new Bosniac and a new Serb MZ board, and the election of a common MZ board is being planned. In other cases, however, District authorities have had to recognize the legitimacy of existing MZ boards, and the conflicting interests they were representing, in order to prevent violent incidents (see Part IB, Box 1). District authorities have thus adopted a more pragmatic attitude, and try to encourage cooperation among ethnic MZ boards with regard to practical needs and public infrastructure projects:

In order for there not to be confusion or for something too hasty to be done, we decided to continue to work with MZs as they exist to this day. The current directions that we have from the Assembly of the Brcko District are that we have to respect, to cooperate with double MZs, while working to soften the relations among the MZs and among citizens themselves. This means a common use of public infrastructure, to force them to recognize problems together and approach the government of the Brcko District together, as such common requests will be resolved more quickly. In this way we soften the situation in the field, in this way we seek to bring them closer together. – director of department in charge of cooperation with MZs, Brcko

Consensual Definition of Infrastructure Needs

In several municipalities of western Bosnia, the UNDP Progress program (1996-1999)⁸⁰ also tried to use infrastructure projects as a mean to encourage the reintegration of local

⁸⁰ The UNDP Progress program was established in April 1996, covered seven municipalities of western Bosnia (four in the Federation and three in the Serb Republic), and lasted until November 1999. Its main objectives were capacity building and support for local governments structures, as well as the implementation of infrastructure rehabilitation projects which had been identified through a participatory, consensus-based approach. It was funded by the Japanese government. See UNDP 2000.

level institutions and the renewal of cooperation among ethnic groups. UNDP set up Municipal Development Committees, with representatives of the municipality and local civil society (including local ethnic minorities), which had to agree consensually on priority infrastructure needs before projects would be implemented by the Progress program. There are, however, difficulties with this consensual approach:

In Drvar, there were representatives of the Croat and Serb population. [We told them,] you're the ones who want to live here—well, then, let's see if you can live here and in what way, and from our side we will try to direct and assist but you are the ones who have to reach an agreement. That is why I think consensus where both sides or all three sides have to reach an agreement is the best approach....The biggest problems were between the [minority] returnees and the [local ethnic] majority. In Drvar we were not able to reach a consensus for one year. The money was ready.... But they did not manage for one year to agree on a single small project worth a hundred marks, and in this situation we had meetings with them every seven days—we went to them, we went to the field, we worked, conducted training, they worked at proving whether, for example, the water supply from Sipovljani [a Serb MZ] or the electrification of the center of the town [settled by Croat IDPs] was more significant from the point of view of various ethnic groups. Finally they were able to reach a consensus and then they said O.K., the water supply is in a Serb MZ but also in the part [of the town] where Croats live, so they were able to reach an agreement. – former leader of the UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

Spontaneous Reintegration or Cooperation at the MZ Level

At the local level, institutional reintegration or practical cooperation among members of different ethnic groups takes sometimes place without strong international pressure or incentives. In a few MZs, such as Gusteri (Zvornik) and Vrce (Gornji Vakuf), a common MZ board was elected after the war; and in Krizevici (Zvornik), the Bosniac MZ board plays a mediating role between international NGOs and some Serb inhabitants of the neighboring MZ Kitovnice. Concrete forms of cooperation also occur with regard to public infrastructure and services. In Debeljaci, a suburb of Banja Luka, Croat locals and Serb IDPs together maintain streets and canalizations. In Bihac, the Serb minority returnees living in Martin Brod and the Bosniac majority returnees living in Kulen Vakuf have common projects for public infrastructure (roads, electricity distribution) and local economic development (trout farms along the Una river). Even the sensitive question of education can sometimes bring members of different ethnic groups closer together: in Krizevici (Zvornik), Bosniac minority returnees are supported by the surrounding Serb villages in their demand for the renovation and reopening of the local elementary school. In these cases, spatial proximity and common interests have helped to overcome institutional fragmentation and ethnic cleavages, creating new bridging social capital.

PART II. ATTITUDES TOWARD LOCAL-LEVEL INSTITUTIONS, AND FORMS OF LOCAL COLLECTIVE ACTION

A. General Assessment of Public Services and Formal Institutions

Assessment of Public Services

The study found that respondents consider the quality of public services as having declined, and in some cases were non-existent. Infrastructure is in poor condition. High prices for public services is considered a major problem by both surveyed respondents and participants in focus groups. Corruption is raised as a concern with respect to specific public services: health care, public security, issuance of official documents, housing for IDPs and returnees, and social assistance. These findings confirm some of the results of earlier studies.⁸¹

Low Quality as the Most Frequent Problem of Public Services

In the survey, respondents tend to associate specific problems with particular public services (Table 10). In all cases, however, they most often mention low quality, non-existence or poor condition of infrastructure as the main problem:

-**low quality** refers to poor condition of infrastructure (roads, water supply and sewerage), low quality of the service itself (public safety, issuance of official documents, social assistance) or, in most cases, both of these (public transport, garbage collection / street cleaning, housing for IDPs and returnees, health care, education, cultural and youth activities) ;

-**non-existence** is frequently mentioned for social assistance, youth activities, cultural activities and, to a lesser extent, housing for IDPs and returnees and garbage collection / street cleaning ;

-**poor condition of infrastructure** is mentioned for water supply and sewerage, roads and public transport.

In focus groups, the same problems are frequently described by participants. Many of them complain also about the amount of time it takes to obtain documents:

⁸¹ In 1999, the *Social Assessment* found that the quality of public services such as running water and electricity had declined in comparison with the pre-war period, and that some of them, like health care and leisure activities, were available only to urban residents. The *Social Assessment* noted complaints about the lack of equipment and quality in health care and education, and about high prices and corrupt practices in health care. In 2001, the *Anti-Corruption Study* found that corruption was a common practice in Bosnia-Herzegovina : one-fifth (19.6 percent) of respondents who tried to access public services had to pay a bribe—most frequently to health care workers and the police. According to that study, corruption was more widespread in the Croat majority area than in the Serb and the Bosniac majority areas. See World Bank, 1999a; World Bank, 1999b; World Bank, 2001.

For a single document you have to go to the municipality ten times, twenty times. Why? I don't know. – man, Banja Luka

The situation in the six sites of the sample illustrates the poor condition of infrastructure and the non-existence of some public services. The city of Tuzla has had drinking water shortages for decades, and all municipalities have leakages in their water and sewerage systems. Poor quality water was the cause of a hepatitis outbreak in Bihac shortly before the beginning of the fieldwork. Garbage collection is insufficient in most municipalities, and illegal dumps have appeared in many rural areas.

In all six sites, youth policy is limited to leisure activities supplied by a few NGOs (see Part IIC). Most public infrastructures dedicated to youth activities were destroyed during the war, or have been dedicated to other purposes,⁸² so that young people spend the main part of their free time at home, in cafés or in the street.⁸³ As a consequence, alcohol and drug consumption are increasing.⁸⁴

There is nothing being offered to young people. In the morning from eight-thirty on, when you walk through town you know in advance exactly who is sitting in which café. Young people sit and drink coffee all day long. – woman, Tuzla

Youth do not have clubrooms, have no resources, have nowhere to go out. – young woman, Gornji Vakuf

We go and get drunk. We walk through town, sit at someone's house, play cards, sometimes we go to the movies. – young man, Brcko

In Bihac, where youth idleness is obvious, municipal authorities and other local or international actors are trying to implement a more active youth policy. In 2001, a Council for the prevention of youth criminality has been created with representatives of the municipality, the International Police Task Force (IPTF), the local police, the secondary schools, the Center for Social Work and various NGOs. At the same time, the Democratic Center (*Demokratski Centar*), a local NGO, has launched a Local Youth Council (*Lokalno Omladinsko Vijeće*) with other youth NGOs of the Bihac canton.

The situation is more diverse with regard to cultural activities: the city of Tuzla has still a relatively rich cultural life, and in Bihac, municipal authorities are trying to revive some pre-war cultural activities (the yearly summer festival) and institutions (museum, art

⁸² In Brcko, the cultural center has been destroyed during the war. In Banja Luka and Bihac, the former municipal youth centers have been turned into office buildings and rented to private businesses. In Zvornik, former municipal sport infrastructures are controlled by a nationalist youth association, the “Serb falcons” (*“Srpski sokolovi”*).

⁸³ In the UNDP *Human Development Report*, the collective leisure activities most often mentioned as frequent or regular by young people are : bars and discos (63.0 percent), parties (38.0 percent), sport (32.0 percent), outings (16.0 percent), cinema (15.0 percent), religious meetings (12.0 percent), courses (10.0 percent). See UNDP, 2000b, p. 99.

⁸⁴ In the UNDP *Human Development Report*, 46.0 percent of the young people say they smoke often or regularly, 11.0 percent say they drink alcohol often or regularly, 2.0 percent say they take marijuana often or regularly, 1.0 percent say they take often stronger narcotics. See UNDP, 2000b, p. 87.

gallery, cinema). In the Brcko District, however, some key informants consider that cuts in public subsidies have compounded an already bleak situation:

In Brcko, there is no creative activity and no recreation even in the most basic sense. There were a good number of painters in Brcko. We had a very active gallery, which barely survives. We had a very strong and respected amateur theatre which is now dead. The only cultural programs now being offered to the public are the programs of the Serb educational and cultural society, "Prosvjeta", and of course certain holiday programs in the elementary and secondary schools. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

High Prices of Basic Public Services

In the opinion survey, **high prices** are frequently mentioned as the main problem in relation to health care, public transport, official documents and, to a less extent, education. In the focus groups, health care is in particular denounced as an expensive and corrupt public service:

It makes no difference whether you have insurance or not. When you go to see a doctor, if you have insurance, you won't pay the visit to him, but then you have to go to a private pharmacy and pay for all the medication and anything else you need. –man, Banja Luka

My father was in the hospital for three months and only a month ago he had an operation on his spine. For three months he had to wait for the operation. Finally he went to a private practice, paid the doctor, and right away was given a cell phone number to call to secure a place, a bed, and was given a date when he would be operated on. – woman, Tuzla

An additional problem raised in all focus groups, but not present in the survey, is the high cost of utilities like water, electricity, and telephone. Prices have increased much more than personal incomes, and the payment of salaries and social benefits remains irregular. Yet, the non-payment of bills can lead to immediate and harsh sanctions, including financial penalties and power cuts:

There are a lot of pensioners, people who are not working, people who work but do not have regular incomes, and so how can institutions [such as the electricity distribution company] expect them to regularly pay their bills? I think they simply cannot. – woman, Bihac

We have negligible earnings, but we have electricity at European prices. They let pensions run six months late, but you have to pay for electricity within a month. – man, Banja Luka

Many participants are also unhappy about how public companies calculate their bills : they require the payment of bills left unpaid by former occupants, charge customers for water losses due to leakages in water and sewerage systems, and do not deduct repairs financed by customers themselves during the war. Participants complain that water, gas, and electricity meters are inaccurate. High prices and strict deadlines for payment create additional material difficulties for an already impoverished population. These practices also constitute a break with those from the Communist and the war periods:

[Public companies] use their monopolistic position and treat people with no sympathy, they do not recognize any state of social need or the low standard of living. I say that they are heartless since they disconnect telephone, electricity, they cancel contracts for the supply of these services without any court proceedings, and besides this, the price of these services is very high relative to the living standard of the population. – three ombudsmen’s regional officers, Bihac

Last night the electricity distribution company announced they would be disconnecting all those who have not paid their bills up to the last month’s account. One monthly bill is some 50 marks, so I say to you, according to this rule half of Zvornik should be in the dark in five days. They have frightened people so that honest people will give their last dinar even if it means going hungry. But we who have more or less grown used to everything in these past 10-15 years, and sincerely, the period before the war was not very honest, we try to avoid [paying] and make the effort only when we really have to and when we can. I will pay the electricity every time when I can, but my children do not to have to feel it. – man, Zvornik

Social service no longer have sufficient budget to provide subsidies. Public companies are often asked by social service agencies to reduce, defer, or subsidize costs to the most vulnerable. In Tuzla, the technical director of the water distribution company says that they sometimes do so, but that the practice is being phased out. The material consequences of the high prices of basic public services are thus compounded by the financial exhaustion of the social welfare system (see Part IC).

The local electricity distribution company asked us to provide a list of [socially vulnerable] cases. But when they saw how long the list was, they said that they could not give free electricity to so many people. – deputy director of the Center for Social Work, Bihac

Corruption and Discrimination in the Access to Public Services

In the survey, **corruption** is frequently mentioned as the main problem in relation to following public services : health care, issuance of official documents, public safety, housing for IDPs and returnees, education and social assistance. IDPs are more likely to mention corruption than locals (Table 9). In focus groups, many participants resent the need to have private connections (*veze, stele*) or to give bribes (*mito*) and small gifts in order to access to public services:

If you have a connection, you will get the job done. If you don’t, then you have to bribe someone. – man, Zvornik

Money opens every door. – man, Tuzla

Discrimination is mentioned by less than 7 percent of respondents.⁸⁵ Most Bosnian citizens are now living in the area dominated by their own ethnic group, and thus do not feel threatened by discriminatory practices. Members of local ethnic minorities are more likely to mention discrimination as the main problem, especially in relation to education (Table 8). They are also more likely to consider that health care (36.0 percent) and

⁸⁵ Housing for IDPs and returnees : 6.1 percent ; issuance of official documents : 3.9 percent ; social assistance : 3.9 percent ; health care : 2.1 percent ; education : 1.9 percent ; public safety : 1.6 percent.

issuance of official documents (22.5 percent) are expensive, and that social assistance (51.7 percent), cultural activities (34.8 percent) and housing for IDPs and returnees (29.2 percent) are not available. However, members of local ethnic minorities rank corruption over discrimination as the main problem and, in focus groups, some of them relate their own difficulties to this general problem. Members of local ethnic minorities are also less likely to consider public services problematic (Table 11). This could be due to caution and self-censorship, or to the fact that most of them live in big cities, where they have access to public services that remain unavailable in small towns and rural areas.

More Nuanced Assessments of Police and Education

Differences appear in the assessment of each public service. According to the opinion survey, the least problematic public services are public safety, education and, to a lesser extent, issuance of official documents and garbage collection / street cleaning. The most problematic services are roads, social assistance and housing for IDPs and returnees (Table 11).

In focus groups, participants give contradictory assessments of police. Some praise its work, but others say insecurity has increased, and criticize policemen and judges for being unmotivated and corrupt, or for protecting criminals:

Some person who has connections comes to the courts, pulls strings – he does not even care that the police have arrested him. The police and courts do not work in a synchronized manner, everyone takes as much money as possible for himself. What value is it that police functions if the courts do not function. – man, Banja Luka

Participants and key informants also have contradictory views of the education system. Some consider that elementary and secondary schools work relatively well, while others deplore the backward teaching methods and the disappearance of extracurricular activities:

It is difficult for children in primary school. They do not have any type of activities in school, no physical activities, they have nothing. If they want to participate in basketball, football, or judo, this has to be paid for separately – there is nothing without money. I really think that something should be organized for the children of school age – excursions, socializing. Now they go to school and go home, there is no possibility to socialize for school-age children, nothing happens for them. – woman, Banja Luka

In my day, schools used to compete to have the most activities. Now there is far less. One reason is that teachers are not well paid, and secondly they do only as much needed to fulfill their legal requirements, but there is ever less interest in animating young people. What is worse still is the education system – we have entered the third millennium and we are still using chalk and blackboard like in the middle ages. The material situation is difficult, the teaching profession has been degraded. This is why are we pushing for it to be returned to the municipal authorities. – mayor and two of his close associates, Tuzla

Spatial Differences in Access to Public Services

The assessment of public services also differs by ethnic area. Inhabitants of the Serb area are most likely to mention corruption as the main problem, while inhabitants of the Croat area are least likely to do so (Table 9).⁸⁶ Inhabitants of the Bosniac majority area seem to be more satisfied with public services (Table 11), while inhabitants of both Serb and Croat majority areas are more likely to feel that some public services are not available. This difference is related to the fact that the Bosniac majority area is more urban, and the Serb and Croat majority areas more rural (Table 12).

Many rural participants and key informants complain about the lack of collective facilities such as medical units, schools, kindergartens, and post offices, or about the bad condition of roads, water and sewerage systems, and electricity and phone lines. Residents of peripheral suburbs have similar complaints:

In the 1980s there was a cinema, a pool, parks, nice buildings, everything that makes a complete urban scheme, but now in the 21st century we have nothing. The only thing that survives in this area is the Miners' house, there they organize a disco, women organize social evenings, and political parties organize their meetings. The swimming pool was in the neighboring MZ, but the sand producer Tuzla-kvarc has taken over the pool for rinsing the sand. – two members of the MZ board, Sicki Brod, Tuzla

New spatial imbalances in access to public services appeared during the war and the post-war periods. War destruction has been greater in some municipalities than in others.⁸⁷ In Bihac, Brcko, Gornji Vakuf and Zvornik, some villages and suburbs located on the front line still lack former collective facilities or connection to water and electricity distribution systems. Spatial imbalances can also be exacerbated by grants of international aid organizations, even in places where there has been no destruction during the war. In Banja Luka, for example, the inclusion of a few elementary schools in international experimental programs has led to differences in educational methods and equipment, and therefore to a sudden rise in the number of pupils:

Over the past two years the number of pupils in our school has increased from 900 to 1100. This new modus operandi that someone has thought of has created new problems – a large number of pupils want to attend the school regardless of there being other schools. I have had cases where parents from other areas that are a few kilometers away drive their children to school here. – director of the elementary school Borislav Stevanovic, Banja Luka

⁸⁶ This finding partly contradicts some data in the *Anti-Corruption Study*, according to which “percentage of respondents who report that they were asked to make unofficial payments for public services is the highest in Croat areas”. See World Bank, 2001, p. xiii.

⁸⁷ About the level of material destruction in the six sites of the sample, see Annex 4.

Spatial imbalances in available public services also compound the problem of public transport, since people from suburbs and villages need to travel to town centers to access basic services such as health care and issuance of official documents.

Assessment of Formal Institutions

The widespread dissatisfaction with public services influences people's view of formal institutions.⁸⁸ Survey results show that over half the respondents consider problems with public services due to inadequate funds. Yet nearly half the respondents also consider local politicians as not serving citizen interests, and the focus groups criticize local politicians for their lack of accountability.

Responsibility of Local and Higher-Level Institutions

In interviews, local politicians complain that they are directly confronted with the material difficulties of the population. Municipal authorities decry the low level of financial resources and, in order to respond to citizen needs, want to regain their former responsibilities with corresponding budgets. In Bihac, the municipality regained management of the Center for Social Work in January 2001; in Tuzla, the mayor is trying to recover responsibility for the management of social policy and the maintenance of elementary schools.

In the budget there is not enough money for social policy, nor is the municipality responsible for this, it is a cantonal responsibility, but they are my citizens and I have to worry about them. – *the mayor and two of his close collaborators, Tuzla*

Regardless of the fact that primary schools, as a compulsory level of education, are the responsibility of the State, it is not possible for the head of a municipality where a school is located to not accept the problem as his own. We are now in such a situation that citizens turn to the head of the municipality with problems which are in reality of an economic nature. – *the mayor, Zvornik*

The survey suggests that Bosnian citizens share in part the views of local politicians. When asked about the main reasons for problems related to public services in their municipality, half (51.4 percent) mention lack of financial means, and a third (33.7 percent) mention obstruction by higher-level institutions. Rural residents are more likely to consider that the lack of financial means is an important reason. On the other hand, respondents still consider local politicians and civil servants to share responsibility for these problems: almost half (44.7 percent) say that local politicians do not serve the interests of the citizens, and more than a third (35.7 percent) say that civil servants are not professional enough. People with a low level of education, IDPs, rural residents, and those who do not belong to a voluntary association tend to put more blame on civil servants, while those with a higher level of education, locals, urban residents, and members of voluntary associations tend to put more blame on local politicians (Table 13).

⁸⁸ See World Bank, 1999a; World Bank, 1999b; World Bank, 2001.

Perception of Politicians and Political Parties

The focus group discussions give a somewhat different picture of how Bosnian citizens perceive formal institutions in general, and local institutions in particular. While some participants say they understand the difficulties of municipal authorities, others believe that corruption is present at every institutional level and that accountability is not present.

Through money, interest in the general good is lost and one begins to care only about personal interest. One comes to a situation where one is sitting in a comfortable chair, has a good position, you have everything served before you and of course you lose sight of the common good. That is the system that prevails here. – man, Bihac

There is the problem of accountability of directors, mayors, people who hold office, because nobody is called to account for their actions. If one director or one mayor were sent to prison for five or six years for embezzlement of monies or misuse of funds, then the next one is not going to risk it. However, that is not the case here, even though the international community is trying to do something with independent courts, they have raised salaries of justice officials, but still the courts do not function properly. They do not take action for five or even ten years on the cases of directors who embezzled money. That is how things now stand. – man, Zvornik

There is no accountability of public officials before the people. If a director who has held his position a long time embezzles 100,000 marks, then he should be publicly tried and sentenced to ten years in prison, and let it be known that he has been sent to prison. – woman, Banja Luka

Many participants consider also that politicians care about the problems of the population only during electoral campaigns. This situation causes some participants to consider political change impossible, and pluralist elections useless:

Only when there are elections do they come along and tell us stories about this party, that party, party number five, party number ten. – man, Zvornik

They will give us anything just so we give them our votes, but once they have gotten our votes none of them turn up again until the next election.(...) As soon as they have secured themselves their “armchair” [position] almighty God himself couldn’t push them out of that chair – man, Tuzla

Our government functions like the mafia, that is clear to everyone, and when a new man is elected, that man has to answer to those in the shadows. We are not stupid, we know who owns the petrol pumps, who owns the firms, who owns the buildings – those are all people who are there on top, those that create the major politics and work with people from the international community who bring the money. There is no way we can have an influence on this, and people have long ago given up trying. – man, Zvornik

While such views can be found in all six sites, opinions vary with regard to the role played by political parties in providing access to public services and other benefits.

In Tuzla, in the Federation, the municipality has been controlled by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) since 1990, and political parties are mentioned only in relation

to the electoral blackmail exerted by the nationalist Party of Democratic Action (SDA) in his attempt to conquer the majority:

There was a threat from the SDA in the cafes that if we do not vote for the SDA, then Tuzla won't get money [from the canton and the Federation], but will be left out in favor of other parts of the country. – man, Tuzla

In Bihac, also in the Federation, hegemony of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) has remained almost uncontested until the last municipal elections in April 2000, and participants complain about the importance of party affiliation and ideological conformity for gaining access to jobs, accommodations, and public services:

To get certain privileges, to be some ten percent better off, people have to get involved in the dominant political structure, even if it means being something they are not. To go and pray in the mosque, to go to church and cross yourself, you know what I mean. I do not want this, but this is the way things are. – man, Bihac

The situation is somewhat different in Banja Luka and Zvornik, both in the Serb Republic, where electoral results and municipal coalitions have changed several times since 1996. Participants in those municipalities also note the importance of party affiliation, but tend to describe political parties as empty institutions hiding clientelistic networks dominated by a few cliques of powerful people:

This is what I call the mafia system – a person cannot be the director of distribution for so many years, have switched among all the parties and for nobody to touch him. Or a director of a school who changed party affiliations so many times and nobody bothers him. There are many whom nobody has been able to touch. New parties came, new governments, new management boards, but the same people always remain there and nobody touches them – all they do is change their party membership and everything is fine. That only shows that they belong to someone, that they are somebody's player, somebody's slave. – man, Zvornik

If you want to become a member of a political party then you have to be of a certain profile. What does this mean? An ordinary citizen who has completed primary school or some secondary schooling cannot enter those circles. First he needs to be university educated, and in terms of the city of Banja Luka he needs to have a good background, well-standing parents, a pedigree. Here the family lineage is very important. For example, if my father was a doctor and I am a doctor, then that is known in Banja Luka. If my father is a banker, or an economist and I will now be an economist, then I inherit what he initiated. So lineage comes first. And then I move into political life, I get activated, I say what I should say and not what I really think, and that is the way I respect the form of the given moment. When it reaches the time of planting, so to speak, then I am there and while I am there I grab as much as I can and after me the heavens can fall. – man, Banja Luka

Participants from the Brcko District share the general distrust of politicians. But in a town where the local assembly and government have been appointed by the international Supervisor in March 2000, and where inhabitants of the former federal part have not, since 1990, taken part in any local election (see Part ID, Box 3) many feel very distant from local institutions. A few even say openly that they are not democratic:

Members of the Assembly were not selected by the people, they were placed there by the OHR on the basis of proposals made by the political parties. This it is not a democratically elected body. The people could not select someone because he is a good, decent, hardworking man, but rather parties selected their own members. It is illusory to talk about better relations between the government and the population without fair elections. – woman, Brcko

Perception of Public Employees

In focus groups, participants have differing views of public employees. Many characterize employees of public companies as too highly paid, lazy, careless and rude:

They have a higher salary than us – I work in printing and I really do earn my pay, but a clerk in one of those organizations has 1500 marks salary and behaves as if he is above me because that is the class he falls into. That is the way they behave at the electricity distribution company and the heating company. – man, Tuzla

Look at how much money Telekom collects. There a cleaner has a salary the same as that of a doctor of sciences, as a university professor. That is absurd. – man, Zvornik

I often go to the municipality and the local police. Their functioning depends largely of the people who work there, on their moods. The other day I received a letter, I had been served with an eviction notice and I had an appointment for a meeting at midday. I went there at eleven-thirty and waited until one o'clock – the man said that he was on his break. He came back from his break but still did not open his door. We all have to wait for them to be in a good mood to get anything done. – woman, Banja Luka

On the other hand, many participants are willing to excuse the behavior of some civil servants—especially policemen, teachers, and doctors—by the fact that they are not paid enough:

It is not tolerable that a teacher or professor has to trade black market at a stall and also teach children in school. But they are struggling for their existence the same as I am for mine. Of course they cannot devote themselves to their work at school because they are not paid the way they should be for the job. – man, Zvornik

How can you expect a police officer to risk his life for 300 marks when everyone has a gun ? –woman, Gornji Vakuf

In Brcko, however, where District authorities decided to increase the salaries of civil servants precisely to increase their motivation and reduce corruption (see Part ID, Box 3), that decision is met with irony and bitterness:

They have determined salaries to be a priority – of some 93 million marks in the budget, about half is earmarked for salaries, as I recall. But as you know there was a war here and many people do not have enough to live on, and it would be [morally] wrong for someone to take so many thousands of marks while others do not have enough to survive. – man, Brcko

The salaries in institutions here are enormous, in the municipality, etc., but there is no program of social protection. There needs to be a social protection program designed for all the unemployed so that, let's say, those with 20 years of work history are given so much, and also for the young people, to make sure they are employed. At the same time

we can decrease the salaries of those up there who have three to four thousand marks while those on social assistance benefits do not get even 20 marks. – man, Brcko

Consequences and Benefits of Institutional Confusion

Bosnian citizens often describe their relationship with formal institutions as a “closed door” (“*zatvorena vrata*”), meaning it is impossible to gain access to these institutions, or as a “closed circle” (“*zatvoreni krug*”), because of the difficulty finding the right person to resolve a problem. This institutional confusion, along with the frequent legal changes characterizing post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, have led to confusion by citizens themselves about how responsibilities are shared among various administrations and services. Respondents also characterize political leaders and civil servants as using this confusion to avoid responsibility or to mask ethnic discrimination or illegal enrichment.

Nobody knows whose responsibility it is, who is in charge, and then you start the game of ping-pong, being pushed from one office to another, and for every entry into an office they say you have to pay some tax or other. – man, Banja Luka

You can complain, but they all pass the blame from one to another and finally you find that you have come full circle and nothing is done. In the end you spend a lot of money and get nothing. – woman, Tuzla

When I worked with municipalities the question was raised about what could be the cause of their inefficiency. Was it something beyond the power of these people, like inherited behaviors, lack of skills, poor technical resources, or is it that if someone wants to engage in criminal activity or other activities contrary to the law, then it is the best to do this in a flawed system where rules are not clear. I would say that the latter is the case, and in this situation everybody finds his own way about. I, as a citizen of Novo Sarajevo, do not know what I need to do in order to get a building permit. Why don't I know? Because there is someone who does not wish to tell me and then makes me go from door to door and give between 20 and 50 marks each time and do this a number of times before I can get the information. – former leader of the UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

Positive Examples of Local Institutions

The few formal institutions and civil servants praised by participants are those that respond to citizen questions and complaints and help citizens understand the legal and administrative labyrinth of post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. The best example is three institutions in Bihac: the cantonal Ombudmen's Office (see Part IIB, Box 4), the municipal Department for General Administration and Social Affairs, and the Center for Social Work. These institutions are the only ones assessed similarly by their leading employees and participants in focus groups:

In general, people approach us because they do not know where to turn to and whom to see, so our role is one of switchman or educator. This was particularly the case when we just started our work. Our educational role has had positive results. The people know better where to go and the government functions more effectively. – three regional ombudsmen's officers, Bihac

At the very least we try and listen to people, to open our doors to people and give them the chance to talk about their problems, to at least direct them to the place where they can realize their rights. We try to help as much as we can. From the war we have remained in the minds of the people because we put together the lists for the distribution of humanitarian aid. Even though we are not a department for the pension fund, we made lists for their beneficiaries as well. People have fallen into the habit of coming to us. There are a few social workers who are favorites of citizens, regardless of whether they gave them something or not. People say that they appreciate the way they are received and treated by them. –deputy director of the Center for Social Work, Bihac

The positive assessment of these three institutions may be due to the fact that they are accessible to all people regardless of ethnic background, local origin, or legal status, and that their employees use the institutional confusion not to escape their responsibility but, on the contrary, to act beyond their strict domain of competence. Why all of them are located in Bihac is more difficult to understand. One reason may be that the close bonds created between citizens and local institutions during the war, under extremely difficult conditions, have survived in the post-war period. Another reason could be that, between 1996 and 2000, the autonomy and professionalism of these institutions constituted an important counterweight to the hegemony of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA).

Perception of International Organizations

Many participants believe that only international organizations are capable of restoring the rule of law, and hope they will strengthen their control over Bosnian institutions or replace them completely. This desire for international involvement is also perceptible in the Serb Republic, even though many Serb participants criticize the political stands of the international community.⁸⁹ However, it is almost absent in Tuzla, where participants seem more confident in their own ability to influence the decisions and activities of formal institutions (see Part IID):

International institutions should take things into their own hands more and do things a little faster. – man, Bihac

The police functions the best because the westerners have pulled them into line. That is the way it should be everywhere, but how? – man, Banja Luka

In Brcko, where the influence of international organizations is more direct and pervasive, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) is criticized for lack of transparency and undemocratic way of working:

There is a particular problem relating to the work of the OHR. I believe that it needs to become, as they now say, transparent. There are some decisions that seem to be purely for the exercise of power.... But there is a distinct need for someone to explain why the

⁸⁹ In the UNDP *Early Warning System*, 39.9 percent of the respondents living in the Bosniac majority area, 19.3 percent of the respondents living in the Croat majority area and 5.9 percent of the respondents in the Serb majority area think that the authorities of the High Representative should be extended. 10.5 percent of the respondents living in the Bosniac majority area, 31.9 percent of the respondents living in the Croat majority area and 70.1 percent of the respondents living in the Serb majority area think that the authorities of the High Representative should be limited. See UNDP, 2000a, p. 16.

decision was made. The problem is not that a decision was made, but that the reasoning, the criteria, were not explained. – man, Brcko

It is necessary to break up that centralistic government inside the Brcko District, in the OHR that is killing every initiative and will to do anything. You can start a thousand initiatives today that the OHR does not approve and nothing can come of those initiatives. Here there is a joke that is told where someone gets a call from a friend afar, the friend who is calling how things are in Brcko, whether it is raining. The man in Brcko replies – well it is cloudy but only if the High Representative decides will the rain fall, or if he decides it won't rain, then it won't. – man, Brcko

B. Relationships between Citizens and Local-Level Institutions

Individual Attitudes toward Formal Institutions

General mistrust toward formal institutions influence the way Bosnian citizens try to solve their disputes with these institutions in relation to the provision of public services. Reactions range from disengagement to threats of violence, and many key informants and participants in focus groups describe the use of connections or bribes. The new institution of ombudsman shows signs of having taken root while the older institution of the neighborhood community (*mjesna zajednica*, MZ) is in decline, having lost financial and administrative autonomy. In a few cases, MZs have transformed themselves into NGOs, but the government-societal link of the MZ is not clearly defined.

Lack of Trust in the Local Justice System

In focus groups, most participants are reluctant to appeal to the local justice system, because they fear reprisal, consider justice itself to be inefficient and corrupt institution⁹⁰, or cannot afford to hire a lawyer and feel they could not win their case without one:

You have no chance to argue in court if you do not have a lawyer to represent you. The judge looks at you through different eyes if you are an individual who is not represented, regardless of whether you attend [the court proceedings] or not, it is different when a lawyer comes out.(...) This country is like a Mecca for lawyers. They have the law at their disposal. That is not only the case with the courts, but also with the municipality and the Canton : it is different when an individual like myself comes in from when a lawyer comes in to represent me. That is why the individual always loses. –man, Tuzla

Significantly, even key informants involved in legal help and information seem to share this skepticism toward judicial proceedings:

It is very difficult to tell someone to look for redress through the courts because this leads to costs that he cannot afford, so he figures that it is less costly to pay for something, even when he considers he should not have to, rather than to enter into lengthy proceedings with the electricity distribution company or the telephone company. – three regional ombudsmen's officers, Bihac

⁹⁰ About the justice system in Bosnia-Herzegovina, see ICG, 1999a ; ICG, 2000a.

In Bihac and Tuzla, however, many participants and key informants mention resort to the regional ombudsmen's office as a valuable alternative to judicial proceedings (see Box 4).

Box 4. The Ombudsmen's Field Offices: An Imported Institution Takes Root

Ombudsmen have recently been introduced in Bosnia-Herzegovina, at both the central (December 1995) and entity levels (Federation, March 1994; Serb Republic, February 2000). The transitional *Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina* is a foreign citizen appointed by the Chairman of the OSCE, after consultation with the President and the Chairman of the Parliament of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 2004, this transitional ombudsman will be replaced by three local ombudsmen appointed by the central Parliament. The Human Rights Ombudsman has three regional offices, in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Brcko. The three *ombudsmen of the Federation* are appointed by the Parliament of this entity, and have ten field offices. The three *ombudsmen of the Serb Republic* are appointed by the National Assembly of this entity and have four field offices.

The ombudsmen's role is to defend the rights and liberties of the Bosnian citizens, according to the Constitution, the European Convention of Human Rights, and other international agreements annexed to the General Peace Agreement. They receive and investigate complaints against public institutions, can investigate their work, and recommend appropriate specific or general measures. Public institutions have the duty to facilitate the ombudsmen's investigations and respond to their questions and recommendations.

In the Federation, ombudsmen's field offices have existed for several years, and play an important role in the relationship between citizens and local-level institutions. In Bihac, field officers explain that "*people do not have trust in local institutions, and the number of requests to this institution clearly reflects their fear of domestic institutions.*" They play a mediatory role in resolving disputes between citizens and local-level institutions: "*We try to smooth things out between opposing sides, help sort things out without court involvement or legal action.*"

Ombudsmen can also put pressure on local politicians and public servants by passing on their recommendations to international organizations:

We inform international organizations as well, and that is effective in relation to local authorities, so the number of adopted recommendation is on the rise. [Local authorities] would rather we did not exist, that is as clear as day. It is easier for them with foreigners who are not familiar with certain facts, it is easier for them to have things their own way, but with us here it is harder for them.

Ombudsmen's field officers also play an important role in educating citizens:

We are often on the radio, on television, in the newspapers, and we educate the public about how they should approach [formal institutions]. The majority of people are uninformed and do not know where to seek assistance, whether it is the OHR or the OSCE, the ombudsman or a local institution.(...) There is also a possibility of misuse of our institution where people come to us immediately after they have initiated a legal process, or they claim a right that in fact is not applicable to them. Our regulations require that the plaintiff tries all avenues to claim his rights. If the municipality is the issue, for example, they must take all legal actions against that institution, and only if the institution does not respond or does not respect certain rights that are guaranteed by law, then and only then can that individual turn to us for assistance.

The independence and effectiveness of ombudsmen can lead other institutions to use their recommendations to overcome the resistance of influential individuals:

When organs of government are not allowed to do a certain task because that would bring them into conflict with a powerful person at the local level, then it is easier for them if we have recommended a certain concrete action. An example is the eviction of a powerful person, where they used our finding and

recommendation as leverage, and said, “We would not, but the ombudsman has written...”, and so they pass the blame over to us.

Finally, ombudsmen’s field officers can play a mediatory role in collective protests. In Tuzla, the water distribution company promptly improve the quality of water in an MZ, after its inhabitants sent a collective complaint to the regional ombudmen’s office.

Extreme Attitudes : Renouncement or Resort to Violence

The difficulty for Bosnian citizens to resolve disputes with formal institutions legally leads some to adopt extreme attitudes. Some people try to avoid contact with formal institutions, at the expense of their own rights. This attitude seems to be more common among women.

People very often do not believe that someone can help and so sometimes they do not even ask for services. They don’t even ask for something that is a hundred percent their right. – president of the local NGO “Bospo”, Tuzla

Quite simply, I am embittered, as whatever I have attempted in a nice way, in accordance with the law, has come to nothing. I am so bitter that I will not even try anymore. I am bitter about certain individuals and I no longer have the courage, I lose courage when I walk into an institution and I am afraid that I will start to argue, say all sorts of things. If a person has not experienced something in his own life, he cannot understand what it is like [with all my problems]. There is a lot that I have experienced in my life and it burned inside and so it is better to stay quiet and let things go the way they are. – woman, Bihac

Men, and especially veterans (see Part IB, Box 2), are more prone to resort to individual violence in order to access to some public services:

There [in the healthcare center] it is written in a notice on the door that children are not charged, but this is not the truth. Both of my children have problems with bronchitis and I have to go there quite often and I have to pay for everything – it even happened to me once that they said they would not take in my child because I did not have the money to pay. However, when I took out my gun, and I had to take it out, then they took my child in. –man, Zvornik

Use of Private Connections and Bribery

Most often, however, Bosnian citizens try to solve their disputes with formal institutions by using private connections (*veze, stele*) or bribery (*mito*). While few admit to having paid a bribe,⁹¹ focus group participants openly discuss the importance of private connections and the principle of “I help you, you help me” (“*ja tebi, ti meni*”):

If I am trying to resolve a problem, I look for where I know someone who can do something. If I am not close to the president I will look for someone I know who is close to him, someone who has influence over him, and get that person to help me to finish what I need to get done. That is the way it is, because directly as an individual it is extremely difficult to get any problem resolved. – man, Zvornik

⁹¹ The Anti-Corruption Study found that 60 percent of Bosnians believe that corruption is widespread, but only 17 percent admit to having paid a bribe themselves. World Bank 2001, pp. 21-22.

Key informants say that bribes and the use of private connections are common:

First people [faced with an administrative problem] think whether they know anyone personally who could get the thing finished quickly, and then whether their friends know anyone. Only if they cannot do it this way do they start to think about how to do it the regular way. – president of the local NGO “Bospo”, Tuzla

Nobody talks about bribery. We ask people which judge they bribed, [and they respond] “Don’t ask me that!”. The wealthier people know they will always be able to get what they need in this way, and for them it is nothing to give even up to a thousand marks, while for others a single mark is a lot. There are wealthy people I advise to make a criminal report and they say to me : “I’m not crazy – I will need that judge again at some point”. The problem is that bribery suits the person giving and the person receiving the bribe. –three regional ombudsmen’s officers, Bihac

Bosnian citizens try to circumvent normal administrative processes, and go directly to the mayor or other important local politicians, even for trivial matters:

People think they can most easily solve their problems by directly approaching the head of the municipality. – the mayor, Zvornik

People who do not have money to seek redress in the courts most often go to the tops in the hope that their problem will be resolved in that way.(...) I used to go to see the president of the canton on official business, and I ask the other people waiting to see him why they are there. The reasons are basic, a neighbor’s conflict over land title and straight to the president of the canton. Or the police took away someone’s license for drunk driving and he thinks the fastest way to get his license back is to see the president of the canton! – president of the local NGO “Women from Una”, Bihac

The desire of Bosnian citizens to directly access the very people they are denouncing as incompetent and corrupt reflects the importance of clientelistic practices and face-to-face relations in Bosnian society (see Part ID). Furthermore, in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, normal mechanisms of participation and mediation between citizens and formal institutions do not function. One reason is that municipal authorities and local representatives of state administrations face the growing needs of the population with reduced financial means, and this institutional overload causes them to turn a deaf ear to some demands. At the same time, the main institutional form of participation and mediation at the local level, the neighborhood communities, have lost most of their legal authority and material means and, in many cases, have ceased their activities.

Declining Role of Neighborhood Communities

Neighborhood communities (*mjesne zajednice*, or MZs) were created in 1974 as the smallest territorial unit of Yugoslav federalism and self-management. They represent an urban neighborhood, a large village, or a few small villages, in which case MZs are further divided in sectors –*podruznice*- corresponding to each village. MZs cover between 500 and 4,000 inhabitants. During the Communist period, MZ boards were elected by a citizens’ gathering (*zbor gradjana*). They were responsible for some local infrastructure (roads, parks, water and sewerage systems) and public services (day care

centers, youth clubs, medical units), and played an important role in the organization of collective works. During the war they organized civil protection and distributed humanitarian aid. After the war, however, the new laws on local self-management adopted in the Federation (January 1996) and the Serb Republic (November 1999) have abolished their compulsory character, and mention them only as a possible form of direct democracy, alongside with citizen initiatives (*gradjanske inicijative*) and local referenda⁹². Each municipality has thus to clarify in its own statutes the exact legal situation and practical role of MZs.

Loss of Financial Autonomy

In most municipalities, MZs have lost their legal personality, including the right to own buildings, hold a bank account, initiate infrastructure projects, and finance them through compulsory financial contributions (*samodoprinosi*). Although they still play an important role in various forms of collective action (see Part IID), their main function at the present time is to formulate infrastructure demands and forward them to municipal authorities or public companies:

The basic function of the MZ is to recognize the needs of citizens in the area of communal infrastructure, water supply, roads, and all the needs that should improve the living conditions. The work of the government with MZs is based on communication through the president or the secretary of the MZ board, who delivers its requests. – director of the Department in charge of the cooperation with MZs, Brcko

Bodies in charge of cooperation between MZs and municipal authorities exist in most municipalities, usually as a commission appointed by the municipal assembly. Proposals for infrastructure projects formulated by the MZ boards are collected by the commission, which then submits them to the municipal assembly during the yearly budget discussion. Priority projects are included in the municipal budget, and are transmitted to the various municipal administrations for implementation.

This new way of dealing with local infrastructure needs represents a clear loss of autonomy for MZ boards, and MZ leaders complain about their increased dependence on the decisions and budget allocations of municipal authorities:

What the MZ mainly does now is initiate contact with the municipality on certain problems, but there is no significant chance that the problem will be resolved. – two members of the MZ board, Siki Brod, Tuzla

For the MZ to fulfill its function, it must have at its disposal a certain level of resources from taxes paid by citizens, and be able to dictate certain tasks. Now the situation is that the MZ comes along as some sort of beggar – the MZ initiates, asks for, mentions, while others make the decisions. – president of the MZ board, Slatina, Tuzla

Moreover, the nationalization of infrastructure built with the financial contributions or voluntary work of citizens (see Part IID) and formerly owned by the MZs is resented as an injustice, especially in cases where such infrastructure produced revenue for the MZ:

⁹² See Annex 1.

All of the infrastructure in this area, that means roads, telephone and electricity lines, were built with contributions from the residents of this MZ. Residents also built community buildings, which now are no longer community property – it all became state property through the law passed in 1994. The same law that took enterprises away from workers also took property away from MZs, and now those buildings are falling into ruin as nobody is taking care of them – they belong neither to the state nor to the citizens and nobody knows who should fund and maintain them. – two members of the MZ board, Sicki Brod, Tuzla

[People in rural MZs], with their own contributions, built the water supply system, the sewerage system, the MZ building, and now by decision of the [District] government this belongs to the District and no longer to the citizens. The MZ had some income through selling water and now they lose even that. There is quite a lot of anger from citizens. Again everything is taken away from them, again some form of nationalization, and again they get nothing in return, as the response is that there is no money in the budget. This is an issue that worries a lot of people. The other day I was in Satorovici, they had built an enormous building and they were pleased that the government had given them 4,000 marks for roof tiles, and now someone has come along to say that the building belongs to the government. They have invested enormous resources since the war, in the past two years, and now someone is taking it away from them. – president of a rural MZ board, Brcko

These feelings of powerlessness and dispossession are compounded by the gap that exists between the demands of the MZ boards and the ability of the municipalities to meet them. The mayor of Tuzla explains that the total cost of all infrastructure projects proposed by MZ boards in 2001 (32 million KM) was more than the entire municipal budget (23 million KM).

Loss of Judicial and Administrative Functions

Under the Communist system, citizens' gatherings did also elect peace councils (*mirovna vijeća*), in charge of resolving interpersonal conflicts and minor infractions such as illegal dumping and unauthorized building. These peace councils have been suppressed by the new laws on local self-management. A few still function informally, such as some Croat MZs in the Brcko District and a few Bosniac MZs in Gornji Vakuf. Elsewhere, presidents of MZ boards may be asked to help resolve minor conflicts between neighbors:

There are cases even now where the MZ plays the role of a peace council. When conflicts arise over small issues, the citizens of the MZ come to me, report the situation, and if I am able I resolve the conflict, and if I am not I refer them to the institutions that can help. – president of the MZ board, Vrse, Gornji Vakuf

MZ boards can also play an important role in mediating conflicts between IDPs and minority returnees (see Part ID, Box 1). But because of the disappearance of peace councils and the overall loss of influence of MZ boards, conflicts between neighbors or between MZ authorities and local inhabitants are now usually heard by regular courts and municipal authorities. This means, according to MZ leaders, that such conflicts are settled only after considerable delays and by people having a superficial understanding of the local situation; and that those decisions are seldom implemented.

MZ boards have also lost the authority to deliver official documents such as birth and death certificates, driving permits, and identity cards. This change is most perceptible in Brcko, where MZs have lost all legal status, making it necessary for people living in rural areas to travel to town centers to get official documents. District authorities plan to open several registry offices throughout the District territory but, in the meantime, the difficulty obtaining some basic documents, along with the suppression of some decentralized services⁹³, causes great anger among rural residents, and even some nostalgia for the former split municipalities:

You have an 80-year-old man in a village who does not have a car and cannot go into town to get some document issued, or perhaps does not even know how to go to that town. Even I have trouble finding my way in the city, though I went to school there until 1984. Everything has changed, the institutions, the buildings, etc. How can an old woman or man of 70 or 80 years find their way around? If she is in the village she can say to me that she needs this or that and I can go and do it for her. If she needs to go and sign for something, that is just not possible.(...) In one day I went three times to the municipality to sign things for people. Nobody paid me for that. I do not ask for people to pay me, what I wanted was to show that the municipality will have difficulties to keep in touch with citizens. – president of a rural MZ board, Brcko

The District government has taken the seal of the MZ. Now [if people ask me] for any paper, any request, any certification, I make the document and then they have to go to Brcko for it to be made official with a stamp. It is that way for every document. – presidents of the MZ boards, Rahic and Maoca, Brcko

In other municipalities, MZ boards still have the right to issue some official documents, but have difficulty fulfilling this task because of limited budgets and cuts in paid secretarial staff.

Lack of Material Means and Volunteers

A few MZ boards, like the MZ board of Slatina (city center) in Tuzla, has succeeded in keeping alive the same dense network of condominium councils and the same high frequency of citizens' gatherings as during the Communist period. But, in general, MZ boards have declined in size and level of activity:

Generally there are three board members per MZ, but this MZ was given five such places – that is, the president of the board and five board members. One board member heads utilities, and each one was given some portfolio to head. But we are still not functioning the way we should, with each board member heading his own portfolio and being answerable to the citizens and to those who named them to the board.(...) Before, the MZ Assembly numbered 31 members, there was an advisory board of 9 members, the Assembly and Advisory Board named various commissions, there were representatives of condominium councils – it was a volunteer apparatus that was much broader and as such much closer to citizens. From every settlement someone could be delegated to the Assembly. At that time the majority of those involved were volunteers, and because of the better financial situation in industry there were better results in the MZ, particularly in terms of their financing. – two members of the MZ board, Sicki Brod, Tuzla

⁹³ The hospitals which had been opened during the war in Gornji Rahic (Bosniac split-municipality) and Bjela (Croat split-municipality) have been closed by the District authorities.

According to MZ leaders, lack of material means is the main reason for the MZs' institutional decay. MZ boards are overloaded with the complaints and requirements of the local inhabitants, but unable to do anything concrete. Financial costs, physical exhaustion and moral discouragement explain the low number of people willing to enter MZ boards or to attend citizens' gatherings:

In the recent past there is not anything that citizens do not come to the MZ about – there are inspectorates, other institutions, citizens can go there directly without seeking the assistance of the MZ but citizens feel ignored. Then there is a pile of personal problems, not community problems but I think that the members [of the MZ board] are here because of social and larger problems.(...) In comparison to the problems of one such large MZ it is not an adequate number of people engaged and so they cannot get involved enough in the real problems of the citizens.(...) There is simply no interest from the citizens because there is a lot promised but little is delivered –frankly the MZ does not have the authority. We can say whatever we like, but the MZ has lost what it had and it has no chance anymore of having any sort of influence. –two members of the MZ board, Siki Brod, Tuzla

Being the president of a MZ is harder than being the president of the state. The people are all your neighbors, everyone is in fact only looking after their own interest, and to get all this to fit in with your own possibilities, your ability to fulfill the wishes of your neighbors for everyone to have their own place – that is very difficult. –member of a rural MZ board, Brcko

Other key informants are pessimistic about the situation of MZ boards and their ability to help local inhabitants:

The presidents [of MZ boards] change very often, it is neither a physically nor a psychologically easy job. You have to be maximally engaged in the job, and people are interested in realizing their rights through the MZ but they are not prepared to help carry out MZ activities. – president of the Croat mountaineering club, Gornji Vakuf

The limited number of people involved in MZ boards means also that their functioning and achievements depend on the personality of the president and his closest associates:

In certain MZs that functions really well, that means that citizens have the possibility to participate in the work of the MZ through regular citizens' gatherings. However, in many MZs a few leader have taken over the role of the board, the assembly and even the citizens' gatherings. They work alone and make decisions without consulting anyone. We try to stop this even to the point of organizing citizens' gatherings to change these types of presidents. This has been done in a number of MZs, citizens' gatherings have been organized in MZs where the citizens were unhappy with the work of their president because of his single-handed approach and decision-making in the name of citizens. We can openly say that in such cases, the president was working more in his own interest than in the interest of the citizens. –Director of the Department in charge of the cooperation with MZs, Brcko

Tendency to Transform MZs into NGOs

Some former MZ leaders have left MZ boards and created non-governmental organizations defending the interests of their neighborhoods or villages. An example is the NGO "Ada-Debeljavi-Vrbanja 2001", which covers these three suburbs of Banja

Luka on the right bank of the Vrbas, and leads in Ada the collective protests against the cemetery project of the municipality (see Part IID). His president, a former president of the MZ board in Ada, argue that a NGO can more easily put pressure on municipal authorities, and get international funding for local activities or infrastructure projects.

Most MZ leaders, however, are very hostile to the long-term project of some municipal authorities to transform MZs from official sub-territorial units – which represent all its inhabitants and are entitled to receive public money for salaries and expenses – into non-governmental organizations that might have even less influence on local issues and might depend on the unpaid work of its members. MZ leaders insist on the necessity to keep the MZ boards alive to mediate between citizens and municipal authorities:

MZs are the basic cell of every society, and if you extinguish them you no longer have this base, there is no cooperation and contact at the grassroots level, as this in fact happens through the MZ. – president of the Serb MZ board, Klanac, Brcko

Other key informants also believe that MZs or similar sub-territorial representative bodies need to be retained:

It is certain that an administrative framework is necessary to give citizens the opportunity to express their needs. Whether this has to be in the form of MZs as it was before, I cannot say. But there is definitely a need for people to gather at the sub-territorial level to articulate their needs and interests. My experience, from Banja Luka and further is for there to be some sub-territorial divisions. You have the situation of Borik which is an urbanized MZ and MZ Krmine that is completely rural. Both belong to the municipality of Banja Luka but do not share anything in common. This means that citizens from a MZ here in town cannot be treated the same way as those in the MZ where there is not even an asphalt road. There has to be some form where these people can organize and have some normal way of presenting their requests to the central institutions in the municipality. – former leader of the UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

Some municipal authorities seem also to rediscover the importance of the MZs for their relationships with citizens. In Bihac and Zvornik, new municipal statutes voted in 2001 have given back to the MZ boards the legal competences and financial means they had lost a few years before:

The need for the MZ to be strengthened became obvious in the practice. In the war the MZ played a big role, there was nothing that could be asked of it that it could not do. Now in this post-war period people no longer have that attitude toward social activities, and the municipality does not have the money to support some activities. Now the organization has to change for the MZ to be put into function again. – director of the Department for General Administration and Social Affairs, Bihac

Perception of MZ Boards by Bosnian Citizens

Bosnian citizens themselves are divided in their assessment of the work of their MZ boards (Table 14). In the survey, only 9.9 percent of respondents claim to be satisfied, while nearly 40 percent say either that their MZ board does not exist (17.8 percent) or that it only serves the interests of a few people (19.4 percent). However, a similar

percentage agree with the MZ leaders that their MZ board does not work properly because it lacks the legal and financial means (39.7 percent).

The survey reveals some interesting spatial differences. Inhabitants of the Bosniac majority area are more likely to be satisfied with the work of their MZ board, and more likely to identify MZ leaders as the main initiators of collective actions related to local public services (Table 23). Urban residents are more likely to think either that their MZ board works well and for the well-being of all citizens, or that it only serves the interest of a few citizens; while rural residents more often believe that their MZ board lacks legal and financial means, or that it does not exist at all. However, more rural residents (15.6 percent) than urban residents (9.5 percent) attended citizens' gatherings (*zbor gradjana*) in the year preceding the survey (Table 19). This suggests that MZ boards play a greater role in rural areas, and that rural residents are therefore more involved in the work of the MZ boards but are less satisfied with their achievements.

In focus groups, many participants express negative views about their MZ boards. Some denounce the MZ boards as ineffective, not representative of the local population, or as corrupt:

Perhaps there exists a president of the MZ on paper, but as a citizen of that MZ I cannot find him anywhere – man, Zvornik

If you need something you go to the MZ secretary and all he does is shrug his shoulders. – woman, Banja Luka.

Those MZs function only in order to pull out as much money as they can. – man, Banja Luka

Political Allegiances and Private Connections

Another problem mentioned by participants is that most MZs are controlled by political parties. In Tuzla and Banja Luka, municipal statutes adopted after the war discontinued the practice of MZ boards being elected by citizens' gatherings; they are now appointed by the mayor according to the electoral results at the MZ level. In other municipalities, MZ boards are still elected by citizens' gatherings, but the local representatives of political parties ensure that electoral results are taken into account in the composition of MZ boards. Many participants and key informants criticize the role of political parties in the MZ boards:

The representatives are imposed by a certain party but they do not suit the majority of people. In the earlier system we grew used to electing individuals. We selected people that had some affinity with the struggle for resolution of utilities problems. We don't have that now. – man, Tuzla

Before the current president, some two years ago there was a president of the MZ who was very active. All of the sudden people from HDZ [Croat Democratic Community] came and said that because he was not a member of HDZ, he could no longer be the president and we need to select a president from the HDZ. The party selected its own man and members of the HDZ came into the council of the MZ – that is the way it goes. – man, Brcko

Participants believe that the practical achievements of the MZ boards depend largely on the political affiliation of their president,⁹⁴ and that the MZs are often used as tools in municipal elections:

If the president [of the MZ] is in the ruling party then he can manage to pull something out, but if he is not then there is nothing. – man, Banja Luka

When activities are in question just before an election, then if I am a member of a certain party, I say that I will now asphalt the roads in my settlement. This part of the town was asphalted for the previous elections, and during the current elections we got street lighting. –man, Banja Luka

In addition to political allegiances, private connections are very important in the work of MZ leaders, even in their efforts to obtain grants from international organizations:

In every organization that he [our MZ president] went to, regardless of which organization it was, people openly said to him – you are a president but you do not have the money to pay for lunch, what kind of a president are you !?! But where can our president get the money to take someone out to lunch – where from ? So they lead him to steal that little bit of humanitarian assistance that comes in – the flour, oil, to hide it and late sell it for money so that he can have the money to take someone out to lunch. – man, Zvornik

The importance of private connections and clientelistic practices in the work of MZ leaders means also that MZ boards often have parochial attitudes and very limited scopes of action (see Part ID), or that they are made up of people belonging to the same extended family or coming from the same village:

When there were elections, the president of the MZ brought in his relatives and we have to put up with them for the next four years. – man, Gornji Vakuf

New Mediation and Participation Mechanisms

In Communist Yugoslavia, the MZs were—along with state enterprises and political organizations—one of the basic elements of the delegation system (*delegatski sistem*) on which Yugoslav self-management was based.⁹⁵ Each MZ sent a delegate to the Chamber of the Neighborhood Communities (*Vijeće mjesnih zajednica*), one of the three chambers of the municipal assembly.⁹⁶ In 1990, that system was replaced by one in which counselors of a mono-cameral municipal assembly were directly chosen by local voters during a free and pluralistic election. The mayor was then elected by this assembly.⁹⁷ The Federation's new law on local self-management, enacted in January 1996, has retained

⁹⁴ In Zvornik, the Bosniac president of the MZ board in Krizevici explains that this MZ does no more receive any material support from the “municipality in exile” located in Tuzla, and controlled by the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), since the MZ board has a social-democratic majority.

⁹⁵ See Seroka, Jim and Smiljkovic, Rados, 1986.

⁹⁶ The two other chambers were the Chamber of Associated Work, where local worker councils and other economic organs were represented, and the Socio-Political Chamber, where the League of Communists and its mass organizations were represented. See Seroka, Jim and Smiljkovic, Rados, 1986, pp. 21-26.

⁹⁷ See Pasic, Hilmo, 1990.

this relationship between the legislative and executive municipal bodies.⁹⁸ In the Serb Republic, the law enacted in November 1999 foresees the direct election of the mayor,⁹⁹ but this was not implemented during the municipal elections of April 2000.

MZs are no longer represented in the municipal bodies, but remnants of the former system can be found in some municipalities. In the Bosniac part of Gornji Vakuf, for example, delegates from the MZs still attend the sessions of the municipal assembly (without right to vote); and in Tuzla, the mayor meets once a month with all MZ presidents. At the same time, the disappearance of older forms of direct democracy, as well as the insistence on local democracy by international organizations such as OSCE and the Council of Europe, have led municipal authorities to develop new forms of mediation and participation.¹⁰⁰

Transparency and Accountability

Many municipalities have established their own print and electronic media and hold regular mayoral press conferences. Some have distributed brochures presenting all municipal counselors and department head, often with the help of local NGOs such as the Center for Civic Initiatives (CCI) in Tuzla or the Legal Aid and Information Center (CIPP) in Zvornik. In Brcko, Tuzla, and Zvornik, public discussions about the annual budget have been organized at the MZ level.

Municipalities are trying to improve citizens' access to local public services by increasing and publicly announcing the reception times of each department, publishing the organizational chart of the municipality, opening complaint books, or creating special departments to register complaints (*Odeljenje za zalbe i prituzbe*).¹⁰¹ In addition, the municipality of Tuzla and the Brcko District have adopted a code of behavior for their employees, and have organized training courses for them on the concept of public service and the relationship between civil servants and citizens.

Citizen Initiatives and Consultative Bodies

Some municipal statutes mention "citizen initiatives" (*gradjanske inicijative*), whereby citizens can petition municipal authorities, who are required to give them an answer. In Tuzla, the municipality has received more than 2,000 petitions in the year 2000, the mayor explains, and the municipal assembly or the competent department must answer

⁹⁸ See Dedic, Sead, 1998.

⁹⁹ See Kremenovic, Ostojica, Stevanovic, Mirko and Nikolic, Anto, 2000.

¹⁰⁰ Many international organizations present in Bosnia-Herzegovina give recommendations and organize training courses in order to improve access, transparency and participation at the local level. Some of them have also set up their own pilot consultative bodies, such as the Municipal Development Committees created by the UNDP or the Capital Planning Committees created by the OSCE, but no such committees exist in the municipalities in the sample. See Rogan, James, 2000; OSCE, 2000a; UNDP, 2000c.

¹⁰¹ Similar measures have been adopted by many public companies and state administrations.

each petition within 60 days. In some municipalities, monitoring and consultative bodies have also been created by municipal authorities or local NGOs:

- in **Bihac**, the local NGO “Women from Una” has created a Council for Public Opinion (*Savjet za javno mnjenje*) comprising eleven independent personalities, which publishes surveys and reports on various local issues.
- In **Zvornik**, the municipality has partnered with the local Office of the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons and four local NGOs to form a Civic Working Group (*Gradjanska radna grupa*) that monitors the implementation of rights safeguards for IDPs and minority returnees.¹⁰²
- In **Tuzla**, the mayor has appointed a Council of Citizens (*Savjet gradjana*) comprising representatives of various religious communities, ethnic minorities, social categories (pensioners, private entrepreneurs, veterans, students, etc.), formal voluntary associations and local media. This Council of Citizens is consulted during the yearly budget discussion and the establishing of infrastructure priorities.
- In **Brcko**, where the Assembly and the Government were not elected, but appointed by the international Supervisor, District authorities try to compensate for this lack of democratic legitimacy by organizing public discussions and working commissions involving representatives of the Government and the local population on various topics, like the yearly budget and the new education law (see Part ID, Box 3).

Limits of the New Mediation and Participation Mechanisms

Most of these new participation mechanisms have been introduced in 2000 or 2001, and their working and achievements are thus difficult to assess. Key informants and focus group participants, however, express some reservations or criticism. In Brcko, the field officer of an international organization considers that District authorities have replaced face-to-face relations with MZ leaders and local inhabitants by written means of communication or formal mechanisms of mediation and participation. These are appropriate for a small urban and educated middle-class, but not for the majority of the population:

All right, there is a Department for contact with MZs, a Department for citizens complaints, etc., but everywhere in the world, it is not easy for a villager to go to the city and knock on the door of an official institution to ask for something. There has always been that relation between villagers and urban dwellers; villagers have always been treated as people on the margins and they feel not comfortable knocking on the doors of institutions. I have the feeling that [District authorities] have in fact built an invisible

¹⁰² These NGOs are the Legal Aid and Information Center (CIPP), the Association of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Zvornik, the women’s association “Spring” (“*Izvor*”), and the youth club “Sun” (“*Sunce*”).

barrier between themselves and the citizens. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

New participation mechanisms are sometimes perceived as empty ones, without any real impact. In Brcko, several participants are dissatisfied with public discussions, an opinion shared by some key informants.

We have had a few situations where we needed to organize a meeting between citizens and the Government of Brcko, for them to inform residents about what is happening, how the process will go and everything else.(...) I advised representatives of the MZs to approach the District Government, they did so in writing. Nobody from the District Government turned up, nor did they apologize for not being able to attend and perhaps have it postponed to a more convenient time. They do not even respond, they are still not aware that they are in fact there for the citizens. But it is not just the Government that is like that, our post is like that, the electricity distribution company is like that. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

In Tuzla, key informants and participants complain that municipal authorities in fact seldom answer petitions sent by citizens or MZ boards. Participants do not really feel represented by the Council of Citizens, and most of them do not even know its role and composition. Some key informants consider also that the criteria along which its members are appointed are unclear, and that this consultative body could be used by the mayor in order to circumvent the municipal assembly and reinforce its own position.¹⁰³

The Role of Other Local-Level Institutions

The limitations of the MZs and of the new mediation and participation mechanisms may explain why other formal and informal institutions play an important role in local public life. In an survey conducted in 1999 in the Federation, only 8.4 percent of the respondents mentioned the municipal assembly, and 14.2 percent citizens' gatherings as important places for advancing vital local issues, while 19.7 percent mentioned cafés, and 32.5 percent party meetings.¹⁰⁴

In some municipalities and MZs, especially in rural ones, religious institutions still exert a strong influence. In the village of Mihatovici (Tuzla), for example, the local Islamic parish (*dzema'at*) is the only link between local residents and IDPs living in the neighboring collective center. In the village of Bistrica (Gornji Vakuf), Croat minority returnees state that the priest works more than the entire municipality. And the former leader of the UNDP Progress program relates that in some municipalities, what the priest or the imam says is far more important than what local politicians say. In focus groups, however, several participants (especially in the Bosniac area) protest the growing

¹⁰³ In both entities, the legal position of the mayor vis-à-vis their municipal assembly remains very strong, but the most recent municipal elections have resulted in narrow and shifting municipal majorities, thus making the mayors more dependent on political compromises. Moreover, the “NERIC Guidelines” issued by the OSCE—see footnote 148—compel ruling parties or coalitions to share, at least formally, executive positions (speaker, heads of department, etc.) among all political parties represented in the municipal assembly.

¹⁰⁴ See Musabegovic, Nijaz, Vockic-Avdagic, Jelenka, and Nuhanovic, Asad, 1999, pp. 222-8.

influence of religious institutions, and more specifically the building of oversized and expansive churches and mosques.

The role of religious institutions in local public life has been institutionalized in the Brcko District, where representatives of religious communities did participate in the working commission on education, and meet every month with the international Supervisor; and in Tuzla, where they take part to the Council of Citizens.

C. Relationship between Citizens and Formal Voluntary Associations

Nearly a third of survey respondents say they belong to some type of voluntary association. Participants in focus groups and key informants distinguish between two main types of voluntary associations: citizens' associations and non-governmental organizations. According to survey results, membership in traditional citizens' associations, such as interest-based, leisure or community associations, is more common than membership in new NGOs funded by the international community. Funding by the international community has affected the balance between the two types of organizations. Some spatial differences in organizational membership exists as well. Most focus groups participants express negative attitudes towards voluntary associations, and half of the survey respondents who claim membership in associations are not actively involved. The main link between citizens and voluntary associations is not one of active participation, but most often of individual requests and one-way delivery of various public services and social benefits. Traditional interest-based associations tend to have close ties with ruling political parties and stronger links with the municipalities than new NGOs. However, relationships between new NGOs and the municipalities have improved from the initial post-war period. Voluntary associations contribute to the formation of bridging and linking social capital, but there is no straightforward correlation between the percentage of affiliation with voluntary associations and the amount of social capital.

Evolution of Associative Life

In the Communist period, the League of Communists was surrounded by mass organizations like trade-unions or youth organizations, and a multiplicity of citizens' associations (*udruzenja gradjana*) like sports clubs or cultural and artistic societies were in charge of leisure activities. Affiliation to the mass organizations was more or less compulsory, but citizens' associations were voluntary ones, and had only loose links with the League of Communists.¹⁰⁵

With the breakdown of the Communist system, mass organizations have disappeared (youth organizations) or withdrawn from politics (trade-unions), while citizens' associations carried on their activities, and nationalist parties founded their own cultural societies and charity organizations. During the war, most citizens' associations split on an ethnic basis, and nationalist parties created mass organizations representing new social groups like IDPs or veterans. At the same time, the international community began to

¹⁰⁵ See Seroka, Jim and Smiljkovic, Rados, 1986.

support a new generation of humanitarian and non-governmental organizations committed to universalistic values. After the signing of the Dayton Accords in December 1995, international programs supporting Bosnian civil society resulted in a rapid increase in the number and activities of these new local NGOs.¹⁰⁶

Two Main Types of Formal Voluntary Associations

Most key informants and focus group participants see a clear distinction between two main types of voluntary associations; i.e., between citizens' associations (*udruzenja gradjana*) and non-governmental organizations (*nevladine organizacije*):

There are non-governmental organizations formed in a more modern way, in a newer time, and there are citizens' associations that existed in all municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia that do not feel like non-governmental organizations, but still consider themselves to be a part of the local community that municipal authorities have a duty to fund. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

Citizens' associations (dating back to the Communist period or associated with nationalist parties) are subsidized by the entities, cantons, or municipalities, and are devoted either to leisure activities or to the interests of a specific ethnic or social group. Non-governmental organizations are funded by the international community, are value oriented, and tend to be centered on service-delivery and new kinds of educational and leisure activities for the younger generation (see Part IIA).¹⁰⁷

This difference, however, should not be overstated. Some citizens' associations also get international funding, have similar activities as the new NGOs, or simply do not fit such a dichotomy. Many environmental associations closely resemble the new NGOs in terms of type of activities and commitment to universalistic values, but often remain linked to municipal authorities and carry out collective functions such as yearly cleaning of the streets or riverbanks (see Part IID)¹⁰⁸. Some NGOs are also not easy to categorize. While a majority of NGOs confine themselves to the delivery of legal help, material assistance, and public services, a few are directly involved in political life.¹⁰⁹ Some leaders of the new NGOs are former activists from Communist trade-unions or youth and women's organizations.

Membership in Formal Voluntary Associations

According to survey results, nearly one third of the respondents (28.9 percent) belong to some type of voluntary association. Membership in traditional citizens' associations, such

¹⁰⁶ See Duffield, Mark, 1996; Smillie, Ian, 1996; Sali-Terzic, Selima, 2001.

¹⁰⁷ In the Federation, formal voluntary associations can have the legal status of citizens' association, humanitarian organization or foundation; in the Serb Republic, the only existing legal status for formal voluntary associations is the one of citizens' association. See Sali-Terzic, Selima, 2001, p. 139.

¹⁰⁸ In Banja Luka and Brcko, the Eco-Movement (*Eko-pokret*) is supported by municipal authorities; and in Bihac, the citizens' environmental association "Una's Emeralds" (*Unski Smaragdi*), created in 1985, has become one of the most important local NGOs.

¹⁰⁹ See Duffield, Mark, 1996; Smillie, Ian, 1996; Sali-Terzic, Sevima, 2001.

as interest-based, leisure or community associations, is more common than membership in new NGOs funded by the international community:

- **interest-based associations:** pensioners' associations, 5.5 percent; veterans' associations, 4.4 percent; trade unions, 3.4 percent; IDPs' associations, 1.6 percent;¹¹⁰
- **leisure associations:** sports clubs, 4.9 percent; hunting and fishing societies, 4.3 percent; cultural societies, 3.1 percent; mountaineering clubs, 2.4 percent);
- **religious associations:** 5.2 percent; and local parishes, 4.3 percent;
- **political parties :** 4.7 percent;
- **community associations:** MZ board, 2.7 percent; school council, 2.4 percent; condominium council, 1.5 percent;
- **new NGOs:** environmental associations, 1.9 percent; women's associations, 1.8 percent; youth associations, 1.3 percent; human rights associations, 0.7 percent.

Differences appear also in the sociological profile of respondents belonging to some type of voluntary association. Higher levels of economic and cultural capital are associated with higher levels of membership in voluntary associations (Table 15). This is especially true for leisure associations and new NGOs, with the latter, in particular, attracting members of the urban and educated middle class.¹¹¹ The lower level of affiliation of IDPs with voluntary associations confirm that the social capital of this group have been more deeply affected by the war than have the one of locals (see Part IA).

Overall Decline in Associative Life

Because the largest proportion of associative life is linked to traditional citizens' associations, the evolution of associative life—and of civil society more generally—cannot be measured by using the number of new NGOs as an indicator.¹¹² Furthermore, this number has itself declined recently, due to maturation of the NGO sector and more selective international funding.

When we first established the new NGO sector, we experienced a real boom, since it was a good way to get some money. An enormous part of the donations were channeled exclusively through NGOs. Now, people's way of thinking is maturing, they are realizing that the system is imperfect and that there are a lot of things they cannot resolve through the institutions. Now people are more and more networking through common interests, to find a way to resolve common problems or realize common ideas. – former leader of the UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

Cultural associations and sports clubs are two types of citizens' associations that have experienced a clear drop in their level of activities and financial resources. In Tuzla, of the more than 400 citizens' associations existing before the war, only 44 still exist.¹¹³ In

¹¹⁰ 24.2 percent of the pensioners belong to a pensioner association, 13.6 percent of the veterans to a veterans' association, and 8.4 percent of the full-time wage-earner to a trade-union

¹¹¹ See Duffield, Mark, 1996; Chandler, Daniel, 1998.

¹¹² About the abusive identification of civil society to the NGO sector, see Duffield, Mark, 1996; Smillie, Ian, 1996; Chandler, Daniel, 1998; Belloni, Roberto, 2001.

¹¹³ Sali-Terzic, Sevima, 2001, p. 139.

Bihac, the leader of a sports club for war invalids says that sports clubs are being closed down because the canton's budget provides only 80 pfennigs per resident for sport activities, while before the war every citizen contributed 20 marks. Interest-based associations, for their part, seem to have lost most of the influence they had in the pre-war and the immediate post-war period, and several participants complain that they do not have the necessary resources to function. Veterans, in particular, resent the decline and marginalization of their associations, which goes hand in hand with their own loss of prestige (see Part IB, Box 2):

They have no influence, or they do have but do you know how – only when there arises a moral obligation in the executive or legislative authorities and they say, “He was a soldier, he was with me in the war, let's help him, let's at least do something for him”. – man, Bihac

The only citizens' associations that have more or less recovered their past activities and influence are hunting and fishing societies, since their financial resources come mainly from the sale of compulsory hunting or fishing permits, and their leaders are often wealthy and influential:

When they come to the municipality and say that they need 5,000 marks to throw young fish into the lake, people give the money and nobody asks any questions. Those who have time to go fishing are people who are not pressed by housing problems, financial problems, nothing. I used to go fishing when I was a gentleman, a man, when I lived from my own work but now it does not even cross my mind. That is why those associations are the strongest and they can come to the municipality and they are well received there. All of these other associations that are supposed to work for the benefit of the people cannot get anything done. – man, Zvornik

Spatial Differences in Associative Life

In the survey, spatial differences appear in the percentage of respondents belonging to at least one voluntary association, in the kinds of associations they belong to, and in the main motivation of their (non-) membership (Tables 15-17). The wide variety of voluntary associations and the different motivations of their members explain why there is no simple or straightforward correlation between percentage of affiliation and amount of social capital in the different ethnic areas:

- The **Croat majority area** has the highest percentage of respondents belonging to some kind of voluntary association, while other data suggest that it has the lowest amount of social capital bridging and linking social capital (see Part IA). Inhabitants of the Croat majority area belong more often to leisure associations—a consequence of their higher living standard. They also belong more often to political parties, religious associations, local parishes, and veterans' associations, all of which indicate bonding social capital rather than bridging one. But inhabitants of the Croat majority area seldom belong to community or interest-based associations dating from the pre-war period. Moreover, fewer inhabitants of the Croat majority area belonging to some kind of voluntary association mention civic commitment or social contact as the main reason for their affiliation, and

- Conversely, in the **Bosniac majority area**, which has the highest amount of bridging and linking social capital (see Part IA), a higher percentage of the respondents belong to the new generation of NGOs (environmental associations, women’s associations), to community associations and to pensioners’ associations. Those belonging to some kind of voluntary association more often mention civic commitment, and those not affiliated more often mention the lack of material possibility or the lack of information as the main reason for their non-affiliation.
- The **Serb majority area** has a much lower percentage of membership, a fact which illustrates its deep social fragmentation. But the lower level of affiliation in this area can also be explained by a lower living standard (leisure associations), the traditionally low level of religious affiliation (local parishes, 2.6 percent; religious associations, 2.2 percent), and the breakdown of the dominant nationalist party (political parties, 2.2 percent). The only formal associations that seem more influential in the Serb majority area than in other ethnic areas are the trade unions.

Important spatial differences exist also at the local level. In Tuzla, a municipality whose local NGO sector is generally considered the strongest in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the associative landscape differs considerably from one neighborhood to the other:

- In the **MZ Slatina**, a central urban neighborhood of educated middle class residents, associative life seems relatively intense, especially the network of community and interest-based associations dating back from the pre-war period (see Part IIB). This MZ also has several active sport and leisure associations, with accompanying infrastructure. The central location of this MZ, its sociological profile, and its close links with the municipal authorities (see Part ID) explains the presence of several international and local NGOs in this neighborhood.
- In the **MZ Siki Brod**, a peripheral and industrial suburb inhabited by miners, the influence of the associative network, which was active during the pre-war period, is still perceptible, but is in an advanced state of decay. Most condominium councils have disappeared, and among interest-based associations, only the pensioners’ association, the old action committee for women (*Aktiva žena*), and the veterans’ association close to the Social Democratic Party (the Unified Organization of Veterans –*Jedinstvena Organizacija Boraca*) seem to be active to some degree. Leisure associations have also experienced rapid decline in their number and activities:

In this area there used to be a football club, a basketball club that was very good, there was a cultural and artistic society called “Brotherhood and Unity” that was one of the most well known in the country—but all of that was before the war. After the war they disappeared, there simply are not the financial resources to support them. The best rifle club was here in this MZ. We had rifle ranges that now belong

to nobody. The only thing that we have managed to revive since the war is the football club, which we are trying to maintain. The pigeon keepers' association is the only one that has been given space by the MZ—it is a very active association and one of the best in the country. There is also a hunting society that is very active. – two member of the MZ board, Sicksi Brod, Tuzla

International and local NGOs are almost completely absent in this MZ. Only the Center for Civic Initiatives has helped the population to organize collective protests against environmental problems (see Part IID), and to create a local chapter of the Green party.

- In the **MZ Simin Han**, a peripheral and residential suburb in which much of the public infrastructure was destroyed during the war, and the once predominant Serb population has been replaced by Bosniac IDPs from Eastern Bosnia, there are no visible remnants of the pre-war associative network. Early and strong presence of international NGOs in this MZ has led to the creation of permanent local branches of these NGOs. It has also led to changes in the local elementary school, where new pedagogic and participatory practices, promoted by its director, are directly inspired and funded by international NGOs. The school has a very active parent association based on the Western model. According its president, about 150 parents are active in this association—a very high number compared to most voluntary associations.

The case of Tuzla shows that, at the local level, the associative landscape is determined not only by long-term sociological factors, but also by factors more closely related to the war, such as population changes and presence of foreign NGOs.

Impact of International Funding

While international funding does not, by itself, determine associative life, it does influence some of features of the associative landscape. International funding decisions have created an imbalance between the Serb Republic and the Federation:

Non-government organizations in the Serb Republic are perceived as Serb associations, and in the Federation as Bosniac or Croat associations, and the attitude of [international] donors toward Serb associations is common knowledge. We in the territory of the Serb Republic have been in a subordinate situation relative to citizens' associations and non-government organizations in the Federation. Of the international donor resources, I do not know the exact numbers, but I believe that at least 90 percent has been directed to the Federation. In the Federation, non-government organizations developed at lightening speed, but not in the Serb Republic. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

In Brcko, District authorities have reduced state subsidies to voluntary associations, and required them to find their own private or foreign funding.¹¹⁴ According to the representative of a local NGO, this has had a negative impact on local associative life:

¹¹⁴ The 2001 District budget foresaw only 82,000 KM of direct subsidies to formal voluntary associations (sports infrastructures : 42,000 KM, health and social protection : 20,000 KM, neighborhood councils –here

The work of NGOs in Brcko is slowly dying because of the Brcko District Statute, which requires that non-government organizations and citizens' associations will be financed outside of the budget, be funded independently with resources they collect through their projects, their activities. Thus, what is left is for projects to make applications, for local and broader activities to be organized, and eventually nobody will have any money because among the organizations seeking support from the donors, even the Center for Legal Aid or the Youth Forum does not get anything, not to mention the associations of refugees and displaced persons, associations of families of fallen soldiers, associations of the hearing impaired, etc. The state of these organizations are in is best shown by the fact that they exist only thanks to handfuls of enthusiasts who maintain them and try and come by paper, pens, anything. Self-sustainability, which is clearly alluded to in the Statute of the District, is not possible at this time and in these circumstances. – representative of local NGO, Brcko

The case of Brcko shows that the suppression of state subsidies to citizens' associations can lead to a stronger ethnicization of local associative life : in the Brcko District, the most active voluntary associations seem to be those linked with the religious institutions (cultural societies, religious charity organizations).

International funding decisions have also played a large role in changing the balance between traditional citizens' associations and new NGOs. While activists in citizens' associations attribute their decline in activities and influence to harsh cuts in state subsidies, NGO activists believe that the psychological legacy of Communism hinders the growth of a vital civil society. These opposite views point to generational and cultural gaps, but also to concrete differences in the ability of citizens' associations and NGOs to finance their activities. Citizens' associations have still difficulty elaborating projects and applying for international funding, while NGOs are much more skilled at such procedures and the related networks and connections. As noted in earlier studies, this can lead to situations in which a few well-established NGOs monopolize international funding, thus endangering the survival of both older citizens' associations and small, nascent NGOs.¹¹⁵

International funding can, therefore, perpetuate or deepen the tensions existing between traditional citizens' associations and new NGOs, as well as among NGOs themselves.¹¹⁶ In the Brcko District, the representative of a local NGO attributes the failure of the local NGO Forum to the fact that, due to disappearing state subsidies, voluntary associations are involved in a battle among themselves to get “*a piece of the donors' cake*”, and citizens' associations have almost no chance of obtaining international funding:

Within the Forum, it was very difficult to unify the work of non-government organizations that were established during and after the war, or non-government organizations that are known in the world and have their chapter here, and those citizens' associations that are

defined as voluntary associations : 20,000 KM). The amount of services in health, social protection, education and other areas contracted to formal voluntary associations does not clearly appear in the documents presenting the budget.

¹¹⁵ Ian Smillie, for example, notes that “funding NGOs, donors have essentially sought –and found- cheap service delivery.(...) By treating NGOs as cheap executing agencies and ignoring what it would really take to strengthen the sector properly, donors will not only damage the potential emergence of a genuine civil society, they will lose their executing agencies as well.” (Smillie, Ian, 1996, p. 9).

¹¹⁶ See Duffield, Mark, 1996; Smillie, Ian, 1996.

the classic standard associations of the former Yugoslavia. This is one of the main reasons that the forum has not come to life. The animosity of the international community and donors toward some of those old organizations means they have no chance of getting support for a project—this has been the case in Brcko. Therefore, tension arises between the new and the old associations, because the new ones are supported to some degree while the old ones get nothing. You know how it goes—you and I are members of the same forum but I have something that assures my activities can continue, and you have nothing. We cannot cooperate, there can be no harmony between us. – representative of local NGO, Brcko

While some international donors try to encourage cooperation among voluntary associations by funding common projects and supporting NGO forums, such initiatives are not always successful. In Tuzla, the regional NGO Forum enables voluntary associations to share information, and plan and undertake common activities; but in Gornji Vakuf, the local NGO forum is seen by some key informants as an empty institution. International funding also influences the activities and ways of working of local voluntary associations. Earlier studies have described how limited funding of short-term projects and frequent changes in donors' priorities lead to instability and lack of specialization in NGO activities, with stronger NGOs tending to turn into catch-all organizations.¹¹⁷ This dependency on international donors leads also to some unproductive activities and demagogical attitudes:

The non-government sector has a place and a role that it does not fulfill. We can openly say here that the non-government sector functions only where they can profit and not what is in the best interests of the community. I will give you an example. We have 10 or 15 non-government organizations that deal with socialization of the youth. These are projects that cost hundreds of thousands of marks, so much money has been spent but still only a limited group of people have been reached, and everyone in town believes that all that is throwing money down the drain. In my opinion, the people who made a basketball court for the children, which cost 10,000 marks, have done more than those who have done things costing over 100.000 and have left nothing behind. – close associate of the mayor, Tuzla

Non-government organizations in the Federation were established on a mono-ethnic basis with a few Serb, Croat, or Bosniac names on the list in order to get funding. In the Serb Republic, where unfortunately there are no Bosniac and no Croat left, non-government organizations were established with only Serbs, so there is no chance of getting funding for a project because it is not multi-ethnic. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

Attitude of Citizens toward Formal Voluntary Associations

In focus groups, most participants have negative attitudes toward voluntary associations. Traditional interest-based associations are seen as corrupt and linked with political parties. Veterans, in particular, are very distrustful toward veterans' associations:

The president of the veterans' association is a member of a certain party, the vice-president and all the others are members of that political party and it is always the political party that is in power. They are the people who benefit most from all of this, they are not even real veterans so they don't care.(...) An hour ago I was standing

¹¹⁷ Idem.

outside in town when one of those people passed by and two real veterans, war wounded, publicly called out to him: "Where have you been, war commander, how do you dare walk through town, aren't you scared that the Serb people will kill you for the money you stole!" – man, Zvornik

The new NGOs are seen as a creation of the international community, as serving only a small part of the local population, or as distant and useless:

All those organizations were established by international organizations. I have not heard of any organization in the Serb Republic or in Bosnia-Herzegovina that was established locally, organized locally and has managed to resolve a concrete problem. – man, Banja Luka

The ordinary, average man does not know that such organizations exist, let alone to be involved in their work. – woman, Tuzla

Membership and Actual Participation in Associative Life

These findings of the focus groups seem to contradict the responses to the survey, according to which 28.9 percent of Bosnian citizens belong to at least one formal association. But the exact meaning of membership in the Bosnian context needs to be clarified. In the survey, respondents were also asked about their actual participation in associative life. About half the affiliated respondents said that they seldom or never pay a membership fee or take part to any activity (Table 18). The focus group discussions and interviews indicate that different kinds of voluntary associations have differing definitions of membership :

- only **leisure associations** such as hunting and fishing societies, sport clubs, and mountaineering clubs, cultural and artistic societies really associate membership with payment of membership fee and active participation.

In other cases, the concept of membership appears to be secondary and abstract:

- **Interest-based associations** tend to consider a member anyone who belongs to the social group or legal category they claim to represent. Some of them collect more or less compulsory membership fees, as in the case of the pensioners' association in the Serb Republic.¹¹⁸ Most of these associations have only a few full-time employees and a limited number of activists, but still control, as during the Communist period, a dense network of representatives at the MZ and workplace levels, who can be activated for general assemblies, solidarity actions, or collective protests.
- Many **new NGOs** talk less about members than about clients, when focused on service delivery, and about citizens when involved in political life. Others include in their membership all people who have contributed to their activities at least

¹¹⁸ In the Serb Republic, the pensioners' association receives automatically a monthly fee 2 KM from the pension of each pensioner.

once; some therefore claim they have thousands of members, when in fact they represent a few dozen volunteers gathered around a small remunerated staff or a charismatic figure. Their relationship with a wider circle of clients or citizens is only one-way and sporadic, since it is interrupted each time an assistance program, training course, or public information campaign comes to an end.¹¹⁹

Representatives of both interest-based citizens' associations and new NGOs say they do not insist on formal membership or regular contributions because of the bad post-war economic situation. Some local NGO representatives believe that requiring such contributions would prevent many people—especially the poor—from participating in their activities:

First we said that the membership fee is one mark for one millennium, then we thought of not charging students and pensioners, and then we made the decision not to charge a membership fee at all. – president of the local Eco-Movement, Banja Luka

We have a membership fee but we do not insist on it being paid, it is more on a voluntary basis. When a person is becoming a new member then we ask for the fee to be paid, but after that we don't ask. Our aim is not to have an association with large numbers but rather to realize certain projects with people who want to become members and who want to help. – president of the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, Banja Luka

Some key informants consider also that the economic situation prevents people from taking part in the activities of voluntary associations:

Civic initiatives start when you have money and then you can contribute four hours to the development of civil society. But if I am hungry and I do not have a job it is very difficult for me to separate out some of my time [for civic activities]. I absolutely do understand this by people. – representative of the Youth Center, Gornji Vakuf

Service Delivery and Material Assistance

Therefore, in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, the main link between citizens and voluntary associations is not one of active participation, but most often of individual requests and one-way delivery of various public services and social benefits (see Part IC).¹²⁰ Some key informants complain about this reality and denounce the passivity of Bosnian citizens:

Someone comes, for example, because he needs building materials. He has sent an application to the municipality and now turns to the organization. We send a letter or go and see the person in charge or the mayor personally.(...) This is the way people are : they are only interested in what they can get for themselves. Thus last year we made the decision that whoever does not pay the membership fee cannot approach the organization for such assistance. These fees should have existed when the organization was established in 1994-95, but pension payments were not regular then. Membership fees were set at 2, 4, and 6 marks—2 marks for those who have incomes inferior to 50 marks per month, 4 marks for those with incomes of 50 to 300 marks, and 6 marks for those with

¹¹⁹ See Duffield, Mark, 1996 ; Smillie, Ian, 1996.

¹²⁰ A good illustration of this reality is the fact that, in focus groups, many participants can mention the address of some NGOs, and the kind of help they deliver, but do not even know their name.

higher incomes. – representative of the local Bosniac association of war invalids, Gornji Vakuf

Participants criticize voluntary associations for not really helping the population:

A year ago I went [to a local NGO] and a woman received me and talked with me but she did not know where to direct me. She registered me under some number and that was it. I do not know what that organization was, but they are not there anymore. – woman, Banja Luka

Of the survey respondents who say that they have turned to a voluntary association for help within the past year, most turned to a traditional interest-based association (IDPs' association, 4.9 percent ; veterans' association, 3.7 percent ; pensioners' association, 3.6 percent ; trade-union, 3.0 percent) or religious association (3.1 percent).¹²¹ Few say they have turned to new NGOs (microcredit NGO, 1.5 percent ; human rights NGO, 1.2 percent ; women's association, 0.7 percent ; youth association, 0.6 percent).

Urban residents, IDPs, and the poor turn more often to voluntary associations for help than do rural residents, locals, and the better-off. The poor turn more often to pensioner, DP, and veterans' associations, whereas the better-off turn more often to trade-unions and new NGOs. Finally, it is worth noting that 7.9 percent of the members of local ethnic minorities turned to religious associations, while few turned to interest-based associations, and there is no indication that they turned more than others to the new generation of NGOs. This finding confirms the substitutory role of religious charity organizations in the provision of material assistance and public services to the local ethnic minorities (see Part ID).

Formal Voluntary Associations and Other Local Level Institutions

Data about the relationship between Bosnian citizens and voluntary associations do not, by themselves, make clear their role in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, and their influence on the amount of bridging and linking social capital. To determine this role, relations between voluntary associations and other local-level institutions have also to be considered. From this point of view, additional differences appear between traditional interest-based associations and new NGOs.

Formal Voluntary Associations and Political Parties

Traditional interest-based associations tend to have close ties with ruling political parties. In some cases, competing political influences can lead to internal conflicts and splits in these associations. In Banja Luka, the Organization of Veterans (*Organizacija Boraca*), founded by the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) is being challenged by the veterans' organization "Concord" ("*Sloga*"), which is close to moderate nationalist parties. In Tuzla, the president of the Unified Organization of Veterans (JOB), a veterans' association created in 1993 and close to the Social Democratic Party (SDP), relates how

¹²¹ 17.9 percent of IDPs have turned for help to IDPs' associations, 9.4 percent of pensioners to pensioners' associations, and 7.3 percent of veterans to veterans' associations.

the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) has divided veterans and created its own associations by mobilizing narrow material interests:

They took invalids and gave them resources to get organized, then they took families of fallen soldiers and gave them the resources to get organized and they succeeded. Now there are four organizations: the Unified Organization of Veterans, the Organization of Families of Fallen Soldiers, the League of War Invalids, and the Organization of Demobilized Soldiers. – president of Unified Organization of Veterans, Tuzla

The main factor of division between IDPs' associations are not political influences as such, but their practical attitude toward the restitution and return process. In the Brcko District, the Association of Refugees and Displaced Persons (*Udruzenje izbjeglica i raseljenih lica*) encourages Serb IDPs to claim their pre-war properties and to return, but the association “*Staying*” (“*Ostanak*”) is hostile to the return process, and insist on the allocation of lot of lands or social apartments to those IDPs willing to settle in Brcko.¹²² On the Bosniac side, the association “*Brcko to Brcko's People*” (“*Brcko Brcacima*”), close to the Social Democratic Party (SDP), accepts that Serb IDPs settle in Brcko, providing that they do not occupy someone else's property, while the IDPs' association “*Returning*” (“*Povratak*”), close to the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), want all them to go back to their former place of residence.¹²³

New NGOs usually share the values of non-nationalist parties. But while a majority of them are not involved in politics, some of the most famous—such as the Citizens' Forum and the Helsinki Parliament in Tuzla—play an important role in the Bosnian political life. In 1996, a few dozen NGOs even created an Alternative Citizens' Parliament (*Gradjanski alternativni parlament*), in opposition to the ruling nationalist parties.¹²⁴

Formal Voluntary associations and Municipalities

Traditional interest-based associations and new NGOs also have different relations with municipal authorities, based on the presence or absence of institutional and financial linkages.

Interest-based associations often receive municipal subsidies and free municipal premises, and distribute various kinds of government-funded social benefits and material assistance to the local population, including apartments and plots of land provided by the municipality. Veterans' associations control jobs in former municipal service activities such as parking, street kiosks, and gas stations. The strongest interest-based associations, like pensioner or veterans' associations, have close links with MZ boards, since they have

¹²² The association “*Staying*” is a split of the Association of Refugees and Displaced Persons. It has chapters in each MZ of the former Serb municipality of Brcko, whereas the Association of Refugees and Displaced Persons is divided in seven clubs gathering IDPs of the same local origin (Sarajevo, Jajce, Travnik, Tuzla, Ozren Mounts, Orasje, Brcko-Federation).

¹²³ The association “*Returning*” is a split of the association “*Brcko to Brcko's People*”.

¹²⁴ About this initiative, Paul Stubbs notes that “donor support has created a kind of ‘anti-political political opposition’ marginalising formal opposition parties, turning social movements into bureaucracies, and ultimately buttressing the status quo whilst formally seeming to support ‘democracy from below’” (Stubbs, Paul, 1999, p. 31). See also Chandler, Daniel, 1998; Belloni, Roberto, 2001.

their own network of representatives at the MZ level who either belong to MZ boards or regularly attend MZ board sessions and citizens' gatherings.

The high degree of institutionalization of the interest-based associations creates mutual dependencies with political institutions. In Tuzla, the transfer of social policy from the Social Democratic municipality to the new canton led by the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) resulted in 1994 in the suppression of the social benefits provided by the Unified Organization of Veterans. However, when the Social Democratic Party (SDP) took over the canton six years later, it did not dare to cut off the subsidies to those veterans' associations that were close to the SDA, for fear of massive protests. The case of the veterans' associations in Tuzla also shows how interest-based associations tend to reproduce, under new circumstances, some of the institutional schemes inherited from the pre-war self-management and delegation system:

From the very beginning of our organization, we have asked for representatives of veterans to enter into public institutions, that veterans attend the sessions of the municipal and cantonal assembly, that they are invited into the management boards of state enterprises, the commissions for privatization, social issues, housing issues, etc., because it is their fate that is in question. Against the background of privatization, we worked on protecting social property and the interests of our members. Many of our workplace sections have bought shares in privatized firms with the privatization certificates of the veterans, in the Public Transport Company for example, in each enterprise we know how many shares we have. – president of the Unified Organization of Veterans, Tuzla

By contrast, most new NGOs do not have strong institutional links with municipal authorities, but they often play an important role in the provision of material assistance (see Part IC) and the organization of some youth activities (see Part IIA). They also publish brochures describing the organizational chart of the municipality, and the background of municipal counselors and department heads; and they are members of the new local-level monitoring and consultative bodies (see Part IIB).

Changes in the Relations between New NGOs and Municipalities

Representatives of both municipalities and new NGOs say that, in the first years of the post-war period, their relations were distant and distrustful. In many cases, municipal authorities suspected NGOs to be "anti-governmental organizations", and resented the fact that they were channeling a disproportionate share of international donations. Many NGO leaders contributed to this impression by circumventing municipalities in their projects and relations with international donors. More recently, however, municipal authorities have come to understand that NGOs can fulfill some important functions in carrying out social and youth activities, and that they generally refrain from open political positions; while the NGOs have needed to compensate for the decline in international funding with municipal subsidies. This has led to more pragmatic and cooperative relations between NGOs and municipalities:

Non-governmental organizations are in touch with us mainly when they get a donation conditioned on our participation. We have avoided conflicts because we have so many open issues that it would be a shame for activities to be doubled up and money to be

spent in the same place when it can reach more places. – director of the Department for General Administration and Social Affairs, Bihac

Now politicians and people who are in the government have realized, I believe genuinely that there is a need to develop a partnership with the non-government sector, and that there are no real problems in the work of the non-government sector. – president of the Youth Communicative Center (OKC), Banja Luka

Some NGO representatives, however, have a more negative view of the relationship:

Associations which were initiated by citizens themselves, and which really aim at raising the civic consciousness of the population, its influence on local institutions and local events—such associations will not get any support because nowhere in the world do authorities support those who act against them, who try to change the social situation and compel the government to function better. We will not see this happen for a long time yet in Bosnia and Herzegovina—for the non-government sector to be recognized as a motor of civil consciousness, as a measure of the effectiveness of the government, as is the case in some countries of the world. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

Relations between New NGOs and Neighborhood Communities

Representatives of local NGOs and MZ board members also have divergent assessments of their relationship. Some NGO representatives have a very positive view:

The representatives of MZs are very important to us when a meeting is being arranged or when we need information about a problem in the field. For example, when we are organizing meetings with the local population or when we receive a request for a donation for house reconstruction, they bring us lists, seek the information about donors. We have organized many such meetings with representatives of MZs where we invited representatives of international donor organizations as well. – president of the Legal Aid and Information Center (CIPP), Zvornik

Other NGO representatives are more critical:

In MZ boards, not only is there not a single woman but there are very few young people or representatives of other social categories. That means that there are only men from 25 to 65 years of age. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

MZ board leaders also express divergent attitudes toward NGOs. The president of one MZ board believes that his board has too little influence on the activities of the local NGOs because of a lack of resources:

MZs have no material power, they have no direct influence on concrete decisions [of the NGOs]. To realize their role, the MZs have to have resources funded from taxes. Only then can they dictate certain tasks [to the NGOs]. – president of the MZ board, Slatina, Tuzla

The former president of another MZ board also complains about the loss of influence of MZ boards, but adapted by creating a NGO to continue his work:

The association was formed in July 1999 but we have been working since 1998. I was the president of the MZ board but we could not do anything—they took away our seals, they did not give us premises to work in, and so we had to organize in some way in order to resolve our problems. – president of the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, Banja Luka

Social and Institutional Impact of Formal Voluntary Associations

The study of the differences in associative life between ethnic areas has shown that there is no simple or straightforward correlation between percentage of affiliation and amount of social capital. Given the large range of voluntary associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the variety of ways Bosnian citizens make use of them, it is also clear that bonding social capital cannot be attributed only to traditional citizens' associations, nor can bridging and linking social capital be attributed only to the new NGOs.

Formal Voluntary Associations and Social Capital

Several studies have shown that the overemphasis of many international organizations on new NGOs as the only representatives of an allegedly nascent civil society, as well as their tendency to use these NGOs as service delivery agencies—often at the expense of social service role of the state or traditional citizens' associations—has had negative long-term consequences for local civil society and social capital.¹²⁵

The role of new NGOs in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, and especially their influence on social capital, depends on how they insert their activities into the local associative and institutional environment. In particular, NGOs can either become an obstacle between international donors and other voluntary associations by monopolizing attention and funding or can facilitate local associative life by transmitting skills and information:

When I look at some of the groups we worked with and compare them with some others, there is an evident difference. For example, we worked with informal groups of citizens who registered as formal association in the course of our work with them, and they are the only association in their village. Another example—citizens organized in informal groups in two neighboring villages, and after about a year of work they decided to formally register as a citizens' association that will work on raising civic awareness on various issues in these communities. This was the first time anything of this type had been done in these villages. They even received some computer equipment. When we worked on the elections supervision project, these people were included, not as a group of people working for our NGO, but as a citizens' association. – representative of the Center for Civic Initiatives, Tuzla

Interest-based associations, for their part, are often considered an embodiment of bonding social capital, since they represent the interests of specific social groups or legal categories and are often linked to nationalist parties. In reality, however, these associations also contribute to the preservation and production of bridging and linking social capital, by mediating between citizens and formal institutions and by taking part in various forms of mutual help. Pensioners' associations, for example, collect money or

¹²⁵ See Duffield, Mark, 1996; Smillie, Ian, 1996; Stubbs, Paul, 1999.

commodities such as food and clothing for their poorest members, in an activity known as “*Pensioner to Pensioner*” (“*Penzioner penzioneru*”), and organize regular visits to those living alone. In Zvornik, several Serb IDPs from Sarajevo said that the trade-union from their former enterprise has provided various forms of help. In other areas, veterans’ associations organize actions at the workplace level to help their members:

I will give you the example of the coal mine in Tuzla that has 8,500 employees. We organized veterans in that coal mine, some 70 percent of the miners were veterans, and now, as a humanitarian act, they all gave 5 marks for the veterans’ organization. In this way 21,000 marks was collected, and all of this money was given to a man to take his child abroad for an operation. – president of the Unified Organization of Veterans, Tuzla

Leisure associations also keep alive a multiplicity of interpersonal relations and informal social networks, and contribute to the diffusion of basic values such as fair play, tolerance, and civility. In Banja Luka, the president of the local Eco-Movement (*Eko-pokret*) describes how his association works with various leisure associations in its information campaigns and collective actions to teach inhabitants—especially to those who settled during the war—the culture of urban life:

In Banja Luka, there is a strong fishing association with a few thousand members, and this organization gave us substantial support, urging all its members to join the Eco-Movement because they are genuine nature lovers and believe that the Eco-Movement should be the umbrella organization for all those organizations that are nature related. – president of the local Eco-Movement, Banja Luka

Even hunting societies can play an important role in the diffusion of civic values:

All citizens cannot be fishermen or hunters, and all of us cannot be active in the protection of the environment, but individuals who are already in these organizations, through conversations, through socializing, they will talk with others about how it is not good [to leave rubbish out in the open]. Their consciousness will start to function and when they see someone dumping in places other than the rubbish dumps, perhaps they will stop him and explain him that it is not nice for the rubbish to be left there and ask him to take it to the town dump. –private entrepreneur, Bihac

Formal Voluntary Associations and Institutional Reintegration

NGOs and traditional citizens’ associations can also play a complementary role in the return process and the institutional reintegration of divided municipalities. New NGOs are committed to the principle of multi-ethnicity and are directly involved in efforts to reconcile local ethnic groups. In Gornji Vakuf / Uskoplje, the Youth Center (*Omladinski Centar*) created in 1996 by international NGOs has played an important role in reestablishing contacts between the Bosniac and Croat communities, and bringing closer divided leisure associations.¹²⁶ The efforts of new NGOs tend to be more successful when they take the local context into account and work with other actors, such as

¹²⁶ See USIP, 1998; Demichelis, Julia, 2001; Kasic, Amra, 2000; Gillard, Steve, 2001.

religious institutions or citizens' associations, rather than when they come in with too ambitious and unrealistic projects.¹²⁷

In Gornji Vakuf, the representative of the Youth Center explains how, at the beginning of their work, they respected the feelings and fears of the children:

We started like this, during the media promotion for enrolment of children we asked what it is that they wanted. There were children who had no problem with sitting in a group with children of other ethnicities. We respected that completely – whether someone wanted to be in a group where there are Bosniacs and Croats or in a group in which they feel completely secure. – representative of the Youth Center, Gornji Vakuf

According to her, the failure of the local NGO Forum is due to its artificial character:

I think that the international organizations that were here had a lot to do with it because they wanted to create forums to fit with their concepts, coalitions that came from above. They never grew from grassroots level, did not come from the needs of the people.(...) I have expended a lot of energy on that forum, I have given a lot of myself and I do not feel the need to keep working on this because I think anything that is imposed on people does not function and is not accepted by people. Life has taught me that people who feel the need to do something will do it, whether by themselves or with a group of people, but everything that is imposed from above does not fare well. Concepts that are not worked through, that are not discussed and articulated, they do not fare well with people. – representative of the Youth Center, Gornji Vakuf

On the contrary, the fact that the two ethnic mountaineering clubs have organized their first common excursions in the year 2000 has had positive consequences even for the activities of the Youth Center :

First the Bosniac mountaineers were guests in the house of Croat mountaineers, the next time the Croat mountaineers were guests in the Bosniac home. Then last weekend together they were guests on the territory over there [in the Croat area]. It is really good because we had two mountaineering groups in the Youth Center but we never managed to take the children up together. It is a bit risky before the adults scout out the path, but now there will be the opportunity to go into this or that area. – representative of the Youth Center, Gornji Vakuf

Therefore, mono-ethnic citizens' associations can also contribute to breaking down ethnic barriers. In the Brcko District, with the support of international organizations and new NGOs, mono-ethnic sport clubs have reached an agreement about the shared use of the main sport infrastructures; mono-ethnic women's associations have formed a common round table; the trade-unions and the anti-fascist veterans' association, which had been multi-ethnic before the war, became reunified. Even IDPs' associations, which had been first used by the nationalist parties to organize mass demonstrations and politicize the

¹²⁷ On this topic, Paul Stubbs notes that “large-scale, high-profile NGO work on repatriation is (...) as likely to have negative as positive consequences. Work with traditional trust-builders : church leaders, citizens' associations, sport clubs, and so on, may actually be more valuable. Again, this would require greater understanding of local situations, and greater flexibility from INGOs, than is found at the moment.” (Stubbs, Paul, 1999, p. 57).

return process, have progressively adopted a more pragmatic stance, and have played a more constructive and conciliatory role:

When they were formed, those IDPs' associations in the area of Brcko had the single aim of protecting so called national interests. As time passed, that consciousness changed, people grew to realize that they had been cheated by political promises, cheated by politics on both sides. They believed in politics for a long time, but then they saw that life is something else, that laws are something else, that in that regard the international community is right, that you cannot live in someone else's property, you have to struggle for yourself and for your own, etc.(...) Since last year the majority of those associations have been playing a truly positive role. The majority of those associations clearly and loudly state and stress that the right of others to their property has to be respected, that one cannot remain long-term in someone else's property, but that they also want equal treatment under Annex VII of the Dayton Accords, according to its segments where it states that "every person has the right to choose their place of residence".(...) It seems to me that today IDPs' associations protect micro-communities from important unrest and violent incidents by keeping the displaced population well organized. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

D. Forms of Collective Action Related to Local Public Services

Thirty percent of the survey participants made a financial contribution for local public services. Nineteen percent engaged in collective works related to local infrastructure, and twenty percent participated in some form of clean-up action. Rural residents are more likely to participate in collective works and citizens' gatherings, while urban residents are more likely to participate in collective protests (petitions, street demonstrations) or complain to the local media and international organizations.

Money collections and collective works appear to be much more common in the Bosniac majority area than in the Croat majority area, while the Serb majority area has a rather high level of money collections, but a low level of collective works. Local residents are more involved in voluntary works than are IDPs, but important differences also appear among IDPs themselves. Those willing to return to their pre-war place of residence often participate in money collections, collective works, citizens' gatherings, and petitions, whereas those willing to settle in their new place of residence are more likely to take part in street demonstrations and road blockades. Survey results show a link between readiness to help neighbors (linking social capital) and readiness to participate in local infrastructure projects or collective protests related to local public services. The success of collective actions is linked to the mobilization of the entire local associative landscape, including leisure and interest-based associations close to the nationalist parties. Where there is low level of interpersonal trust, lack of confidence in formal institutions and an absence of civic values, collective action is less likely to occur.

Main Forms of Collective Action

In Yugoslav self-management, municipalities and MZs could collect financial contributions ("self-contribution" –*samodoprinosi*) and organize collective works ("working actions" –*radne akcije*) in order to construct or repair some local

infrastructures.¹²⁸ These practices of the Communist period still exert a strong influence on the forms of collective action related to local public services which can be met in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Infrastructure Projects, Clean-Up Actions and Collective Protests

Collective action related to local public services are a relatively frequent form of self-organization in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the year preceding the survey, 30.1 percent of respondents has given a financial contribution, and 19 percent took part in some collective work related to a local infrastructure project. One in five (20.1 percent) took part in a clean-up action such as street cleaning, riverbank cleaning or waste collection. Collective protests, which might include petitions, delegations, street demonstrations, road blockades, or complaining to the local media or an international organization, attract considerably fewer participants (Table 19).

Spatial Differences in Frequency of Collective Action

The survey reveals important spatial differences in the frequency of collective actions. Money collections and collective works appear to be much more common in the Bosniac majority area than in the Croat majority area, while the Serb majority area has a rather high level of money collections, but a low level of collective works. These differences can be explained by the fact that MZ boards function better in the Bosniac area than in the rest of the country (see Part IIB). More respondents in the Croat majority say they have participated in collective protests, but it is likely that some of them took into account protests which had nothing to do with local public services, since the survey was carried out after several months of political protests organized by the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ) against the international community.¹²⁹

Rural residents are more likely to participate in collective works and citizens' gatherings, while urban residents are more likely to participate in collective protests (petitions, street demonstrations) or complain to local media and international organizations. These data are confirmed by the findings of the fieldwork: money collections and collective works are much more widespread in rural MZs surrounding small (Gornji Vakuf, Zvornik) and middle-size towns (Bihac, Brcko) than in large urban centers (Banja Luka, Tuzla).

This difference can be explained by the fact that people in urban areas are more accustomed to municipal services, and expect such services in exchange for paying their bills; while rural areas generally have worse infrastructure and rural residents see themselves as responsible for improving the living conditions in their villages :

¹²⁸ See Seroka, Jim and Smiljkovic, Rados, 1986, p. 18.

¹²⁹ This hypothesis is supported by the fact that fewer respondents in the Croat majority area declare themselves ready to take part to a local collective protest against the opening of a waste dump or closure of a public institution (Table 22d).

People in urban areas consider that because they have paid their bills the municipality should do all of the work for them. But rural MZs are very active in this, voluntary participation in the repair of roads, the electricity supply, installation of telephone cables, piped water supply – they are creating better living conditions in the village without the assistance of others. If the municipality jumps in with a part of the resources then this is taken and a lot more is done. – private entrepreneur, Bihac

The frequency of local infrastructure projects in rural areas can also be explained by their stronger links to the diaspora:

There are people who do not have money but are able to work, and there are other people who have money but do not want to work. They compensate in this way: those from abroad will give 500 marks for the construction of some road and those here will work, dig channels, carry the shovels. They will work their participation in the construction of the road and that probably comes out about even in the end and works out well. – president of Bosniac mountaineering club, Gornji Vakuf

Collective protests related to local public services are an urban phenomenon. During the fieldwork, the only two lasting and organized protests of this kind were met in the peripheral worker suburbs of Sicki Brod (Tuzla) and Ada (Banja Luka). In Sicki Brod, local inhabitants protest for years against air pollution, opening of new dumps for industrial waste, security issues linked with the main road going through this MZ, and general poor condition of local infrastructure. In Ada, local inhabitants protest against the project of the municipality to open a cemetery on the only free ground of this MZ, and require that this free ground be instead used for the building of public infrastructures lacking in this MZ, like elementary school, health center and sport facilities.

Reactions to similar events show also that collective protests are more common in large urban centers. A few months before the fieldwork, street demonstrations against growing insecurity have taken place in Tuzla under the motto “*Who Is The Next ?*” (“*Ko je slijedeci ?*”), after the murder of a young man in the city center. In Zvornik, a similar murder did also provoke a strong emotion, with hundreds of people attending the burial of the victim, but the idea of a street demonstration was rejected by his family, by fear of possible politicization.

Sociological Differences in Participation to Collective Action

Level of participation to collective actions is related to differences in gender, age, income, and education. Men take part more often in voluntary works, delegations and street demonstrations, while women take part more often in money collections and clean-up actions. Middle-aged people participate more often in money collections and collective works, and old people participate more often in clean-up actions and citizens’ gatherings. Young people are less involved in collective actions in general. Respondents with a higher level of income more often take part in citizens’ gatherings and money collections, while those with a higher level of education take part more in clean-up actions (Table 20a). Those with higher incomes and education both participate more in collective protests, those with a low level of income are more likely to participate in

clean-up actions, and those with a low level of education are more likely to participate in collective works (Table 20b).

In general, local residents are more involved in voluntary works than are IDPs, but important differences appear among IDPs themselves (Table 20c). Those willing to return to their pre-war place of residence often participate in money collections, collective works, citizens' gatherings, and petitions, whereas those willing to settle in their new place of residence are more likely to take part in street demonstrations and road blockades. The findings of the fieldwork reveal that minority returnees to Krizevici (Zvornik), Martin Brod (Bihac), and Bistrica (Gornji Vakuf) are active in the rebuilding of their houses and surrounding public infrastructure, whereas Bosniac IDPs in the collective center of Mihatovici, and Serb IDPs in Klanac (Brcko), and Divic (Zvornik), have organized several street demonstrations and road blockades. It is difficult, however, to determine the extent to which these different behaviors are due to divergent mentalities, or simply to objective needs and opportunities. For example, when Serb IDPs from Sarajevo settled in Klanac and Krizevici in 1996, they also organized collective work to repair the destroyed local infrastructure (see Part IA).

Participation in Collective Action and Type of Public Service

The readiness of various groups to take part in collective actions depends heavily on which public services are needed :

The spectrum of interest is broader [in urban areas], as it is based on the level of development of the community. If you go to a village where there is no asphalt and the road is in poor condition, where there is no piped drinking water, no sewerage system, no electricity – those basic utilities are a priority for them. The city has its own infrastructure. The city has its own activities in the afternoons, there is a night life, theater, movies, so their thinking goes wider – that is only logical. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

When asked about the kinds of local projects they would be most ready to support, rural residents show more interest than urban residents for the repair of roads, water and sewerage systems, and school building, while urban residents are more interested in cleaning-up actions, repair of sport and cultural facilities, and opening of youth centers (Table 21). Young people are particularly interested in the opening of a youth center (32.8 percent), and IDPs in construction of a collective center for homeless people (23.9 percent).

The most frequent reasons for local collective protests seem to be environmental threats (industrial pollution, waste dumps, etc.), security issues, lack or poor condition of public infrastructure, rising prices of basic utilities, and power cuts due to delays in payment.

Limits in Number, Scope and Achievement of Collective Action

Money collections and collective works have declined in number and scope due to breakdown of MZ boards and impoverishment of the population. Lack of response from formal institutions has contributed to the reluctance to engage in collective protests.

Decline in Number and Scope of Voluntary Actions

Many focus group participants consider that money collections and collective works related to local infrastructure projects were more frequent before the war. Participants state that these forms of collective actions still exist, but have declined in number and scope. Since many MZ boards have ceased to function, collective actions are often initiated by the inhabitants themselves

We used to go from house to house and ask whether someone is willing to participate in building the road, digging, this or that. There was never any rejections, everyone always wanted to participate. – man, Brcko

Before the war, the pipes for the village water supply, seven kilometers, were laid with personal contributions. People sold cows if they did not have the money to pay for that water supply. – president of the MZ board, Krizevici, Zvornik

Negative Impact of the Economic Situation

The impoverishment of the population means also that many people can contribute very little, or only in labor:

The conditions that existed before the war no longer exist where workers earned and received salaries and were able to separate out 3-5 percent of their income for the development of infrastructure in this area.(...) Citizens are only looking out for ways to survive, to find the fundamental things they need to survive. –two members of the MZ board, Sicki Brod, Tuzla

Our voluntary work, our hands will be there, but don't ask me to contribute 10 marks when I have not earned even a single mark this year. – man, Banja Luka

Many municipalities have kept alive a funding mechanism called “One Mark for one Mark” (“*Marka na Marku*”), according to which they finance one half of any infrastructure project initiated and organized by local inhabitants. Some municipalities accept that people contribute to such projects only through voluntary work. Due to the low level of their financial resources, municipalities have difficulties in satisfying all demands. Support from public enterprises has also declined:

Before, public enterprises were more prepared [to donate construction material or lend heavy equipment], they had money. However, in the last year or so nobody wants to help anymore and nobody is willing to give a dinar because of the move into privatization. People simply do not have desire to help such projects anymore because they expect a

change in ownership and management structure. – president of local NGO “Homeland Spring”, Banja Luka

The decline in public funding for collective actions is compensated, to some extent, by funding and other assistance from international organizations, NGOs, and local entrepreneurs.

Limited Number and Scope of Collective Protests

The survey shows that collective protests are much less frequent than money collections and collective works (Table 19). Moreover, these protests are rather parochial and limited to the protesters’ own interests:

I would like it if that rubbish were not dumped here, but somewhere further away. – woman, organizer of petition against waste dump, Bihac

I am not interested in what is happening in other towns, but when something happens in my city, in the center of town, then the entire city should worry. – young man, participant in demonstration against insecurity, Tuzla

Most frequently, collective protests are carried out by means of citizens’ petitions to authorities channelled through the MZ board, or through delegations of people with common grievances who try to meet with the authorities directly:

We were all displaced people without accommodation, that is what bound us. The majority I met in the building of the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons when we were all there and unsuccessfully seeking accommodation. When the head of the office said to us, “There is nothing I can do because the municipality will not let me, the police will not allow me to evict”—then some 20 of us gathered together and went to the municipality and asked to be seen. – man, organizer of delegation of homeless IDPs, Zvornik

In the Federation, delegations generally approach local and cantonal authorities, but in the more centralized Serb Republic, some delegations go to the ministries in Banja Luka. In both entities, people often do not know which institution should be addressed, or do not trust the local authorities, and sometimes turn to higher authorities or international organizations, even for trivial issues. In Banja Luka, for example, the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001” lodged a complaint against the municipality’s cemetery project with the Constitutional Court of the Serb Republic; and in Bihac, residents of a street did not like the noise from a neighbouring café, and sent a petition to the mayor, the cantonal police, the International Police Task Force (IPTF) and the OSCE.

Street manifestations and road blockades are often outburst of anger without long-lasting aim. Insecurity prompts the most emotional responses, as illustrated by the street demonstrations which have taken place in Tuzla after the murder of a popular young man in the city center:

That murder opened up the town to the struggle against crime. Something like that needed to happen to make the glass overflow, so to speak.(...) There had been rapes,

kidnappings, but nobody paid much attention. But that boy was really lovely, a real Tuzla local, and the people who knew him personally started the demonstration and then others gathered and stood with them. – man, Tuzla

Reactive protests can also be caused by other traumatic events or direct threats to personal security and well-being. Residents of the MZ SICKI BROD (Tuzla) blocked the main road after a young pedestrian was killed by a passing car. IDPs living in the collective center of MIHATOVICI (Tuzla) did the same after the local electricity distribution company had cut the power to indebted consumers. Road blockades are not repressed by the police, but most often answered by the opening of negotiations between representatives of the local authorities (municipality, public companies, etc.) and the leaders of the blockade.

Lack of Response from Formal Institutions

Most focus group participants do not fear sanctions, in case they would participate in a collective protest related to local public services. Many participants and key informants complain about lack of response from formal institutions. In particular, they consider petitions and delegations to be useless, since representatives of formal institutions do not take them into consideration, or only make empty promises:

We went to see a certain gentleman three or four times and while we were with him everything is milk and honey. He received us and told us a story, along the lines of “everything will be all right.” But nothing came of what we had discussed. We waited ten or fifteen days, then we gathered again and went to the Ministry; then we heard the same story, the man told us he can do nothing because those above him will not let him. We managed to get an appointment with those above, and then again the same story and in the end there were no results. – man, organizer of delegation of homeless IDPs, Zvornik

This lack of response to citizens’ concerns can lead, again, to people resorting to street demonstrations or road blockades—not as an emotional reaction, but as part of a well-considered strategy. This is clearly the case in SICKI BROD (Tuzla) and ADA (Banja Luka), where collective protests lasted for several years:

We initiated these protests [against industrial waste dumps] four years ago. We started with the cantonal Ministry for the Environment and went up to the Parliament of the Federation. We used all democratic channels to have the issue put on the agenda as a step toward resolving the problem. The Ministry for the Environment made certain conclusions, the Government adopted the conclusions, the Parliament adopted the conclusions, but now we see that it is falling on deaf ears. All that we have left is to prepare materials for the media, to inform the public that we have tried everything, that we have been patient and persistent, and to take the streets. – two members of the MZ Board, SICKI BROD, Tuzla

We from the MZ sent letters, tried to generate pressure from below. Meetings were organized at least twice a month about environmental issues, but nothing was done. Then

citizens from this area organized themselves and they went out and stood in front of those big trucks [transporting industrial waste] and would not let the trucks pass. – man, Tuzla

Even this kind of collective actions has limited results. In Sicki Brod, local authorities promised to turn the lakes used for industrial waste dumps into recreational facilities, but nothing has been done so far. In Ada, local residents prevented municipal employees from fencing the free ground foreseen for the municipal cemetery project, and the new mayor elected in November 2000 has promised to reconsider this project, but no final decision has been made.

Lack of responsiveness to all forms of collective protest has led to a sense of hopelessness among many Bosnian citizens:

Citizens have gotten to the point where they cannot even react anymore, and they do not react, they have stopped reacting because they do not know how, where, to whom to turn. If someone has said something against management then he no longer has a job, if he said something against someone in the municipality then when he seek something there he will be refused. –man, Tuzla

People are aware that they cannot change anything and anything they do comes to nothing.(...) People cannot rise from below, those above won't let them, the international community does not know how to help, and what they try is misguided. Total apathy reigns here. – man, Zvornik

As a result, many of them are more prone to resort to individual violence, private connections, or emigration—an exit strategy often favored by the younger generation (see Box 5). In fact, emigration is sometimes the only aim able to motivate collective action:

Three years ago, me and two friends got together and invested in a job. That job was to send one of us to America. We collected the money and sent one friend. Last year the second one went, and now they are sending money for me to go. – man, Zvornik

Emigration can also be a motivation for collective action among voluntary associations. In Brcko, an association of Serb IDPs is attempting to have its members collectively resettled in a foreign country.

Box 5. Young People : Better Emigration than Collective Action

Many local politicians and representatives of voluntary associations complain that young people do not participate in collective action or voluntary activities, but are preoccupied with finding a way to emigrate:

I can freely say that the generation from the Second World War has more spirit and optimism is achieving something through working together for the benefit of the society and themselves, while young people lose patience waiting and they look for solutions elsewhere, in other countries. – mayor, Tuzla

Young people do not organize themselves, they stay passive and say that it is best to go to America. – representative of the Youth Center, Gornji Vakuf

More generally, key informants and parents consider that young people are very passive and depressed:

If day in and day out you cannot go out and socialize but rather waste time sitting around in front of stores or on the street in groups without nothing concrete to do – from day to day you lose the desire to do anything. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

Young people are not as active as they should be, probably as a result of not having any prospects. Nobody expects any quick changes, but young people are naturally impatient because of the energy they have – they simply move around, they do not see a role for themselves in all of this because they expect fast changes that are just not possible and so they go [to other countries]. – representative of the Center for Civic Initiatives, Tuzla

The results of the opinion survey indeed show that young people are generally less affiliated with voluntary associations (Table 15a), and less involved in collective actions related to public services (Table 20a). In the UNDP *Human Development Report* devoted to the situation of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, only 7 percent of young people say they regularly participate in voluntary work, and 62 percent say they would leave the country if they had the opportunity. Among those who are willing to leave, 42 percent mention low standard of living as the main reason, 19 percent mention lack of personal perspectives opportunities, and 17 percent mention unemployment (UNDP, 2000b, pp. 35, 95, and 99).

In focus groups, young participants acknowledged that they have little interest in collective action:

The time of “brotherhood and unity” and working actions is in the past. I do not think any of us would participate in a youth work action. – young woman, Brcko

If a young person is not at least somewhat financially well situated, then they simply lose the will for everything. Why would that young person go there [to a NGO] and do voluntary work when they cannot afford to buy themselves trousers. They simply lose the will. They lose the desire for life, let alone the will to work as a volunteer. – young man, Tuzla

Like other focus group participants, young people mention material difficulties, lack of confidence in formal institutions, and skepticism about the effectiveness of collective action as the main reasons for their passivity. But additional reasons are more specific to the younger generation. Many young participants complain there are not enough youth activities (see Part IIA). Widespread unemployment also means that young people cannot socialize with their fellows, achieve financial autonomy, and start a family:

And when they finish university, have a degree, a young person does not know if they will have the chance to work in the profession they have been educated for and to live decently from that work. A young person wants to be independent, to have his own car, his own apartment, but often it is only parents who can afford to provide these things. The state won't be able to provide this for at least the next 20 years. – young man, Brcko

Young people are faced with financial problems because after all, life goes on as normal in Banja Luka – people go out, cafes are full, mobile phones are used, just like in some more developed, bigger cities. Nevertheless, someone has to pay for all of that. Every parent will somehow find the money to educate their children, but young people have other needs as well. If the parents don't work, it is very hard for them to rely on their parent's help, particularly if the parents themselves are in a difficult situation. – woman, Banja Luka

My son cannot establish a family of his own here, he cannot have a girlfriend – what can he take her out with? He can't get married – where will he bring her to live? – woman, Bihac

Some key informants also say that young people who grew up during the war were not educated and introduced to social life, as former generations have been:

The children who are now 17-18 years old were 10 years old when the war period started, and this was the period in their lives when they needed to be introduced to social life through various forms of activities and upbringing by adults, parents, teachers, through activities that uplift people...but our children were burdened with concerns about what they would eat, how to survive, whether they would survive, many experienced being refugees. – president of the Youth Communicative Center (OKC), Banja Luka

Young people, for their part, complain that the older generation does not take them into consideration:

Very few people take me seriously because I am supposedly too young. I can state a hundred times that I have completed some school and that I do know something, but nobody believes me. I don't know, I guess I need to be 50 years old for someone to take me seriously. – young woman, Bihac

Adults do not respect at all the opinions of us young people. Because of this, I do not think there is any sense in us trying to do anything. – young woman, Brcko

This feeling of not being recognized by the rest of the society reinforces the passivity and despair of most young people. But some of them become aggressive against the older generation:

If someone were to say come over here [to another country], 99 percent of young people would go. You [adults] can keep this rubbish, you made it so, please, play with it and enjoy it completely. That is my personal attitude. – young man, Bihac

Let the older generations forgive me but it is time that they move aside and let young people into work places – people that want to and know how to work. This is because they [adults] grew up and were educated in a totally immature system. They are used to working unconscientiously; to do what they want how they want, to have hour-long breaks and then they wonder why the young and educated are leaving. They should move aside. We have enough educated young professionals – they might not be experienced but they are certainly capable. – young man, Banja Luka

Most key informants consider that only new and specific activities can motivate young people to participate in collective action and join voluntary associations:

Young people need to be encouraged to become active through youth associations, non-governmental organizations, youth groups. They need to be encouraged to become interested, they themselves need to be more interested and more patient and persistent in achieving some goal. We need to encourage them to take an interest in voluntary work and offer them more training in this field, and enable them through this training to create their own projects, to express their ideas. – president of the Legal Aid and Information Center (CIPP), Zvornik

In the focus groups with young people in Tuzla, participants express a strong wish for activities and voluntary associations dedicated to the specific problems and needs of young people:

I am all for investing in sports, because in this way young people are taken off the streets and that is my suggestion. – young man, Tuzla

There need to be more associations related to young people – let's say an association against drugs, and young people should be in that association. I think that any child would sooner listen to me than to any adult. What have adults got to say to me, [they think], but when it is their peer, then they listen better. – young woman, Tuzla

Decline in Collective Action as a Reflection of Decline in Social Capital

The results of the survey show a clear link between readiness to help neighbors (linking social capital) and readiness to participate to local infrastructure projects or collective protests related to local public services (Tables 22a, 22b). Residents of the Croat majority area, who have the lowest amount of bridging and linking social capital (see Part IA), are also the least ready to participate to infrastructure projects and collective protests (see Tables 22c, 22d). Beyond the negative influence of external factors like impoverishment of the population or lack of responsiveness of formal institutions, decline in collective action is also linked to the decline in social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Negative Impact of Low Level of Interpersonal Trust

Many focus group participant, especially in the Serb Republic, relate the decline in collective action to generalized mistrust of the post-war period:

Before the war in my MZ there was dance parties, entertainment evenings, if there was a sports tournament, there were people, music, nobody cared who was what ethnicity. There was more time and more will because there was more money. We all lived well, we all worked well. Now everyone is preoccupied with themselves. They are concerned about their own family problems, existential problems, so that people have less time to go socializing. For me the fundamental problem is the lack of resources. If people could earn more, to live better, then they would straight away have more time and money for the MZ and for those civic activities that would bring people closer together. – man, Banja Luka

Negative Impact of Low Confidence in Formal Institutions

Mistrust toward formal institutions contribute also to the decline of collective action, since such institutions are often perceived as stealing international aid and contributions from local residents or people in the diaspora:

For religious buildings, donations are received through personal contacts. For example, we got 40 squares of copper from Italy for the church. However, for larger projects, people do not want to make contributions. People in the diaspora, especially, feel they have been cheated, that their resources have not been rationally spent, and for this reason they do not wish to pay anymore. – president of local NGO “Homeland Spring”, Banja Luka

Crisis of Civic Values

The decreased number and limited scope of collective actions reflect a crisis of civic values in Bosnian society. Many participants, especially in the Bosniac majority area, complain about lack of civic involvement:

Everyone stands around and waits for things to be served to them on a platter. – woman, Bihac

That is an effect of the war, a culture created by war. A vacuum came to exist, a cultural vacuum, so that it came to be completely usual that you cannot pass in a street because there is rubbish strewn, cans and all sorts of other rubbish – it was not at all unusual. After a while you get used to it, you adapt your way of life, your own behaviors. Besides, there are no more legal restrictions. Punishment policies are always effective if they are well conceived and effectively applied. But for this to be done you need to have a department, people who will monitor what is going on. – president of the Bosniac mountaineering club, Gornji Vakuf

According to some participants and key informants, the crisis of civic values explains the relative failure of cleaning-up actions in the post-war period:

We had a working bee on Saturday, the turnout was zero. Just the two of us cleaned up the area surrounding the building – us two refugees. The civic conscience of the building

residents is non-existent. I am cleaning up under the window while my neighbor peers out. – man, Tuzla

In my building there lives an inspector of green surfaces and last year he tried to gather us together to clean up around the building. Some people are willing to join in, most are not. Some say, I didn't make the mess, others say the refugees made the mess, that someone's children made the mess, and that is how it all ends. – woman, Bihac

Disrepute of Voluntary Work

Moreover, the breakdown of the Communist system and the disillusionment of the post-war period have jeopardized the very idea of voluntary work:

In the former Yugoslavia I was a Tito's youth, I participated in working actions over twenty times, I was a team leader in my enterprise, I was active in sports – everything for the society and for the country. Now the country has failed, there is nothing of it and there is nothing of me. Now in my 42nd year of life I have nothing anywhere. My family has no kind of existence. I cannot even think about going abroad because I am not fit to work. Nobody wants to take care of me. Forget all those humanitarian, voluntary works, works without reward. It is better if I had gone along the road and collected a single rock every day and taken it home and by now I could have built a palace. – man, Tuzla

Who would work for nothing ? I was the secretary of the MZ before the war and people started coming to my house in the middle of the night to get licences to be able to go and cut down trees in the forest and they say to me 'So what, you are paid for this job !' Now we are going back to the same position. Patriotism, volunteerism – I say that it all died in 1992 and does not exist anymore. I won't work anymore. I can do a little something without getting paid but not to have a responsibility everyday. – woman, Bihac

Local Factors Influencing Frequency and Achievements of Collective Actions

Beyond economical, social and institutional circumstances, more specific factors like skills of local leaders, way of working of the MZ boards and mobilization of voluntary associations play, at the local level, an important role in the frequency and achievements of collective actions related to public services.

Influence of Local Leaders

Many participants and key informants agree that the success of collective action depends on the skills of local leadership:

All depends on the president of the MZ, on what kind of man he is. – man, Tuzla

Essentially [the local success of our program] depended on the Municipal Development Committee. Where the committee took an active role, where they accepted the idea as their own, then there was very good participation of the local population. – former leader of the UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

Most of them agree that MZ boards are the most crucial factor for the success of collective action at the local level, especially money collections and collective works. In the survey, those who say their MZ board functions well are more likely to be willing to

participate in local infrastructure projects (70.1 percent) than those who say their MZ board does not exist at all (56.7 percent) or only serves the interests of a few citizens (56.5 percent). Conversely, those who consider that their MZ board only serves the interests of a few citizens are more likely to consider that infrastructure projects are not their responsibility (12.2 percent) than those who say their MZ board functions well (3.0 percent).

Important spatial differences appear in the survey. The role of the MZ leaders seems to be especially important in the Bosniac majority area, but almost inexistent in the Croat majority area. In the Serb majority area, informal leaders such as private entrepreneurs and influential people play a more important role than do the MZ leaders (see Table 23).

Sociological Profile of Local Leaders

MZ leaders, as well as other leaders of local collective actions, are generally men with a higher level of income and education, some personal prestige, and a rich network of contacts:

Those who already have some source of income, who have some sort of status assured, who are free of worry about how they will survive, they have reached the level where they can start thinking about other things and they are pulling the others along.(...) Number two – somehow,, throughout history, it has stayed with our people that clergymen, teachers, doctors are the most prominent citizens. In villages, they were always the people who led others, they were the locomotive of the entire train. It is not important today that teachers are in a very difficult economic situation with very low wages—they are still that center for gathering people, they are still the motivating force. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

Pensioners play often a leading role in local collective actions, since they have more free time and a minimal guaranteed income. This is especially true when their former profession put them in contact with many local inhabitants. In Martin Brod (Bihac), the leader of the Serb minority returnees owned the only café in the village before the war; in the Dubrave (Brcko), the informal representative of the MZ is a former police officer; and in Ada (Banja Luka), the president of the MZ board receives a German pension, and has opened a hairdressing salon after returning from Germany.

Veterans, too, often play a leading role. In Sicki Brod (Tuzla), the road blockade following the death of the young pedestrian mentioned above was organized by the local chapter of the Unified Organization of Veterans (JOB); in Ada (Banja Luka), the local chapter of the Organization of Veterans supported the protests of the inhabitants against the municipality's cemetery project; and in Klanac (Brcko), the president of the Serb MZ board is a former officer in the Bosnian Serb army. The strong presence of veterans among leaders of collective protests is partly a mere reflection of the fact that most middle-age men participated in the war.¹³⁰ Some former officers and veterans use also the self-confidence, personal prestige and organizational skills they acquired during the war:

¹³⁰ In the opinion survey's sample, 53.8 percent of men are war veterans.

[I became the leader because] *I am the most aggressive, I cannot bare injustice and I am free enough to tell it to people's faces. Two and a half years ago I argued with [the Bosniac member of the state presidency] Izetbegovic: "Grandpa, I said, why are you acting crazy, people did steal all the money and you know well that it is nobody but your son Bakir who could get new glass in this collective center". I proved to him how and everything. Then he says : "You with your secondary education are trying to teach me something and I have a law degree". "Grandpa, I said to him, these four years of war have been my university and I have completed law, astronomy, whatever, these years have taught me everything".* – man, informal leader of the IDPs living in the collective center of Mihatovici, Tuzla

Another common feature of many local leaders is that they already acquired some organizational skills before the war, as activists in the League of Communists and its mass organizations, as members of MZ boards, or through their professional activities as engineers, school directors, social workers. Local leadership is clearly linked with associative experience: according to the survey, those affiliated with a voluntary association are much more likely to participate in a delegation than those who are not affiliated (9.7 vs. 1.0 percent).

Influence of Formal Voluntary Associations and Local Media

The link between membership in a voluntary association and participation in local collective actions means that MZ boards are not the only formal institutions that play an important role in such actions. School councils and parent associations can also initiate infrastructure projects. In Tuzla, for example, parents secured the area around several elementary schools by repairing pavement, street lighting, and road signs.

The success of collective actions is linked to the mobilization of the entire local associative landscape, including leisure and interest-based associations close to the nationalist parties. In Western Bosnia, the Municipal Development Committees set by the UNDP include not only municipal authorities, but also representatives of MZ boards, youth associations, women's associations, and veterans' associations. In most municipalities, yearly street or riverbank cleaning actions involve not only environmental associations such as Eco-Movement in Banja Luka or "Una's Emeralds" in Bihac, but a large array of state institutions (elementary and secondary schools, municipal service agencies, local police stations, and military units) and leisure associations (scout movements, hunting and fishing societies, diving clubs). Even collective protests can involve a variety of voluntary associations: in Sicki Brod (Tuzla), the protests against industrial waste dump were supported by the local veterans' association, beekeepers' association, and pigeon keepers' association.

Local electronic media can also facilitate collective actions by helping to mobilize local residents. In Banja Luka, for example, the Eco-Movement relies on its own weekly TV program; and in Tuzla, the massive character of the street demonstrations in response to the murder of a young man were due to the fact that they were supported by a local independent radio station where the victim worked as a journalist.

New NGOs do possess neither the informal networks of citizens' associations, nor the audience of electronic media, but can be the initiators and advisors of some local collective actions, as shown in Tuzla by the example of the Center for Civic Initiatives, which provided organisational help to the inhabitants of Sicki Brod in their protests against industrial waste dump, and whose aim is to develop citizens' participation at the local level:

[In one MZ] they started by asking citizens, interviewing them about what the main problems are in their area and in this way they worked out what they should work on.(...) There was an unofficial rubbish dump there for a long time, the rubbish was not collected. The garbage collectors said that nobody wants to pay for the service. The citizens of course did not want to pay because that rubbish dump had existed for years and it came into being because nobody was collecting the rubbish and so they were not willing to pay – it was a catch 22 situation.(...) The Center for Civic Initiatives led those citizens, they organized themselves and they held a meeting. They invited representatives of the municipality, the director of the public institution for the collection of rubbish. Citizens were there and they stated what the problem is. In the course of that campaign they informed other citizens about what was happening, what progress was being made, they printed information leaflets, and finally, after that meeting, the problem was resolved within seven days. –president of the local NGO “Bospo”, Tuzla

The importance of electronic media and formal associations for the success of local collective actions becomes clear in the focus group discussions, where several participants attribute the limits of collective actions to a lack of information and organization:

If I am president of the condominium council, I will bring up an issue, write an announcement, and inform residents – for example, on Sunday at midday we are all to come out and clean the stairwell, windows, and area around the building. But we are not organized at the municipal level. What we need is for all the presidents of condominium councils to come together and agree that all housewives, workers, students will get up one Saturday or Sunday and work at cleaning up the town. People are willing but we do not have enough channels of information to let them know. What we need is for TV Zvornik to say that on May 27 all citizens are called to participate in cleaning up the city. – woman, Zvornik

Mediatory Role of Formal Voluntary Associations

Voluntary associations play a crucial role not only in mobilizing citizens, but also in mediating between them and formal institutions, and preventing violent protests. The mediatory role of voluntary associations means that, in places where associative life is weak, the risk of violent protests is higher.

Today IDPs' associations protect micro-communities from important unrest and violent incidents by keeping the displaced population well organized. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

One veteran said to me, “What if I mine three apartments where people are returning?” He would be willing to do this, I guarantee—he is one of those awaiting eviction and has to go back to his pre-war apartment in a cellar. I asked him, “What would you achieve?” I told him that Serb extremists can hardly wait for incidents to happen here and then there would be ten times more on that side. With this he would only be stopping the return of people to their own homes, and then he realized that it was a stupid idea. – president of the Unified Organization of Veterans, Tuzla

This risk seems particularly high in the Brcko District, where property restitutions, minority returns, and institutional reintegration have created a high level of tension at the same time that associative life has been weakened by the decline in state subsidies:

It is a fact that people gather together far more easily in some conflictual situation, around some political stupidity, in reaction to some bad decision of the government, some unacceptable decision of the OHR etc. rather than in reaction to four rubbish containers around which packs of stray dogs, cats and rats gather.(...) There needs to be good non-government organizations for the kind of collective actions you are talking about. Members of non-government organizations in the neighbourhood, who will initiate some sort of civic initiative and if necessary organize civic protests. However, we do not have a well organized non-government sector, small organizations within micro-communities who would push those local issues. We have MZ presidents, but they are alone. We still do not have functioning bodies at the MZ level – assemblies, advisory boards, condominium councils. We do not have them because of the deep economic crisis, the poverty and the unresolved problems of IDPs who are awaiting eviction.(...) When those property issues are resolved then production can begin, when people have full stomachs then I think that the initiative, will, desire will return and the potential that we carry within can be realized. – representative of a local NGO, Brcko

Impact of Collective Action on Local Social Capital

While a low level of associative life and collective action may increase the risk of violent outbursts, the contrary is also true. In all municipalities in the sample, a higher level of associative life and collective action encourages interpersonal relations, compromises among social groups, and communication between citizens and formal institutions.

Key informants involved in associative life emphasize that concrete projects based on the interests and wishes of the population can lead to more involvement into collective action:

Normally we start with a small project to show people that we are doing something and interest them in future cooperation. If you come to some MZ and spend three or four months talking in meetings, the interest disappears. People come when they see that something is being done.(...) Initially it is men who come, they attend the meetings, etc but when they get involved it is women who are far more active and more conscientious: they come to meetings, they do the job, and they do not ask for any reward. – field officer of an international organization, Brcko

Collective action, in turn, helps to further develop associative life. In Banja Luka, the Eco-Movement’s yearly clean-up action is also aimed at reactivating school and condominium councils. Such actions are facilitating the emergence, from the bottom up,

of a new generation of voluntary associations based on common interests and local projects:

More and more often, people are coming together through common interests, to resolve a problem or realize an idea. For example, the consumer association in Banja Luka conducted an analysis at its own expense and then, in a meeting with the government, said that the price of telephone services is abnormally high, that it is unjust, and that the price of electrical energy is so high because these are state monopolies where the prices are set by the state. I also know of a few cases where private enterprises have come together here in Banja Luka—there is a complex of small firms that is to be knocked down and they gathered to protect their interests. (...) There is a difference between older citizens' associations that work under the force of the law and those that are now formed for members to resolve issues of interest to them. – former leader of UNDP Progress program, Banja Luka

In several places, collective action appears to be an efficient means by which cooperation—especially between ethnic groups—is preserved or restored at the local level. In Tuzla, the predominantly Bosniac MZ SICKI Brod and the predominantly Croat MZ Bukinje are closely associated in protests against environmental threats and demands for additional public investments. In Ada (Banja Luka), the local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001” wants to develop common projects with the association of Bosniac women returnees in the MZ Vrbanja:

If we are in contact with Muslim associations, we believe that we can find solutions more quickly because they have better information about Muslim residents and we have more information about Serb residents. – president of local NGO “Ada-Debeljaci-Vrbanja 2001”, Banja Luka

Perhaps the most interesting example of collective action leading to renewed inter-ethnic cooperation is the MZ Klanac in the Brcko District (see Part IB, Box 1), where infrastructure projects help people to overcome both the material and the moral consequences of the war. In this MZ, Bosniac minority returnees cleaning their destroyed houses have given the rubble to Serb IDPs, who have used it to build a foundation for the road leading to their future settlement.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions are meant to support the definition of the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as to inform other Bank work.

Conclusion # 1: In Bosnia-Herzegovina, trust among people living in the same place (bonding social capital) takes precedence over trust toward people from outside (bridging social capital), affecting a range of civic values and confidence in formal institutions (linking social capital). This situation is aggravated by the fragmentation and parochialism along ethnic lines of social welfare and administrative structures. The labyrinth of Bosnia and Herzegovina post-war legal and administrative framework is therefore a source of distress and frustration, especially for the most vulnerable.

Recommendation # 1: The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina should strive to harmonize its social welfare system. Additional efforts should be made to make Bosnia and Herzegovina's legal and administrative system more transparent, accountable and uniform. People are simply at loss regarding to which rule applies to any specific case, to whom they should turn to in order to get explanations or receive any given services and which is the appropriate authority. Due to this lack of information, people tend to direct their requests to the wrong recipient or address the highest level to which they have access, increasing the inefficiency of the system by overloading the wrong actor. The system, normally does not respond to such requests, increasing people's frustration and the vicious circle of a flawed administrative system. **Increasing communications strategy is key to improve citizen knowledge. Positive examples exist in certain municipalities on which a strategy could be built that uses in-country examples to build local ownership. In addition, it seems evident that a reform of the social welfare system is needed. Such reform should avoid reinforcing existing social cleavages, and could perhaps build on the results of the upcoming Poverty Assessment (i.e. benefits should be based on actual needs and not on political/social categories). Additional reforms could establish more clear-cut mechanisms of accountability.**

Conclusion # 2: Respondents considered the quality of public services as having declined, and in some cases were non-existent. Public services that are considered as having declined in quality include social assistance, issuance of official documents, health care, education. Non-existence was lamented more often for youth and cultural activities, housing for IDPs and garbage collection. Infrastructure is in poor condition.

Recommendation # 2: Sectors where the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the Bank, has been more active in the past years (such as health care and education) are still reported as problematic and of low quality, but at least they are recognized as existent. The new projects in waste management and road development should alleviate people's concern related to these services. A noticeable absence in this "black list" of bad public services are pensions – that used to be cited in former studies as

very bad – probably thanks to the success of the Pension Reform project. **Sectors where the Bank has not been involved at all (such as youth and housing) are overwhelmingly reported as not only problematic but completely missing, and it is recommended that the Government and the Bank take appropriate action. Youth is a sector in which the Bank is getting increasingly involved, and where significant donor support could be raised. Housing needs should be given appropriate attention within the Government PRSP, keeping in mind the implications on social cohesion of housing policy .**

Conclusion # 3: Respondents considered local politicians as not serving citizen interests, and the focus groups criticize local politicians for their lack of accountability. In focus groups, participants characterize employees of public companies as too highly paid, lazy, careless and rude.

Recommendation # 3: In addition to simplifying the administrative and political structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **a massive education campaign on responsiveness should be carried out targeting local administrators. Report cards systems, ombudsman offices like the one in Bihac should be established everywhere around the country. Training workshops in public administration skills may also be useful, as well as training leaders to strengthen their civic engagement.**

Conclusion # 4: The local institution of the mjesna zajednica (MZ) is in decline, having lost financial and administrative autonomy. In some cases, MZs have transformed themselves into new style NGOs or citizens associations, but the government-societal link of the MZ is not clearly defined.

Recommendation # 4: MZs used to be the smallest territorial unit of Yugoslav federalism and self-management. They were responsible for some local infrastructure (roads, parks, water and sewerage systems) and public services (day care centers, youth clubs, medical units, provision of official documentation such as birth and death certificates, driving permits), and played an important role in the organization of collective works. After the war, however, the new laws on local self-management adopted in the Federation (January 1996) and the Serb Republic (November 1999) have abolished their compulsory character, and mention them only as a possible form of direct democracy, alongside with citizen initiatives and local referenda. Each municipality has thus to clarify in its own statutes the exact legal situation and practical role of MZs. **This situation multiplies the fragmentation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's legal and administrative system, as well as depriving citizens from a clearly recognizable and handy instrument to access public services and a vehicle for organizing collective work. A reconsideration of these laws would be highly recommended. This does not mean to reinstate MZs as they used to be, but to establish some form of local level institution which is consistent across boundaries and that provides a clear societal link among citizens.**

Conclusion # 5: The study detected a clear link between level of participation to collective actions and differences in gender, age, income, education, and rural/urban residence.

Recommendation # 5: The study provides a clear map of the interest of potential stakeholders (men take part more often in voluntary works, delegations and street demonstrations, while women take part more often in money collections and clean-up actions; respondents with a higher level of income more often take part in citizens' assemblies and money collections, while those with a higher level of education take part more in clean-up actions; rural residents show more interest than urban residents for the repair of roads, water and sewerage systems, and school building, while urban residents are more interested in cleaning-up actions, repair of sport and cultural facilities, and opening of youth centers; young people are particularly interested in the opening of a youth center, and IDPs in construction of a collective center for homeless people; etc). **In general, the study reveals that there is ample room for making more extensive and better use of collective actions and people mobilization to improve service delivery and accountability. Health care, education and environment seem to be sectors where people mobilization could be prompted easily. These findings should be accordingly integrated into Bank work, especially the Community Driven or Local Development projects.**

Conclusion # 6: The study finds that there is a decline in associative life and that Bosnians distinguish between two forms of voluntary associations: traditional citizens' association and new NGOs.

Recommendation # 6: Voluntary associations can play a mediatory role between citizens and formal institutions and serve as a vehicle for collective actions. However, many respondents in focus groups expressed negative attitudes towards voluntary associations, although one third of the survey respondents claimed membership in one. The mixed findings on voluntary associations suggest **the need for careful inquiry into the specific dimensions of civil society organizations prior to engaging in capacity-building efforts or when implementing projects in co-ordination with local organizations. At the same time, while so far NGOs and civil society organizations have been exclusively used to channel service delivery, the PRSP dialogue should strive to make them part of policy dialogue.**

Conclusion # 7: The study found that economic reasons as well as housing issues played a greater role in decisions by IDPs to return than personal security. This marks a change from earlier findings.

Recommendation # 7: The study has revealed a marked improvement in the sense of security enjoyed by people, especially IDPs and minority returnees. While this change has to be positively saluted, it also suggests that further **efforts should be directed into the creation of employment and the resolution of housing issues.**

Conclusion # 8 : The study found corruption as the main problem in relation to the following public services: health care, issuance of official documents, public safety, housing for IDPs and returnees, education and social assistance. IDPs are more likely to mention corruption than locals.

Recommendation # 8: The findings of this study are pretty much in line with the ones of the “Diagnostic Surveys of Corruption” study. **While it is more appropriate for the “Corruption” study to deal with an appropriate set of recommendations, we would like to reinforce the need for an anticorruption strategy that empowers civil society to both design and monitor reforms, especially in sectors like health care and education.**

A more detailed presentation of the findings by sector is presented below:

Governance issues were raised from several dimensions. The low quality of public services, such as the difficulties in obtaining basic documents, was identified by focus groups. Obtaining basic documents was also seen as frequently affected by corruption as well. Difficulties in obtaining basic documents has also occurred due to the loss of authority by some MZs. Political parties were criticized for control over access to public services in some areas and for their role in MZ boards. Ethnic fragmentation of local level institutions has persisted, and divisions of municipalities result in conflict over public infrastructure. More efforts on reform of municipalities and improvement in municipal services seem to be essential.

Positive examples were found in certain municipalities of efforts to enhance transparency and accountability. Many hold regular mayor press conferences and have established their own print and electronic media. Others have organized public discussions about the budget, established special departments to handle complaints or held training courses for municipal employees. New NGOs have also contributed to these efforts through publishing brochures about the municipal governments and establishing local-level monitoring bodies.

Transportation- Survey respondents considered road infrastructure as of low quality and public transportation as of low quality as a service and the infrastructure in poor condition. However, some citizens in rural areas are still active in collective actions in connection with road repair, and members of the diaspora contribute financially. Rural residents also expressed more interest in participating in repair of roads.

Social Protection- Survey respondents considered social assistance as non-existent in many areas and that services were of low quality when present. Social service agencies no longer have sufficient budgets to provide subsidies for utilities. The social welfare system remains fragmented and has become limited. Centers for Social Work no longer have the means for material assistance, and some people are excluded because they are unemployed or work for enterprises that do not pay their contribution.

Tensions occur between ethnic groups on distribution of benefits based on political categories and not on actual need. Tensions among members of the same ethnic group occur due to IDPs receiving certain benefits for which local residents were not eligible. Social protection is one of the sector where public participation could be increased to help improving targeting as well as monitor reforms.

Environment - Twenty percent of survey respondents participated in some form of clean-up action in the past year and focus groups described this persistence of collective action in local clean-up actions. A local ecology-focused voluntary association in Banja Luka worked together with leisure organizations focused on fishing in their information campaigns and collective actions. Collective protests about air pollution and industrial waste dumping have occurred in Siki Brod, outside of Tuzla. Environmental issues generate spontaneous people mobilization that should be channeled into policy and project design.

Education- Corruption was mentioned as the main problem, but focus groups were divided on how effective they considered the school system. In Banja Luka, inclusion of some schools in international experimental programs have lead to differences in educational methods and equipment, with the experimental schools receiving pressures on enrollment. In the survey, rural residents expressed interest in supporting through collective action by working on school building.

Electric Power and Other Energy- Focus groups described the burden of increased prices and strict deadlines for payment for electricity (especially in the context of delayed payment of wages), and criticized how bills are calculated. Meters are considered inaccurate. Subsidies provided by social services for utility payments are no longer available reliably.

Health, Nutrition and Population- Survey respondents considered health services of poor quality and the associated infrastructure as in poor condition. High prices were mentioned as the main problem associated with health care, and focus group participants saw health care as marred by corruption. This is reflected in the survey findings as well. Rural focus group participants and key informants considered the lack of medical services a concern, a finding which echoes the results of earlier qualitative studies. Health is also a sector where increasing people participation (especially in monitoring corruption) could lead to improved services.

Water Supply and Sanitation

Survey respondents considered water supply and sewerage of poor quality and the associated infrastructure as in poor condition. Of the sites in which the study was conducted, all have leakages in the water and sewerage systems. Tuzla has a long-standing problem with drinking water shortages, and poor quality water caused a recent hepatitis outbreak in Bihac. Focus group participants complained that they are charged for losses due to leakages in water and sewerage systems and that meters are inaccurate.

Some key informants and focus group participants perceive the nationalization of infrastructure consider the nationalization of infrastructure as dispossessing the local community since the residents had contributed with voluntary work or financial contributions. In the survey, rural residents expressed more interest in supporting collective work in connection with the water and sewerage system. Conflicts over water infrastructure have occurred between IDPs and locals in Tuzla.

Annex 1. Country Overview: General Situation and Local-Level Institutions

Compared to other Communist countries, Yugoslavia was characterized by a relatively high standard of living, cultural liberalism and political decentralization, and the coexistence of several constitutive nations and national minorities.¹³¹ Bosnia-Herzegovina was one of the most underdeveloped Yugoslav republics, and had the reputation as a stronghold of Titoist orthodoxy, but was also known as a model of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among its three constitutive nations (Bosniacs, Serbs, and Croats). Under the system of self-management, municipalities and neighborhood communities (*mjesne zajednice*, MZs)¹³² enjoyed a large degree autonomy; had important competences in economic, social, and security affairs; and were closely linked to local enterprises and mass organizations.¹³³ In Bosnia-Herzegovina, local-level institutions also played a key role in managing inter-ethnic relations: municipal bodies and agencies were set up in accordance with ethnic quotas (“*nacionalni ključ*”), and informal mediators—local politicians, factory directors, or religious notables—mediated the conflicts that could arise with regard to scarce resources such as land, jobs, and public services. In everyday life, inter-ethnic relations were regulated by “good neighborliness” (“*komsiluk*”), a set of rules about respect and reciprocity.¹³⁴

Due to the dominance of the Communist party (League of Communists), however, formal participatory mechanisms often remained empty, and the misuse of decentralization by local elites brought about new parochial attitudes and clientelistic practices, especially in rural and under-developed areas. In the 1970s and 1980s, Yugoslavia experienced a growing economic and legitimacy crisis, while self-management resulted in a deep fragmentation of Yugoslav society, not only between its constitutive republics and nations, but also at the municipality and factory level.¹³⁵ In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the level of trust among ethnic groups remained high at the local level (among neighbors and colleagues), but became increasingly polarized at the institutional level (among constitutive nations and their representatives).¹³⁶ In other words, Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina had, like other Communist countries, a high level of bonding social capital, but a rather low level of bridging and linking social capital.

At the end of the 1980s, the deepening crisis and the manipulation of ethnic fears by political leaders such as Slobodan Milosevic led to the violent breakdown of Yugoslavia.¹³⁷ After the Yugoslav League of Communists fell apart in January 1990, political movements committed to the ideas of democracy and multi-ethnicity began to

¹³¹ About Communist Yugoslavia, see, among others, Allcock, John, 2000; Lydall, Harold, 1989; MacFarlane, Bruce, 1988.

¹³² About neighborhood communities (MZs), see Introduction, footnote 9, and Part IIB.

¹³³ See Seroka, Jim and Smiljkovic, Rados, 1986, esp. pp. 238-65.

¹³⁴ See Mujacic, Mahmut, 1972; Mujacic, Mahmut, 1973; Tomic, Stojan, 1988; Bringa, Tone, 1995.

¹³⁵ See Schierup, Carl-Ulrich, 1992; Young, Boris, 1992; Sekelj, Laslo, 1993. About the case of local level institutions, see Minovic, Zika, 1972; Seroka, Jim and Sniljkovic, Rados, 1986, esp. pp. 238-65; Seroka, Jim, 1978; Seroka, Jim, 1979; Seroka, Jim, 1989.

¹³⁶ See Tomic, Stojan, 1988; Bakic, Ibrahim, 1990.

¹³⁷ On the end of Yugoslavia, see, among others, Allcock, John (ed.), 1992; Cohen, Lenard, 1995; Woodward, Susan, 1995; Hayden, Robert, 1999;.

emerge, but they were defeated by nationalist parties in the elections held at the republic level. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the League of Communists transformed itself into a multi-ethnic Social Democratic Party (*Socijaldemokratska Partija*, SDP), but many of its the League's former members joined one of the three nationalist parties: the Party of Democratic Action (*Stranka Demokratske Akcije*, SDA, the Bosniac nationalist party), the Serb Democratic Party (*Srpska Demokratska Stranka*, SDS), or the Croat Democratic Community (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, HDZ). The coalition of the nationalist parties won the general elections of November 1990.¹³⁸ All but two municipalities, Tuzla and Vares (both industrial and mining centers), were also controlled by various local coalitions of the nationalist parties, depending on the local ethnic balance.

Between December 1990 and April 1992, the final breakdown of Yugoslavia, the war in Croatia, and the division of Bosnian institutional and social life along ethnic lines resulted in a rapid rise in inter-ethnic tensions and violent clashes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite the resistance of the emerging civil society.¹³⁹ At the local level, increasing political conflicts and clientelistic competition among the nationalist parties led to the monopolization of municipal power by the dominant party, and to growing discrimination against the local ethnic minorities. This situation led to the split of municipal assemblies into separate ethnic assemblies, and, in many places, to the creation of ethnic split-municipalities encompassing homogenous MZs (villages or suburbs).

In March 1992, Bosniacs and Croats voted for the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, while a majority of Serbs supported the creation of a Serb Republic (*Republika Srpska*). Large-scale conflicts broke out when Serb forces, supported by the Yugoslav army, launched violent offensives in eastern and northern Bosnia, and began a siege of Sarajevo (April 1992). The war lasted about three and a half years. At first, the Bosnian army (*Armija Bosne i Hercegovine*, ABiH) and the Croat Council of Defense (*Hrvatsko Vijeće Odbrane*, HVO) fought the Army of the Serb Republic (*Vojska Republike Srpske*, VRS). In 1993, the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ) organized its own Croat Republic of Herceg-Bosna, and fighting broke out in Herzegovina and central Bosnia between the Bosnian ABiH and the Croat HVO. But, on March 18, 1994, the Washington Agreement laid the foundation for a common Croat-Bosniac Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (*Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine*), and made possible a renewed alliance between Bosnian and Croat forces. Finally, the General Peace Agreement signed at Dayton on December 14, 1995 put an end to the war, and turned Bosnia-Herzegovina into a highly decentralized state consisting of two entities, the Federation and the Serb Republic, with the Federation itself divided into ten cantons (four Bosniac, four Croat, and two of mixed ethnicity).¹⁴⁰

Between April 1992 and December 1995, war and ethnic cleansing resulted in the de facto partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina into several ethnic areas. This process was accompanied by crimes unseen in Europe since 1945, with by tremendous human

¹³⁸ On the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina before the war, see Bougarel, Xavier, 1996b.

¹³⁹ See Andjelic, Neven, 1998.

¹⁴⁰ On the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, see, among others, Burg, Steven and Shoup, Paul, 1999; Bougarel, Xavier, 1996a.

suffering and material destruction. About 200,000 people, mainly civilians, were killed, and 2.5 million others—more than half the pre-war Bosnian population—were displaced (1.2 million refugees abroad, and 1.3 million displaced persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina itself). At the same time, 50 percent of the housing stock was damaged and 6 percent was destroyed in the Federation, while 24 percent was damaged and 5 percent destroyed in the Serb Republic. Landmines rendered approximately 15 percent of farmland inaccessible. The Bosnian economy experienced a major collapse, compounding the already desperate situation in the country: in 1996, GDP had dropped to 20-25 percent and industrial production to 5-10 percent of their pre-war levels, and unemployment reached almost 90 percent.¹⁴¹ This breakdown of peacetime economic activities was accompanied by the emergence of a new war economy based on material support from abroad (financial assistance from foreign countries and ethnic diasporas, international humanitarian aid, etc.); organized criminality (looting of ethnic minorities, embezzlement of foreign aid, smuggling of scarce commodities, etc.); and individual coping strategies (remittances of relatives abroad, selling of personal goods, development of subsistence agriculture, etc.).¹⁴²

As a result of the war, the Bosnian population experienced a dramatic drop in its standard of living and an enormous increase in poverty: in 1997, the poverty rate was 22 percent in the Federation, and 52 percent in the Serb Republic. The middle class disappeared, and pre-war vulnerable categories (pensioners, unemployed people, single mothers), as well as new social categories produced by the war (displaced persons, war invalids, families of fallen soldiers) were especially exposed to impoverishment.¹⁴³ Material destruction, economic breakdown, and institutional chaos caused the collapse of the social welfare system and basic public services, including water and electricity supply, public transport, and telecommunications. Clientelistic control of the population was reinforced through new informal, minimal, and often discriminatory social assistance mechanisms related to the distribution of humanitarian aid, free access to basic utilities (water, electricity, etc.), and allocation of seized flats and houses to members of local ethnic minorities.

At the political level, nationalist leaders bypassed elected institutions and developed their own parallel networks controlling the armed forces, the financial resources of the state, and various criminal activities. Non-nationalist parties, pacifist movements, and independent media were reduced to silence, while nationalist parties created their own mass organizations, including IDPs' and veterans' associations.¹⁴⁴ Many municipal assemblies were marginalized or overthrown by self-proclaimed "emergency staffs" ("*krizni stabovi*"), which played an important role in the ethnic cleansing of local ethnic minorities. Due to the breakdown of central institutions and the entanglement of front lines, municipal authorities enjoyed almost complete autonomy, at least in the first years of the war. In many cases, they took over the organization of the local life, setting up their own fiscal systems and military units, while the MZs were responsible for civil protection, distribution of humanitarian aid, and accommodation of displaced persons.

¹⁴¹ See World Bank, 1997; World Bank, 1998b; World Bank, 1999a.

¹⁴² See Bojicic, Vesna and Kaldor, Mary, 1999; Bougarel, Xavier, 1995.

¹⁴³ See World Bank, 1999a; World Bank, 1999b; World Bank, 1999c.

¹⁴⁴ See ESI, 1999.

With a few exceptions, such as Tuzla or Sarajevo, each municipality became physically and symbolically identified with a single ethnic group, while municipal counsellors representing expelled ethnic minorities created municipalities in exile. Local mediators who did not submit to nationalist policies were marginalized, and “good neighborliness” (“*komsiluk*”) was deliberately destroyed or even turned into plunder, murder and rape acts involving former neighbors, colleagues, and friends.¹⁴⁵ This local dimension of ethnic cleansing explains why, in the aftermath of the war, former neighbors represent a direct threat to each other, whether as owners of a house occupied by other people, as voters who can delegitimize the new local ethnic majority, or as witnesses who can charge someone with war crimes. “*Komsiluk*” therefore has ceased to be a central feature of Bosnian society. Even if it survives in some places or at an individual level, wartime Bosnia-Herzegovina has suffered a dramatic destruction of its existing social capital.

Since the signing of the General Peace Agreement in December 1995, the deployment of a NATO-led *Stabilization Force* (Sfor) has secured a durable cessation of hostilities; and the political supervision of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the UN High Representative and the OSCE has enabled the restoration of legal institutions at the entity and state levels, the adoption of a minimal set of common laws and symbols, and relatively free and secure movement across the Inter-Entity Border Line (IEBL). But the central (inter-entity) and federal (Croat-Bosniac) institutions have remained largely inefficient, due to the permanency of the parallel power networks set up during the war, and the pernicious effects of both lasting nationalist ambitions and short-term parochial interests.¹⁴⁶ Institutional deadlocks and political conflicts have led to the increasing role of international actors. The Peace Implementation Conferences of Sintra (May 1997) and Bonn (December 1997), in particular, have empowered the UN High Representative to enact legislative measures on which the entities were unable to agree, and to dismiss politicians and public servants. Consequently, the High Representative has been able to overcome the obstructions to implementing the peace led by the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) in summer 1997, and by the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ) in spring 2001. The High Representative has also been able to reduce the influence of parallel power networks on the state apparatus and public enterprises.

At the same time, the organization of free elections by the OSCE and the massive presence of foreign NGOs have contributed to the renewal of political pluralism, free media, and the third sector.¹⁴⁷ Whereas the first post-war elections held in September 1996 had seen the triumph of nationalist parties, the extraordinary elections held in the Serb Republic in November 1997 resulted in the defeat of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and, with the support of the international community, to the nomination of the Social Democrat Milorad Dodik as Prime Minister. Similarly, the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) experienced a clear setback in the last elections in November 2000, and an “Alliance for Changes” (“*Savez za Promene*”) led by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) gained control of the central and federal institutions. In the Serb Republic, however, the

¹⁴⁵ See Halpern, Joel / Kideckel, David (ed.), 2000; Sorabji, Cornelia, 1994; Bougarel, Xavier, 1996c.

¹⁴⁶ On the political situation in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, see, among others, ESI, 1999; ICG, 1999d.

¹⁴⁷ On the third sector, see Duffield, Mark, 1996; Smillie, Ian, 1996; Sali-Terzic, Sevima, 2001.

parties supporting M. Dodik were defeated by the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and the Party of Democratic Prosperity (PDP) of the new Prime Minister, Mladen Ivanic.¹⁴⁸

At the macroeconomic level, the Four-Year Reconstruction and Recovery Program endorsed by international donors at the end of 1995, totaling US\$ 5.1 billion, enabled Bosnia-Herzegovina to achieve substantial results in terms of reconstruction and recovery: in 1999, GDP reached 50 percent of its pre-war level. But the growth rate is slowing again (5 percent in 2000), and new regional imbalances have appeared, due to differences in war damage and aid allocation. Moreover, Bosnia-Herzegovina still has to carry out the structural policy reforms needed to move to a market-oriented economy (privatization of public enterprises, reform of the financial sector and the labor market, new fiscal and social policies, etc.). Institutional and political circumstances have so far hindered their implementation, while facilitating the perpetuation of economic criminality and corruption, informal employment, and tax evasion. This is all the more worrisome since international assistance will eventually decline, and Bosnia and Herzegovina's economic development is expected to become self-sustainable.¹⁴⁹

Lasting problems with unemployment, irregularity of income, and lack of housing have created a pervasive feeling of insecurity among the population, in contrast to the stability and predictability of pre-war life. In 2000, about 30 percent of the active population in Bosnia-Herzegovina was officially unemployed. Average net salaries are only 365 Convertible Marks—KM (413 KM in the Federation and 277 KM in the Serb Republic), and the payment of salaries, pensions, and other social benefits remains irregular. The restitution of illegally occupied houses and flats to their pre-war owners or beneficiaries is a slow and intricate process: in September 2000, only 39 percent of almost 250,000 restitution demands had been examined, and 18 percent satisfied.¹⁵⁰ The social welfare system and the main public services have been re-established, but financial constraints and discriminatory practices have resulted in new inequalities regarding access.¹⁵¹

Finally, social capital seems difficult to restore, as illustrated by the consolidation of some of the human consequences of ethnic cleansing. Since 1996, UNHCR has registered about 700,000 returns of refugees and displaced persons, but only 200,000 minority returns. Though minority returns have been accelerating since 1998, they have been accompanied by widespread discrimination and sporadic violence, and returns are expected to level off during the next few years.¹⁵² More generally, mistrust among ethnic groups is pervasive and lasting, the traditional cleavage between urban and rural residents has been stirred up by the war, and new cleavages have appeared between locals and displaced persons, and between a large majority of poor and a small minority of rich, the

¹⁴⁸ See ICG, 2000d; ESI, 2001.

¹⁴⁹ See World Bank, 1997; World Bank, 1998b; European Commission and World Bank, 1999; World Bank 2000b.

¹⁵⁰ UNHCR, OHR, and OSCE, 2000. See also CRPC and UNHCR, 1999a; CRPC, 2000.

¹⁵¹ On social policy, see Stubbs, Paul and Gregson, Kendra (ed.), 1998. On discrimination, see, among others, OSCE –Human Right Department, 1999b; UNHCR, 1999a; UNHCR, 1999d; ICG, 1999e.

¹⁵² On the question of return, see, among others, UNHCR, 1999a; UNHCR, 2000a; UNHCR, 2000b; ICG, 1999b; ICG, 1999c; Stubbs, Paul, 1999.

latter often being considered war profiteers.¹⁵³ Bosnian citizens also distrust local formal institutions and political elites, and their participation in NGOs and social movements remains low. International organizations enjoy a much higher level of confidence, but their direct involvement in Bosnian political and social life also contributes to a feeling of dispossession and powerlessness, and thus to the weakness of civil society.¹⁵⁴

All of these changes have deeply influenced the status and the role of local-level institutions. Following the signing of the General Peace Agreement, new laws on local self-management were adopted in the Federation (January 1996) and the Serb Republic (November 1999). Municipalities lost a considerable part of their previous legal competences and financial resources, to the benefit of the cantons in the first case, and the entity in the second. MZs, for their part, are no longer compulsory.¹⁵⁵ The first post-war municipal elections, initially scheduled for September 1996 and postponed until September 1997, restored legally elected municipal bodies, but a large majority of municipalities remain under the control of nationalist parties, and municipal counsellors representing local ethnic minorities or opposition parties have been deprived of any real influence on local life. The elections of April 2000 led to a more diversified picture, with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) gaining control in a large number of municipalities in the Federation.¹⁵⁶

To understand the status of local-level institutions in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, two other factors must be taken into account. First, the relationship between municipalities and other formal institutions depends on the economic situation and on changes involved in the transition to a market economy. The increased number of unemployed and poor, the privatization process, and the transfer of some social services from enterprises to public administrations, as well as the development of the third sector, have contributed to the redefinition of the competences and activities of municipal authorities.¹⁵⁷ Second, the influence of international organizations has been very important. While direct budgetary support has gone mainly to the entities, almost all reconstruction funds have been spent at the local level. Recognizing the importance of the municipal authorities in the (non-) implementation of the General Peace Agreement, international organizations have gradually reinforced their hold on them. Following the elections of September 1997, the OSCE issued several rules—so called “NERIC Guidelines”¹⁵⁸—on the transparency of municipal assemblies and the composition of executive bodies, and has closely supervised their implementation. In addition, the UN High Representative has dismissed several local politicians and public servants, and has put under direct international

¹⁵³ See World Bank, 1999a; World Bank, 1999b.

¹⁵⁴ See Chandler, Daniel, 1998; Belloni, Roberto, 2001.

¹⁵⁵ See Dedic, Sead, 1998; Kremenovic, Ostojica, Stevanovic, Mirko and Nikolic, Anto, 2000; Musabegovic, Nijaz, Vockic-Avdagic, Jelenka, and Nuhanovic, Asad, 1999.

¹⁵⁶ See OSCE, 2000b; ICG, 2000b; Pugh, Michael and Cobble, Margaret, 2001.

¹⁵⁷ See Stubbs, Paul and Gregson, Kendra, 1998; IBHI, 1998a; IBHI, 1998b.

¹⁵⁸ These guidelines have been published by the National Elections Results implementation Committee (NERIC) after the first post-war municipal elections in September 1997. They foresee in particular a proportional representation of all local ethnic groups and political parties in municipal executive bodies, the effective return of municipal counsellors representing local ethnic minorities, and the publicity of all municipal assembly's sessions. See Rogan, James, 2000.

tutelage some especially problematic municipalities, including Srebrenica in the Serb Republic, and Drvar, Zepce, and Gornji Vakuf in the Federation.¹⁵⁹ In December 2000, the High Representative also dissolved the split-municipality of Skelani (eastern part of the municipality of Srebrenica) in the Serb Republic.

The growing involvement of international organizations reflects the changing role of local-level institutions in managing inter-ethnic relations after the war: the local level is no longer the place where ethnic conflicts are softened; now it is where they crystallize. The extreme sensitivity of local issues, especially in strategic or symbolical municipalities, explains why the first post-war municipal elections were postponed until September 1997, and why the international arbitration over Brcko was delayed until March 1999. While Brcko has been turned into a neutral district under the supervision of the Office of the High Representative (OHR),¹⁶⁰ numerous split-municipalities have been recognized on both sides of the Inter-Entity Border Line; and in the Federation, municipalities such as Mostar, Gornji Vakuf or Zepce remain more or less divided between a Bosniac part and a Croat part.¹⁶¹ Local authorities also play an important role in the (non-)return of expelled ethnic minorities, and their (non-)reintegration into local social life, through their handling of issues such as the restitution of occupied properties and access to basic utilities and public services.

In the context of these ongoing difficulties, UNHCR launched the Open Cities program in 1997 to foster minority returns. The program monitored local authorities and rewarded those that cooperated with the return and reintegration process.¹⁶² The operation, however, had only limited success, leading international organizations to resort to more restrictive measures: the competences of the Commission for Real Property Claims (CRPC) and the Return and Reconstruction Task Force (RRTF) were enlarged, and local politicians and public servants who obstructed the implementation of new property laws have been sacked by the UN High Representative. At the same time, several international organizations, including the World Bank, UNDP, and OSCE have shown a growing interest in the development of local democracy, and have used their own infrastructure projects or democratization programs to encourage transparency, accountability, and participation at the local level.¹⁶³ Local-level institutions have therefore become one of

¹⁵⁹ In Srebrenica, where political parties representing Bosniac IDPs won the majority in the municipal elections of September 1997, no agreement could be reached about the composition of executive bodies, and the UN High Representative had to issue a compulsory arbitration in June 1999. A similar situation happened in August 1999 in Drvar, where political parties representing Serb IDPs had won the majority. The municipality of Zepce was divided between a Bosniac and a Croat split-municipality until October 2000, when the UN High Representative ordered the institutional reintegration of this municipality, appointed a provisory common municipal assembly, and put it under the tutelage of an international supervisor. A similar case happened in Gornji Vakuf in July 2001 (see Annex 4).

¹⁶⁰ See Part ID, Box 3.

¹⁶¹ From May 1993 to March 1994, heavy fighting opposed Bosnian and Croat forces in Mostar. This town was put under the tutelage of the European Union in July 1994, and divided into seven administrative units (three Bosniac-dominated municipalities, three Croat-dominated municipalities and a neutral central district) in February 1996. See Bjelakovic, Nebojsa and Strazzari, Francesco, 1999; ICG, 2000c. About Zepce, see footnote 149. About Gornji Vakuf, see Annex 4.

¹⁶² See UNHCR, 1999b; ICG, 1998.

¹⁶³ See World Bank, 2000c; OSCE, 2000a; UNDP, 2000c.

the most important factors in the political and human reintegration of Bosnian society, and one of the most important mechanisms for restoring trust and social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Annex 2. Social Capital: Definition and Context

Social capital is most narrowly defined, by Robert Putnam, as the “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions.”¹⁶⁴ According to this definition, horizontal (non-hierarchical) networks encourage the formation of social capital, whereas vertical (hierarchical) networks inhibit it. A second and broader definition, put forth by James Coleman, includes both vertical and horizontal networks, so as to capture the overall social structure as well as the ensemble of norms governing interpersonal relations. A third definition of social capital, shared by Douglas North and Mancur Olson, also encompasses the institutional environment that shapes social structure and enable norms to develop. In addition to the largely informal and local relationships of the first two definitions, the third definition includes the most formalized institutional relationships and structures such as political regime, legal frameworks, and individual and collective rights.¹⁶⁵

These definitions are complementary rather than contradictory, and there is now a large consensus that social capital refers to the norms and values that govern interpersonal relations, as well as the formal and informal institutions in which they are embedded.¹⁶⁶ Thus social capital is not simply the sum of institutions that underpin society, but also the glue that holds them together, and makes society more than a collection of individuals.¹⁶⁷ This broad definition of social capital as the social and cultural coherence of society allows for a distinction among different components, levels, and types of social capital.

Social capital comprises both a structural and a cognitive component: structural social capital refers to institutions, whereas cognitive social capital refers to collective norms and values, and the level and distribution of trust.

Social capital also has micro and macro levels: micro-level social capital refers to interpersonal trust and civic engagement, whereas macro-level social capital refers to confidence in public institutions.¹⁶⁸ Macro variables such as the rule of law, effectiveness and accountability of government, and quality of public services provide environments that either are conducive to the development of social capital or represent an obstacle to its formation at the micro level (and vice versa; see Introduction, Figure 1).

¹⁶⁴ Putnam, Robert, 1993, p. 167.

¹⁶⁵ On the various definitions of social capital, see Grootaert, Christiaan, 1998; Rossing Feldman, Tine and Assaf, Susan, 1999.

¹⁶⁶ Formal institutions are legally recognized and rule bound, while informal institutions have no legal status and are characterized by face-to-face relationships; e.g., kinship networks

¹⁶⁷ See World Bank, 1998a. The concept of social capital is related but not identical to other concepts such as civil society: civil society consists of the groups and organizations, both formal and informal, which act independently of the state and market to promote diverse interests in society. See also the difference drawn by Paul Collier between “government social capital” and “civil social capital”. See Collier, Paul, 1998.

¹⁶⁸ The difference between micro and macro levels of social capital can also be expressed by the distinction between *horizontal* and *vertical* social capital. See Woolcock, Michael, 1998.

At the micro level, bonding social capital brings together people with similar characteristics, such as relatives, friends, members of the same ethnic or social group; whereas bridging social capital links people with different backgrounds but comparable political power.¹⁶⁹ At the macro level, linking social capital consists of the vertical ties existing between simple citizens and influential persons in public institutions.

Less progress has been achieved in measuring social capital, since it involves concepts such as *networks* and *norms*, which are difficult to quantify. The challenge is increased by the need to determine not just the quantity, but also the quality of social capital on a variety of scales, and in a diversity of contexts. Empirically driven studies have developed and used various measurement tools for social capital, which differ from those originally developed by Robert Putnam. To some extent, these differences are justified by the local contexts. But contextualizing the inquiries should not be tantamount to throwing open the field to uncountable numbers of unassociated measurement tools.

Therefore, after studying different methodological approaches, Anirudh Krishna and Elizabeth Shrader have elaborated for the World Bank a Social Capital Assessment Tool (SCAT), which combines complementary methodologies, allowing it to be both rigorous in analysis and flexible in application, and to assess a wide range of networks and norms.¹⁷⁰ SCAT takes into account both the micro and macro levels, and both the structural (density and nature of institutions) and cognitive (values and norms, level of trust) components of social capital. It combines qualitative (community and organizational profiles) and quantitative methods (household survey), and focuses on the issues of interpersonal trust and cooperation, formal and informal institutions, and forms of participation and collective action related to public services at the local level. This use of local institutions and public services as concrete cases for the assessment of social capital is also present in the World Bank's *Local-Level Institutions Study* and its prototype questionnaires.¹⁷¹

There is little disagreement about the relevance of social capital for poverty reduction and sustainable development, although its contribution to growth is difficult to quantify¹⁷²:

For poverty reduction: social capital can be used by the poor as a substitute for physical and human capital, and thus represents a key asset in their portfolio of resources to reduce risk and maximize opportunities. Relationships with kin, neighbors, and friends are crucial to survival when formal safety nets are absent or inadequate. Informal networks and formal associations provide substitute resources when people are short of money or face bureaucratic obstacles. Trust among community members and their ability to work together can reduce problems such as violence and free-riding, by enforcing shared values and norms of behavior. But institutions, norms, and values can also reinforce inequalities among social groups and lock poor people into long-term poverty traps by

¹⁶⁹ See Narayan, Deepa, 1999. The distinction between bonding and bridging social capital is close to the one made by Mark Granovetter between *strong ties* and *weak ties*. See Granovetter, Mark, 1973.

¹⁷⁰ Krishna, Anirudh and Shrader, Elizabeth, 1999.

¹⁷¹ World Bank, 1998c.

¹⁷² See World Bank, 2000a. Also see Grootaert, Christian, 1998; Collier, Paul, 1998; Knack, Stephen, 1999.

placing barriers between them and the opportunities and resources they need to advance their interests.

For sustainable development: natural capital, physical or produced capital, and human capital were traditionally seen as the basis for economic growth and development. It is now recognized that these three types of capital only partially determine these processes, because they do not account for the ways economic actors interact and organize themselves. Social capital contributes to growth and development by improving coordination and cooperation, reducing transaction costs, and providing access to new markets and credits. It also fosters government accountability and efficiency, as well as delivery and quality of public services. Like human capital, social capital is thought to be an exponent: it is not enough on its own to achieve sustainable development, but performs as a shift factor that enhances or complements other types of capital.

Various types of social capital have different effects on poverty and economic development. By bringing together people with similar characteristics, bonding social capital can serve as a collective coping and risk management strategy. This type of self-help is important, especially to the poor and vulnerable, but it does not serve as a force for significant change, since participants share similar problems as well as limited knowledge and resources. Bonding social capital also has its dark side. The same social ties that enable community members to work together can exclude outsiders, create barriers to upward mobility, and restrict people's ability to benefit from and contribute to economic growth. Such ties can also encourage clientelism and corruption, and endanger political participation and accountability. Where informal networks and formal associations are parochial or working at cross-purposes to society's collective interests, the social capital they represent serves perverse rather than productive purposes, perpetuating poverty and exclusion and undermining development.

Bridging social capital, on the other hand, can play a more forceful and long-term role in development by linking individuals and groups with access to different knowledge and resources. Informal networks and formal associations that are more diverse, whose members bridge major social categories, are more effective in fostering generalized trust and reciprocity and in leveraging new resources. Finally, linking social capital provides political voice and potential access to additional resources for poor people through ties with higher levels of decisionmaking and resource allocation.

In practice, the nature of social capital represented by specific institutions, norms, or values is often ambivalent and subject to change. It is not easy to determine whether an institution is heterogeneous or homogeneous, formal or informal, horizontally or vertically organized. A formal voluntary association, for example, can have members of different ethnic origins but similar social status (or vice versa), and its leaders can use at the same time formal and informal, horizontal and vertical means of influence. What sort of norms is related to which type of institutions must also be investigated for each separate context. And, as James Coleman puts it, "a given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others."¹⁷³

¹⁷³ Coleman, James, 1990, p. 598.

Finally, one has to keep in mind that the relationship between social capital and development is two way. Whereas social capital can facilitate or impede poverty reduction and sustainable development, economic crisis or growing inequalities can also deplete existing social capital.¹⁷⁴ Similar two-way causalities exist between social capital and education,¹⁷⁵ social capital and infrastructure,¹⁷⁶ and social capital and development projects. The presence of social capital improves the effectiveness and sustainability of such projects; while, at the same time, its accumulation can be stimulated through select donor-supported interventions. A key lesson for policymakers and practitioners is the importance of identifying and using existing pockets of social capital, taking care not to destroying them by disabling partnerships and breaking down social cohesion, investing in social capital through participatory project design and implementation, and helping the poor to transcend their closed networks in order to access additional resources.¹⁷⁷

As shown by Nat Colletta and Michelle Cullen in their book, *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*,¹⁷⁸ social capital is especially important for the prevention of internal wars and the reconstruction of war-torn countries. In fragile societies, such as those that are multicultural, low levels of linking and bridging capital, resulting from an unequal distribution of power and resources (often accompanied by exclusion and indignity), and the absence of cross-cutting ties among dissimilar groups, facilitate the breakout of violent conflicts. The role of bonding capital, that is, of the networks and values existing within primary groups such as extended families or ethnic groups, is more ambiguous. It can be manipulated and lead to exclusionary and violent behaviors, but it also provides protection and welfare when legal institutions and formal safety nets collapse.

War generally depletes social capital by undermining trust, and destroying the values, norms, and institutions that underlie cooperation. But it also leads to a transformation or even limited creation of social capital, since “conflict seemingly spur[s] integrative social capital geared toward mitigating risks within the community....In general, coping mechanisms can be internal or external and traditionally range from horizontal social capital relations, such as family, extended family, or clans, to more bridging formal and sometimes vertical organizations such as religious groups, local governments, and markets.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ See Rodrik, Dani, 1997.

¹⁷⁵ See Colletta, Nat, 1995; Coleman, James, 1998.

¹⁷⁶ Following Caroline Moser and Jeremy Holland, violence can prevent the installation or maintenance of infrastructure, which in turn exacerbates crime and conflict and erodes community-level cohesion. Lack of infrastructure or its inadequate maintenance as a direct consequence of violence can increase fear and mistrust and reduce community space for association See Moser, Caroline and Holland, Jeremy, 1997. See also Kahkonen, Satu, 1999.

¹⁷⁷ World Bank, 2000a; Grootaert, Christiaan, 1998; Uphoff, Norman, Krishna, Anirudh, and Esman, Milton, 1998.

¹⁷⁸ Nat Colletta and Michelle Cullen (eds.), 2000.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72. On the distinction between horizontal and vertical social capital, see footnote 158.

This relationship between social capital and violent conflict has important implications for peacebuilding and reconstruction. In war-torn countries, “even if other forms of capital are replenished, economic and social development will be hindered unless social capital stocks are restored.”¹⁸⁰ This means that both local governments and international actors need to foster the restoration of bridging capital, manifested in a thriving civil society and a functioning market economy, as well as linking social capital, in the form of an effective and inclusive state. But, “because the nature and causes of war are country-specific..., efforts for relief, reconstruction, and reconciliation need to take note of these differences, acknowledge the variations in how the social fabric was damaged, and assess how the social threads remaining after the conflict can be used to help facilitate the larger peace processes.”¹⁸¹

A central and complex issue remains the bonding social capital that survived or appeared during the war. On the one hand, “by weakening such primary bonds, conflict can create opportunities for bridges to other networks and can displace relations that tend to build dependency, limit access to new information and opportunities, and retard change.”¹⁸² But, on the other hand, “a major concern is that external interventions may ignore local, spontaneous coping mechanisms, disrupt the internal group’s ability to function and, in some cases, damage the local coping fabric, undermining the credibility of local efforts within the community.”¹⁸³

What is implicitly at stake is, again, the question of the real nature and possible roles of bonding social capital. Does it facilitate or impede the creation of other kinds of social capital or, to put it differently, can bonding social capital transform itself into bridging and linking social capital? What are the policies that could encourage such processes? There is, of course, no simple answer to these questions, which is why reconstruction and reconciliation policies need to be especially nuanced and sensitive to the local context. Colletta and Cullen argue that, “while cross-cutting ties are being established, assessments must also be made of existing bonding capital bases, and care must be taken that external efforts do not erode them. Once these local coping mechanisms are identified, they must be incorporated into the reconstruction process.(...) Humanitarian and development actors should jointly assess existing bonding capital bases and take care that their external efforts do not erode them nor blindly reinforce them at the expense of facilitating cross-cutting ties.”¹⁸⁴

Concretely, Colletta and Cullen consider that “economic policy reform without the attendant creation of institutional capacity and reform of social policy can only bring about social fragmentation and the recurrence of violent conflict”. In particular, they warn that state policies that “reduce subsidies to the vulnerable in the aftermath of war, privatize state assets into an institutional vacuum, raise taxes regressively, reduce or increase subsidies in favor of one or another group, downsize an already underpaid or

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 114 and 116.

unpaid civil service or army, and repatriate refugees or demobilize combatants without the capacity or resources to provide a transitional safety net or employment-generating opportunities— are high-risk adventures.”¹⁸⁵

War-torn countries and post-Communist countries present some similarities concerning social capital. While some authors believe that “the hallmark of the Soviet system was the purposeful destruction of what is now understood as social capital”,¹⁸⁶ other think that “the Communist system left a double legacy: individuals are likely to have a high degree of trust in their immediate social network, and a high degree of distrust in the formal institutions of the state.”¹⁸⁷ Studies of the post-Communist period also show that people continue to mistrust formal institutions and to rely heavily on informal networks in order to cope with economic crisis and state failure.¹⁸⁸ In both cases, the level of bonding social capital appears to be much higher than the levels of bridging and linking social capital. The question is whether, and for what reasons, bonding social capital in post-Communist countries represents an impeding or a facilitating factor in the transition to political democracy and a market economy.¹⁸⁹

These similarities between war-torn and post-Communist countries are not surprising if the breakdown of Communist regimes and the outbreak of violent conflicts are both considered in the context of globalization. As Colletta and Cullen remind us, one of the similarities among war-torn countries is the combined political, social, and economic instability resulting from the transition—changes that facilitated the emergence of hostilities in each examined country. Another commonality is the impact of the local-to-global transition in each country on social cohesion or fragmentation.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, in war-torn countries, the presence of international actors, and the politics of reconstruction, contribute to the acceleration of local-to-global transition, to the further marketization and monetization of social relations, and therefore to the ongoing transformation of social capital.¹⁹¹

All of these considerations have direct implications for Bosnia-Herzegovina, a country with a strong international presence that is undergoing a “double transition from war to peace and from a failed Communist system to a functioning market economy”.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 108 and 109.

¹⁸⁶ Nichols, Thomas, 1996, p. 631.

¹⁸⁷ Rose, Richard, Mishler, William, and Haerpfer, Christian, 1997, p. 91. Note that this difference in analysis can be related either to divergent interpretations of the Communist system or to different definitions of social capital.

¹⁸⁸ See Rose, Richard, 1998; Aberg, Martin, 2000.

¹⁸⁹ See Stark, David and Grabher, Gernot (eds.), 1997.

¹⁹⁰ Colletta, Nat and Cullen, Michelle (eds.), 2000, p. 87.

¹⁹¹ In Rwanda and Cambodia, for example, where people focus on primary, bonding relations and view moves toward establishing bridging links as a weakening of their own social capital, “all [interviewed villagers] felt that market penetration and monetization had eroded local trust and mutual assistance.” In fact, many of them thought that “market penetration had affected social capital in their societies more than had conflict, in terms of the shift of focus from familial and intra-community ties to inter-community relations” (*Ibid.*, p. 78).

¹⁹² Petritsch, Wolfgang, 2001.

Annex 3. Methodology: Initial Intentions, Difficulties, and Adaptations

The qualitative part of the research, based on **focus group discussions** and **interviews** with key informants, was carried out in April and May 2001.

Three **basic focus groups** were foreseen at each site in the sample,¹⁹³ taking into account the ethnic and urban/rural cleavages:

- urban residents belonging to the local ethnic majority,
- urban residents belonging to the local ethnic minorities,
- rural residents.¹⁹⁴

As far as possible, each basic focus group was to include locals, IDPs, and returnees; and take into account the socio-demographic categories of gender, age, and levels of education and income. In addition, some **specific focus groups** were held with vulnerable groups such as IDPs living in collective centers (Tuzla) and Serb refugees from Croatia (Banja Luka); veterans, who have a strong collective identity and high potential for collective action (Bihac, Zvornik); and young people, whose participation in local life is particularly important for the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Brcko, Tuzla). In all, 25 focus groups discussions were conducted (see Introduction, Table 1).

Due to organizational problems and political tensions, the basic focus groups were not always as representative as had been hoped. Rural residents were often recruited in one or a few villages, and did not reflect the situation in the entire municipality. Members of local ethnic minorities were sometimes reluctant to attend focus groups, due to personal fears (Bosniacs in Banja Luka and Zvornik¹⁹⁵) or political reasons (Croats in Brcko and Gornji Vakuf¹⁹⁶). In divided municipalities, misunderstandings and tensions led to unexpected results: in Gornji Vakuf, the two rural focus groups covered only the Bosniac part of the municipality; and in Brcko, the focus groups held in the former Bosniac and Croat parts of the District consisted only of local political leaders, i.e., middle-aged men.

Similar problems appeared in some specific focus groups: young people in Brcko were all Serbs from the former Serb part of the District, young people in Tuzla were all local students, and veterans in Bihac were all war invalids. Finally, many focus group

¹⁹³ For a description of the six sites, see Annex 4.

¹⁹⁴ This pattern had to be adapted to each local context, especially in the case of formerly or still-divided municipalities. In Brcko, four basic focus groups were foreseen: former Serbian part, ethnic majority; former Serbian part, ethnic minorities; former Bosniac part, ethnic majority; former Croat part, ethnic majority. In Gornji Vakuf, three basic focus groups were foreseen: urban residents from the Bosniac and Croat part; rural residents from the Bosniac part; rural residents from the Croat part.

¹⁹⁵ The fieldwork in Banja Luka was carried out in the immediate aftermath of violent riots to protest reconstruction of the Ferhadija mosque (destroyed in 1993). The fieldwork in Zvornik took place just one week after veterans' associations staged protests against the arrest of the former local commandant, who was sent to the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

¹⁹⁶ All of the fieldwork was carried out during the time the Federation was shaken by a deep political crisis: the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ) had withdrawn from all federal institutions (including the police and the army), had organized demonstrations in favor of a third Croat entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and was openly defying the international community.

discussions were held during the day, leading to a slight over-representation of unemployed people and pensioners.

Six in-depth interviews with **initial key informants** were also planned at each site. These key informants were defined as follows:

- the mayor or one of his close associates,
- a representative of the main local ethnic minority,
- representative of the field office of OSCE (Democratization Branch),
- a representative of the field office of UNHCR,
- a representative of a citizens' association subsidized by the state or the municipality,
- a representative of a non-governmental organization funded by the international community.¹⁹⁷

In a few cases, due to the local political context, this scheme could not be respected: in Banja Luka, the mayor refused to give an interview; in Zvornik, the same happened with the veterans' association.¹⁹⁸ Other interviews took place in a climate of crisis, the mayor having been dismissed, and his successor just elected (Zvornik), or not yet appointed (Bihac) by the municipal assembly. Finally, some OSCE and UNHCR representatives were just taking up their posts, due to the high turnover in these international organizations, and did not have enough knowledge of the situation to comment.

Both the focus group discussions and interviews with initial key informants were meant to help the study team find **further key informants**. The main objective of such a two-step methodology was to identify informal notables and mediators (religious leaders, lawyers, private entrepreneurs, etc.). From this point of view, in all but a few cases, the results were rather disappointing, since the identification of such informal actors would have required much more time, and a truly participatory approach. On the other hand, this methodology proved very useful for identifying formal voluntary associations that played an important role at the local level, as well as neighborhood communities (*mjesne zajednice*, MZs)¹⁹⁹ with specific problems and/or strong collective mobilization related to local public services.

In total, 30 in-depth interviews were conducted with initial key informants, and 37 with further key informants. Of these 67 interviews, 45 were transcribed and used for in the final report. A few persons—local opposition leaders, municipal employees, people depending on the subsidies of international organizations—expressed the wish to remain anonymous, for fear of possible consequences.

This qualitative part of the study led to some adaptations in its problematic, for several reasons. First, a common feature of all focus group discussions was the participants' inability or unwillingness to separate the specific issue of access to local-level public

¹⁹⁷ On the distinction between citizens' associations (*udruzenja gradjana*) and non-governmental organizations (*nevladine organizacije*), see the Introduction, footnote 187, and Part IIC.

¹⁹⁸ About the political background of these refusals, see footnote 185.

¹⁹⁹ About neighborhood communities (MZs), see Introduction, footnote 9, and Part IID.

services from the larger issues of poverty, unemployment, and housing. Asked about public services, some participants talked about the economy and employment. In the focus group with young people in Brcko, while participants were talking about the lack of youth politics, a young girl stated simply that, “*if there were some jobs, it would not be so boring.*” In the focus group with veterans in Zvornik, one of them asked the group:

Isn't it more appropriate to give a donation to build, let's say, a small factory that could employ people, instead of giving money that is thrown away on painting a school or asphaltting some village road ? – man, Zvornik

Other participants thought there was no point talking about public services as long as the economic situation was so bad:

As long as the economy does not work, we can't do anything. We can do some comments, but we can't undertake anything. – man, Banja Luka

Others became bitter and aggressive:

I am interested in my firm, the thing that I will live from. Now you talk about culture, this and that, we are not interested in any culture, any theatre—I have a theater production at home every morning when I prepare breakfast and say: kids, do you want cheese and cream—because I have a cow—or do you want me to bake you some bread ? [I care] that my fridge is full and I can say to my child: my son, just tell me what you would like to eat today. That is what I am interested in because everything has come down to bare survival. – woman, Brcko

Second, one of the most striking features of the discussions about interpersonal relations was that they did not lead primarily to complains about ethnic hatred or war traumas, but to grievances about economic inequalities, and problems related to property restitution and differential access to social benefits and donations. Therefore, although these social issues were already examined in other World Bank studies, and were not, strictly speaking, part of the work of the present study, they were taken into account as essential determinants of interpersonal relations and confidence in local-level institutions; that is, of the amount and nature of social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Another change of emphasis concerned local-level institutions. As already mentioned, it turned out to be very difficult to identify informal actors by means of the focus group discussions and interviews. More attention was, therefore, given to formal voluntary associations and their role at the local level, especially in facilitating access to public services and organizing collective actions. The fact that some focus groups had participants originating from the same MZ, that MZ boards were often mentioned as an important link between citizens and municipal authorities (at least before the war), and that many collective actions were organized at the MZ level, and by its elected leaders, also gave this local-level institution, inherited from Yugoslav self-management, a particular importance.

Finally, the non-representative character of some focus groups presented both advantages and disadvantages. Cleavages between urban and rural residents, among ethnic groups,

and among locals, IDPs, and returnees were obvious in focus groups in which only one side was represented; but they often remained hidden in focus groups in which the different groups were represented. In this way, homogenous focus groups showed which social cleavages exist in Bosnian society, while heterogeneous focus groups showed how they are managed or denied. Similarly, focus groups consisting of residents of the same village or suburb did not reflect the situation in the whole municipality, but they were more likely to shed light on concrete problems and behaviors, rather than complaining about general problems.

The tendency to focus on a few concrete cases was also present in the in-depth interviews with further key informants. These interviews made it possible to collect detailed and reliable information, but made it more difficult to compare the six study sites, since each case was illustrative rather than representative, and was related to a specific place, local-level institution, or public service. This was all the more true since the demographic, socio-economic, and political situations of the sites were very different.

While the qualitative part of the study was meant to provide some strong hypotheses and illustrations of their validity, the quantitative part—a nationwide opinion survey²⁰⁰—was meant to check the validity of these hypotheses for Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole. The survey was carried out in June 2001, shortly after the end of the fieldwork.

The **opinion survey** was based on a representative sample of 675 persons covering all of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Its aim was not to provide data covering the entire scope of the study, since quantitative data about social cleavages, discrimination, corruption in the access to public services, and confidence in public institutions are already available in other studies by the World Bank and other international organizations.²⁰¹ Nevertheless, the structure of survey questionnaire reflected the main objectives of the study: evolution of interpersonal relations and balance between formal and informal institutions (questions 1 through 6), assessment of public services and formal institutions (questions 7 through 10), forms of collective action related to local public services (questions 11 through 15), and participation in formal voluntary associations (questions 16 through 21).²⁰²

The questions were largely based on the Social Capital Assessment Tool (SCAT) and the prototype questionnaires for the World Bank's local-level institutions studies,²⁰³ but were adapted to the Bosnian context and the results of the fieldwork. Questions on level of income were designed to illuminate the issue of poverty; and questions related to the evolution of interpersonal relations were designed to disentangle the specific impacts of ethnic conflict and material impoverishment.

²⁰⁰ See Annex 5.

²⁰¹ See, among others,

²⁰² See Annex 6.

²⁰³ See Anirudha Krishna and Elizabeth Shrader, *Social Capital Assessment Tool*, Conference on Social Capital and Poverty Reduction, Washington: The World Bank, June 22-24, 1999; and *The Local-Level Institutions Study: Program Description and Prototype Questionnaires*, Local-Level Institutions Working Paper no. 2, Washington: The World Bank, August 1998.

Annex 4. Qualitative Work: Presentation of the Six Selected Sites

The qualitative fieldwork was conducted in April and May 2001 at six sites: Banja Luka, Bihac, Brcko, Gornji Vakuf, Tuzla, and Zvornik. Following various geographic, economic, and demographic criteria, this sample can be considered representative (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. Main Characteristics of the Six Sites

	Location and size	Pre-war population (1991)	Level of pre-war personal income (1989)	Pre-war ethnic composition (1991, percent)	Post-war ethnic composition (1996)
Banja Luka	Serb Republic, West Big	<u>Municipality</u> 195,139 <u>Town</u> 143,079	3,122 dinars	Serbs : 54.8 Croats : 14.9 Bosniacs : 14.6 Yugoslavs: 12.0	Serbs <u>Local minorities</u> Bosniacs, Croats
Bihac	Federation, West Middle	<u>Municipality</u> 70,896 <u>Town</u> 45,553	2,372 dinars	Bosniacs : 66.6 Serbs : 17.8 Croats : 7.7 Yugoslavs: 6.0	Bosniacs <u>Local minorities</u> Croats
Brcko	District, North Middle	<u>Municipality</u> 87,332 <u>Town</u> 31,437	1,637 dinars	Bosniacs : 44.4 Croats : 25.4 Serbs : 20.8 Yugoslavs: 6.4	Divided into three ethnic municipalities <u>No minorities left</u>
Gornji Vakuf	Federation, Central Small	<u>Municipality</u> 25,130 <u>Town</u> 5,344	1,368 dinars	Bosniacs : 56.1 Croats : 42.6	Divided in two ethnic municipalities <u>No minorities left</u>
Tuzla	Federation, East Big	<u>Municipality</u> 131,861 <u>Town</u> 83,770	3 981 dinars	Bosniacs : 47.6 Yugoslavs: 16.6 Croats : 15.6 Serbs : 15.5	Bosniacs <u>Local minorities</u> Croats, Serbs
Zvornik	Serb Republic, East Small	<u>Municipality</u> 81,111 <u>Town</u> 14,584	2 272 dinars	Bosniacs : 59.4 Serbs : 38.0	Serbs <u>No minorities left</u>

Table 2. Impact of the War and Post-war Periods in the Six Sites

	Level of material destruction (1996)	Number of IDPs and refugees (1996)	Number of restituted properties (Sept. 2001)	Number of minority returnees (Jan. – Oct. 2001)
Banja Luka	<u>Damaged dwellings</u> 552 (0.9 p.) <u>Destroyed dwellings</u> 180 (0.3 p.)	74,000	3,174 (19.2 percent)	2,715 Bosniacs 408 Croats
Bihac	<u>Damaged dwellings</u> 5,277 (25.2 p.) <u>Destroyed dwellings</u> 370 (1.8 p.)	12,500	1,293 (50.7 percent)	38 Serbs
Brcko	<u>Damaged dwellings</u> 13,272 (53.3 p.) <u>Destroyed dwellings</u> 2,094 (8.4 p.)	55,000	2,075 (30.2 percent)	1,869 Bosniacs 186 Croats 259 Serbs
Gornji Vakuf	<u>Damaged dwellings</u> 1,112 (19.5 p.) <u>Destroyed dwellings</u> 366 (6.4 p.)	3,600	172 (56.2 percent)	116 Croats 74 Bosniacs 11 Serbs
Tuzla	<u>Damaged dwellings</u> 2,323 (5.4 p.) <u>Destroyed dwellings</u> 1,173 (2.7 p.)	45,000	3,247 (43.0 percent)	976 Serbs 20 Croats
Zvornik	<u>Damaged dwellings</u> 5,589 (30.5 p.) <u>Destroyed dwellings</u> 1,079 (5.9 p.)	31,000	706 (12.2 percent)	1,877 Bosniacs

Banja Luka is located in the Vrbas valley and surrounded by low-altitude mountains. It is the second largest town of Bosnia-Herzegovina after Sarajevo, and an important industrial, administrative, and educational center. Before the war, its main industries were electronics, metallurgy, clothing, and food processing.

Bihac is located in the Una valley and surrounded by low and medium-altitude mountains. It is a regional industrial, administrative, and educational center. Before the war, its main industries were metallurgy, chemistry, clothing, food processing, and industry and wood processing.

Brcko is located in the Pannonian plain, along the Sava river (Posavina region), close to the Croatian border. It is a regional industrial center and an important communications

crossroads.²⁰⁴ The surrounding rural area has an intense agricultural activities. Before the war, its main industries were food processing and clothing.

Gornji Vakuf is located in a mountainous area, and is mainly rural and agricultural. Before the war, its industries were mining (coal, quartz), wood processing, and clothing.

Tuzla is located in the mineral and industrial basin of the Spreca river, and surrounded by low-altitude mountains. It is the main industrial, administrative, and educational center of northeastern Bosnia. Before the war, its main industries were mining industry (salt, coal), chemistry, metallurgy, building materials, and food processing.

Zvornik is located in the Drina valley, close to the Serbian border, and surrounded by low-altitude mountains. It is mainly rural and agricultural. Before the war, its main industries were mining industry (bauxite), clothing, building materials, and wood processing.

From a political point of view, this sample offers a large range of situations and includes some particularly interesting cases:

Banja Luka is the main urban center of the Serb Republic. Despite a thorough ethnic cleansing campaign, a few thousands Bosniacs and Croats remained in the town until the end of the war. Banja Luka has also been the center of a strong regional opposition to the Pale leadership and, following the political crisis of summer 1997, has become the new capital of the Serb Republic. The municipal assembly elected in 1997 was dominated by the moderate nationalists of the coalition “Concord” (“*Sloga*”). The new coalition elected in April 2000 has no clear majority, but the mayor is a member of the Party of Independent Social Democrats (*Savez Nezavisnih Socijaldemokrata*, SNSD).

Bihac was besieged by Serb forces during the war, as was the surrounding Bosniac-populated region of Cazinska Krajina. There was no fighting between Bosniacs and Croats in this area, but in September 1993, after the Sarajevo central government had rejected the Owen-Stoltenberg peace plan, the dissidence of the regional leader Fikret Abdic led to bloody fighting among Bosniacs themselves. After the municipal elections of 1997, the coalition led by the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) enjoyed nearly monopolistic control in the municipal assembly. The municipal elections of April 2000 have reduced this control to a narrow and unstable majority.

Brcko was highly contested during the war due to its strategic position, and the Serb part of the municipality experienced a thorough and violent ethnic cleansing. There was no fighting between Bosniacs and Croats in Brcko, but its federal part was divided in June 1994 between a Bosniac (Brcko-Rahic) and a Croat (Ravne-Brcko) municipality. Brcko was put under direct international tutelage in February 1997, and has had the status of a unified and neutral district since March 1999. A provisional District Assembly and

²⁰⁴ Brcko is the main Bosnian harbor on the Sava river, as well as a crossroads (railway, road) linking Bosnia-Herzegovina with Central Europe. During the war, the narrow *Brcko corridor* linked the western and eastern parts of the Serb Republic.

government were appointed in March 2000 by the international Supervisor, so no local elections took place in April 2000 (see Part ID, Box 3).

Gornji Vakuf experienced intense fighting and ethnic cleansing between Croats and Bosniacs in 1993/1994, leading to territorial partition. The Croat part was renamed Uskoplje. Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje is one of the few municipalities in the Federation that remained divided after the war. The results of the municipal elections of 1997 were never implemented, and the municipal elections of April 2000 were boycotted by the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ). The municipal assembly is dominated by the Party of Democratic Action (SDA). Following strong international pressure, an agreement about the reintegration of Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje was reached in July 2001. This agreement foresees the nomination of an international Supervisor for the municipality, the designation of a provisional common municipal assembly, and the reunification of all municipal bodies and public services before the end of March 2002.

Tuzla, before the war, was one of only two municipalities led by a non-nationalist party. During the war, the municipal authorities were able to resist the assaults of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), avoid open conflict with the local Croat Council of Defence (HVO) and preserve, at least partially, the multi-ethnic character and spirit of the town. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) again won a majority in the municipal assembly in September 1997 and in April 2000, and the wartime mayor of Tuzla, Selim Beslagic, became the new governor of the Tuzla-Podrinja canton after the defeat of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) in the general elections of September 2000.

Zvornik was one of the towns in eastern Bosnia that was overrun and ethnically cleansed by the Yugoslav army and Serb paramilitaries, in 1992. The part of Zvornik municipality that remained under control of the Bosnian army during the war became the municipality of Sapna after the General Peace Agreement was signed. The municipal assembly elected in September 1997 was dominated by the Serb Democratic Party (SDS), while the new assembly elected in April 2000 has no clear majority. Zvornik is the first municipality in the eastern part of the Serb Republic to experience massive minority returns since 1999.

The neighborhood communities (MZs) on which the study did focus are :

- **“4. Juli” (Brcko):** the MZ “4. Juli” is a residential suburb, which had a majority of Bosniac inhabitants before the war (65 percent; Serbs: 25 percent; Croats: 5 percent; Yugoslavs: 3 percent; others: 2 percent). Bosniacs and Croats have left at the beginning of the war. This MZ was located on the Serb side of the frontline, and was largely destroyed. In 1996, it was partly settled by Serb IDPs from the Sarajevo area. Minority returns started there in 2000.
- **Ada (Banja Luka):** the MZ Ada is a residential worker suburb, which had already a majority of Serb inhabitants before the war (63 percent; Bosniacs: 13 percent; Yugoslavs: 7 percent; Croats: 4 percent; others: 13 percent). Bosniacs and Croats have left during the war.

- **Bistrica (Gornji Vakuf):** the MZ Bistrica is a mixed Croat-Bosniac village which counted about 1,700 inhabitants before the war. Croats have left in 1993, at the beginning of the Croat-Bosniac fighting. This MZ was located on the Bosniac side of the frontline, and was partly destroyed. In 2001, it was one of the rare villages in this municipality where some minority returns did happen.
- **Grcica (Brcko):** the MZ Grcica is a residential suburb, which had already a slight majority of Serb inhabitants (51 percent; Bosniacs: 29 percent; Yugoslavs: 9 percent; Croats: 6 percent; others : 5 percent) before the war. Bosniacs and Croats have left at the beginning of the war. Minority returns started there in 2000.
- **Klanac (Brcko):** the MZ Klanac is a residential suburb, which had a large majority of Bosniac inhabitants before the war (81 percent; Yugoslavs: 7 percent; Serbs: 5 percent; Croats: 4 percent; others: 3 percent). Bosniacs and Croats have left at the beginning of the war. This MZ was located on the Serb side of the frontline, and was largely destroyed. In 1996, it was partly settled by Serb IDPs from the Sarajevo area. Minority returns started there in 2000 (see also Part IB, Box I).
- **Krizevici (Zvornik):** the MZ Krizevici is a Bosniac village which had about 3,000 inhabitants before the war. Bosniacs have left at the beginning of the war. This MZ was located on the Serb side of the frontline, and was largely destroyed. In 1996, it was partly settled by Serb IDPs from the Sarajevo area. Minority returns started there in 1999.
- **Martin Brod (Bihac):** the MZ Martin Brod is a Serb village which had about 200 inhabitants, and belonged to the municipality of Drvar before the war. Serbs have left in the Fall 1995, after the joint Croat-Bosniac offensive in Western Bosnia. This MZ has been transferred from the municipality of Drvar to the municipality of Bihac in 1996. Minority returns started there in 1998.
- **Sicki Brod (Tuzla):** the MZ Sicki Brod is a peripheral worker suburb, which had already a large majority of Bosniac inhabitants before the war (93 percent; Yugoslavs: 4 percent; Croats: 2 percent; others: 1 percent).
- **Simin Han (Tuzla):** the MZ Simin Han is a peripheral and residential suburb which had a mixed population before the war (Serbs: 41 percent; Bosniacs: 28 percent; Yugoslavs: 17 percent; Croats: 9 percent; others: 5 percent). Serbs have left at the beginning of the war, and have been replaced by Bosniac IDPs from eastern Bosnia. Due to the proximity of the frontline, some public buildings and private houses have been destroyed by fighting and shelling.
- **Slatina (Tuzla):** the MZ Slatina is a central urban neighborhood of educated middle class residents, which had a mixed population before the war (Bosniacs: 48 percent; Yugoslavs: 22 percent; Serbs: 18 percent; Croats: 8 percent; others: 4 percent). Many Serbs have left during the war.

Annex 5. Quantitative Work: Opinion Survey Sample

The opinion survey sample consisted of 675 persons covering all Bosnia and Herzegovina. 447 respondents—66.2 percent—are located in the Federation (Bosniac majority area: 319—47.2 percent; Croat majority area: 128—19.0 percent). In the Serb Republic (Serb majority area), the sample was 228—33.8 percent.

Two hundred ninety-three respondents—43.4 percent—said they are of Bosniac nationality²⁰⁵; 214—31.7 percent—said they are of Serb nationality²⁰⁶; 139—20.6 percent—said they are of Croat nationality²⁰⁷; 15—2.2 percent—said they are of Bosnian nationality²⁰⁸; 7—1.0 percent—said they have a mixed background²⁰⁹; 6 said they have another nationality²¹⁰; and one did not answer.

Five hundred eighty-three respondents—86.4 percent—belong to the local ethnic majority of their present municipality²¹¹; 89—13.2 percent—belong to the local ethnic minority of their present municipality²¹²; and 3 did not know or did not answer.

Two hundred ninety-nine respondents—44.3 percent—are men; and 376—55.7 percent—are women. One hundred sixty-one men—84.3 percent—and 30 women—15.7 percent—belong to the legal category of war veterans.²¹³

One hundred seventeen respondents—13.3 percent—are between 18 and 29 years old; 158—23.4 percent—are between 30 and 39 years old; 147—21.8 percent—are between 40 and 49 years old; 111—16.4 percent—are between 50 and 59 years old; and 82—12.1 percent—are more than 59 years old. The average age of the sample is 40.5 years.

One hundred forty-one respondents—20.9 percent—are single; 439—65.0 percent—are married; 20—3.0 percent—are divorced; 68—10.1 percent—are widowed; 5—0.7 percent—have another marital status; and one did not answer.

Four hundred thirty-two respondents—64.0 percent—live in urban settlements²¹⁴; and 243—36.0 percent—live in rural settlements.²¹⁵ Five hundred fifty-two respondents—

²⁰⁵ Bosniac maj. area : 263—82.4 percent; Croat maj. area: 21—16.4 percent; Serb maj. area: 9—3.9 percent.

²⁰⁶ Bosniac maj. area: 10—3.1 percent; Serb maj. area: 204—89.5 percent.

²⁰⁷ Bosniac maj. area: 29—9.1 percent; Croat maj. area: 106—82.8 percent; Serb maj. area: 4—1.8 percent.

²⁰⁸ Bosniac maj. area: 9—2.8 percent; Croat maj. area: 1—0.8 percent; Serb maj. area: 5—2.2 percent.

²⁰⁹ Bosniac maj. area: 4—1.3 percent; Serb maj. area : 3—1.3 percent.

²¹⁰ Bosniac maj. area: 4—1.3 percent; Serb maj. area : 2—0.9 percent.

²¹¹ Bosniac maj. area: 278—87.1 percent; Croat maj. area: 98—76.6 percent; Serb maj. area: 207—90.8 percent.

²¹² Bosniac maj. area: 39—12.2 percent; Croat maj. area: 30—23.4 percent; Serb maj. area: 20—8.8 percent.

²¹³ It is probable that at least some women who say they belong to the legal category of war veterans are in reality war widows.

²¹⁴ Bosniac maj. area: 206—64.6 percent; Croat maj. area: 77—60.2 percent; Serb maj. area: 149—65.4 percent.

81.8 percent—are locals²¹⁶; 117—17.3 percent—are IDPs²¹⁷; and 6 did not know or did not answer. Due to their low number—20, 3.0 percent, returnees are included in the category “Locals”. The survey made no distinction between those who returned to an area where they belong to the local ethnic majority, and those who are minority returnees.

One hundred forty-seven respondents—21.8 percent—have completed between 0 and 8 years of education; 405—60.0 percent—have completed between 9 and 12 years; and 123—18.2 percent—have completed more than 12 years.

Thirty-five respondents—5.2 percent—are students²¹⁸; 76—11.3 percent—are housewives²¹⁹; 190—28.1 percent—have a stable and formal job²²⁰; 179—26.5 percent—are unemployed or waitlisted²²¹; 56—8.3 percent—have a precarious job²²²; 128—19.0 percent—are pensioners²²³; 10—1.5 percent—have another professional status²²⁴; one did not know or did not answer.

One hundred fifty-eight respondents—23.4 percent—said they are “on the brink of existence” or “substantially below the average income”²²⁵; 128—19.0 percent—said they are “slightly below the average income”²²⁶; 324—48.0 percent—said they are “around the average income”²²⁷; and 56—8.3 percent—said they are “slightly above the average income” or “significantly above the average income.”²²⁸ In the study, these levels are categorized as: minimal level of income, low level of income, medium level of income, high level of income. Nine respondents did not know or did not answer.

²¹⁵ Bosniac maj. area: 113—35.4 percent; Croat maj. area: 51—39.8 percent; Serb maj. area: 79—343.6 percent.

²¹⁶ Bosniac maj. area: 283—89.8 percent; Croat maj. area: 109—85.8 percent; Serb maj. area: 160—70.5 percent.

²¹⁷ Bosniac maj. area: 32—10.2 percent; Croat maj. area: 18—14.2 percent; Serb maj. area: 67—29.5 percent.

²¹⁸ Bosniac maj. area: 20—6.3 percent; Croat maj. area: 6—4.7 percent; Serb maj. area: 9—3.9; percent.

²¹⁹ Bosniac maj. area: 38—11.9 percent; Croat maj. area: 8—6.3 percent; Serb maj. area: 30—13.2 percent.

²²⁰ Bosniac maj. area: 92—28.8 percent; Croat maj. area: 47—36.7 percent; Serb maj. area: 51—22.4 percent.

²²¹ Bosniac maj. area: 81—25.4 percent; Croat maj. area: 28—21.9 percent; Serb maj. area: 70—30.7 percent.

²²² Bosniac maj. area: 22—6.9 percent; Croat maj. area: 17—13.3 percent; Serb maj. area: 17—7.5 percent.

²²³ Bosniac maj. area: 63—19.7 percent; Croat maj. area: 18—14.1 percent; Serb maj. area: 47—20.6 percent.

²²⁴ Bosniac maj. area: 3—0.9 percent; Croat maj. area: 4—3.1 percent; Serb maj. area: 3—1.3 percent.

²²⁵ Bosniac maj. area: 70—22.2 percent; Croat maj. area: 13—10.6 percent; Serb maj. area: 75—32.9 percent.

²²⁶ Bosniac maj. area: 63—20.0 percent; Croat maj. area: 19—15.4 percent; Serb maj. area: 46—20.2 percent.

²²⁷ Bosniac maj. area: 162—51.4 percent; Croat maj. area: 72—58.5 percent; Serb maj. area: 90—39.4 percent.

²²⁸ Bosniac maj. area: 20—6.3 percent; Croat maj. area: 19—15.4 percent; Serb maj. area: 17—7.5 percent.

Four hundred seventy-four respondents—70.2 percent—own their present accommodation²²⁹; 134—19.9 percent—occupy someone else’s property²³⁰; 35—5.2 percent—rent their present accommodation²³¹; 30—4.4 percent—have another housing status²³²; and 2 did not know or did not answer.

²²⁹ Bosniac maj. area: 233—73.0 percent; Croat maj. area: 93—72.7 percent; Serb maj. area: 148—64.9 percent.

²³⁰ Bosniac maj. area: 55—17.2 percent; Croat maj. area: 14—10.9 percent; Serb maj. area: 65—28.5 percent.

²³¹ Bosniac maj. area: 16—5.0 percent; Croat maj. area: 5—3.9 percent; Serb maj. area: 14—6.1 percent.

²³² Bosniac maj. area: 14—4.4 percent; Croat maj. area: 16—12.5 percent.

Annex 6. Quantitative Work: Opinion Survey Questionnaire

Question 1 – In the past three months, how many times did you invite the following people into your home for lunch, dinner, or a similar occasion ?

Items

- A- Relatives
- B- Closest friends
- C- Work colleagues
- D- Old neighbors (from before the war) / same nationality
- E- Old neighbors (from before the war) / other nationality
- F- New neighbors / same nationality
- G- New neighbors / other nationality

Answers

- 1- Not once
- 2- A couple of time (not more than 2-3 times)
- 3- Often (more than 3 times)
- 4- Regularly (at least twice a month)
- 5- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 2 – Do you socialize with those people to the same degree as before, more than before, or less than before? If you socialize less than before, what is the main reason ?

(Question in regard to new neighbors: Do you socialize with those people a lot / enough / a little ? If you socialize a little, what is the main reason?)

Items

- H- Relatives
- I- Closest friends
- J- Work colleagues
- K- Old neighbors (from before the war) / same nationality
- L- Old neighbors (from before the war) / other nationality
- M- New neighbors / same nationality
- N- New neighbors / other nationality

Answers

- 1- We associate a lot / more than before
- 2- We associate enough / to the same degree as before
- 3- We associate little / less because we do not have enough time/money
- 4- We associate little / less because we do not live and work in the same place
- 5- We associate little / less because we do not know one another well enough
- 6- We associate little / less because there is no desire for this
- 7- We associate little / less because of political / ethnic intolerance
- 8- We associate little / less for some other reasons
- 9- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 3 – In the past three months, how many times did you extend financial or material assistance to the following people ?

Items

- O- Relatives
- P- Closest friends
- Q- Work colleagues
- R- Old neighbors (from before the war) / same nationality
- S- Old neighbors (from before the war) / other nationality
- T- New neighbors / same nationality
- U- New neighbors / other nationality

Answers

- 1- Not once
- 2- Once
- 3- A couple of times
- 4- Often (more than three times)
- 5- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 4 – In the case that they were to seek any type of financial or material assistance, would you be willing to give such assistance to these people?

Items

- A- Relatives
- B- Closest friends
- C- Work colleagues
- D- Neighbors

Answers

- 1- Yes, in any case
- 2- Yes, if I am sure that they are in a difficult financial situation
- 3- No, because I do not have the resources to be able to help them
- 4- No, because I am not sure how they would use that money
- 5- No, not at all
- 6- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 5 – In the case that they were to seek some financial contribution to assist the most vulnerable members of the community, would you be willing to give such a contribution to these institutions and organizations ?

Items

- A- Your MZ board
- B- Your local parish
- C- The trade union of the firm where you work or used to work
- D- A citizens' association
- E- A humanitarian or non-governmental organization

Answers

- 7- Yes, in any case
- 8- Yes, if I am sure that they will use this money to help the most vulnerable
- 9- No, because I do not have the resources to give such a contribution
- 10- No, because I am not sure how they would use that money
- 11- No, not at all
- 12- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 6 – In the case that you were to find yourself in a serious financial crisis, to whom could you turn for help?

Answers

- 1- Relatives
- 2- Closest friends
- 3- Work colleagues
- 4- Neighbors
- 5- Your present or previous firm
- 6- Your MZ board
- 7- The local Center for Social Work
- 8- A humanitarian or non-governmental organization
- 9- A citizen's association
- 10- Influential persons

Question 7 – In your municipality, what is the main problem in relation to the provision of following public services?

Items

- A- Public security
- B- Issuing of official documents
- C- Social assistance
- D- Housing for IDPs and returnees
- E- Public transport
- F- Roads
- G- Water supply and sewage
- H- Garbage collection and street cleaning
- I- Healthcare
- J- Education
- K- Cultural activities
- L- Youth activities

Answers

- 1- Does not exist at all
- 2- Low quality
- 3- High prices
- 4- Poor conditions of infrastructure
- 5- Corruption (bribes, private connections)
- 6- Discrimination (some citizens are in an unequal position due to their nationality, gender, political affiliations, social background, etc.)
- 7- Generally there are no problems
- 8- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 8 – In your opinion, what are the three main reasons for the existence of these problems in relation to the provision of public services?

Answers

- 1- Higher-level institutions obstruct the work of the municipality
- 2- Municipality does not have money
- 3- Civil servants are not professional enough
- 4- Local politicians do not serve the interests of citizens
- 5- Citizens are disinterested
- 6- Other (write in what!)
- 7- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 9 – How would you evaluate the work of your MZ board?

Answers

- 1- Does not exist at all
- 2- Functions poorly, as it does not have adequate legal competences, staffing, and material means
- 3- Functions, but only serves the interests of a few citizens
- 4- Functions poorly, as citizens do not wish to participate in its work
- 5- Functions well and works for the benefit of all citizens
- 6- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 10 – In the past year, did you participate in any of these actions to improve the delivery of some public services?

Answers

- 1- Gave a financial contribution
- 2- Participated in collective work
- 3- Participated in a clean-up action (street cleaning, riverbank cleaning, etc.)
- 4- Attended a citizens' gathering
- 5- Signed a petition
- 6- Participated in a citizens' delegation
- 7- Participated in a street demonstration
- 8- Blocked traffic as a sign of protest
- 9- Informed local media
- 10- Informed an international organization
- 11- Something else (write in what!)

Question 11 – Which people were the most active in these collective actions?

Answers

- 1- All local residents equally
- 2- Those local residents who most needed the action
- 3- Representatives of the MZ
- 4- Members of voluntary associations
- 5- Representatives of the municipality
- 6- Local politicians
- 7- Private entrepreneurs
- 8- Influential people
- 9- Others (write in who!)
- 10- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 12 – If there were an infrastructure project in your municipality aimed at improving local public services such as garbage collection, education, or health care, would you participate?

Answers

- 1- Yes, in any case
- 2- Yes, if I have personal benefit
- 3- No, because I do not have enough money / time
- 4- No, because it is not my responsibility
- 5- Something else (write in what!)
- 6- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 13 – In which of these local projects would you be most ready to participate?

Answers

- 1- Cleaning-up action (street cleaning, riverbank cleaning, etc.)
- 2- Repair of roads / streets
- 3- Repair of canalizations
- 4- Repair of health center
- 5- Repair of school
- 6- Repair of sport / cultural facilities
- 7- Construction of collective center for homeless people
- 8- Opening of a youth center

Question 14 – If there were a project in your municipality that endangered local life, such as opening of a waste dump or closure of a public institution, would you take part in public protests?

Answers

- 1- Yes, in any case
- 2- Yes, if I am directly affected
- 3- No, for fear of possible repercussions
- 4- No, as I don't believe in the effectiveness of such action
- 5- Something else (write in what!)
- 6- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 15 – Are you a member of any citizens' association or non-governmental organization and, if so, which one(s)?

Items

- A- Sports club
- B- Cultural / artistic society
- C- Mountaineering / scouting association
- D- Hunting / fishing society
- E- Other leisure association (write in which!)
- F- Condominium council
- G- School council
- H- MZ board
- I- Local parish
- J- Religious association
- K- Political party
- L- IDPs' association
- M- Veterans' association
- N- Pensioners' association
- O- Trade union
- P- Other professional association (write in which!)
- Q- Women's association
- R- Youth association
- S- Ecological association
- T- Human rights association
- U- Other voluntary association (write in which!)

Answers

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

(Question 16 and 17: only for respondents belonging to at least one voluntary association. In case the respondent is affiliated with several voluntary associations, only the one in which the respondent is the most active is taken into consideration)

Question 16 – What is the major benefit you derive from being a member of a voluntary association?

Answers

- 1- Spending free time
- 2- Socializing with other people
- 3- Participating in an activity that benefits the community
- 4- Acquiring certain skills and knowledge
- 5- Receiving various types of assistance
- 6- Networking with influential people
- 7- Other (write in what!)
- 8- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 17 – In the past year, how often have you participated in the work of the voluntary association you belong to through the following types of activities?

Items

- A- Payment of membership fee
- B- Attendance at internal meetings
- C- Participation in public activities

Answers

- 1- Not once
- 2- Rarely (a couple of times)
- 3- Often (at least once a month)
- 4- Regularly (a few times a month)
- 5- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

(Question 18 : only for respondents not belonging to any voluntary association)

Question 18 – What is the main reason that you are not a member of any voluntary association?

Answers

- 1- I am not interested in their work
- 2- I am not informed about their work
- 3- I do not have enough money / time
- 4- I lack the required skills and knowledge
- 5- I do not have confidence in the work of such associations
- 6- I do not feel that my membership and work would have a significant influence
- 7- I fear reprisal or pressure from the community
- 8- Other (write in what!)
- 9- Don't know / Don't wish to answer

Question 19 – In the past year, did you turn to any voluntary association for help and, if so, which one(s)?

Items

- A- IDPs' association
- B- Veterans' association
- C- Pensioners' association
- D- Trade union
- E- Other professional association (write in which!)
- F- Political party
- G- Religious charity organization (Merhamet, Caritas, Dobrotvor, etc.)
- H- Other humanitarian organization (write in which!)
- I- Micro-credit non-governmental organization
- J- Legal aid and human rights association
- K- Women's association
- L- Youth association
- M- Other voluntary association (write in which!)

Answers

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- Don't know / don't wish to answer

Annex 7. Quantitative Work: Main Results of the Opinion Survey

Table 1. Do you socialize with those people to the same degree as before, more than before, or less than before ? If you socialize less than before, what is the main reason ? *

	Relatives		Closest friends		Work colleagues		Old neighbors / same nationality		Old neighbors / other nationality		New neighbors / same nationality		New neighbors / other nationality	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
We associate a lot / more than before	37	5.48	45	6.67	19	2.81	17	2.52	8	1.19	42	6.22	6	0.89
We associate enough / to the same degree as before	532	78.81	501	74.22	360	53.33	432	64.00	241	35.70	243	36.00	168	24.89
We associate little / less because we do not have enough time/money	48	7.11	65	9.63	87	12.89	69	10.22	47	6.96	47	6.96	38	5.63
We associate little / less because we do not live and work in the same place	36	5.33	31	4.59	59	8.74	64	9.48	67	9.93	8	1.19	9	1.33
We associate little / less because we do not know one another well enough	-	-	1	0.15	11	1.63	6	0.89	11	1.63	149	22.07	110	16.30
We associate little / less because there is no desire for this	3	0.44	10	1.48	13	1.93	19	2.81	67	9.93	27	4.00	67	9.93
We associate little / less because of political / ethnic intolerance	3	0.44	6	0.89	6	0.89	8	1.19	53	7.85	7	1.04	40	5.93
We associate little / less for some other reasons	15	2.22	16	2.37	61	9.04	41	6.07	75	11.11	62	9.19	94	13.93
Don't know / didn't answer	1	0.15	-	-	59	8.74	19	2.81	106	15.70	90	13.33	143	21.19
Total	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00

* Question in regard to new neighbors : Do you socialize with those people a lot / enough / a little ? If you socialize a little, what is the main reason?

Table 2. In the case that they were to seek any type of financial or material assistance, would you be willing to give such assistance to these people ?

		Relatives		Closest friends		Work colleagues		Neighbors	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, in any case	Bosniac area	208	65.20	163	51.10	124	38.87	123	38.56
	Croat area	82	64.06	53	41.41	38	29.69	31	24.22
	Serb area	118	51.75	101	44.30	76	33.33	85	37.28
Yes, if I am sure that they are in a difficult financial situation	Bosniac area	44	13.79	84	26.33	86	26.96	96	30.09
	Croat area	23	17.97	42	32.81	39	30.47	45	35.16
	Serb area	39	17.11	50	21.93	44	19.30	53	23.25
No, because I do not have the resources to be able to help them	Bosniac area	65	20.38	69	21.63	84	26.33	87	27.27
	Croat area	22	17.19	26	20.31	24	18.75	25	19.53
	Serb area	70	30.70	74	32.46	81	35.53	81	35.53
No, because I am not sure how they would use that money	Bosniac area	1	0.31	1	0.31	6	1.88	4	1.25
	Croat area	-	-	1	0.78	6	4.69	7	5.47
	Serb area	-	-	2	0.88	2	0.88	3	1.32
No, not at all	Bosniac area	-	-	1	0.31	8	2.51	3	0.94
	Croat area	-	-	2	1.56	9	7.03	10	7.81
	Serb area	-	-	-	-	6	2.63	-	-
Don't know / didn't answer	Bosniac area	1	0.31	1	0.31	11	3.45	6	1.88
	Croat area	1	0.78	4	3.12	12	9.37	10	7.81
	Serb area	1	0.44	1	0.44	19	8.33	6	2.63

Table 3. In the past three months, how many times did you invite the following people in your home for lunch, dinner, or a similar occasion ?

	Relatives		Closest friends		Work colleagues		Old neighbors / same nationality		Old neighbors / other nationality		New neighbors / same nationality		New neighbors / other nationality	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not once	150	22.22	175	25.93	400	59.26	352	52.15	455	67.41	435	64.44	513	76.00
A couple of times (not more than 2-3 times)	274	40.59	281	41.63	165	24.44	194	28.74	100	14.81	126	18.67	49	7.26
Often (more than three times)	166	24.59	163	24.15	57	8.44	77	11.41	36	5.33	50	7.41	21	3.11
Regularly (at least twice a month)	83	12.30	54	8.00	15	2.22	33	4.89	14	2.07	12	1.78	8	1.19
Don't know/ didn't answer	2	0.30	2	0.30	38	5.63	19	2.81	70	10.37	52	7.70	84	12.44
Total	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00

Table 4. In the past three months, did you, and if so, how many times did you extend financial or material assistance to the following people?

	Relatives		Closest friends		Work colleagues		Old neighbors / same nationality		Old neighbors / other nationality		New neighbors / same nationality		New neighbors / other nationality	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not once	365	54.07	419	62.07	513	76.00	537	79.56	572	84.74	574	85.04	577	85.48
Once	91	13.48	92	13.63	71	10.52	47	6.96	20	2.96	29	4.30	14	2.07
A couple of times	156	23.11	126	18.67	52	7.70	56	8.30	26	3.85	25	3.70	15	2.22
Often (more than three times)	55	8.15	30	4.44	14	2.07	19	2.81	12	1.78	10	1.48	8	1.19
Don't know / didn't answer	8	1.19	8	1.19	25	3.70	16	2.37	45	6.67	37	5.48	61	9.04
Total	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00

Table 5. Readiness to help neighbors and local formal institutions (percentage)

	Ready to help neighbors in any case *	Ready to help formal institutions in any case **
Bosniac majority area	38.6	Local parish (29.8), MZ board (28.2), humanitarian/non-governmental organization (23.5) citizens' association (22.3), trade union, (20.1)
Croat Majority area	24.2	Local parish (30.5), MZ board (8.6), humanitarian/non-governmental organization (7.0), citizens' association (6.3), trade union (6.3)
Serb Majority area	37.3	Local parish (27.6), MZ board (14.0), humanitarian/non-governmental organization (13.2), citizens' association (13.6), trade union (12.7)

* See Annex 6, question 4.

** See Annex 6, question 5.

Table 6. In the case that you are a displaced person or a refugee, do you want to return to the place you were living before the war ?

	Age										Level of education					
	18-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		> 59		0-8 years		9-12 years		> 12 years	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	8	26.67	12	48.00	21	63.64	10	58.82	3	25.00	14	66.70	37	48.10	3	15.80
No	21	70.00	13	52.00	11	33.33	6	35.29	7	58.33	7	33.30	36	46.80	15	78.90
DK / DA	1	3.33	-	-	1	3.03	1	5.88	2	16.67	-	-	4	5.20	1	5.30
Total	30	100.00	25	100.00	33	100.00	17	100.00	12	100.00	21	100.00	77	100.00	19	100.00

Table 7. In the case that you were to find yourself in a serious financial crisis, to whom could you turn to for help ?

	Relatives		Closest friends		Work Colleagues		Neighbors		Present or previous firm		MZ board		Center for Social Work		Humanit. or non-gov. Organization (*)		Citizens' association (*)		Influential persons		Someone else	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	578	85.63	352	52.15	83	12.30	94	13.93	24	3.56	9	1.33	24	3.56	27	4.00	9	1.33	17	2.52	22	3.26
No	82	12.15	323	47.85	592	87.70	581	86.07	651	96.44	666	98.67	651	96.44	648	96.00	666	98.67	658	97.48	653	96.74
DK / DA	15	2.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00	675	100.00

*On the distinction between citizens' associations and non-governmental organizations, see Introduction, footnote 9.

Table 8. In your municipality, what is the main problem in relation to the provision of following public services ? (frequency of the answer "Discrimination")

	Local ethnic majority		Local ethnic minorities		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public security	7	1.20	4	4.49	4	1.25	3	2.34	4	1.75	11	1.63
Issuance of official documents	21	3.60	5	5.62	9	2.82	12	9.37	5	2.19	26	3.85
Social assistance	23	3.95	3	3.37	12	3.76	7	5.47	7	3.07	26	3.85
Housing for IDPs and returnees	33	5.66	8	8.99	17	5.33	10	7.81	14	6.14	41	6.07
Health care	13	2.23	1	1.12	10	3.13	3	2.34	1	0.44	14	2.07
Education	7	1.20	6	6.74	6	1.88	4	3.13	3	1.31	13	1.93

Table 9. In your municipality, what is the main problem in relation to the provision of following public services ? (frequency of the answer “Corruption”)

	Locals		IDPs		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public security	58	10.51	18	15.38	29	9.09	4	3.13	44	19.30	77	11.41
Issuance of official documents	55	9.96	22	18.80	30	9.40	6	4.69	43	18.86	79	11.70
Social assistance	33	5.98	13	11.11	15	4.70	6	4.69	25	10.96	46	6.81
Housing for IDPs and returnees	44	7.97	19	16.24	20	6.27	5	3.91	39	17.11	64	9.48
Health care	65	11.78	18	15.38	40	12.54	16	12.50	29	12.72	85	12.59

Table 10. Main problem in relation to the provision of public services (most frequent answers)

Type of service	Type of problems (percentage)
Public security	Low quality (16.7), Corruption (11.4), Non-existence (8.1)
Issuance of official documents	Low quality (15.0), High prices (14.1), Corruption (11.7)
Social assistance	Non-existence (34.8), Low quality (18.5), Corruption (6.8)
Housing for IDPs and returnees	Low quality (23.4), Non-existence (18.7), Corruption (9.5)
Public transport	Low quality (34.4), High prices (16.0), Non-existence (7.4)
Roads	Low quality (66.1), Poor condition of infrastructure (8.0)
Water supply and sewage	Low quality (36.1), Poor condition of infrastructure (16.1), Non-existence (8.9)
Garbage collection and street cleaning	Low quality (34.1), Non-existence (11.3), Poor condition of infrastructure (6.1)
Healthcare	Low quality (22.4), High prices (20.4), Corruption (12.6)
Education	Low quality (16.0), Corruption (8.4), High prices (7.0)
Cultural activities	Non-existence (27.9), Low quality (27.9)
Youth activities	Non-existence (32.9), Low quality (23.1)

Table 11. In your municipality, what is the main problem in relation to the provision of these public services ? (frequency of response: “Generally there are no problems”)

	Local ethnic majority		Local ethnic minorities		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public security	290	49.74	53	59.55	188	58.93	64	50.00	93	40.79	345	51.11
Issuance of official documents	214	36.71	38	42.70	122	38.24	44	34.38	87	38.16	253	37.48
Social assistance	90	15.44	15	16.85	58	18.18	19	14.84	28	12.28	105	15.56
Housing for IDPs and returnees	91	15.61	25	28.09	71	22.26	17	13.28	28	12.28	116	17.19
Public transport	144	24.70	27	30.34	112	35.11	12	9.38	47	20.61	171	25.33
Roads	81	13.89	17	19.10	44	13.79	12	9.38	42	18.42	98	14.52
Water supply and sewage	142	24.36	28	31.46	89	27.90	20	15.63	61	26.75	170	25.19
Garbage collection and street cleaning	204	34.99	43	48.31	145	45.45	34	26.56	68	29.82	247	36.59
Healthcare	183	31.39	26	29.21	109	34.17	30	23.44	72	31.58	211	31.26
Education	294	50.43	43	48.31	186	58.31	46	35.94	107	46.93	339	50.22
Cultural activities	172	29.50	32	35.96	117	36.68	19	14.84	69	30.26	205	30.37
Youth activities	132	22.64	30	33.71	90	28.21	16	12.50	57	25.00	163	24.15

Table 12. In your municipality, what is the main problem in relation to the provision of these public services ? (frequency of response: “Does not exist at all”)

	Urban settlements		Rural settlements		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public security	29	6.71	26	10.70	16	5.02	12	9.38	27	11.84	55	8.15
Issuance of official documents	22	5.09	11	4.53	8	2.51	2	1.56	23	10.09	33	4.89
Social assistance	148	34.26	87	35.80	125	39.18	33	25.78	77	33.77	235	34.81
Housing for IDPs and returnees	72	16.67	54	22.22	57	17.87	23	17.97	46	20.18	126	18.67
Public transport	25	5.79	25	10.29	6	1.88	14	10.94	30	13.16	50	7.41
Roads	12	2.78	12	4.94	1	0.31	4	3.13	19	8.33	24	3.56
Water supply and sewage	19	4.40	41	16.87	22	6.90	12	9.38	26	11.40	60	8.89
Garbage collection and street cleaning	30	6.94	46	18.93	24	7.52	24	18.75	28	12.28	76	11.26
Healthcare	10	2.31	12	4.94	2	0.63	5	3.91	15	6.58	22	3.26
Education	20	4.63	11	4.53	4	1.25	4	3.13	23	10.09	31	4.59
Cultural activities	100	23.15	88	36.21	89	27.90	42	32.81	57	25.00	188	27.85
Youth activities	129	29.86	93	38.27	102	31.97	52	40.63	68	29.82	222	32.89

Table 13. In your opinion, what are the three main reasons for the existence of these problems in relation to the provision of public services ?

	Urban settlements		Rural settlements		Locals		IDPs		0-8 years of education completed		9-12 years of education completed		13-18 years of education completed		Members of voluntary assoc.		Non-members of voluntary assoc.		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Higher level institutions obstruct the work of the municipality	157	36.34	72	29.63	193	34.96	36	30.77	51	34.69	145	35.80	33	27.50	58	29.74	171	35.63	229	33.69
Municipality does not have money	203	46.99	144	59.26	285	51.63	60	51.28	93	63.27	197	48.64	56	46.67	95	48.72	252	52.50	347	51.41
Civil servants are not professional enough	136	31.48	105	43.21	188	34.06	52	44.44	59	40.14	136	33.58	44	36.67	59	30.26	182	37.92	241	35.70
Local politicians do not serve the interests of citizens	204	47.22	98	40.33	247	44.75	51	43.59	66	44.90	172	42.47	61	50.83	97	49.74	205	42.71	302	44.74
Citizens are disinterested	61	14.12	24	9.88	74	13.41	8	6.84	17	11.56	45	11.11	22	18.33	25	12.82	60	12.50	85	12.59
Other	9	2.08	1	0.41	9	1.63	1	0.85	2	1.36	4	0.99	4	3.33	3	1.54	7	1.46	10	1.48

Table 14. How would you evaluate the work of your MZ board ?

	Urban settlements		Rural settlements		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Does not exist at all	73	16.90	47	19.34	48	15.05	28	21.88	44	19.30	120	17.78
Functions poorly as it does not have adequate legal competences, staffing and material means	154	35.65	114	46.91	130	40.75	49	38.28	89	39.04	268	39.70
Functions but only serves the interests of a few citizens	90	20.83	41	16.87	60	18.81	23	17.97	48	21.05	131	19.41
Functions poorly as citizens do not wish to participate in its work	28	6.48	16	6.58	19	5.96	7	5.47	18	7.89	44	6.52
Functions well and works for the benefit of all citizens	56	12.96	11	4.53	48	15.05	7	5.47	12	5.26	67	9.93
Don't know / didn't answer	31	7.18	14	5.76	14	4.39	14	10.94	17	7.46	45	6.67
Total	432	100.00	243	100.00	319	100.00	128	100.00	228	100.00	675	100.00

Table 15a. Membership in formal voluntary associations, by demographic category (percentage)

	Total	Type of organization
Men	37.1	Hunting / fishing society (9.0), veterans' association (8.4), sports club (7.7), political party (7.7), pensioners' association (6.7), religious association (4.0), MZ board (4.0)
Women	22.3	Religious association (6.1), local parish (5.1), pensioners' association (4.5), school council (3.5), trade union (3.5), cultural society (2.9), women's association (2.9)
Young people (18-29 years old)	24.3	Sports club (11.3), political party (5.1), cultural society (4.5), hunting / fishing society (3.4), religious association (2.8), youth association (2.8)
Middle-aged people (30-49 years old)	45.1	Religious association (7.2), local parish (6.2), trade union (5.9), veterans' association (5.9), political party (4.9), sports club (3.9), cultural society (3.6), hunting / fishing society (3.6), school council (3.6), MZ board (3.6)
Older people (>50 years old)	33.7	Pensioners' association (14.5), hunting / fishing society (6.2), religious association (4.1), political party (4.1), MZ board (3.6), local parish (3.1), veterans' association (3.1)
Urban residents	27.5	Pensioner's association (6.5), sports club (5.8), political party (5.1), hunting / fishing society (4.2), veteran's association (4.2), religious association (4.2), local parish (3.5), trade union (3.5)
Rural residents	31.3	Religious association (7.6), local parish (5.8), hunting / fishing society (4.5), political party (4.1), MZ board (3.7), veterans' association (3.7), pensioners' association (3.7)
Locals	30.3	Pensioners' association (6.3), sports club (5.1), hunting / fishing society (5.1), religious association (4.9), political party (4.3), local parish (4.0), trade union (4.0)
DPs	23.1	Veterans' association (6.8), political party (6.8), religious association (6.0), local parish (5.1), DPs association (5.1), MZ board (3.4), sports club (3.4)
Low education (0-8 yrs of school)	21.1	Pensioners' association (9.5), religious association (4.1), hunting / fishing society (3.4), local parish (3.4), MZ board (2.7), political party (2.7), trade union (2.7)
Higher education (>12 yrs of school)	39.0	Political party (10.6), trade-union (8.9), hunting / fishing society (7.3), sports club (6.5), mountaineering club (4.9), school council (4.9), MZ board (4.9), religious association (4.9), ecological association (4.9)
Minimal level of income	22.2	Pensioners' association (4.4), veterans' association (4.4), hunting / fishing society (3.8), religious association (3.2), trade union (3.2), mountaineering club (3.2)
High level of income	51.8	Political party (17.9), local parish (12.5), sports club (8.9), religious association (8.9), women's association (8.9), cultural society (7.1) hunting / fishing society (7.1), MZ board (7.1), trade union (7.1)

Table 15b. Membership in formal voluntary associations, by ethnic area (percentage)

	Total	Type of organization
Bosniac majority area	32.6	Pensioners' association (8.2), religious association (6.0), sports club (4.7), local parish (4.7), hunting / fishing society (4.1), political party (4.1), mountaineering club (3.4), school council (3.4), trade union (3.1), cultural society (2.8), veterans' association (2.8), ecological association (2.8), MZ board (2.5), women's association (2.5), IDPs' association (1.9), condominium council (1.9), youth association (1.6)
Croat majority area	35.2	Political party (10.9), sports club (8.6), religious association (8.6), cultural society (7.0), local parish (6.3), veterans' association (5.5), hunting / fishing society (4.7), MZ board (3.1), mountaineering club (2.3), professional association (2.3), pensioners' association (1.6), trade union (1.6), women's association (1.6), youth association (1.6)
Serb majority area	20.2	Veterans' association (4.8), trade union (4.8), hunting / fishing society (4.4), pensioners' association (3.9), sports club (3.1), MZ board (2.6), local parish (2.6), religious association (2.2), political party (2.2), condominium council (1.8), school council (1.8), IDPs' association (1.8), cultural society (1.3), ecological association (1.3)

Table 16. What is the major benefit you derive from being a member of a voluntary association ? *

	Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Spending free time	19	18.27	9	20.00	6	13.04	34	17.44
Socializing with other people	42	40.38	12	26.67	26	56.52	80	41.03
Participating in an activity that benefits the community	27	25.96	6	13.33	11	23.91	44	22.56
Acquiring certain skills and knowledges	5	4.81	3	6.67	1	2.17	9	4.62
Receiving various types of assistance	6	5.77	1	2.22	-	-	7	3.59
Networking with influential people	-	-	3	6.67	-	-	3	1.54
Other	3	2.86	11	24.44	1	2.17	15	7.69
Don't know / didn't answer	2	1.92	-	-	1	2.17	3	1.54
Total	104	100.00	45	100.00	46	100.00	195	100.00

* Only for respondents belonging to at least one voluntary association.

Table 17. What is the main reason that you are not a member of any voluntary association ? *

	Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I am not interested in their work	66	30.70	44	53.01	69	37.91	179	37.29
I am not informed about their work	28	13.02	6	7.23	16	8.79	50	10.42
I do not have enough money / time	79	36.74	15	18.07	35	19.23	129	26.88
I lack the required skills and knowledge	4	1.86	2	2.41	6	3.30	12	2.50
I do not have confidence in the work of such associations	6	2.79	6	7.23	12	6.59	24	5.00
I do not feel that my membership and work would have a significant influence	17	7.91	6	7.23	16	8.79	39	8.13
I fear reprisal or pressure from the community	1	0.47	-	-	2	1.10	3	0.63
Other	9	4.19	2	2.41	14	7.69	25	5.21
Don't know / didn't answer	5	2.33	2	2.41	12	6.59	19	3.96
Total	215	100.00	83	100.00	182	100.00	480	100.00

* Only for respondents not belonging to any voluntary association.

Table 18. In the past year, how often have you participated in the work of the voluntary association you belong to through the following types of activities ? *

	Payment of membership fee		Attendance at internal meetings		Participation in public activities	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not once	54	27.69	34	17.44	51	26.15
Rarely (a couple of times)	40	20.51	59	30.26	51	26.15
Often (at least once a month)	30	15.38	50	25.64	36	18.46
Regularly (a couple/few times a month)	64	32.82	44	22.56	49	25.13
Don't know / Didn't answer	7	3.59	8	4.10	8	4.10
Total	195	100.00	195	100.00	195	100.00

* Only for respondents belonging to at least one voluntary association. In case the respondent is affiliated with several associations, only the one in which the respondent is the most active is taken into consideration.

Table 19. In the past year, did you participate in any of these actions to improve the delivery of some public services ?

	Urban settlements		Rural settlements		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gave a financial contribution	127	29.40	76	31.28	112	35.11	17	13.28	74	32.46	203	30.07
Participated in collective work	62	14.35	66	27.16	71	22.26	19	14.84	38	16.67	128	18.96
Participated in a clean-up action	90	20.83	46	18.93	101	31.66	4	3.13	31	13.60	136	20.15
Attended a citizens' gathering	41	9.49	38	15.64	36	11.29	8	6.25	35	15.35	79	11.70
Signed a petition	37	8.56	13	5.35	16	5.02	25	19.53	9	3.95	50	7.41
Participated in a citizens' delegation	14	3.24	10	4.12	8	2.51	6	4.69	10	4.39	24	3.56
Participated in a street demonstration	16	3.70	5	2.06	4	1.25	11	8.59	6	2.63	21	3.11
Blocked traffic as a sign of protest	5	1.16	4	1.65	1	0.31	5	3.91	3	1.32	9	1.33
Informed local media	6	1.39	1	0.41	5	1.57	-	-	2	0.88	7	1.04
Informed an international organization	7	1.62	1	0.41	4	1.25	2	1.56	2	0.88	8	1.19

Table 20a. In the past year, did you participate in any of these actions to improve the delivery of some public services ?

	Gender				Age									
	Men		Women		18-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		> 59	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gave a financial contribution	79	26.42	124	32.98	49	27.68	59	37.34	48	32.65	31	27.93	16	19.51
Participated in voluntary work	64	21.40	64	17.02	28	15.82	32	20.25	38	25.85	16	14.41	14	17.07
Participated in a clean-up action	51	17.06	85	22.61	27	15.25	29	18.35	32	21.77	27	24.32	21	25.61
Attended a citizens' gathering	41	13.71	38	10.11	9	5.08	16	10.13	24	16.33	16	14.41	14	17.07
Signed a petition	25	8.36	25	6.65	16	9.04	9	5.70	18	12.24	3	2.70	4	4.88
Participated in a citizens' delegation	16	5.35	8	2.13	3	1.69	8	5.06	8	5.44	4	3.60	1	1.22
Participated in a street demonstration	11	3.68	10	2.66	7	3.95	3	1.90	3	2.04	5	4.50	3	3.66
Blocked traffic as a sign of protest	4	1.34	5	1.33	4	2.26	2	1.27	-	-	3	2.70	-	-
Informed local media	4	1.34	3	0.80	3	1.69	-	-	3	2.04	1	0.90	-	-
Informed an international organization	2	0.67	6	1.60	3	1.69	-	-	3	2.04	2	1.80	-	-

Table 20b. In the past year, did you participate in any of these actions to improve the delivery of some public services ?

	Level of income								Level of education					
	Minimal		Low		Medium		High		0-8 years		9-12 years		> 12 years	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gave a financial contribution	31	19.62	36	28.13	111	34.26	24	42.86	41	27.89	123	30.37	39	31.71
Participated in voluntary work	27	17.09	23	17.97	66	20.37	12	21.43	39	26.53	60	14.81	29	23.58
Participated in a clean-up action	36	22.78	29	22.66	66	20.37	4	7.14	29	19.73	76	18.77	31	25.20
Attended a citizens' gathering	15	9.49	15	11.72	39	12.04	8	14.29	24	16.33	41	10.12	14	11.38
Signed a petition	10	6.33	9	7.03	25	7.72	6	10.71	5	3.40	20	4.94	25	20.33
Participated in a citizens' delegation	6	3.80	4	3.13	10	3.09	4	7.14	1	0.68	14	3.46	9	7.32
Participated in a street demonstration	3	1.90	4	3.13	10	3.09	4	7.14	1	0.68	14	3.46	6	4.88
Blocked traffic as a sign of protest	1	0.63	1	0.78	5	1.54	2	3.57	-	-	6	1.48	3	2.44
Informed local media	1	0.63	2	1.56	3	0.93	1	1.79	-	-	3	0.74	3	2.44
Informed an international organization	2	1.27	3	2.34	3	0.93	-	-	1	0.68	3	0.74	3	2.44

Table 20c. In the past year, did you participate in any of these actions to improve the delivery of some public services ?

	Local origin				Desire for return (among IDPs only)					
	Locals		DPs		Yes		No		Don't know / Didn't answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gave a financial contribution	167	30.25	34	29.06	23	42.59	10	17.24	1	20.00
Participated in voluntary work	111	20.11	13	11.11	10	18.52	3	5.17	-	-
Participated in a clean-up action	123	22.28	12	10.26	7	12.96	5	8.62	-	-
Attended a citizens' gathering	66	11.96	13	11.11	9	16.67	3	5.17	1	20.00
Signed a petition	41	7.43	8	6.84	5	9.26	3	5.17	-	-
Participated in a citizens' delegation	19	3.44	5	4.27	2	3.70	3	5.17	-	-
Participated in a street demonstration	15	2.72	5	4.27	1	1.85	4	6.90	-	-
Blocked traffic as a sign of protest	7	1.27	2	1.71	-	-	2	3.45	-	-
Informed local media	6	1.09	1	0.85	-	-	1	1.72	-	-
Informed an international organization	6	1.09	2	1.71	1	1.85	1	1.72	-	-

Table 21. In which of these local projects would you be most ready to participate ?

	Urban settlements		Rural settlements		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cleaning-up action	187	43.29	72	29.63	259	38.37
Repair of roads / streets	91	21.06	75	30.86	166	24.59
Repair of canalizations	65	15.05	65	26.75	130	19.26
Repair of health center	112	25.93	64	26.34	176	26.07
Repair of school	81	18.75	58	23.87	139	20.59
Repair of sport / cultural facilities	51	11.81	9	7.82	70	10.37
Construction of collective center for homeless people	71	16.44	39	16.05	110	16.30
Opening of a youth center	87	20.14	36	14.81	123	18.22

Table 22a. If there were an infrastructure project in your municipality aimed at improving local public services such as garbage collection, education, or health care, would you participate?

	Ready to help neighbors in any case		Ready to help neighbors under conditions		Not able to help neighbors		Not ready to help neighbors	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, in any case	181	75.73	117	60.31	83	43.01	10	37.04
Yes, if I have personal benefit	14	5.86	27	13.92	27	13.99	4	14.81
No, because I do not have enough money/time	29	12.13	24	12.37	60	31.09	2	7.41
No, because it is not my responsibility	12	5.02	18	9.28	18	9.33	10	37.04
Something else	3	1.26	1	0.51	3	1.55	-	-
Don't know / Didn't answer	-	-	7	3.61	2	1.04	1	3.70
Total	239	100.00	194	100.00	193	100.00	27	100.00

Table 22b. If there were a project in your municipality that endangered local life, such as opening of a waste dump or closure of a public institution, would you take part in public protests ?

	Ready to help neighbors in any case		Ready to help neighbors under conditions		Unable to help neighbors		Not ready to help neighbors	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, in any case	183	76.57	130	67.01	108	55.96	8	29.63
Yes, if I am directly affected	31	12.97	39	20.10	37	19.17	7	25.93
No, by fear of possible repercussions	2	0.84	2	1.03	3	1.55	-	-
No, as I don't believe in the effectiveness of such action	22	9.21	15	7.73	33	17.10	5	18.52
Something else	-	-	1	0.52	-	-	1	3.70
Don't know / Didn't answer	1	0.42	7	3.61	12	6.22	6	22.22
Total	239	100.00	194	100.00	193	100.00	27	100.00

Table 22c. If there were an infrastructure project in your municipality aimed at improving local public services such as garbage collection, education, or health care, would you participate?

	Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, in any case	207	64.89	63	49.22	124	54.39	394	58.37
Yes, if I have personal benefit	28	8.78	17	13.28	29	12.72	74	10.96
No, because I do not have enough money/time	54	16.93	15	11.72	50	21.93	119	17.63
No, because it is not my responsibility	19	5.96	26	20.31	22	9.65	67	9.93
Something else	6	1.88	-	-	1	0.44	7	1.04
Don't know / Didn't answer	5	1.57	7	5.47	2	0.88	14	2.07
Total	319	100.00	128	100.00	228	100.00	675	100.00

Table 22b. If there were a project in your municipality that endangered local life, such as opening of a waste dump or closure of a public institution, would you take part in public protests ?

	Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, in any case	235	73.67	65	50.78	132	57.89	432	64.00
Yes, if I am directly affected	43	13.48	25	19.53	53	23.25	121	17.93
No, by fear of possible repercussions	1	0.31	1	0.78	5	21.93	7	10.37
No, as I don't believe in the effectiveness of such action	34	10.66	20	15.62	26	11.40	80	11.85
Something else	1	0.31	3	23.44	-	-	4	0.59
Don't know / Didn't answer	5	1.57	14	10.94	12	5.26	31	4.59
Total	319	100.00	128	100.00	228	100.00	675	100.00

Table 23. Which people were the most active ones in these collective actions ?

	Urban settlements		Rural settlements		Bosniac majority area		Croat majority area		Serb majority area		Total sample	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All local residents equally	95	21.99	74	30.45	80	25.08	36	28.13	53	23.25	169	25.04
Those local residents by whom it was most needed	150	34.72	84	34.57	130	40.75	43	33.59	61	26.75	234	34.67
Representatives of the MZ	44	10.19	18	7.41	45	14.11	1	0.78	16	7.02	62	9.19
Members of voluntary associations	12	2.78	4	1.65	6	1.88	5	3.91	5	2.19	16	2.37
Representatives of the municipality	4	0.93	3	1.23	4	1.25	1	0.78	2	0.88	7	1.04
Local politicians	11	2.55	3	1.23	7	2.19	3	2.34	4	1.75	14	2.07
Private entrepreneurs	14	3.24	12	4.94	11	3.45	2	1.56	13	5.70	26	3.85
Influential people	27	6.25	19	7.82	19	5.96	7	5.47	20	8.77	46	6.81
Others	17	3.94	3	1.23	15	4.70	3	2.34	2	0.88	20	2.96

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