

SUCCESS STORY

Socio-economic empowerment of mine victims and their families

DELEGATION OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION
TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Altogether more than 100 motocultivators were distributed

EU support provides employment opportunities for mine victims

According to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BH MAC), the current size of mine suspected areas in BiH is 1.091 km² or 2.2% of the total area of BiH. Micro locations contaminated with mines and explosive ordnances directly affect the safety of 545.000 inhabitants or 15% of the total population of BiH. Due to the poor economic situation, many BiH citizens are consciously entering suspected risky areas for collecting firewood or secondary raw materials despite mined-area warning. In 2014 alone, two persons were injured during collecting secondary raw materials, while eight were injured during collecting firewood.

The Mine Victim Assistance is a comprehensive process involving both the government and the NGO sector as victims are in need

Altogether, the project provided 285 grants for mine victims or members of their families across the country. Various kinds of business plans were supported and different equipment was delivered, such as livestock, greenhouses, beehives with bees, fruit processing machines, carpeting machines, barber shop equipment, etc.

of medical, psychological, social and economic assistance. The focus of Mine Victim Assistance is placed on the full socio-economic re-integration of mine victims into society.

With the aim of contributing to the socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable mine victims and their families into the society and as the support to the Mine Action Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU started a project *“Socio-economic empowerment of mine victims and their families through provision of business trainings and employment opportunities in BiH”*.



Business trainings were organised in 23 local communities and Brčko District

The project was financed by the EU in the amount of EUR 1 million, co-financed by the local authorities with EUR 150.000 and implemented by Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB)

BH MAC assisted the project by providing the mine victims data base updated with newly registered victims within the project. In total 128 files and medical documentation of mines victims were added to the BH MAC mine victims database after the evaluation.

The project aimed at creating employment opportunities for economically vulnerable mine victims or members of their families in 23 local communities and Brčko District through provision of business trainings and business grants for job creation.

Suljo Golo from Ilidža, a project beneficiary, sustained mine injury in 1993 that rendered him 100% invalid, and made him dependant on the state pension. His business plan, developed during the training, was to start a car wash, , it was of the highest standards and a subsequent grant enabled him to start his own business.

“With the grant awarded two years ago, I got myself a car wash machine and a vacuum cleaner to start my own business. I am very happy as it has been growing since the first day. Having in mind the lack of jobs in the country, I am particularly happy that my son has been working with me at the car wash as well”, Golo said.

The project used wholly innovative methods of socio-economic assistance for the most vulnerable population in BiH, by organising business trainings for mine victims and providing grants for the best business ideas and plans.



The final conference of the project was titled "To Earn – Not to get"



Different equipment was delivered, such as cattle, greenhouses, beehives with bees etc.

The project built on capabilities, and not disabilities of landmine survivors following the international and national human rights standards. It empowered survivors to exercise their human rights, particularly in the field of employment and vocational training. More than 480 mine victims or their family members increased their entrepreneurial skills through specialised business trainings.

Enes Muratović, President of the Eco Sport Group, a partner organisation in the project gathering mine victims, reckoned that the involvement in the project presented them with a valuable experience for the future.

"The Eco Sport Group was selected as a partner organisation due to our experience in the field, and information and contacts established among the mine victims population. The opportunity to work with ABS on this EU-funded project was satisfactory

Abdulah Vrselj from Travnik, with a 100% disability, had the idea of turning his passion, web design, into a business. Unfortunately, his business plan didn't receive a grant for the desired equipment. However, Vrselj was not downhearted, and he used his valuable experience further and managed to find other means to pursue his passion.

"Now I finally have the opportunity to do what I really like, web designing and publishing. I am making a living out of it and following my passion. It was the training within the project that filled me with confidence and equipped with knowledge to continue realizing this idea", Vrselj said.

in terms of the provision of genuine assistance to the mine victims, as well as improving the capacities of our organisation for the future activities”, Muratović explained.

Altogether, the project provided 285 grants for mine victims or members of their families across the country. Various kinds of business plans were supported and different equipment was delivered, such as livestock, greenhouses, beehives with bees, fruit processing machines, carpeting machines, barber shop equipment, etc.



285 grants for mine victims or members of their families were provided

Delegation of the European Union
to Bosnia and Herzegovina
Skenderija 3a, 71000 Sarajevo,
Bosnia and Herzegovina

T. 00387 33 254 700
F. 00387 33 666 037

Please contact Zora Stanic
in Communication Team via
zora.stanic@eeas.europa.eu
for any feedback or comments
on this story.

www.europa.ba [facebook.com/europa.ba](https://www.facebook.com/europa.ba) twitter.com/eubih [youtube.com/eubih](https://www.youtube.com/eubih) [@delegation-bih@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:delegation-bih@eeas.europa.eu)