Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina (TI BiH) is the Bosnian-Herzegovinian national chapter of Transparency International (TI), a global movement dedicated to the fight against corruption headquartered in Berlin. TI BiH identifies, investigates and responds to the corruptive phenomena and their causes in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, and is committed to the development of social and individual integrity in the fight against corruption. It does so by advocating increased transparency in the work of administrative bodies at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), raising public awareness of the problem of corruption and sensitising citizens of BiH about the damaging effects of corruption through studies, independent public appearances and warnings about violations of norms and standards, direct legal aid to victims of corrupt practices, networking with similar organisations, and thanks to the strong support from the movement of citizens who recognise the importance of TI BiH’s actions and activities.

In its work, TI BiH uses valuable experiences and practices of other Transparency International chapters.
1. Introduction

Transparency International BiH Strategic Plan 2015–2020 presents the organisation’s main strategic directions in the upcoming five-year period and aims to methodologically establish a logical link with the recently adopted Transparency International’s global strategy (Together Against Corruption 2020).

The document provides an insight into the Bosnian-Herzegovinian context, while conforming to the framework and priorities established in the global strategy. This Strategic Plan contains certain elements and parts of the recently developed Transparency International BiH Sustainability Strategy 2015–2019.

2. Methodological approach

The structure of the Strategic Plan follows the strategic planning process and focuses on the programmatic work of Transparency International BiH for the period 2015–2020.

The revised vision and mission, priorities and analysis of the organisation’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified jointly by all employees. Furthermore, they are the result of an objective review of the external environment, operating context and organisational capacities, and reflect the actual intention of all participants in the process to maximise TI BiH’s performance, with a constant effort to raise the quality and visibility of the organisation’s performance.

The Strategy is modelled on Transparency International’s global strategy (Together Against Corruption 2020), and is the result of joint participation and contributions of all TI BiH staff, based on objective assessments by the organisation’s staff, members of the Board of Directors and the Assembly, and taking into account the results of public opinion polls about the activities of Transparency International BiH.

3. Previous strategic documents

The previous strategic plan of TI BiH was adopted in 2011 in accordance with the strategic plan adopted at the global level by Transparency International.

Also, as part of the five-year Civil Society Sustainability Project (CSSP) in BiH (2014–2018), funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), TI BiH has developed the Transparency International BiH Sustainability Strategy 2015–2019. The main idea behind the Strategy is to ensure that the key principles and elements of organisational sustainability (institutional, programmatic and financial sustainability as well as cooperation, partnership and networking with key stakeholders in the region) are mainstreamed in the existing and future strategic operational and action plans.
4. Social context for anticorruption combat within which TI BiH operates

During fifteen years of active work, TI BiH has grown into an organisation commonly recognised for its uncompromising fight against all forms of corruption, which is committed to improving public administration in all segments and aims to act as a corrective to the government in the areas that concern transparency and professional ethics. Particularly noticeable is the organisation’s influence and expertise in the interpretation of criminal legislation concerning the identification and sanctioning of acts of corruption, with special emphasis on monitoring public procurement, conflict of interest, political party financing, free access to information, the electoral process and protection of whistleblowers as real agents of change in the development of a society resistant to corruption.

References and experience gained during its fifteen years of activity have strongly positioned TI BiH as the most visible organisation in the country which is active in the fight against corruption and whistleblower protection. Personal integrity and high motivation of TI BiH staff, as well as the demonstrated ability to work in emergency situations and under great pressure of daily politics, have created a public trust that is resistant even to the hostility towards civil society organisations (CSOs) shown by some segments of the public, often due to a lack of understanding of CSOs’ role and opportunities that they provide to the public.

Being a national chapter of the Transparency International Global Network, TI BiH has an advantage of accessing the resources and using the experience and knowledge of the international network, but also a great responsibility to maintain high level of quality and standards of work. The organisation’s constant vigilance in monitoring and responding to the socio-political trends and actions by public administration, as well as the need to maintain high quality and standards of work, makes TI BiH an organisation with competitive advantage for which high expectations are placed by the public, donors, the rest of civil society and individuals who expect support and protection from the organisation.

Fight against corruption in BiH and institutional context

The longevity of the corruption problem and the slowness of the process of changing society and the administration create an aggravating atmosphere for work and do not contribute to the achievement of rapid and visible results. Changes to citizens’ perceptions about the unacceptability of corruption take place slowly and with delicate steps. Deep entrenchment of corruption in BiH society and social defeatism, taking the form of perception that corruption is normal, expected and unbeatable, pose a great challenge and require constant vigilance and engagement by TI BiH to respond to all adverse phenomena in the society.

BiH has adopted several strategic documents for the fight against corruption, but they have not been adequately implemented, which has also been the conclusion of the BiH progress reports for the last few years, where the country’s overall engagement is evaluated as constituting only “an early phase in the fight against corruption”\(^1\).

The reform agenda, “served” on the tables of political officials in 2015 as a condition for further negotiations on the future of the EU integration process for BiH, strongly underlines the EU expectation that BiH will tackle corruption at all levels promptly and with great

determination, which will drum up the otherwise weak interest of national authorities in this problem and place it in new focus in terms of political importance and orientation.


The main objective of the Strategy is: “Establish priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of prevention of corruption and fight against corruption, establish principles and mechanisms of joint action of all institutions in BiH as well as all segments of the society in that area, create and/or improve preconditions for reducing both real and perceived levels of corruption, and promote positive social values such as integrity, accountability and transparency.”

Strategic objectives for the fight against corruption in BiH for the period 2015–2019 are as follows:

1. **Build and enhance institutional capacity and improve the normative framework for the fight against corruption;**

2. **Develop, promote and implement preventive anticorruption activities in the public and private sectors;**

3. **Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of judicial institutions and law enforcement agencies in the fight against corruption;**

4. **Raise public awareness and promote the need for the participation of the entire society in the fight against corruption;**

5. **Establish effective mechanisms to coordinate the fight against corruption, as well as monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Strategy.**

The adopted strategic framework provides a basis in terms of the recognised need for a stronger fight against corruption in BiH society and is intrinsically compatible with the strategic objectives and mandate of TI BiH. The Strategy for Combating Corruption in BiH also states the following:

“Due to the existence of multiple levels of government, the normative framework for combating corruption in BiH is complex as there are numerous laws at all levels of government regulating this area, among which, in addition to the Law on the Agency, the most important ones are those governing the following areas:

- **criminal legislation;**
- **public procurement;**
- **conflict of interest;**
- **political party financing;**
- **free access to information;**
The unstable political situation, frequent changes of political actors, extreme unresponsiveness of government institutions, an extremely slow process of “opening to” CSOs, and lack of determination to tackle corruption and lack of transparency continue to be a reality in BiH. However, TI BiH has been continuously working towards establishing partnerships with institutions, recognising this approach as the most important one for fundamental and radical changes in public administration in BiH through direct advocacy for change.

Although the national Strategy for Combating Corruption 2015–2019 does not mention municipal administrations as part of the institutional framework, TI BiH recognises local governments as having a very important role to play in combating corruption at the level at which citizens are affected by it most directly. In the coming period TI BiH will direct its focus on the municipal level by building the capacity of local governments to fight corruption.

Other components of TI BiH’s work – especially the reactive one, which includes public divulgence of identified problems and direct legal aid to victims of corruption – may sometimes have a negative effect on advocacy activities such as the establishment of partnerships with government institutions. In any case, TI BiH holds that each of the individual components of its work – advocacy, reactive component, research, and direct legal aid – are of equal importance in a society that is in such a state of need, and seeks to balance them, not budging an inch from the principles and core values the organisation stands for.

Citizens and Transparency International BiH

The public generally perceives TI BiH as a credible civil society organisation that has achieved, and continues to achieve, significant results in the fight against corruption in BiH.

TI BiH’s continuing presence in the media helps promote its achievements and underline its presence in the society, which adds value and produces positive anticorruption results. On the other hand, it is exactly TI BiH’s frequent appearances in the media that are sometimes likely to create a public misperception that TI BiH has some special powers and authorities that it, being a CSO, does not and cannot have.

However, the relationship between citizens and TI BiH is not only defined by TI BiH’s media appearances. Mutual trust, which will be further deepened during the upcoming strategic period, seeks to channel the strong dissatisfaction of BiH citizens outraged by corruption in a positive direction and towards legal civic actions that will send a strong political message about the inevitability of introducing order and making a strong turnaround in the fight against corruption at all political levels.

TI BiH and civil society in the context of partnership and access to donor funds

In terms of TI BiH’s financial sustainability and success in establishing contacts with donors to ensure the availability of resources for the implementation of projects, TI BiH has an
excellent rating and enjoys high confidence among all donors with which it collaborated. TI BiH believes that the excellent results and the visibility of its anticorruption projects had a motivating effect on other CSOs which have thus found their own niche for action in the fight against corruption. The growing competition among CSOs that have built their absorption capacity for already scarce donor resources is, on the one hand, an aggravating circumstance, but, on the other, allows for replication of TI BiH’s positive practices and results.

5. Vision of Transparency International BiH

During the strategic planning process TI BiH employees reviewed the organisation’s former vision and developed a new one that communicates with citizens, as well as the employees, in a more emotional, powerful and direct way. The ability to identify with the vision and the need to formulate it such to be easy to understand was additional motivation for the staff to participate in all stages of the strategic planning process: joint creation of a vision contributes to creating a sense of individual ownership of the organisation’s future in each employee, and creates a feeling of extra motivation and additional responsibility for the future being planned.

After discussing a number of different formulations of the organisation’s vision, TI BiH employees finally settled on the one given below:

A society which is based on equity, transparency and accountability, able to prevent and punish corruption.

6. Mission of Transparency International BiH

During the strategic planning process participants also discussed the organisation’s potential mission. From a number of proposed formulations, TI BiH employees settled on the mission statement that best represents Transparency International BiH:

(We are) an organisation that fights for systemic changes in society and articulates citizens’ demands for accountable, transparent and efficient governance. We achieve this in partnership with public, private and civil sectors.

7. Organisation’s key values

Organisation’s key values are as follows:

- integrity,
- accountability,
- transparency,
- equity,
- courage,
- solidarity.

The key principles are:
8. Strategic Framework for Action

Strategic Framework for Action of Transparency International BiH follows the normative framework for the fight against corruption in BiH, in particular:

- criminal legislation, its compliance with international standards and implementation in practice;
- public procurement;
- conflict of interest and asset declarations;
- political party financing;
- freedom of access to information;
- electoral processes;
- public administration; and
- whistleblower protection.

TI BiH uses a multisectoral approach, which means that the organisation monitors all forms of possible corruptive actions related to public administration and their harmful consequences for society, not focusing solely on specific areas.

Defined strategic objectives presented below cut across all strategic areas that TI BiH focuses on and make it possible to see a broad picture and pursue a broader range of activity, but also place greater responsibility in monitoring the enforcement of existing legislation in practice and advocating for the harmonisation of the existing legal framework with international standards.

During the strategic period TI BiH will continue its uncompromising battle against corruption in political decision-making, providing support to APIK BiH in the implementation of the anticorruption strategy and action plan, strengthening transparent management of all public resources, and advocating for the enhancement of the public administration's capacity to identify and implement the principles of transparent management.

9. Strategic goals

TI BiH's main priorities in the period 2015–2020 will revolve around the following:

- Establishing a strong and productive cooperation with citizens and institutions, with additional focus on agents of change identified within institutions;
• Influencing the adoption and monitoring the introduction and enforcement of anti-corruption standards and policies at all levels of government in the country, and the fight for social justice; and

• Enhancing the capacity and image of Transparency International BiH and improving the organisation’s position in the global network.

TI BiH plans to introduce innovative approaches into its day-to-day operation, use modern technologies and novel methods of communication and presentation of its results, and further sharpen its focus on the local level, recognising the potential that lies in changing and improving anticorruption policies at the local community level.

It is worth mentioning that the identified priorities do not contain a list of all individual activities that fall within TI BiH’s mandate and operational framework, but rather narrowly defined objectives presented in the form of the expected outcomes to which TI BiH intends to commit in the next five years.

Each individually identified outcome is accompanied by a set of expected activities that TI BiH is going to plan out in more detail in line with the annual or thematic action plans.
CITIZENS AND PARTNERS

IMPLEMENTATION OF ANTICORRUPTION STANDARDS
FIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

STRONG TI BIH
STRONG ORGANISATION
STRONG MOVEMENT

TOGETHER AGAINST CORRUPTION
I. Citizens and partners

Outcome: Transparency International recognises citizens’ fear of corruption, sensitising and informing them of ways to respond to corruption and individually contribute to the creation of an anticorruption climate in society.

Action: TI BiH recognises the constant need to expand the base of citizens who belong to the so-called informed public – people who keep themselves informed of TI BiH’s work, understand the dangers of corruption in the society, and are interested in committing themselves, personally and/or professionally, to contributing to the creation of an anticorruption climate in the country. This will be achieved through constant public and media pressure to keep the issue of anticorruption and its importance in focus; exert constant pressure on the authorities to demonstrate transparency in their work based on the rule of law; the establishment of innovative channels of communication with citizens; organisation of concerts, debates, and street events and promotion of activities in a way that will appeal to different age groups. Additionally, TI BiH will focus on dissemination of promotional materials to specifically defined target groups; cooperation with other organisations, and the use of external complementary capacities and membership. TI BiH will also enhance its accessibility to a wider public through educational workshops, specialised training for journalists and government officials, and involvement of the public in its projects, and will work towards establishing a network of volunteers and new collaborators.

Past experience suggests that the most powerful and immediate effect is achieved at the local level – TI BiH can use its direct contacts with citizens which are established on the ground through various projects implemented with the aim of gathering information about citizen’s needs and the most common problems they face when it comes to corrupt practices. Direct contact with citizens would serve as a basis for developing a network of contacts on the ground, in partnership with other active CSOs, which would lend further credibility and provide an opportunity to act at the local level. The positive experience gained at the local level could be replicated in other communities, while taking account of their specific problems or differences.

This set of activities would also include public awareness-raising actions with the aim of pointing out positive examples and promoting best practices from the country, the region and the world; education of specific target groups of citizens about democratic and legal forms of expressing public dissatisfaction; pointing out irregularities and illegal acts to citizens; and additional practical examples of ways and methods by which TI BiH has given support to citizens – (potential) victims of corruption.

A separate branch of activities under this expected outcome would target the younger population and be aimed at the continuation of motivational training courses held in schools in the form of a clearly structured programme designed to increase young people’s knowledge of and interest in anticorruption activities. It is also possible to target specific groups, e.g. to educate job seekers about how to recognise corruption in employment and which mechanisms to use to protect their rights.
**Outcome:** TI BiH is recognised as an organisation that communicates effectively with the public.

*Action:* The set of activities planned under this outcome is almost exclusively related to the identification and application of modern methods of communication, the use of new technologies and social networks, successful visual identity and improved presentation of TI BiH's results. This includes TI BiH's commitment to further consulting with other national chapters about the most successful means and methods of communication, analysing the possible impact achieved relative to the costs and number of people to whom the message is transmitted, and a stronger and more interesting promotion of results to the public and informed public.

The differentiation between these two is necessary in order to record TI BiH's determination to become actively engaged in advocacy activities with professional and informed public, while using modern and/or the most useful means of communicating messages to citizens. This includes an in-house content verification system, different approaches to different target groups, and a number of lower-order engagement activities such as: website upgrade, user-friendly presentation of content on the website, customising the website for Android devices.

In addition to activities related to the visual identity and improved presentation of content and key messages on a regular basis, the expected outcome includes polishing TI BiH's image as an organisation that seeks and actively establishes contacts with citizens, using all available means of communication. Individual project webpages (e.g. ALAC) need to be brought into line with TI BiH's clear visual identity and content.

**Outcome: Increased number of partners with whom TI BiH works as a leader, partner and consultant in anticorruption initiatives.**

*Action:* This set of activities implies TI BiH's strong commitment to identifying partners and getting involved more determinedly in the initiation, development and expansion of networks and coalitions, and in the planning and implementation of anticorruption projects with organisations with similar mandates. Activities include establishing contacts with potential partner organisations, regular exchange of information on projects, activities and possible joint public appearances, and planning work schedules such that TI BiH staff can participate in and provide support to public events organised by partner organisations. Cooperation can also be achieved through provision of expert services, mentoring, sharing of information and initiatives for joint response and action.

**II. Implementation of anticorruption standards and fight for social justice**

*Outcome:* TI BiH monitors and participates in all key political processes relating to the analysis, amendments and adoption of laws and has a stronger say in decision-making processes.

*Action:* Continuously and thoroughly monitor current political themes according to the established schedule and system and, in cooperation with the legal team and external collaborators, develop recommendations based on research and analyses pertaining to the improvement of policies, regulations, manner of passing regulations and – ultimately –
monitoring consistency of enforcement of regulations. In doing so, TI BiH will develop internal capacity to use advocacy techniques and apply them in practice. In the coming period organisation will be established and individual responsibilities to monitor certain sectors will be specified, and efforts will be made to establish a system of forecasting and preventive and proactive action.

Stronger participation in political processes, as well as the continuous and planned monitoring of the political situation, will lead to a stronger and greater influence on the decision-making process. Ability to mobilise stakeholders support, creation of a network of individuals of such a profile and establishment of regular channels of communication, constant advocacy of TI's ideas and values, and maintaining established networks and relationships must be in a stronger focus.

**Outcome:** Positioning TI BiH in anticorruption activities among election candidates.

**Action:** Going to the polls is the most massive and the only direct form of citizen participation in government. It has a strong importance when it comes to anticorruption policies and is an opportune moment for presenting programmes and strengthening the position and extending the impact of TI BiH.

Activities related to TI BiH’s stronger involvement in elections (2016 local elections and 2018 general elections) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- advocacy activities;
- direct impact on candidates to incorporate anticorruption aspects into their political platforms and programmes;
- involving citizens in strategic decision-making;
- promotion of existing projects at the local level – through formal and informal channels of communication;
- implementation of activities before and during election campaigns – setting up information stands;
- providing information on how to report irregularities during election campaigns;
- education and training of volunteers on how to monitor the elections;
- symbolic and promotional, media-covered participation of TI BiH as an organisation that monitors the electoral process.

**III. Strong Transparency International BiH – strong organisation and strong movement**

**Outcome:** TI BiH has secured a leading position in the implementation of anticorruption projects.

**Action:** The organisation’s strong brand image, as well as the huge needs in society, are certain to have spurred the formation of new CSOs and helped sharpen the focus of the existing anticorruption projects. The growing competition in civil society must be used as a positive phenomenon to better position TI BiH. Instead of fighting for limited donor funds, TI BiH will make special efforts to build partnerships with CSOs that have credibility and share the same values, use their complementary expertise where necessary, and act in an
advisory and mentoring role to grassroots organisations that strive for the same goals. Initiating the creation of stakeholder sectoral networks, acting as a partner in joint projects, and participating more visibly in public events organised by other organisations will help TI BiH establish itself as a leader in guiding and directing anticorruption projects, which is a perfectly fitting role for an organisation of such capacity, references and experience.

**Outcome: Recognisable positioning of TI BiH in Transparency International's Global Network.**

**Action:** TI BiH has a comparative advantage over other national chapters in the region in terms of the results achieved in accessing donor funds and overall achievements. Some of the areas that TI BiH focuses on in its work are not a priority in other national chapters or TI BiH deals with them more intensively and in more detail than other chapters. It is necessary to develop a positive and stimulating competitive spirit within the TI movement, engage more strongly with the network in terms of keeping up to date with its work, maintaining regular communication with other chapters and the Secretariat, and acting through joint projects. Special attention will be paid to the use of the rich treasury of resources available from the Global Network: database of projects, online learning and training materials, via the intranet; input data to explore new areas of work, etc. Also important for serious positioning of TI BiH within the Global Network is continuous work on internal capacity building and establishing a system to build TI BiH's institutional memory and sharing its resources with the Global Network.

**Outcome: Financially viable TI BiH enjoys the support and confidence of donors at home and abroad.**

**Action:** In the next phase TI BiH will realistically assess and redistribute its capacity for producing new project proposals, identifying new potential sources of funds, maintaining continuous contact with the existing donors. These activities also include provision of training for TI BiH staff (PCM, project preparation), which is also related to professional training/capacity building of employees. A project team cell responsible for identifying new project ideas is to be established in the near future. Each member of staff will be encouraged in his/her individual efforts to contribute to the development of project ideas, whether in the form of mini-projects for internal nomination and delegation, or in terms of direct involvement in the development and writing of project proposals.

Also, stronger participation in the preparation and delegation of project ideas will strengthen the sense of belonging and individual “ownership” of the programme, which is a powerful motivating factor for taking on further tasks and raising the quality of implementation of tasks by each employee.

A more systematic approach to the creation and, more importantly, the monitoring of standards of work when it comes to internal organisation and work ethics, and establishing procedures relating to the system of work, evaluation of additional engagement and commitment, assessment of potential benefits for the organisation from personal/individual efforts by employees will also be in TI BiH’s focus in the near future. All these will inevitably entail the establishment of a policy for encouraging personal ambitions for further training and education, and raising the level of education of employees in accordance with the capacities, interests and capabilities of the organisation.
One group of activities that is also related to the established expected outcome is the alignment of the staffing plan, in terms of its content, with personal interests and abilities of employees and project/organisational needs. Development of an HR plan will be based on the principles of participation, continuing education, motivation and responsibility of employees.

10. Monitoring of strategy implementation

TI BiH will regularly and closely monitor and evaluate the impact of the adopted 2015–2020 Strategy with the aim of recognising moments at which the Strategy needs to be revised, updated or expanded for easier and more precise orientation of the organisation’s future activities.

The monitoring process will be a joint process involving all TI BiH employees and will be used for strengthening the organisational readiness as well as individual commitment to the organisation’s goals and the continuing work towards improving the quality and increasing the scope of activities.

The starting point for the monitoring activities will be the regular appraisal of the chapter’s relevance in the social context and recording of any positive developments, as well as limiting factors, which could jeopardise the implementation of the Strategy, or – in better case – enable its smooth implementation.

Regular monitoring will consist of:

- Development of operational plans by strategic areas and goals
- Periodic assessment of the degree to which the Strategy is being implemented as planned (once a year)
- Annual update of the 2015–2020 Strategic Plan and updating the strategic document with more relevant data that allow a better understanding and more effective planning
“To oppose corruption in government is the highest obligation of patriotism.”

G. Edward Griffin