

Translating the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina into sustainable and inclusive growth

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The Fourth Annual Progress Report

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Glossary

B2B	Business to Business
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BHAS	BIH Agency for Statistics
BPPS	Bureau for Policy and Programme Support
BD	Brčko District
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CO	Country Office
CoM BiH	Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina
DEP	Directorate for Economic Planning (BIH)
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
FBIH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
IFI	International Financial Institution
ILDP	Integrated Local Development Project
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IRH	Istanbul Regional Hub (UNDP)
LG	Local Government
LSU	Local Self-Government Unit
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
LG	Local Government
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LSU	Local Self-Government Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
MICS 6	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OT	Operation Teams
ProDoc	Project Document
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
RIA	Rapid Integration Assessment
RS	Republika Srpska
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDG FF	Sustainable Development Goals Financing Framework
SEE	South East Europe
SDG BPA	SDG Business Pioneer Award
SPI	Social Protection and Inclusion
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UN RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator

UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VNR	Voluntary National Review / Voluntary Review
WB	World Bank
WG	Working Group

Introduction and Project Description

“Translating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina into sustainable and inclusive growth” (SDG2BiH) Programme is a successor to the SDG Roll-Out and Private Sector Support Project. The Programme is financed by Sweden and implemented by UNDP in partnership with UNICEF and UN Women under the United Nations’ overall support extended to the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to implement the SDG Framework in BiH.

The overall objective of the Programme is to contribute to accelerated achievement of SDGs in BiH by supporting governance systems and private sector engagement towards green and inclusive growth. The Programme is thus expected to support the authorities in BiH in their efforts to advance their progress towards the achievement of sustainable development targets defined in the SDG Framework in BiH. It is organized around two mutually reinforcing outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Authorities at state, entity and Brčko District BiH levels effectively work on planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on the SDG Framework in BiH and foster development partnerships.
- **Outcome 2:** Cantonal and local governments actively contribute to implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH.

This Programme aims to engage and support a wide range of stakeholders in BiH, primarily governments and socio-economic stakeholders, and strengthen their capacities for systemic implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH, which is a foundation of the attainment of the SDG targets in the country.

The Programme aims to strengthen the ability of governance systems in the country for planning, financing, and implementation of activities towards the SDGs and will support connecting public and private finances with a view of fostering SDG commitments, especially with regards to smart and green growth, while at the same time contributing to creating a society of equal opportunities. The stakeholders in the country are supported in kickstarting the transition towards circular and low-carbon economy by providing relevant data and analysis, promotion of circular business models, capacity development, and knowledge sharing support.

Concrete changes are driven by piloting SDG localization at the cantonal and local levels. This involves raising awareness and building capacities of local stakeholders, supporting and preparing specific projects that will improve people’s lives, and showing the essential role of lower levels of government in SDGs achievement, with a special focus on ensuring no one is left behind. By empowering vulnerable population groups as drivers of solutions in their communities, the effectiveness and needs-orientation of local governance systems will be enhanced and human capital investments increased.

Building on the previous interventions focused on the private sector and other stakeholders on sustainable development and the SDGs, further engagement of and cooperation with the private sector and other stakeholders helps accelerate domestication of SDG targets and maximize results.

The SDG2BiH, with cost extensions approved in August 2024 and May 2025 (introduction of No-nation fashion component implemented by IOM), will last a total of 46 months, from April 2022 to the end of February 2026. Though the SDG2BiH is managed and implemented by UNDP, two specific sub-activities are implemented by UNICEF and UN Women.

Executive summary

Key Objectives and Intended Outcomes

During the reporting period, the Programme focused on advancing systemic processes to strengthen institutional capacities across all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) for sustainable development. Emphasis was placed on embedding the SDG Framework into existing policy and planning systems, gradually aligning public financing with SDG priorities through the conceptualization of innovative financial instruments. The Programme also supported iterative processes to promote innovation in care and social protection, while enabling localized and participatory governance mechanisms that foster inclusive, cross-sectoral partnerships. These efforts aimed to institutionalize long-term, integrated approaches to SDG implementation.

Key Achievements and Activities

Strategic Planning and Institutional Strengthening:

- Supported the SDG Council in the preparation of their Annual Report on the Implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH, as well as the revision and formal adoption of an updated SDG indicator list by the Council of Ministers of BiH.
- Contributed to the development of the RS 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy, finalized in late 2024, and enabled multi-stakeholder consultations to shape a shared vision for the entity's development priorities.
- Provided data collection tools and methodological support for a national perception survey, enriching evidence-based policymaking and monitoring of key SDG indicators, including those related to public service satisfaction and safety (first evidence-based data for SDG 16.2.1 gathered in BiH).

Public Financing for Sustainable Development:

- Facilitated the adoption of the SDG Financing Framework (SDG-FF) by all levels of government, introducing innovative mechanisms like the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) and SDG Bonds. Feasibility studies for both instruments were launched during the reporting period.
- Piloted three grant-based financial mechanisms targeting SME competitiveness (FBIH), local digital service delivery (FBIH and RS), and joint R&D grant scheme in coordination with academia and private sector (FBIH), with efforts focused on digitalizing grant management systems and fostering circular economy transitions.

Parliamentary Engagement and Oversight:

- Enabled rulebook amendments to embed SDG responsibilities within parliamentary mandates at state and cantonal levels and organized the first national SDG conference in the BiH Parliamentary Assembly.
- Developed a guidebook for Members of Parliament and facilitated a self-assessment of parliamentary readiness to support SDG-aligned legislation in partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Social Protection and Care Economy:

- Supported the operationalization of Social Protection Strategies in both entities and drafted key legal reforms, including a Law on Social Services in FBIH.
- Piloted innovative care economy models including “Gerontodomaćice” and “Entrepreneurs in Care”, training over 240 women and integrating care work into institutional and economic planning frameworks.
- Launched digital tools like the Rights and Services Map for persons with disabilities and older adults in Sarajevo Canton, now being scaled to all ten cantons.

Localization and Community Engagement:

- Enabled the implementation of 14 Leave No One Behind (LNOB) projects in local and cantonal governments with 34% co-financing, directly benefitting 43,772 people, including 5,644 children.
- Formed 7 permanent multisectoral Social Protection and Inclusion (SPI) commissions and developed 8 referral mechanisms to enhance service coordination and accessibility for vulnerable groups. Trained 142 SPI members and 380+ service providers (e.g., psychologists, teachers) to enhance multisectoral cooperation and local service delivery.
- Set up a multisectoral working group in Novo Sarajevo focused on integrating youth with disabilities into the labor market, involving private sector partners.
- Introduced or improved social services in eight communities, reaching 1,854 children/youth and 779 parents with direct support.
- Developed eight tailored referral systems defined through formal cooperation protocols.
- Supported 11 infrastructure project concepts and initiated the development of Local Action Plans for 2025–2026 in all LNOB partner locations.

Private Sector Engagement and SDG Promotion:

- Launched the Circular Economy Accelerator and expanded the Green Transition Web Platform, reaching 50 companies and generating transition plans for 10 SMEs.
- Achieved record-breaking participation in the SDG Business Pioneers Award (484 companies in 2025), with strong private sector uptake of ESG and gender equality practices.
- Organized the 4th SDG Week in BiH, featuring 20 events across the country, and honored sustainable municipalities through the Local Governance Awards. The initiative reached over 2,000 participants and maintained its status as a carbon-positive event.

Visibility:

- 130 media mentions in 2025 and 190 media mentions in the second half of 2024.
- 90 social media posts on UNDP channels.
- Campaign to promote applications for SDG BPA 2025 reached 776,000 unique users, with 44,600 clicks, resulting in record-breaking 484 companies that applied.

Challenges and Next Steps

Key challenges included complex tendering procedures on local level affecting project timelines, ongoing data limitations for certain SDG indicators, and the need to strengthen long-term ownership of multisectoral approaches at the local level.

In the next period, the Programme will finalize feasibility studies for SIF and SDG Bonds, expand digital grant platforms, scale up care economy initiatives, continue strengthening the SDG Council's role, and provide tailored support for cantonal and local governments to implement the SDG Framework in BiH more effectively.

Overview of the Programme results in the reporting period (July 2023 – June 2024)

Outcome 1: Authorities at state, entity and Brčko District BiH levels effectively work on planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on the SDG Framework in BiH and foster development partnerships.

Output 1.1. The SDG steering body and institutional partners at state, entity and Brčko District levels are equipped with knowledge, capacities and tools for synchronized and effective planning, financing, monitoring, and reporting on the implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH

1.1.1. Support to effective functioning of the SDG Council in BiH

The Programme inherited the responsibility from the SDG Roll-Out Project to support effective functioning of the SDG Council in BiH. This mandate includes providing secretariat support for the meetings of the SDG Council, ensuring its smooth operation, and fostering collaboration across various sectors to advance the SDGs in the country.



During this reporting period, significant focus was placed on production of the Annual Report for the Implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH. This comprehensive document, which highlights the progress and challenges of SDG implementation in BiH, was submitted to the BiH Council of Ministers in May 2025. The Programme provided substantial support in the preparation of this report, engaging in critical research and contributing to the development of the content, ensuring the document reflects accurate and up-to-date information on SDG progress in the country.

In preparation for the drafting of the aforementioned Annual Report, the SDG

Council revised the list of indicators relevant for the implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH. The Programme provided extensive support in this revision. As detailed further in the report, this revision process culminated in the final adoption of the revised indicator list by the BiH Council of Ministers in October 2024. This revision was a critical step in ensuring that the indicators align with both national and international standards and provide a robust framework for monitoring progress.

To support reporting, the Programme also facilitated the design and execution of a national survey assessing the population's perception of safety, integrity, public services, and public transport across BiH. Commissioned by the BiH Department for Economic Planning (DEP), this survey provided valuable insights into public opinion and served as a key input for evidence-based policymaking on various issues.

Throughout this period, the Programme diligently supported the SDG Council in developing and maintaining key strategic partnerships. These efforts included collaborations with the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliament of the Federation of BiH, and the Inter-parliamentary Union, fostering dialogue and strengthening the legislative support for SDG implementation. Furthermore, SDG2BiH supported partnerships with other UN agencies, such as the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), UNICEF, WHO, and FAO. These partnerships were instrumental in advancing specific areas of sustainable development, such as food safety in BiH's local communities, and ensuring the integration of the SDGs into various sectoral policies.



The Programme also supported the SDG Council's participation in the development of several key documents, including the UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA Country Programme Documents, as well as the 2026-2030 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in BiH. These documents emphasize coordination with the SDG Council in BiH, acknowledging its formal mandate, its representation of institutions leading strategic planning processes at state, entity, and Brcko District BiH levels, and its political connections with the executive branches of government. The UNSDCF, which integrates activities of all UN agencies in the country and promotes partnerships supporting the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, relies heavily on the SDGs Council's central role in both drafting and implementation. Given that the UNSDCF serves as a central planning document and implementation tool for all UN agencies, the SDGs Council's involvement is crucial for strategic partnership and collaboration with authorities and other partners at the country level.

Furthermore, in terms of forging strategic partnerships, the Programme played a pivotal role in supporting the SDG Council's active participation in various international and regional forums on sustainable development. This included the preparation of input materials and presentation materials, ensuring the Council's voice and BiH's priorities were represented effectively on the global stage.

In terms of capacitating the member institutions of the SDG Council, the most notable achievement of this reporting period was the development of a comprehensive technical solution for a database designed to monitor and manage social data, done in collaboration with an individual consultant. This solution enables the Federal Institute for Development Programming (FZZPR) to efficiently track social metrics. The project also included preparations for the online publication of an interactive version of the database, featuring visualizations on maps, which will be valuable for researchers and policymakers, particularly for local governments working on data-driven decision-making.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, the Programme guided the organization of the SDG Week platform, which serves as a major event for the SDG Council in BiH. This initiative fosters awareness, engagement, and action on the SDGs across various sectors, bringing together stakeholders from government, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

1.1.2. Strengthening governments' planning systems for effective implementation of the SDGs, monitoring and reporting

During this reporting period, the Programme provided strategic support to the Government of Republika Srpska in developing the new RS 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy. Following the RS Government's decision to initiate the Strategy process, the Executive Team formed by the RS Government continued to guide its formulation supported by expert consultants engaged by the Programme.

The consulting team included two lead methodological experts and four sectoral consultants specializing in smart growth, social development, environmental sustainability, and good governance. Together, they supported the Executive Team in developing methodological guidelines and an action plan for the Strategy's preparation. The sectoral consultants also contributed to the Strategy's content and structure, aligned with the SDG Framework in BiH. A key milestone was reached with the finalization of the draft Strategy by the end of 2024. However, the Government's focus had shifted to other priorities by that time, and the strategy has not yet been formally presented or subjected to broad consultations. Earlier in 2024, stakeholder consultations were held on the Strategic Platform, which established the conceptual foundation for the strategy. The discussions brought together representatives from public institutions, civil society, academia, and the private sector, aiming to align development priorities in RS with the global 2030 Agenda. Looking ahead, the Programme will continue its support in 2025, focusing on facilitating inclusive consultations and refining operational elements. These efforts are expected to lead to the formal adoption and launch of the RS 2030 Sustainable Development Strategy in early 2025, providing a shared framework for sustainable and inclusive development in the entity. In parallel, the Programme provided capacity support to the RS General Secretariat by strengthening foreign language proficiency of the staff. This initiative is essential for enhancing the Secretariat's ability to participate in international dialogues, exchange best practices, access global funding opportunities, and engage effectively with international stakeholders and partners.

1.1.3. Supporting governments in translating selected development accelerators into action

Social Protection Strategy development (UNICEF)

Within this activity, both entities were supported in developing evidence-based Social Protection Strategies for 2023-2029 (Republika Srpska) and 2023-2030 (Federation of BiH), laying a foundation for other Programme components and the broader integration of the SDGs. Following the adoption of both strategies, UNICEF continued to assist both entity Ministries of Social Welfare/Policy in developing action plans for their implementation. Republika Srpska developed a comprehensive three-year action plan, while Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina formulated a detailed work plan for 2025.

The Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Policy introduced the Draft Law on Social Services, currently under parliamentary review. This law aims to standardize social service delivery across the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), providing a robust legal framework for service provision and licensing. UNICEF has, through the Programme, provided technical support throughout the process to ensure the law effectively meets the needs of families and children, particularly the most vulnerable. The passage of this law will further enhance the sustainability prospects of LNOB grant schemes under this project.

Both strategies align with the BiH SDG Framework and are expected to address social exclusion through improved policy planning and more effective targeting of cash benefits and social service delivery. The strategic vision of both entities includes priorities such as poverty reduction, prevention and early identification of families at risk, improved targeting, deinstitutionalization, and the development of community-based services, among other.

Capacity development for designing care economy policies (UN WOMEN)

During the reporting period, UN Women advanced its work on care economy reforms through the Programme by building on the key findings of the 2023 Baseline Study on the Care Economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Guided by the study's recommendations, targeted efforts were undertaken to support the development of inclusive and care-responsive policies. These actions aimed to improve service accessibility for vulnerable groups and reduce the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work carried by women. To support the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care work, interventions were implemented under three strategic pillars focused on strengthening care infrastructure and systems.

1. Support to normative and policy framework changes to better integrate care into laws and government priorities



In BiH, care work continues to be predominantly viewed as a private family responsibility, with limited institutional support and infrastructure. Publicly accessible services, particularly for early childhood education and care for older persons, remain insufficient and unevenly distributed. In response to these structural shortcomings, UN Women have continued to provide technical assistance to government institutions at various levels to promote the integration of care into legislative and policy frameworks.

During the reporting period, a significant focus was placed on supporting legislative reform processes, particularly in

FBiH. UN Women provided expert input to the draft Labour Law, advocating for the inclusion of gender-sensitive and family-friendly provisions. These contributions focused on aligning the Law with international standards on work-life balance, parental leave, and flexible work arrangements, ultimately aimed at reducing the disproportionate care burden on women and fostering a more equitable division of unpaid care responsibilities.

The efforts are part of a broader institutional shift towards more inclusive and responsive governance, reflected in policy advancements aligned with the SDGs. The reform of the Labour Law in FBiH marks an important step forward, introducing legal mechanisms that promote family-oriented employment policies and help lay the foundation for improved support systems for working families. To further inform evidence-based decision-making, UN Women conducted a comprehensive review of existing legislation, policy frameworks, and financing structures related to the care economy. The analysis identified actionable opportunities to strengthen care availability, with a focus on institutionalizing gender-responsive solutions and increasing investments in care infrastructure.

2. Development of pilot models to increase care accessibility

In line with the strategic priorities outlined in the Baseline Study on the Care Economy in BiH, UN Women has continued to design and implement pilot models that promote equitable and sustainable care systems. These models aim to strengthen care services, improve social protection entitlements, expand family leave policies and flexible working arrangements, and enhance public awareness around the distribution of unpaid care responsibilities.

A significant milestone was achieved in the second part of 2024 with the official launch of the Interactive Map of Rights and Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly in Sarajevo Canton. The initiative, made possible

through a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Sarajevo Canton Government, consolidates information on entitlements, benefits, and services in one accessible digital platform. It empowers users, especially women caregivers, with streamlined access to reliable, up-to-date information, thereby reducing the time and effort required to navigate fragmented institutional systems.

This tool represents a major advancement in simplifying access to social services for persons with disabilities and older adults, and in turn, alleviating the caregiving burden disproportionately carried by women. By reducing bureaucratic complexity and increasing the visibility of support systems, the platform not only addresses immediate needs but also promotes more inclusive service delivery models.

Building on the success of the Sarajevo Canton map, UN Women has also provided technical assistance to expand the initiative to a wider level. In partnership with the FBiH Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (FMRSP), work commenced on developing a unified Catalogue of Rights and Services for Persons with Disabilities that will encompass all ten cantons. Once finalized, the catalogue will be hosted on the Ministry's website, serving as a centralized resource to guide both beneficiaries and service providers across FBiH.

These efforts mark important progress in institutionalizing innovative care solutions and advancing the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care work within public systems. They also reflect a broader commitment to ensuring that caregiving is no longer an invisible responsibility shouldered by women, but a shared social and policy priority.



Furthermore, in response to the growing demand for community-based elder care and the persistent exclusion of women from the formal labour market, UN Women advanced the development and piloting of the Gerontodomaćice model in the FBiH. This innovative approach addresses two critical challenges simultaneously: the care needs of an ageing population and the socio-economic empowerment of long-term unemployed women.

Under this model, unemployed women received structured training to become certified home care aides, providing essential services to older adults and persons with disabilities in their communities. By equipping women with caregiving skills, the initiative fosters workforce reintegration, enhances their economic autonomy, and contributes to the professionalization of the care sector.

In 2025, a significant milestone was achieved: 217 individuals (213 women and 4 men) successfully completed a comprehensive one-month training programme in FBiH. The training, jointly implemented by UN Women and the FMRSP, focused on home care provision and social support services. These newly trained professionals now represent the foundation of a growing, community-based care workforce. To ensure sustainability, the Gerontodomaćice model was integrated into institutional budgets and development plans. UN Women worked closely with key stakeholders, including the Federal Employment Institute, the FMRSP, the Red Cross of FBiH, and international partners such as Hilfswerk, to co-create tailored business and service delivery models for local implementation.

The second phase of the initiative (employment phase) is currently being rolled out across 14 cities and municipalities. The scale-up aims to further expand the reach and impact of the model, while contributing to the formal recognition of care work as a pillar of social and economic development. These efforts signal a shift in institutional thinking, moving care from the private to the public domain, and recognising women not only as

caregivers, but as essential agents of community resilience, inclusion, and development. In RS, UN Women continued its collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders to promote sustainable care solutions tailored to community needs. Regular coordination with the Mayor and representatives of the City of Bijeljina, an active local partner in the programme, resulted in tangible progress toward the development and implementation of care economy models.

Building on this cooperation, the Entrepreneurs in Care model was successfully piloted in Bijeljina, with the dual aim of addressing rising care demands and supporting women's economic empowerment. The model responds to the growing needs of older persons, children, individuals with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups by enabling the provision of accessible, quality, community-based care services. In 2025, 30 women completed a tailored training programme that combined practical caregiving skills, such as personal care, home assistance, and psychosocial support, with entrepreneurship and business development competencies. As a result, these women are now equipped not only to provide essential care services but also to independently manage and grow their own micro-businesses within the care sector. Through this approach, the model fosters the formalization of care roles traditionally performed unpaid, offering women new income-generating opportunities while also enhancing service quality and availability in underserved areas. By bridging care and entrepreneurship, the initiative contributes to reducing gender gaps in the labour market and builds a more inclusive and adaptive local care infrastructure. This localized care economy intervention also aligns with ongoing discussions around gender-responsive labour legislation and social policy reform, reinforcing the broader agenda of care work recognition and redistribution.

3. Capacity development for designing care economy policies and Awareness-raising



On the occasion of the International Day of Care and Support, a full-day event was organized in cooperation with FMRSP to highlight key milestones in BiH's efforts to improve care services, particularly for persons with disabilities. As part of the event, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Ministry to enhance care and support services and to strengthen the protection and recognition of care workers. The event also featured the presentation of steps towards the development of an interactive Rights and Services Map for persons with disabilities in FBiH, as well as the draft Law on Social Services.



On 10 December 2024, the job fair #GledajSebiPosla was officially opened, bringing together over 100 employers and offering 3,000 job opportunities. UN Women hosted a workshop at the fair focused on empowering women in the labour market and presented the Rights Map for persons with disabilities. Visitors to the UN Women booth were also able to learn about ongoing activities in women's economic empowerment and register for training programmes for home care aides.

Green Transition/Circular Economy Web Platform

During the reporting period, the Green Transition Engagement Platform, now fully functional, continued to serve as a hub for information and inspiration on circular economy and broader green transition topics. The platform featured a variety of new articles and success stories showcasing companies from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region that have embraced circular practices, offering practical insights and encouraging the replication of sustainable business models. Some of the published articles were contributed by international circular economy experts, allowing the Programme to leverage global knowledge and bring added value to the platform's content. The platform and its embedded Circular Pulse were actively promoted through newsletters and official web channels of the entity chambers of commerce, as well as through dedicated UNDP communication platforms. As a result of these efforts, 50 companies completed the self-assessment, contributing to a growing understanding of circular economy readiness across the private sector. In the period ahead, UNDP will continue promoting the tool and exploring opportunities to scale its use. In addition, interest was shown from a commercial bank in using the Circular Pulse tool to assess SME clients on a circular basis presents a valuable opportunity, which UNDP will seek to leverage to further support green transformation in the financial sector.

Circular Accelerator

Following the contracting of Service Provider (Deloitte d.o.o. Sarajevo) for the implementation of the Circular Accelerator, and choosing of ten participant companies¹, the Programme initiated Circular Accelerator, which lasted from August 2024 to February 2025.

Circular Accelerator for SMEs was structured from three main tasks, including:

- Task 1: Design the replicable and scalable concept and a curriculum for the Circular Accelerator for SMEs
- Task 2: Delivery of capacity development trainings and mentoring sessions under the Circular Accelerator for SMEs programme
- Task 3: Develop Circular Economy Transition Plans for large-scale interventions from the companies that completed the Accelerator programme.

¹ Bojo-Metal d.o.o., Empress d.o.o., FTM d.o.o., GS Traders d.o.o., Gala Group d.o.o., MDG International d.o.o., Medena Commerce d.o.o., T&E d.o.o., Termoglas d.o.o., Walter AEC d.o.o.

The primary objective of Task 1 was to create a methodology and curriculum for a Circular Accelerator tailored to SMEs embarking on circular and green transitions. The result was a Blueprint that includes a comprehensive curriculum covering topics such as circular economy principles, value creation loops, sustainable product development, ESG integration, risk management, financial planning, and investor readiness. Designed for both group and one-on-one mentoring formats, it allowed for cross-sector applicability and future adaptation. Additionally, a template for Circular Economy Transition Plans (CETPs) was developed, guiding companies in defining their vision, goals, interventions, KPIs, and financial strategies for circular transformation.



The implementation of Task 2 began with a kickoff online session introducing the programme and conducting ESG maturity diagnostics using a green impact assessment tool. Two rounds of in-person training followed:

- Training 1 (Hotel Monti, Igman, 9-10 October 2024) focused on introducing circular economy concepts, business models (9Rs), ESG integration, and local-global synergies. Interactive exercises encouraged peer collaboration and self-assessment.
- Training 2 (Hotel Čardaci, Vitez, 5-6 November 2024) explored circular production processes, value chain innovation, and financial planning. SMEs engaged in life cycle analyses, material flow mapping, and drafted investment proposals.



The training was complemented with at least three and where needed four personalized mentoring sessions per company. These sessions guided the development of each SME's CETP, providing feedback and step-by-step support. Companies were coached on strategic planning, financial modeling, and stakeholder engagement, preparing them for collaboration with financiers and implementation of circular solutions.

As mentoring progressed, SMEs submitted drafts of their CETPs. Assigned experts provided detailed feedback to refine the plans through an iterative process. Finalized CETPs — tailored roadmaps with milestones and KPIs — were submitted to UNDP.

These documents serve as strategic tools for securing investments and implementing sustainable business transformations.

1.1.4. Strengthening capacities of parliaments for SDG-informed decision making and oversight (UNDP)

Significant progress has been made in strengthening the capacity of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina (PSBiH) to integrate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its decision-making processes and oversight functions. This progress builds on the landmark achievement of the formal adoption of amendments to the Rulebooks of both the House of Peoples and the House of Representatives, which expanded the mandate of the Joint Commission on Economic Reforms and Development to include sustainable development oversight. This development marks a pivotal step in the PSBiH's commitment to sustainable development, as it was the first instance of the Assembly formally engaging with SDGs as part of its legislative framework.

Recognizing the need for broader parliamentary engagement and capacity-building, it became clear that further efforts were required to ensure MPs were equipped to fully embrace sustainable development as a guiding principle in their work. To address this need, in December 2025, the Joint Commission on Economic Reforms and Development, within the framework of the SDG2BiH Programme and with support from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) organized a specialized seminar. The seminar, which was attended by members of the Joint Commission on Economic Reforms and Development, secretaries of other committees, representatives from the Public Relations Sector of PSBiH, the Audit Office of the Institutions of BiH, and members of the SDG Council in BiH, provided critical insights into the progress BiH has made in achieving the SDGs. The event focused particularly on the SDGs Framework in BiH, as the only development document to have been adopted at all levels of government in the country. In addition, the seminar explored established mechanisms for implementing the SDG Framework, highlighting both key challenges and opportunities for incorporating the SDGs into BiH's legislative process. A primary area of focus was the strengthening of cooperation between the PSBiH and the SDG Council in BiH. Ms. Aleksandra Blagojević, representative of the IPU, led an interactive session that initiated a self-assessment of PSBiH's readiness to engage with sustainable development. This session also provided a comparative analysis of global sustainable legislative practices and discussed their potential application in the BiH context.



As part of the ongoing capacity-building efforts, the Programme also provided expert and technical support for the development of a Guidebook for MPs. This guide is designed to assist members of the PSBiH in integrating SDGs into their legislative work and decision-making processes. The seminar represented a crucial step towards embedding sustainable development into the functioning of the PSBiH, reinforcing its role in fostering inclusive, sustainable development across the country. It laid the groundwork for further improvements in legislative practices that align with BiH's long-term sustainability goals.

1.1.5. Strengthening state and entity statistical institutions' capacities for monitoring achievements towards SDG targets

During the reporting period, the Programme provided comprehensive technical and expert support to the SDG Council in the revision of the SDG indicators used to monitor the implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH. This revision process culminated in the adoption of a revised list of 74 SDG indicators by the BiH CoM in October 2024. Through this revision, the SDG Council identified several critical data gaps for key indicators, particularly those related to SDG 16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels." Notably, there were significant gaps in data for indicators that measure service provision, public satisfaction, and the effectiveness of governance - elements essential for assessing progress toward sustainable development in BiH. Recognizing the strong link between service delivery, population satisfaction, and public trust, the SDG Council emphasized the need for comprehensive data to help governments better understand the needs, experiences, and preferences of the population. This insight is crucial for providing more targeted and effective services, particularly to underserved populations. Tracking public satisfaction with services is a cornerstone of a citizen-centered approach to governance and serves as an important indicator of overall government performance. One such critical indicator is Indicator 16.6.2, which tracks the proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience with public services, including healthcare, education, and government services related to obtaining identification documents and civil registration of life events (e.g., births, marriages, and deaths). The SDG Council deemed it essential to track this indicator to accurately monitor the progress of the SDG Framework in BiH. In response to the identified data gap, the BiH Department for Economic Planning (DEP), in its role as the chair institution of the SDG Council, submitted a formal request to UNDP to conduct a survey to collect data for Indicator 16.6.2, based on the custodianship of this indicator.

To ensure a more comprehensive assessment, the SDG Council also requested the inclusion of several additional indicators in the survey, namely:

Indicator 16.1.4: The proportion of the population that feels safe walking alone around their area after dark.

Indicator 16.5.1: The proportion of individuals who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid or were asked for a bribe by that public official during the previous 12 months. Additionally, the SDG Council recognized the absence of an appropriate SDG indicator to measure public access to and satisfaction with public transport. Given the importance of public transport to quality of life and inclusivity, the SDG Council decided that forthcoming research would also include questions related to the speed, availability, usage, and satisfaction with public transport services. These indicators collectively offer a more nuanced understanding of governance effectiveness, population satisfaction, and perceptions of safety and inclusivity within BiH communities. The data gathered will be crucial for informing evidence-based policy decisions and for strengthening accountability at all levels of government. In line with this request, the Programme conducted a comprehensive population perception survey, focusing on safety, integrity, public services, and public transport. The survey collected responses from a representative sample of 2,992 individuals, with data disaggregated by administrative unit (e.g., BD BiH, RS, FBiH, cantons, regions in RS, and urban centers with populations greater than 50,000 in RS) and socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, rural vs. urban, disability status, household income, and level of education). The Programme produced a detailed report analyzing the survey findings, which were used by the SDG Council to inform their Annual Report on the achievement of the SDG Framework in BiH. The insights gained from this survey will be instrumental in enhancing government strategies, improving public services, and fostering inclusive governance across the country.

Output 1.2: Public financing instruments at the entity and/or cantonal level sustainably reinforce the achievement of the SDGs in selected priority areas, including through partnerships with the private sector

The SDG Financing Framework (SDG FF) in BiH is a country-wide strategic policy paper that provides the institutions at all levels of government an agreed set of key policies and financing instruments to significantly accelerate progress toward achieving Agenda 2030. The SDG FF was formally adopted by the CoM in June 2024, after its adoption by the governments of RS and FBiH, the BD BiH Government. At the core of the SDG FF is the development of key financing instruments designed to support the accelerated attainment of SDGs in BiH.



Advised by the inter-governmental working group to support the implementation of the SDG FF, the Programme launched targeted technical assistance in 2024 to help entity governments prepare **feasibility studies for two key financial instruments: the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) and SDG Bonds**. As part of this support, the Programme facilitated the development of the proposed approach and a set of Terms of References (ToRs) for conducting the studies in line with internationally recognized methodologies and other obligatory standards. Based on the defined approach, agreed upon with the inter-entity government working group, the Programme commissioned consulting service providers in late 2024/early 2025 to carry out the studies, which are expected to be finalized and published by late July 2025. Once completed, both studies will offer the entity governments feasible, context-specific solutions and technical guidance for introducing a new generation of SDG-aligned financial instruments that support development financing in priority sectors.

During the reporting period, the Programme also continued providing tailored support to BiH subnational governments to enhance their capacity for introducing innovative financial mechanisms aimed at (i) **local level governments digitalization**; (ii) **green transition and circular economy**, and (iii) **research & development** through joint efforts combining government, academy, and private sector. These initiatives are aligned with the key SDGs priority areas, and aiming to contribute to the accelerated achievement of the SDGs.

The Programme's institutional partners for this component remained the same as during the previous reporting period. In the area of LG digitalization, the partners are Agency for Information Communication Technologies of RS and the Federal Ministry of Justice in the FBiH. For green transition and circular economy, the Federal Ministry of Development, Entrepreneurship, and Crafts (FMRPO) is the main partner. In the area of research and development, collaboration continues with the Federal Ministry of Education and Science.

The table below provides a summary of the pilot financial mechanisms supported by the Programme.



→ The Program support to the development of **“Grant Scheme for Strengthening the competitiveness of SME”** in FBiH is a strategic opportunity & tool for embedding a systemic “know-how” into the process of the development of a complex government grant scheme that offers incentives for green transition and circular economy. Furthermore, it envisages the support to the anchor government for the digitalization of the entire process of the government grants scheme management; As well, it explores the possibilities for collaboration and partnerships for sustainable financing of SME development initiatives. Lastly, demonstrating the FBiH experience may encourage other government levels to utilize the same approach & solutions while developing similar financial mechanisms for supporting green transition and circular economy in the coming years.



→ The Program support to piloting of a **“Digital transition scheme for digitalization of LG services”** at the entity government level serves as a “proof of concept” in terms of (i) LGs’ ability to adopt new digital solutions to enhance their openness, transparency, and effective service delivery through applied package of e-services; (ii) the anchor government institution’s ability to host a digital transformation scheme (in regard to identifying target LGs, conducting rapid e-readiness assessments, coordinating technical assistance to eligible LGs to establish e-services, and monitoring and reporting). It will set up the systemic platform for further scale-up for other cohorts of LGs that are in need of improving their e-services to citizens and local business.



→ The Program support to the development of **“Joint Research & Development Grant scheme”** is a unique opportunity to support the R&D in FBiH through the joint efforts by government, academia, and private sector. It has two-fold (long term) objectives: (i) to support the government partner in developing a financial mechanism for a concentrated, targeted, and transparent distribution of grants to support the R&D projects (as the key priority area defined in the SDG Financing Framework; (ii) to utilize the pilot phase to develop a methodological approach that allows for a quick and effective replication (scale-up) in the next year(s). Additionally, the pilot phase will be utilized to explore and call for possible partnerships for crowding-in the external financial resources for the next year(s) grant scheme financing from the other government ministries, private sector, development organizations, and other donors active in the country.

As part of its support through the **Grant Scheme for Strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs in FBiH**, the Programme provided direct technical assistance to its partner institution, FMRPO. This support focused on the development and management of the grant scheme, including the preparation of Public Call Guidelines and supporting documentation in accordance with standards for complex grant scheme development). In the previous reporting period (early 2024), the Programme contributed financially to the establishment of the grant scheme, with a total value of 18 million BAM (USD 9.9 million), including a USD 0.1 million contribution from the SDG2BiH Programme. During this reporting period, the Programme provided further technical support by developing a custom software solution for the digitalization of grant scheme management processes. This included training FMRPO staff on how to use the new online grant management platform. The Programme also supported the Ministry in organizing info sessions for private sector applicants, introducing them to the digital platform and promoting the scheme’s focus on supporting the green and circular transition of SMEs.



To further enhance institutional capacities for designing and implementing complex grant schemes, in the second half of 2024, the Programme engaged a dedicated Grant Scheme Expert to lead a structured and in-depth capacity-building process. This began with a research study on the knowledge and skills gaps in complex grant scheme management in BiH. Based on the findings, the Programme developed a set of high-quality, context-specific training materials tailored to the administrative, legal, and operational realities of grant scheme management in the country.



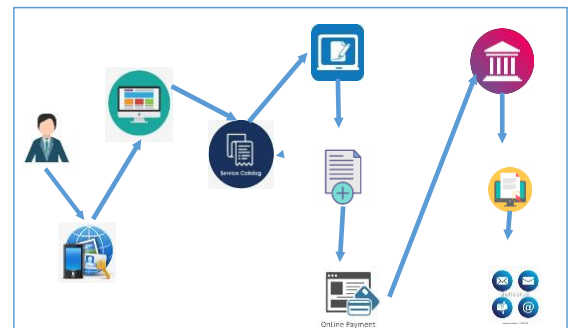
As a result, a series of comprehensive training sessions for target institutional representatives was held in late 2024, gathering 50 participants from key government institutions involved in public funding processes. The training curriculum was based on the Handbook for Public Sector Practitioners and offered a step-by-step guide to managing complex and high-value grant schemes. Topics included grant programme design and planning, integration of sustainability and circularity principles, development of operational guidelines and procedures,

quality assurance mechanisms, publication of calls, applications management, and effective monitoring and reporting. A combination of expert-led presentations, practical exercises, and peer exchange enabled participants to acquire new knowledge and share experiences across institutions.

Furthermore, due to growing interest in the digital grant management platform – initially developed for FMRPO – from several target ministries, the Programme signed a new agreement with the same Service Provider to expand the platform’s use across multiple levels of government in BiH. The upgraded platform, expected to be finalized by early summer of 2025, will enable other ministries to publish and manage their public calls through a unified, transparent, and accountable system, aligned with modern EU grant management practices.

For supporting government on **digital transition, including the digital transition scheme for digitalization of LG services**, during this reporting cycle, the Programme was active through two major interventions:

Firstly, the Programme was providing direct support in **the digital transformation initiative in Canton Sarajevo**. This involved the support for introduction of an upgraded, e-Service portal for Canton Sarajevo as an exemplar of a systemic approach to implementing “digital by default” and “citizen-centricity” in public service delivery and digital governance in BiH. As well, to ensure long term sustainability and scalability potential, the Programme was also providing support for preparation of DRA (Digital Readiness Assessment) for lead institutions (Ministry of Justice and Administration and the Institute for Informatics and Statistics of Canton Sarajevo) and a roadmap for the digital transition of Canton Sarajevo, including the development of regulatory by-laws needed required by e-Governance Law. The Program is on track to complete planned activities despite contextual, and other challenges. The e-portal upgrade and DMS expansion is progressing in line with plan and it is expected to be handover fully functional until the end of August 2025.

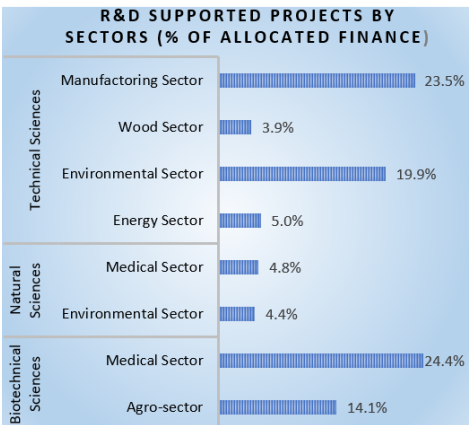


Secondly, the Programme initiated piloting of a **digital transition scheme as a mechanism to accelerate the digital transformation of local government services in BiH**. Conceptually based in the BiH SDG FF, the digital transition scheme aims to support 10 LGs (i.e up to 5 LGs in FBiH i RS) to establish 5 key e-services for a rapid, transparent, and cost-effective public e-services to citizens and local business at the local level. It leverages proven digital platforms and administrative process reengineering methodologies to set a precedent for scalable, interoperable e-services solutions. During this reporting period the Programme launched a public call (in early 2025) and selected 10 local governments based on their readiness and commitment to reform and digitalization. From the Federation of BiH selected are municipalities: Mostar, Jablanica, Konjic, Čapljina, Čitluk, Zvornik, Gacko, Gradiška, Laktaši, Prnjavor have been selected for the piloting in the RS.

After contract signing ceremonies with beneficiary LGs, the Programme supported the comprehensive analyses of the existing administrative services of the LGs. Beside identifying information for an easier selection of those services that after the introduction of e-services will reduce daily queues in the office/service counters, special focus was given to determining the applicable services for citizens - individuals with special needs, pensioners, or other vulnerable categories of citizens. The end result was development of a digital catalogue of public services for each LG. These catalogues were aligned with the Common Public Service Catalogue requirements (CPSV-AP), ensuring compatibility with EU standards. Finally, the Programme is providing support on establishing and upgrading of ePortals that are the spots where the e-services operational data flow at the LG level will be operationally anchored, and treated for end use. The Program is on track to complete planned activities despite contextual, and other challenges, including not clear definition of roles and responsibility in FBIH regarding the digital transformation. As well, the current political situation in RS has its effect on partners slowing down AIKT RS response times when it comes to relevant input preparation and decision making.



Regarding the **Joint Research & Development (R&D) Grant Scheme**, the Programme provided financial support for a grant scheme implemented in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Education and Science, targeting public and private universities and R&D institutes. The Programme's contribution played a catalytic role, leveraging additional financial resources and significantly increasing the total funding envelope of the scheme. This approach enabled the financing of a larger number of scientific research projects, with a total allocated budget of BAM 990,882 (approximately USD 0.56 million, of which USD 0.15 million was contributed by the SDG2BiH Programme). The Programme was also actively involved in the technical development of the Public Call, which was launched by the Ministry in late 2024. Designed in accordance with best practices for complex grant schemes, the call focused on supporting scientific research with strong application potential in industry. The call attracted 50 applications from 29 academic and R&D institutions across FBIH. Following a rigorous two-stage evaluation process, 37 projects met the administrative and technical criteria, and 22 projects were ultimately selected for funding.



The selected projects span fields such as biomedicine, biotechnical sciences, technical sciences, and natural sciences, with a strong emphasis on applied research in priority sectors, including renewable energy, waste management, and sustainable agriculture. For example, the project "Development of an Energy Storage System for Photovoltaic Plants" directly supports SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), while "Green Production of Native Trout Using Genetic Markers" aligns with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). These 22 selected projects are expected to lead to market-validated prototypes, improved processes, and stronger private sector collaboration with R&D institutions - a critical factor in enhancing BiH's competitiveness and knowledge-based economic growth.

During the first quarter of 2025 funds were disbursed to all grantees, though the process took longer than planned. Online meetings were held with project leaders to agree on the implementation timeline and project monitoring. According to the agreed implementation schedule, the grant funds are expected to be utilized by the end of August 2025, while research components of projects should be completed by late 2025.



In the upcoming period, the Programme will continue supporting the Ministry in project monitoring and completion, ensuring the successful implementation of ongoing projects and the capture of key lessons learned. These insights will inform the Ministry's efforts to scale and replicate the R&D Grant Scheme in future cycles, contributing to a more robust innovation ecosystem in BiH.

Output 1.3. Advancing engagement of private sector and other stakeholders in sustainable development

Activities below focus on advancing the engagement of the private sector, but also of other relevant actors, in the implementation of Agenda 2030. Engagement of the private sector, local communities, and other key stakeholders is crucial for the successful implementation of the SDGs in BiH. Initiatives such as the SDG Business Pioneers Award (SDG BPA) and activities during SDG Week promote responsible business practices, sustainability reporting, and strengthen partnerships that contribute to social inclusion, environmental protection, and economic resilience. This part of the report summarizes key activities and results aimed at supporting sustainable development, raising awareness, and taking concrete steps toward localizing the 2030 Agenda, highlighting the role of diverse sectors in building a long-term sustainable society.

1.3.1. Engaging private sector to promote sustainable development

SDG Business Pioneers Award in BiH

The SDG BPA in BiH has become a flagship initiative and a highly effective instrument for engaging the private sector in the implementation of the SDGs.

This annual award recognizes and highlights the efforts of private sector companies in advancing sustainable business practices and encourages new entrepreneurs to adopt more sustainable business models. Since its launch in 2019, the Award celebrated its seventh edition in 2025.

During the reporting period, the Programme successfully organized the SDG BPA for both year 2024 and 2025. The Award continued to emphasize companies that generate and retain decent jobs while actively working to reduce their environmental footprint. Each year, nine companies of different sizes are recognized: one company each in the micro, small, medium, and large categories within the two thematic pillars—"People" and "Resources & Environment"—as well as one overall winner in each category. The application process spans three months, followed by an independent evaluation conducted by a panel of experts based on GRI-aligned criteria. Upon completion of the application process, all participating companies received tailored blueprints to support their future sustainability reporting. In this reporting period, a total of 66 companies were provided with these blueprints—32 in 2024 and 34 in 2025.



Following initial efforts to raise awareness and actively engage the private sector in advancing the SDGs through the organization of the 2025 SDG BPA, there has been a significant and growing interest from businesses in embedding sustainability into their core operations. This growing momentum is reflected in the increasing



adoption of sustainable business models, as well as in the expanding efforts of companies to monitor, measure, and transparently report on their sustainability initiatives.

The application process for the 2024 SDG BPA record notable growth, with 180 applications submitted by 360 companies over the three-month application period, marking a 34% increase compared to 2023. This positive trend continued in 2025, with a record-breaking 484 companies applying. These numbers not only illustrate rising interest but also signal a deeper commitment by the private sector to sustainable transformation. To date, the SDG BPA in BiH has showcased numerous inspiring examples of good practices - featuring companies of varying sizes and sectors that have taken concrete steps toward more responsible and sustainable business operations. Among them are Zira d.o.o., TT Kabeli d.o.o., Greens d.o.o., Walter Code d.o.o., and Bosnalijek d.d., all of which proudly shared their approaches to driving positive change. Among them are Zira d.o.o., TT Kabeli d.o.o., Greens d.o.o., Walter Code d.o.o., and Bosnalijek d.d., all of which proudly shared their approaches to driving positive change.

The **2024 award ceremony** was held on August 20 at Villa Braun in Sarajevo and brought together over 200 participants, including representatives from institutions, businesses, civil society organizations, public administration, academia, and financial institutions. The event celebrated the winners and provided a valuable platform to foster partnerships and share inspiring success stories. Special guests included members of the APU Network Sweden, prominent Bosnian-Swedish businesswomen, and other key partners supporting the initiative. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of BiH also attended the event, further underscoring its significance. Two thematic exhibitions were featured during the ceremony, “Pioneer the Possible: Accelerating the Green Transition” - highlighting cutting-edge Swedish innovations in the transport, energy, construction, and industrial sectors to inspire local companies, and “SDGs Through Arts in Bosnia and Herzegovina” - an exhibition originally presented in BiH in June 2024, showcasing artwork by 17 talented women artists from around the world, aimed at visually communicating the principles of sustainable development.

In **2025**, the ceremony will be organized at the premises of company Energoinvest, symbolically celebrating the legacy of industrial development while also emphasizing the importance of innovation, resilience, and sustainable business. The event will gather over 200 guests, including BiH diaspora from Sweden, regional inspiring and innovative partners such as Ericsson Nikola Tesla, and the wider business community. Some of the standout companies from 2025 demonstrated exceptional innovation and commitment to sustainability. Half of the applicants are actively implementing measures to cut harmful emissions (42%), while 46% of companies are educating their employees on circular economy, fostering commitment to long-term sustainability. Social issues have not been overlooked either as 67% of applicants offer wages equal to or above the industry average, while in 32% of companies, women make up more than 55% of the top management team. This is a clear indicator of progress in gender equality as condition for further sustainable



growth. In line with the event's commitment to sustainability and inclusivity, vegan food was served at both ceremonies.

The SDG BPA continues to emphasize the critical role of the private sector in advancing sustainability, particularly in the areas of green transition, innovation, and the development of new business models. As a direct result of the initiative's promotion of annual sustainability reporting, an increase in the number of BiH companies joining the UN Global Compact has also been observed, marking an important step in aligning local businesses with international sustainability frameworks. Importantly, through the years companies requested feedback on their applications and received detailed guidance on areas for future improvement, demonstrating a strong interest in continuous development.

The Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina served as the official partner for both the 2024 and 2025 SDG BPA editions. This strategic partnership aims to strengthen cooperation and raise awareness of the importance of sustainable business practices, circular economy principles, digitalization, and decarbonization. Moreover, it plays a key role in localizing the SDG BPA and ensuring its continued integration within national development frameworks.

Finally, the promotion of finalists and winners continues to be a central component of the SDG BPA. The award ceremony and its results are widely covered by mainstream media in BiH, amplifying the reach and impact of sustainability champions across the country.

1.3.2. SDG Week in BiH and promotion of SDG localization

SDG Week in Bosnia and Herzegovina is an annual initiative gathering all UN agencies and creating opportunities for representatives of public and private sector as well as the CSOs to promote SDGs and foster a society based on equal opportunities. The 2024 edition, held from 4 to 8 November, marked the fourth consecutive year of this initiative. Under the overarching theme “Accelerating Action for a Sustainable Future (Act4SDGs)”, the week showcased innovation, partnerships, and impactful local action in pursuit of sustainable development.

Under the auspices of the UN RCO in BiH, supported by Sweden, and a wide network of institutional and civil society partners, coordinated by the Programme, the SDG Week 2024 presented 20 events, representing a 18% increase in activities compared to 2023. This growth illustrates the increasing momentum and engagement of stakeholders in promoting inclusive, green, and fair development across the country.

The events reached a broad and diverse audience, including youth, policymakers, academia, businesses, civil society, innovators, and media from BiH and the region. Activities ranged from high-level dialogues and conferences to workshops, community outreach, online advocacy campaigns, and youth-focused bootcamps, covering a wide range of topics: inclusive governance, climate action, digital transformation, gender equality, health equity, circular economy, and innovation. In total, more than 2,000 participants attended the events. The week concluded with a strong message on the importance of partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, and innovation for achieving sustainable and inclusive development in BiH.



The week officially opened with the **2024 SDG Local Governance Awards**, organized by SDG2BiH, recognizing municipalities and cities that are pioneering sustainable development practices and effectively localizing the SDGs. The awards ceremony brought together over 150 participants, including representatives from local governments, national institutions, and development partners. Applications were received from 30 local governments (municipalities and cities)² across the country, with cooperation from the Associations of Municipalities and Cities of RS and FBiH. The event highlighted replicable best practices and encouraged collaboration and innovation at the local level.



Key Activities of the 2024 SDG Week in BiH:

- **Camp UP (Banja Luka):** A five-day startup development bootcamp for youth culminating in a pitch competition. Organized by the Science and Technology Park of RS, UNDP, University of Banja Luka, and the RS Ministry of Science.
- **Inclusion through Art (Čapljina):** A mural workshop promoting social inclusion through joint artistic creation involving children from diverse backgrounds. Organized by UNHCR.
- **Franco-Bosnian Air Quality Summit (Sarajevo):** A high-level dialogue on air pollution solutions with stakeholders from BiH and France. Organized by the French Embassy in BiH.
- **Special Olympics (Tuzla):** An inclusive sports competition featuring athletes with and without disabilities, promoting equality and breaking down stigma. Organized by UNFPA, Tuzla City, and Special Olympics.
- **Strategic Planning Workshop (Banja Luka):** A capacity-building event for RS Government institutions on integrating SDGs into development planning. Organized by the General Secretariat of RS with UNDP.
- **Mental Health and Peacebuilding (Banja Luka):** Discussions on strengthening mental health services in support of social cohesion. Organized by IOM and UNDP.
- **Circular Accelerator for SMEs (Vitez):** Training sessions to help SMEs adopt circular economy practices. Organized by UNDP.



² City of Bijeljina, Centar Sarajevo Municipality, City of Gradiška, Ilijaš Municipality, Kakanj Municipality, City of Laktaši, Novi Grad Municipality, City of Prijedor, Tešanj Municipality, City of Bosanska Krupa, Bosanski Petrovac Municipality, Doboj Istok Municipality, Kotor Varoš Municipality, Modriča Municipality, Novo Sarajevo Municipality, Posušje Municipality, Rudo Municipality, Sanski Most Municipality, Srbac Municipality, Teslić Municipality, Žepče Municipality, City of Zvornik, Breza Municipality, Doboj Jug Municipality, Istočno Novo Sarajevo Municipality, Kreševo Municipality, City of Livno, Maglaj Municipality, Šamac Municipality, and City of Široki Brijeg.



- Gender and Environmental Justice (Sarajevo): Presentation of research on women's engagement in environmental activism. Organized by UNDP and the Gender Equality Agency of BiH.
- Local Gender Action Plans (Jahorina): A conference on integrating gender perspectives in municipal development and combating gender-based violence. Organized by RS and FBiH Municipal Associations and SALAR.
- Tree Planting – Fortica (Mostar): A symbolic action by local scouts and partners to promote reforestation. Organized by the City of Mostar Scouts' Alliance and UNDP.
- Recycle and Win (Sarajevo): A community recycling event with prizes and educational booths. Organized by Foundation Mozaik.
- HPV Vaccination Access (Sarajevo): Training and awareness-raising on improving HPV vaccine uptake among marginalized groups. Organized by the Institute for Public Health FBiH, Sarajevo Canton Ministry of Education, and UNFPA.
- Sustainable Fashion: Threads for Tomorrow (Sarajevo): Exploring the environmental impact of fashion and the need for sustainable consumer choices. Organized by the EU Delegation to BiH.
- AI and Digital Literacy (Sarajevo, Banja Luka): Events engaging university students in discussions about artificial intelligence and media information literacy. Organized by UNESCO.
- Health, Technology & Collaboration (Sarajevo): Exploring healthcare innovations, with Sweden's life science model as inspiration. Organized by UNDP, the Embassy of Sweden, and WHO.
- Field Visit to Trebinje: Opening of a sensory room for children with developmental disabilities as part of the SDG Localisation Grant Scheme. Organized by UNICEF and UNDP.
- Gendergy (Sarajevo): Exploring the intersection of gender and energy, highlighting women's roles in a just energy transition. Organized by UNDP.



As part of its commitment to sustainability, SDG Week in BiH remains a carbon-positive event. CO₂ emissions generated during the organization and implementation of the events were offset through the TvojCO₂.ba digital platform. Through this initiative, tree seedlings were purchased and planted on behalf of event participants, demonstrating a tangible contribution to reforestation and environmental stewardship.

SDG Week 2024 reaffirmed BiH's commitment to inclusive and sustainable development. By creating a collaborative platform for learning, innovation, and action, the initiative continues to strengthen partnerships, mobilize local solutions, and accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

1.3.3. No Nation Fashion: Sustainable Fashion Initiatives that Leave No-One Behind

From 1 May 2025, No Nation Fashion (NNF) initiated its activities under the Programme framework. During this period, NNF began the recruitment process for both a Project Coordinator and a Project Assistant, who will oversee the coordination, implementation, monitoring, and reporting of the project. In addition, NNF held a kick-



off meeting with UNDP and the donor to finalize plans for activities and visibility initiatives related to the upcoming Sarajevo Film Festival.

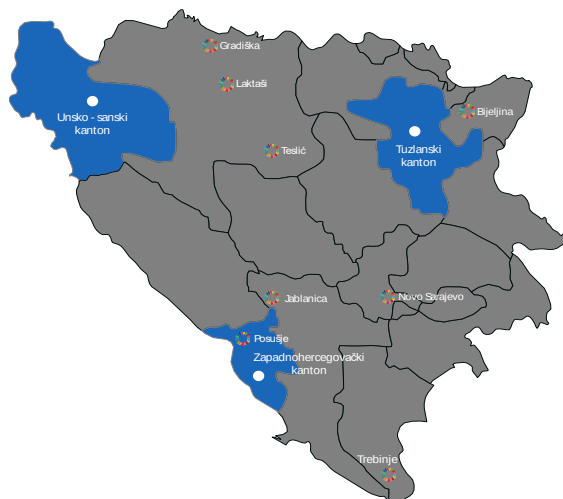
NNF is also preparing for the Orea Market Art Festival scheduled for autumn 2025, and has initiated applications for the European Fashion Summits, which highlight sustainable and human-centric production approaches. Furthermore, NNF is organizing a mini-fashion show as part of the Sarajevo Business Forum, hosted by Sparkasse Bank, in the final week of June.

Outcome 2: Cantonal and local governments actively contribute to implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH

During the reporting period, the Programme significantly advanced its support to partner Local Governments (LGs) and Cantons by strengthening their capacities to localize and implement SDGs. This support included tailored assistance in aligning local development strategies with the SDG Framework, preparation of technical documentation for strategic, large-scale infrastructure projects, and the facilitation of successful implementation of projects that directly contribute to the achievement of SDG targets. The tangible results of these efforts are detailed under Outputs 2.1 and 2.2.

Output 2.1. Local governments capabilities to plan, finance, implement, monitor and report on their SDG achievements enhanced (up to 8 local governments)

During this reporting period, the Programme built on the foundations laid in the previous year by transforming strategic objectives into tangible, measurable outcomes across partner LGs. The focus remained on embedding the SDGs into local governance systems, development strategies, and service delivery mechanisms. Notable achievements include:



Adoption of SDG-Aligned Local Development Strategies

Two partner LGs, Bijeljina and Laktaši, finalized and formally adopted local development strategies fully aligned with the SDG Framework in BiH and the new RS Law on Strategic Planning. Developed with technical support from the Programme, these strategies were adopted by the respective City Assemblies and serve as guiding documents for sustainable, inclusive development.

Integration of SDGs into Local Planning and Reporting

Six LGs (Gradiška, Teslić, Novo Sarajevo, Trebinje, Jablanica, and Posušje) integrated SDG priorities into key planning and reporting tools, including development reports, planning guidelines, three-year action plans, mid-term plans, annual work plans, and annual progress reports. Bijeljina and Laktaši also received tailored assistance in translating their strategies into implementation documentation, following the adoption of their new development strategies.

Support for the readiness and implementation of the large-scale projects

As a result of capacity-building trainings on large-scale project implementation, partner LG identified eight priority infrastructure projects. Each LG received seed funding to develop essential technical documentation, making these projects investment-ready, including two feasibility studies with cost-benefit analyses, two conceptual designs, and four main construction designs. The total investment in technical documentation was 87,847.00 BAM with LGs securing 14,067.00 BAM or 16% of the funds.

Implementation of the Grant Scheme aligned with the LNOB Principle

Nine LG projects were designed and implemented in collaboration with local governments and social protection actors - eight aligned with the "Leave No One Behind" principle and one broader development initiative. These projects addressed SDG-aligned social priorities by delivering tangible services and infrastructure improvements, including:

Construction of six multi-sensory playgrounds in Trebinje, Jablanica, Posušje, Novo Sarajevo, Teslić, and Bijeljina, promoting inclusive recreational spaces for children with developmental, behavioral, and physical challenges.

Ensuring equal accessibility for children and adults from vulnerable groups, including those with developmental and behavioral difficulties, disabilities, and those from rural areas - **seven new social services** in Gradiška, Jablanica, Posušje, and Trebinje, and improvement of at least **three existing services** in other partner LGs **were introduced**.

As part of the joint support to LGs provided by UNDP and UNICEF, UNICEF led efforts to introduce and operationalize the **Social Protection and Inclusion (SPI)** model in all eight partner LGs. **SPI Commissions were established in seven of the eight partner LGs. In Novo Sarajevo**, where the context called for a specialized approach, **a Multisectoral Working Group (WG) was created** to focus on the employment and inclusion of youth with disabilities. Furthermore, companies such as Bingo and DM drogerie markt d.o.o. joined the WG, showcasing a successful approach to inclusive employment through private sector involvement.

Operational Teams (OTs) were set up in all seven locations with SPI Commissions, serving as technical and professional support bodies that institutionalize multisectoral collaboration. These structures ensured that the new model was effectively integrated into local governance systems.

The SPI model was further reinforced through formalized cooperation protocols, defining referral mechanisms and ensuring integration of newly established services. Seven LGs signed protocols to institutionalize cooperation and coordination in service provision. Although Jablanica's protocol has been adopted, official signing is pending due to natural disasters, with a project extension granted until June 2025.

Sustainability was prioritized across all project components.

Local Action Plans (LAPs) for the 2025–2026 period have been initiated in all eight LGs, with drafts completed in Gradiška, Posušje, Teslić, and Trebinje. These plans are fully aligned with local development strategies and will be submitted to municipal assemblies for formal adoption in 2025. The LAPs are expected to play a critical role in embedding SPI structures and services into long-term planning processes.

In Bijeljina, a tailored initiative at the Mihajlo Pupin Secondary School established partnerships with seven local companies, providing hands-on vocational training to 39 students and bridging the gap between education and employment.

Capacity building was a core component of the support, with over 380 professionals from the social and education sectors - such as those working in Day Care Centers, sensor rooms, and inclusive playgrounds **receiving training. Additionally, 32 members of SPI Commissions and WGs participated in dedicated sessions** to strengthen their understanding of the SPI model and planning processes. Internal evaluations showed that 81.25% felt they had received excellent cooperation and support during project implementation. While overall familiarity with the SPI model was high, local governments that were newly engaged in collaboration with UNICEF (Teslić, Gradiška, Bijeljina, and Posušje) identified a need for additional support in the practical implementation of the model.

Specialized trainings were also delivered to children, parents, and professionals on coping with disabilities, alongside procurement of early disability detection equipment. Awareness-raising efforts underscored the value of inclusion and equal opportunities, further embedding the LNOB principle into community practices.

Financial and Social Impact

The total value of the nine projects under the grant scheme amount to BAM 1,312,288.00, with LGs contributing BAM 326,498.00 (25%). The initiatives directly benefited 3,014 individuals (1,538 male, 1,476 female), of whom 1,854 were children and youth (61%), 779 parents and 381 service providers. **Indirectly, the projects reached an estimated 43,283 people** (21,903 male and 21,380 female).

In terms of sustainability, **56.25% of respondents confirmed that the services introduced during the project are fully sustainable**, with funding secured through local government budgets. An additional 43.75% percent stated that services are partially sustainable but would require continued technical or financial support. These findings demonstrate strong progress in ensuring the longevity of newly introduced services, with varying levels of readiness across municipalities.

Overall, the Programme has made substantial progress in fostering inclusive service provision at the local level. The SPI model has demonstrated strong relevance, with 71.87% of participants affirming its suitability for the local context and no participants deeming it inapplicable. With established multisectoral structures and LAPs under development, the project has laid a strong foundation for sustainable, community-owned social protection systems. As the model proves fully functional in municipalities with a longer history of engagement with the SPI approach - such as Laktaši and Trebinje - **continued technical assistance will be key to ensuring consistent, long-term integration in newer partner LGs.**



Presentation of results of the LNOB grant in Novo Sarajevo



Study visit to Varaždin

Inclusive playground in Teslić - opening ceremony

Output 2.2. Cantonal capabilities to plan, finance, implement, monitor and report on their SDG achievements enhanced (up to 3 cantons)

In parallel with support provided to Local Governments, the Programme delivered a technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives to partner Cantons, with the goal of accelerating the localization and operationalization of the SDGs. These efforts focused on strategic planning and implementation documents, regulatory improvements, and practical service delivery, ensuring Cantons are equipped to deliver inclusive and sustainable development outcomes. Most notable achievements are:

Operationalizing Cantonal Development Strategies

Two Cantons, Una-Sana Canton and Tuzla Canton, were supported in translating their development priorities into actionable and measurable planning documents that reflect the SDG Framework in BiH. These included development reports, planning guidelines, three-year action plans, mid-term plans, annual work plans, and annual progress reports, laying the groundwork for more coherent and evidence-based development management.

Support for the readiness and implementation of the large-scale projects

As a result of capacity-building activities, partner Cantons identified three strategic infrastructure projects (including two components in West Herzegovina Canton (WHC)). Each project was supported with seed funding to develop key technical documentation, making them investment-ready. The outputs included: two feasibility studies with cost-benefit analyses (Tuzla Canton and WHC) and two conceptual designs (WHC and Una-Sana Canton). The total value of technical documentation preparation was BAM 38,500.00.

Implementation of the Grant scheme

Following the signing of Letters of Agreement, five grant-funded projects were launched across partner Cantons. These projects translated SDG-aligned development priorities into practical, on-the-ground improvements in services and infrastructure. Key achievements include:

- Establishment of three new Public Institutions/Departments, including:
 - A first kindergarten in the Municipality of Sapna, employing at least four staff members,
 - A kinesitherapy department within the Gata Spa Health Center (USC),
 - A Day Care Center within the Public Institution for Children without Parental Care in Tuzla,

These establishments involved renovation, construction, procurement of didactic and therapeutic equipment, and staff training.

- Introduction of three new public services, significantly improving access to early childhood education, rehabilitation, and social care services.
- Market-oriented vocational education reform in WHC, where the Programme facilitated multi-stakeholder cooperation to reform secondary vocational education. This included amendments to the Law on Secondary Vocational Education, equipping four schools with specialized training equipment, and fostering partnerships with the private sector to align educational outcomes with labor market demands.

- Digital Transformation in Tuzla Canton's Ministry of Economy, where a fully automated, real-time decision-support system was developed. The new web-based platform streamlines the allocation of business incentives and grants, enhancing transparency, efficiency, and user experience for enterprises in the Canton.



The total value of the five grant-funded projects amounts to BAM 843,900.00, with Cantonal governments contributing BAM 404,746.00, representing 48% co-financing. The projects directly benefit an estimated 17,949 people (10,362 male and 7,587 female), demonstrating a strong return on investment in terms of service delivery, economic development, and social inclusion.

Overall Management

“Translating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina into sustainable and inclusive growth (SDG2BiH)” is an initiative funded by Sweden and implemented by UNDP in partnership with UNICEF and UN Women, under the United Nations’ overall support extended to the authorities in BiH to implement the SDG Framework in BiH.

Upon signing of the contract, UNDP assumed full responsibility and accountability for the overall management of the Programme including achievement of the outputs and the outcomes, the efficient and effective use of resources, as well as implementation monitoring. UN Women and UNICEF are kept responsible for implementation of specific activities, considering the mandate and specific know-how that these agencies possess.

The Programme operates with a Programme Board comprising representatives from the MFA of BiH, the Office of the Prime Minister of the FBiH, the Ministry for European Integrations and International Cooperation of RS, the Government of BD BiH, and UN agencies, namely UNDP, UNICEF, and UN Women. The Board is co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and a representative from the CoM BiH, with the participation of the Embassy of Sweden in the work of the Board as an observer. The Programme Board is the decision-making authority for the Programme, responsible for the Programme’s management oversight. It reviews and endorses annual work plans, supervises and monitors the progress of implementation, and authorizes any major deviation therefrom. During this reporting period, the fourth and fifth Programme Board meetings were held (on August 21st 2024 and June 19th 2025, respectively). The Programme Assurance, performed by the UNDP Good Governance Sector Leader and Associate, with support of the UNDP Sustainable Growth Sector Leader, supports the Programme Board by carrying out objective project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed.

During this reporting period, the Programme deployed 39 experts that committed a total of 940.5 days of work to support specific processes and deliver technical assistance, training, or other types of specific services.

Lessons learned

Taking into consideration the experience of the current Programme as well as learnings from the previous similar initiatives, below are some key “lessons learned” that are should be considered:

- **The participatory and consultative approach** applied, paired with awareness raising and capacity development and on-system support to localizing Agenda 2030, proved to be crucial for success and domestic ownership of both process and results. This provided for an opportunity for the stakeholders to contribute to and be part of the solution, to be creative and to share and own jointly achieved results.
- **Continuous empowerment of the key stakeholders** resulted in full ownership and readiness of domestic partners to facilitate and move processes forward. Institutional partners appreciated this approach and the fact that project actions and focus were not overprescribed and finite in their scope.
- **Continuous advocacy and support to strengthening strategic planning and development management systems in the country**, which are recognized as the backbone for systemic implementation of the Agenda 2030. These vertically and horizontally aligned systems are new or emerging and thus require future support.
- **Innovation and exploration.** Hallmark characteristic of the intervention is that all its work has fostered the transformative actions of business towards more sustainable business practices, by applying innovation and exploration as continuous parts of the thought processes.
- **Piloting of new and innovative business models based on circular economy and decarbonization principles** provided hands-on guidelines for business community how to successfully embark on the circular economy transformation journey. The pilots also break the myth of budgetary constraints for such transformations where the pilots show how smaller investments can have exponentially large positive impact on businesses. However, businesses still need to build specific human capital to be able to envision new ways of doing business and design transformative actions towards the circular economy.
- **Placing the focus on development agenda** is of extreme importance in a country where political issues and disagreements take up most of the public space and where issues relevant for everyday life of the citizens are side-lined.
- **Flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of partners** are crucial, particularly in emergencies and crises. During the reporting period, one of the target locations, Jablanica, was heavily affected by floods, making the full implementation of the originally designed grant scheme impossible. Through a consultative process with local partners, project adjustments were agreed upon and support was provided.
- For future joint initiatives at the local level, **a new modality of cooperation** may be considered. Partners have emphasized that the commencement of different project components should not necessarily be synchronized; rather, each component should be tailored to the specific needs of the project and the circumstances within the LGs. This approach is particularly important as some partners encountered challenges in managing all project activities simultaneously and adhering to the administrative and financial regulations.

Gender equality

The SDG Framework in BiH itself is gender-responsive, emphasizing SDG 5 (Achieving Gender Equality) and integrating gender considerations into development goals at all government levels and across various sectors. Moreover, wherever applicable SDG targets are set for both men and women, separately, so that inequality against these targets can be observed. Furthermore, priorities are incorporated into local government development plans. Importantly, the SDG Financing Framework in BiH establishes tools like Gender Bonds, prescribed to promote gender equality in public policies.

Gender equality is a core component of all Programme activities too. For example, selection criteria for the SDG Business Pioneers Award 2025 includes a dedicated section on women's workplace rights, such as data on female representation in senior management and maternity leave policies. The methodology prioritizes gender equality in sustainable business management.

Furthermore, a number of events dedicated to gender equality in BiH – analysed from different aspects – are organized each year within the framework of the SDG Week. The 2024 edition featured several such events, including *Gendergy – Energy and Gender Equality*, which explored strategies to ensure both men and women benefit equally from energy resources and opportunities. The conference on *Gender-Responsive Local Governments* emphasized integrating local gender action plans to address domestic violence and promote gender equality. Additionally, a discussion on *Gender-Inclusive Environmental Justice* highlighted the need for women's engagement in environmental governance, presenting findings on women's participation in climate action.

These events reflect the Programme's commitment to advancing gender equality across sectors, fostering collaboration and policy dialogue to drive the achievement of SDG 5 and the broader 2030 Agenda.

Additionally, excellent achievements by the UN Women within the framework of the Programme directly contribute to both alleviating the existing burden women assume in the care economy (through legislative changes and formalization of such engagements), but also affect the state of awareness of the society at large in terms of the issue of unequal distribution of work in the care economy.

Visibility

Between July 2024 and June 2025, the Programme's activities were featured in the media **320** times, more than double the **157** mentions recorded during the previous reporting period. This significant increase reflects not only stronger media engagement, but also the natural evolution of the Programme's communication approach. At inception, the focus was on communicating goals, during implementation it shifted to activities, and now, in the final phase, we are sharing results. This is naturally a message that attracts more attention and relevance across media platforms.

Social media remained the primary channel for reaching the public. During this period, **90** social media posts were published on UNDP's Facebook page alone, compared to **59** in the previous cycle, indicating a steady increase in content output and audience engagement.

During SDG Week 2024, over 20 events were organized across Bosnia and Herzegovina by various UN agencies and partners under a joint SDG Week umbrella. All events carried unified branding, contributing to increased visibility and recognition of the initiative. SDG Week 2024 placed a strong focus on partnerships, innovation, and inclusive development, serving as a platform to engage a wide range of stakeholders around sustainable practices, local action, and solutions to development challenges. The opening event, “2024 SDG Local Governance Awards: Pioneering the Possible in BiH”, honored municipalities and local leaders for their commitment to sustainable practices, inclusive policies, and community resilience. SDG Week 2024 successfully brought together over 2,000 participants from all parts of society, contributing to greater awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and the importance of local-level action in achieving them.



To maintain momentum leading up to the seventh edition of the SDG Business Pioneers Award in 2025, the Programme implemented a targeted digital outreach campaign during the application period. Promotional activities included both social media and Google Ads, as well as LinkedIn, which was introduced as a new platform this year. Social media efforts reached over 330,000 individuals, while the Google Ads campaign delivered more than 1,800,000 impressions and generated 23,600 clicks on the SDG BPA banner. The newly added LinkedIn promotion resulted in 215,000 impressions and over 1,200 clicks. Altogether, the campaign reached more than 776,000 unique users, generating over 44,600 clicks across platforms.

The campaign, along with other outreach activities, translated into another record-breaking year in term of numbers of companies that applied. 484 companies applied, compared to 360 applications from 2024, and 114 from 2023. Of the companies that applied, 25% fall into the large and medium enterprise category.



As part of its efforts to highlight successful initiatives supported through the grant scheme, the Programme promoted selected projects through dedicated web and social media content. In the West Herzegovina Canton, the opening of modern CNC and mechatronics labs in vocational schools was featured as an example of how targeted investments can improve youth employability through hands-on technical education. In Novo Sarajevo, the Programme showcased a project that supported social inclusion through sports by renovating a local playground and organizing inclusive games for students with and without developmental challenges.

In addition to content published through UNDP’s and Zamisli2030 channels, the Programme’s visibility was further strengthened through the communication efforts of UN Women, who also participate in the Programme. Their dedicated social media outreach included 10 Instagram posts reaching 9,846 users with over 18,000 views, and 13 Facebook posts reaching 18,601 users with more than 27,000 views. These posts amplified messages related to the care economy and women’s economic empowerment.

UN Women also contributed through targeted media engagement, with 78 mentions and 10 dedicated media appearances during the reporting period (these are included in the overall statistic). To further raise awareness, they produced tailored communication materials including social media visuals and short videos featuring real-life care stories, one of which highlighted their participation at the employment fair in the Federation of Bosnia

and Herzegovina. These efforts supported broader Programme messaging and contributed to positioning care work as a societal and economic priority in the country.

Zamisli2030 platforms continued to play an important role in amplifying Programme messages. Key milestones and achievements were regularly shared on both the UNDP in BiH website and zamisli2030.ba, ensuring wider reach. The Programme's website, www.zamisli2030.ba, has undergone a comprehensive redesign and update. The new layout is more user-friendly, ensuring ease of navigation for all visitors. Additionally, the website now includes the most relevant and up-to-date information for each component of the programme, enhancing accessibility and providing a better user experience.



Implementation challenges

The list with the key risks affiliated with the project implementation are identified below, together with probability of occurring, types of effects on the project, as well as adequate mitigation measures and update on developments in terms of risks initially identified at the project outset. Overall, after considering likelihood of the risk occurrence and impact overall risk level for this Project remains as **medium** attributed mainly to political factors.

Risk	Probability	Type / Impact	Programme response
Partners fail to ensure financial sources for co-funding sustainable development priorities.	Moderate	Minor	Investments by higher government levels for sustainable development in various sectors have been reduced due to the COVID-19 crisis. Nevertheless, relevant development measures and priorities are outlined in the newly prepared SDG-aligned development strategies, therefore it is expected that some financial resources will be in place. The Programme will seek commitment and engagement of



			relevant authorities from the outset, insisting on early transfer of funds.
Lack of awareness and interest of private sector and other non-governmental stakeholders to engage in Programme implementation.	Moderate	Financial / Medium	The Programme will engage with interested and committed private sector partners. The Programme will build on the existing interventions and continuously promote the importance of private sector engagement and contribution, emphasizing the benefits of their involvement in sustainable development financing.
There is a potential risk that duty-bearers do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the Programme.	Low	Social and Environmental / Medium (delays)	The Programme will apply adequate mitigation measures, such as signing agreements with institutional partners, thus formalising their commitment and contribution. The Programme will also reserve the right to remove and replace cantons and local governments with uncooperative leaderships.
Increased level of risk linked to intended increased shift of implementation responsibility to third parties, thus delaying up to one year in in public procurement procedure that will be conducted by local partners	Moderate	Operational / Low	The Programme will have a flexible approach, including reprogramming of activities to respond to emerging needs/time frame.

Synergies with other interventions

- The Programme complements the piloting of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) supported by **the Joint SDG Fund and implemented by FAO and WHO**. These efforts are further enhanced by awareness-raising and technical assistance to local governments to promote sustainable food systems and healthy lifestyles, with special focus on vulnerable populations.
- Close coordination is established with the **Municipal Environmental Governance Project (MEG)**, funded by Switzerland, Sweden and the EU through promotion of e-citizen application as well as with the **“Project for Improving Performance of Local Services (PIPLS) in BiH”** supported by Sweden, with shared good government priorities underpinning the agenda for transformational change in local governance in particular.
- The Programme builds on systemic local governance reforms implemented under the **Strengthening the Role of Local Communities in BiH (MZ) Project** jointly supported by Sweden, Switzerland, the EU, and the Czech Republic. These initiatives, implemented by UNDP, introduced performance-based management and institutionalized citizen participation mechanisms, enabling more accountable and inclusive local development.

- The Programme is informed by the UN Women-supported initiative under the previous UN Joint Programme “**Towards the SDG Financing Ecosystem in BiH,**” which piloted a gender bond proposal in Canton Sarajevo and advanced GRB in public financial systems.
- The Programme complements UNICEF’s feasibility work on innovative financing models for scaling quality early childhood education and care (ECEC), with pilot interventions planned in two target locations focused on marginalized children in line with the LNOB principle.
- The Programme contributes to SDG 1 by supporting UNICEF’s technical assistance to entity-level social protection reforms aimed at improving the quality and coverage of local social services for vulnerable populations.

The Programme works in synergy with UN Women’s policy efforts on care economy and local economic governance, including pilots on **gender-sensitive agricultural subsidies** and preparatory work for gender-responsive PPP models for municipal care infrastructure.

The Programme builds on efforts supported by the Government of Slovakia and UNDP to strengthen the **SDG audit capacity of Public Audit Offices** and is aligned with performance-based audit methodologies for SDG 5 developed with support from Sweden and UN Women across the Western Balkans.

The Programme closely cooperate with the **Green Economic Development (GED)** Project – Phase III (2021-2024), financed by Sweden, especially in support to the private sector on energy efficiency measures to be linked to the circular economy initiatives under the Programme, so as to expand the outreach and impact of sustainability measures on the private sector in the country.

The Programme continues with close contact and cooperation with other initiatives funded by Sweden in BiH like **SERDA, Mozaik and Kult.**

Financial overview for period April 1, 2022 to May 31, 2025

SDG2BiH received total of 46,100,000 SEK or 4,471,512.15 USD as shown in table below:

Income from SIDA	Date	SEK	USD	TOTAL received USD
1 st Installment received	3 June 2022	10,000,000.00	1,019,783.81	4,471,512.15
2 nd Installment received	14 July 2023	17,000,000.00	1,624,152.10	
3 rd Installment received	24 July 2024	19,100,000.00	1,827,576.24	

Expenditures for the period: 1 April 2022 – 31 May 2025

Outcome 1:	Authorities at state, entity and Brčko District levels effectively work on planning, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on the SDG Framework in BiH	1,721,245.10 USD
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Outcome 2:	Cantonal and local governments actively contribute to implementation of the SDG Framework in BiH.	1,301,994.25 USD
Project management	Project Management and Operating Costs	323,015.62 USD
Total (incl. 8% GMS)		3,346,254.97 USD

Commitments as of May 31, 2025.

Open POs	ICs and services	441,566.23 USD
LOAs signed with RPs	Grant scheme "Leave no one behind" - LGs	9,511.38 USD
LOAs signed with RPs	Grant scheme "Leave no one behind" - Cantons	87,011.38 USD
UNICEF	Advance to be reported	23,484.77 USD
UNWOMEN	Advance to be reported	116,272.02 USD
Total (incl. 8% GMS)		677,845.79 USD

Grand total financial overview:

Expenditures	Commitments:	GRAND TOTAL:
3,346,254.97 USD	677,845.79 USD	4,024,100.76 USD

Impact of Exchange Rate Fluctuations:

It is important to note that the majority of Programme expenditures were incurred in Bosnian Convertible Marks (BAM), while financial reporting is conducted in United States Dollars (USD). Consequently, fluctuations in the BAM/USD exchange rate over the reporting period have had a direct impact on the reported cost of activities. For instance, the exchange rate shifted from 1 BAM = 0.5307 USD in December 2024 to 1 BAM = 0.5885 USD in April 2025.

To illustrate the impact, an open purchase order valued at 800,000 BAM would have been reported as 424,560 USD in December 2024. However, using the April 2025 exchange rate, the same amount would be reported as 470,800 USD, reflecting an increase of 46,240 USD solely due to exchange rate fluctuations. These variations have significantly influenced the USD-equivalent value of expenditures, thereby affecting the overall financial figures presented in this overview.