



# CWG

Collaborative Working Group  
on Solid Waste Management in Low-  
and Middle-income Countries

**Capacity development and  
advocacy for improved solid waste  
and resource management**

CWG - WASH Workshop  
1 - 5 December 2008  
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

## **#12 MOTIVATING MUNICIPALITIES TO INTRODUCE RECYCLING - LESSONS IN ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

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### **1. Introduction**

IFC's<sup>2</sup> ever increasing focus on environmentally sustainable practices was a precursor for the Southern Europe Recycling Linkages Program. In 2006 this program represented bold step in a new direction for IFC Advisory Services. Among the successful activities of this program were the advocacy and capacity building activities (further discussed in this paper) relating to the introduction of household waste segregation and recycling in selected municipalities in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Elements of sequencing, advocacy, capacity building, innovative design and the fact that it worked are all valuable lessons. In south-east Europe the recycling industry has an estimated annual turnover of €1.5 billion, employs 32,000 individual scrap collectors, and incorporates over 500 SME operators and 28 mills as end users of scrap. However, the amount of waste recycled on a per capita basis in the south-eastern Europe region is far lower than the amount recycled in Western Europe, indicating great potential for recycling industry growth in the region.

This paper will discuss lessons learned from advocacy and capacity building activities, supported by three case studies. The consistency of the positive results from all case studies underlines the overall and potential long-term impact of the introduction and acceptance of recycling in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Individuals and teams working on project development and sustainable environment practices should find this experience of interest.

#### Objectives of IFC advocacy and capacity building:

- Engage in advocacy, creating an atmosphere conducive to the introduction of recycling, lobby for legislation that is a good balance between promoting sustainable industry and preserving the environment and public good.
- Educate and build capacity within the municipalities in the waste management sector.

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<sup>2</sup> The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, is an international organization whose mission is to promote sustainable private sector investment in developing countries, helping to reduce poverty and improve people's lives. IFC's Advisory Services initiative for the region aims at strengthening the development of the private sector in Southern European countries.

## 1.1 Background

Bosnia & Herzegovina (B&H) became an independent state in 1992. The ensuing war came to an end in 1995, following the Dayton Peace Agreement. The population of the country is estimated at approximately 3.87 million. The administration is highly fragmented with the duplication of many domestic policy functions. Progress towards economic harmonisation and integration has been slow. The major drivers of economic growth in B&H are the manufacturing, agriculture and retail sectors.

In B&H's Mid-term Development Strategy (MTDS), it is estimated that close to one-fifth of the population lives below the poverty line, while another third of the population is only slightly better off. As a result of extensive international aid, the country's expenditure far exceeds current production capacities. It is therefore extremely important to increase the rate of economic growth, because the danger of a dramatic increase in the poverty rate is very real.

A major part of the B&H economy (more than 40%) is in the grey economy. With privatization incomplete and most public companies overstaffed and heavily in debt, unemployment has been a major issue in B&H since the end of the 1992-95 war. The true level of unemployment is about 25%. Remittances from family members overseas comprise an estimated 17-20% of B&H's GDP.

A nationwide solid waste management (SWM) strategy for B&H was framed by the EU in 2002 proposing a regional landfill for every 200,000 inhabitants. The World Bank has allocated financing for the implementation of this long-term strategy and construction of regional landfills are under way. So far three regional landfills have been constructed.

## 2. A creative approach to community advocacy – partner with non governmental organisations (NGOs) & start with schools

Cost: \$15,500  
 Additional Sponsor Contribution: \$5,500  
 Duration: April – June 2007  
 Location: Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

A number of activities have been organized with the aim of raising the interest of all stakeholders (SMEs, government, households, consultants) in the regional recycling industry to conserve energy and resources through the recovery and reuse of scrap and the general improvement of environmental practices. Engaging an environmental NGO for a public awareness and education campaign has served as a good inroad to gaining momentum and acceptance of the topic of recycling in local communities.

### 2.1 Benefits of NGO partners in awareness raising:

Generally speaking, environmental NGOs have expertise in environmental issues and are not motivated by profit. It is very important that the NGO is a credible partner and has a good track record of implementing tangible, successful and visible community projects. It is important that they are not seen as "tree hugging idealists" which more often than not lack the diplomatic skills in dealing with situations that have multiple stakeholders.

People are far more likely to believe an unbiased message coming from a trustworthy local organization which is in tune with community needs rather than from a commercially-driven public relations (PR) or marketing agency. In Bosnia & Herzegovina - a post-conflict transition country – the PR and marketing industry is in its infancy. There is no set tradition for these skills and the industry is very much focused on marketing FMCG's (fast moving consumer goods) as a result of the large sums of money available from multinational companies in their desire to create a consumer-driven society. The region's economies are weak and therefore funding is scarce for "social good" products and this will probably remain true until these countries obtain EU accession status that allows access to EU grants and soft loans. In contrast, the NGO sector in Bosnia is currently strong and thriving, and it employs some very capable and highly educated and motivated individuals as a result of the grant and aid money that was channelled toward the country in the 12 year period since the end of war.

## 2.2 Advocacy through schools:

Although not covered by this paper directly, it is important to note that awareness-raising activities have contributed to the overall advocacy. Education events implemented in conjunction with the project's NGO partners were aimed at children and residents in districts where household waste segregation containers were being distributed. Experience shows that long-term success in recycling schemes is strongly correlated to the effort invested in awareness raising and education. 1300 primary school pupils attended recycling education sessions in Sarajevo alone. This contributed to the collection of 160 tonnes of PET<sup>3</sup> from 250 bins in a 12 month period – a significant achievement given there had been no segregation of this material previously. Schools are now actively supporting recycling education and household waste segregation, and this topic is now covered as part of their education curriculum.

## 3. Advocating for transparent recycling legislation

Cost: \$4,000  
 Additional Sponsor Contribution: \$5,000  
 Duration: April-May 2008  
 Location: Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

IFC teamed up with the BiHPak Waste Packaging Association with the aim of organizing a roundtable meeting to exchange European experience and best practices in developments in the sphere of packaging waste legislation and packaging waste management systems.

IFC stepped into this host/moderator role in order to facilitate the industry/ministry dialogue between the ministry and industry, which had been slowed down by mutual distrust and a lack of technical capacity on the subject matter. The existing draft legislation had been prepared without consulting the relevant industries and recommended a non-transparent compulsory deposit system to be set up and governed by the state.

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<sup>3</sup> The plastic polymer polyethylene terephthalate, which is widely used for mineral water and carbonated beverage bottles.



Guest presenters from EU associations and ministries were invited to present lessons learned from the recycling systems implemented in their respective countries. Participating local stakeholders included Ministry of Environment representatives, BiHPak members and other interested parties, including the Director of the Brussels-based European Waste Packaging Association EUROPEN.

### 3.1 Results

Following the presentations and discussions, the Ministry representatives admitted that the current draft law required ammendment to protect against a slow, non-transparent and expensive system implementation. One option proposed by the Ministry offered BiHPak the opportunity to set up a pilot project based upon producer responsibility principles.

It was concluded that the new system would consider the following points:

- ♦ There is no perfect solution
- ♦ There is no master to copy
- ♦ Try to use best practices
- ♦ Avoid pioneer approaches because they always have the highest cost. Instead use existing experience.
- ♦ Transfer some initiative and responsibility to the private sector; the Government should inspect and monitor

## 4. Advocacy through the demonstration effect - a pilot project in Tuzla

Cost: \$43,200  
 Additional Sponsor Contribution: \$52,000  
 Duration: March 2007 – June 2008  
 Location: Tuzla, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Tuzla has a population of about 120,000 people. In 2006 there was no separate collection service for segregated household waste available to residents in Tuzla. In 2007 IFC commenced a number of activities aimed at introducing household waste segregation, promoting investment in it and raising the awareness on recycling. Based upon a successful IFC pilot project in one Tuzla residential district, Tuzla Municipality decides to partner with IFC to expand the household waste segregation initiative to the whole urban area.

Our NGO partner *The Centre for Ecology and Energy* is a specialized environmental NGO that has a long history of supporting local environmental initiatives. The following activities were undertaken as part of the pilot.

#### 4.1 Introduction of a pilot project in a residential district - Breka Malta

IFC financed the pilot project (covering the purchase of six containers for segregated recyclables and a budget for education & awareness). The NGO facilitated support from the local municipality and obtained location permits for the recycling yards. Public support was obtained firstly through local resident representatives and eventually from all residents with regular meetings and targeted education sessions. Promotional and educational material was designed, printed and distributed to all households. A private collection and recycling firm *Angrosirovina* was engaged to collect recyclables from the containers.

The Municipality did not want to get involved in the project initially. They gave their tentative approval without much interest or support. This was the case even though the only firm with permission for household waste collection in Tuzla was *Komunalac*, a waste collection firm owned by the municipality and which has a 100% monopoly on household waste collection. This municipality firm had no special desire to set up household waste recycling because it would involve additional work and responsibility without additional reward, since they are financed from the municipal budget and have no profit or productivity incentives. Advocacy was aimed at municipality decision-makers on the one hand and at the residents on the other to help them to understand the importance of their role in recycling and its benefits.

The pilot project introduced household waste segregation in a small residential district consisting of four apartment buildings (housing approximately 440 residents) and a local kindergarten (with approximately 80 children and staff).

#### 4.2 Inclusion of private sector firm in pilot project

*Angrosirovina* was included in the project from the inception phase. We chose this company because they were identified as a potential major supplier to Bosnia's only paper mill *Natron Hayat*. *Angrosirovina's* management wanted advisory assistance and were willing to pay for it, and the management was truly committed to helping the community and not only their profits.

During the period that *Angrosirovina* participated in IFC recycling activities, the firm was able to increase volumes and sales significantly as seen in the table below.

Material collected	March 2007	August 2008
Paper	90 tonnes/month	500 tonnes/month
Polyethylene Foil.	15 tonnes/month	50 tonnes/month
TOTAL SALES	\$65,000 /month	\$165,000 /month

#### 4.3 Round table event to publicise results from completed pilot

A round-table event was held to discuss all aspects of the completed pilot, including the positive and negative lessons learned. All stakeholders were invited to attend, including residents, municipal representatives, the communal waste company, private waste collection firms and officials from nearby municipalities eager to hear about the experiences. There were 32 participants.

During the 6-month pilot project a total of 2,100 kg of paper and 1,000 kg of PET were collected. Favourable results resulted in 17 media mentions, some commitment from the municipality's communal waste firm and eventual replication of this pilot to all of Tuzla.

At the end of the pilot project 67% of residents said they were segregating household waste. Before the pilot there had been no segregation.

#### **4.4 Municipality seeks inclusion, capacity building of employees and replication of the pilot project**

IFC and Tuzla Municipality signed a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of 15 new recycling yards. IFC agreed to provide funding related to education, awareness and capacity building. Fifty educational "door-to-door" presentations were held, reaching 927 residents. 602 students attended 21 workshops in 15 schools across Tuzla.

So by advocacy and raising awareness, undertaking a pilot project that involved the private sector and publicizing the good results; we persuaded the Municipality to sit up and pay attention and actually do something. Following the pilot success, when other residential districts began requesting this service, the communal waste company hurriedly claimed responsibility for future removal of segregated household waste, fearing a threat to its monopoly from private waste management companies.

The municipal workers learned about new possibilities for processing and reusing waste that had for so many years simply been buried in the ground. The topics taught to municipal employees included: reducing household waste, waste disposal at sanitary and open dump sites, identifying and handling hazardous waste, and composting.

As a result of the initial IFC pilot project and the continuation of IFC support, Tuzla municipality has invested approximately \$386,000. These funds were used to purchase 50 containers for recyclable material distributed around the city (at recycling yards), and two trucks for collecting segregated waste. The Municipality has earmarked a further \$100,000 for the purchase of additional containers and has committed itself to expanding the project to the entire urban region around Tuzla.

#### **4.5 Press conference for the opening of the first 3 recycling yards**

A press conference was organized on the site of one of the newly constructed recycling yards.

The event received major coverage from local and national media. As a result there were 25 media mentions, including two mentions during evening TV news programmes.



### **5. Conclusion**

Advocacy and capacity building activities are essential where there is no history or habit associated with recycling.

This paper has described three case studies and their relevance, methodology and overall impact. Advocacy needs to be aimed at various audiences, including decision-makers. The sum of these separate advocacy measures should provide an additional momentum, creating a more receptive environment for recycling initiatives.

The selection of partners is a critical success factor – i.e. partnering with a local NGO that has "street credibility" and has earned the trust of some of the Municipal decision-makers based on previous environmentally related projects.

NGO partner selection plays an even more important role as part of the project exit strategy. At the end of the project the partner should continue to act as an instigator and focal point for recycling activities. In both instances described here, further municipal funding was allocated to these two organizations following the exit of IFC.

External factors influence decision-making and are critical to success. Recycling initiatives were particularly relevant in one municipality given that the local landfill was fast reaching its capacity. Introducing household waste segregation reduced the overall amount of material disposed at the landfill, extending the life of the landfill and providing some breathing space until a new site is ready or other measures are introduced. Conveniently, this also coincides with the overall EU/WB waste management strategy for Bosnia which prescribes construction of regional sanitary landfills and sets aside grants and financing for these projects.

The importance of timing: One of the residential recycling projects was initiated in a municipal election year. Environmental issues are particularly important and topical in this industrial city which also suffers from poor air quality. A governing municipal party seen to be constructive and engaging in environmental issues would gain electoral advantage from this stance.

The significance of the commitment of the Mayor cannot be overestimated. In one case there was a significant turning point when the Mayor was taken to the landfill and shown first-hand how segregated household material was being disposed of as worthless waste. This practice definitely stopped very shortly afterwards and maintained confidence in the recycling scheme.

Partly because of the experience gained through IFC's Recycling Linkage (RL) Program (2005-2008) in the Western Balkans, and partly because of the success of the residential recycling initiative, the excellent demonstration effect and the readiness of private sector SWM firms to invest, the IFC Southern Europe Advisory Services have won approval and donor support for a new program called "The Integrated Solid Waste Management Program (ISWMP)". The new program will focus IFC's activities on increasing the capacity of national governments, municipal authorities and the private sector in managing waste and recycling activities by widening advisory services to a larger concept – integrated solid waste management (ISWM).