

INTERNATIONAL AID TO BOSNIAN AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

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Abstract

Damage related to the 1990s war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to the agricultural sector totalled approximately US\$ 4.54 billion. About 70% of the business infrastructure and 60% of livestock were destroyed. The paper aims at providing an overview of foreign aid and assistance to BiH in the post-war period with a special focus on agriculture, forestry and rural development.

The work is based on an extended review of secondary data especially from the Donor Coordination Forum in BiH. The paper (i) lists the main policies and institutions dealing with agricultural and rural development; (ii) analyses international aid history especially principal sectors and areas to which were dedicated approximately US\$12 billion after 1995; (iii) investigates current situation of international assistance focusing on donor agencies, aid sectors (*e.g.* governance; economic development; agriculture and forestry; environmental protection) and financial allocations by sector and by donor in 2009-10 period; (iv) focuses on agriculture and forestry sector especially main donors (*e.g.* USAID, European Commission, World Bank, JICA, FAO, SIDA, DFID, JICA, EBRD, UNDP), government implementing organisations, financial allocations, projects and donor coordination; (v) devotes a special attention to international aid perspective evolution in the transition from the “era of Dayton” to the “era of Brussels”; and (vi) analyses aid effectiveness and impacts using many socio-economic indicators. Despite the huge efforts made by dozens of international organisations Bosnian rural areas still lag behind in terms of socio-economic development, which puts in question rural and agricultural development policies and strategies appropriateness but also international support effectiveness.

Keywords: *International aid; Bosnia; agriculture; effectiveness.*

Introduction

Current Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) consists of two governing entities, namely the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS), and one self-governing administrative unit *i.e.* Brčko District (BD) under the State sovereignty. According to the Labour Force Survey for 2010, the agricultural sector employs 166,000 persons *i.e.* 19.7% of the total labour force (ASBiH, 2010). Rural areas represent 81% of the territory of BiH where lives around 61% of the total population. Agricultural land covers 50% of the total area of BiH. The average size of farms is 2.6 ha (MoFTER, 2009).

The 1990s war in BiH left the country in economic ruins. By the end of 1995, BiH's output had fallen to just 10-30% of the pre-war level. GDP had collapsed to less than US\$500 per capita, about 20% of its pre-war level. Most of the basic infrastructure was shattered and more than 80% of the population received some food aid. The destruction costs in Sarajevo alone amounted to €14 billion (IDA, 2009). War-related damage to the agricultural sector totalled approximately US\$4.54 billion. Seventy percent of the business infrastructure and 60% of livestock were destroyed (Christoplos, 2007). In 2001, 10% of farmland was mined (Gärke, 2001).

The most enduring legacy of the war in the rural sector may not be in terms of physical destruction, but the institutional weaknesses and delayed reforms due to a complex and polarised political system. BiH is certainly not a 'collapsed state', but due to the legacy of war it still lacks many of the institutions that would seem self-evident in a 'normal state' (Christoplos, 2007).

The paper aims at providing an overview of foreign aid and assistance to BiH in the post-Dayton Peace accords period especially in terms of financial allocation, main donors and implementing institutions, sectors, effectiveness and approaches with a special focus on the sectors of agriculture, food, forestry and rural development.

Material and methods

The work is based on an extended review of secondary data especially from the Donor Coordination Forum in BiH. A considerable amount of reliable secondary data has been consulted, analysed and cross-checked. The paper (i) lists the main policies and institutions dealing with agricultural and rural development (ARD); (ii) analyses international aid history especially principal sectors and areas; (iii) investigates current situation of international assistance focusing on donor agencies, aid sectors and financial allocations in 2009-10 period; (iv) focuses on agriculture and forestry sector especially main donors, financial allocations, projects and donor coordination; (v) devotes a special attention to international aid perspective evolution in the transition from the "era of Dayton" to the "era of Brussels"; and (vi) analyses aid effectiveness and impacts. Inconsistency of secondary data from different sources was the main problem faced during the preparation of this paper.

Results and discussion

The design and implementation of ARD policies involve different international, national and sub-national actors (regional; intermediate or sub-regional; and local) (OECD, 2006). In BiH, intermediate levels, Entities of RS and FBiH, have a crucial role in ARD design and delivery. In BiH, all levels of governance are involved in the agricultural sector management and rural areas development. International organisations and development agencies have implemented different rural development projects and programmes during the post-war period. There is no ministry of agriculture at the level of central government. The two entities of the FBiH and RS, and Brcko District, each retain their own quasi-ministerial structures. This institutional architecture is not recognised as appropriate for developing the statutory and regulatory functions and the overall administrative tasks that are essential for wider integration into EU and international markets. Each entity has its own systems for phytosanitary control, veterinary services, etc. and provides different subsidies types and levels. The roles of cantons and municipalities are different in each entity and unclear in many respects (Christoplos, 2007).

The main agriculture and forestry strategies are BiH Harmonisation Strategy and Operational Programme for Agriculture; FBiH Strategy for Agriculture and Rural

Development; RS Strategy for Agricultural Development; and RS Strategic Plan for Rural Development. Notable progress was made in the Forestry sub-sector with the introduction of Corporative Governance in RS. The new FBiH revised Law on Forestry was drafted in February 2010 (MoFT, 2010).

International aid poured into BiH after the Dayton Peace Accords, signed in 1995, targeted primarily cities and villages in the Federation. RS claims to have received only about \$1.9 billion of the approximately \$12 billion given (International Crisis Group, 2011). From 1996 to 1999, \$3.7 billion were allocated by 48 countries and 14 international organizations (Pasic, 2011). From 1996 to 2002, Bosnia's annual aid amounted to \$730 million, or, \$1,400 per person. At \$1,400 per head, assistance in the first two post-war years in Bosnia was higher than any other international state-building project since the Second World War (Huliaras, 2010). It has been calculated that BiH has received more per capita aid than any European country under the Marshall Plan. Since 2000 international aid to Bosnia has been decreasing (Pasic, 2011).

As BiH moves from the era of Dayton onto the road to Brussels, the EU itself has assumed a leading position in BiH's international engagement (Christoplos, 2007). In total, throughout the last twenty years the European Union (European Commission and the member-states) provided about 66% of the assistance for the reconstruction of Western Balkans and the United States about 15%. With regard to the relevant burden of the European Community and its member states, Community contributions were higher to much higher than all EU member states bilateral efforts taken together (Huliaras, 2010).

The EU invested EUR 91.280 million in Bosnia under the 2011 budget of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) which represents 9.1% of budget for all countries wishing to join the EU. The funding focuses on Public administration reform, justice and home affairs, private sector development, transport, environment and climate change, and social development (EC, 2011a). Aid under IPA is expected to increase to 110.2 million Euro in 2012 (EC, 2008).

The United States provided large amounts of aid to Bosnia. According to the USAID "Greenbook", the US provided over \$2 billion in aid to Bosnia between 1993 and 2009 (Woehrel, 2011). Moreover, since 1996, the World Bank has committed over \$1.1 billion, while other World Bank agencies had sent \$500 million by 2010 (Bardos, 2010).

In the immediate post-war period the main reconstruction priority was housing (Christoplos, 2007). Two main aid programs were food aid and cash handouts (Andersson, 1997). Direct food assistance in the form of food aid has been given in BiH as far back as 1992 (World Bank, 1997). As far as agricultural and rural development is concerned, there was a transition from modalities reminiscent of the agricultural rehabilitation programming supported in the past through the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP1 phase), 'era of Dayton', to now preparing for future EU membership and increasing integration into markets steered by the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP2 phase), 'era of Brussels' (Christoplos, 2007).

Over time, agricultural programming in BiH has become increasingly marketing oriented in the sense that great attention is being paid to ensuring that producers can sell their crops. Development processes are combining the tools of poverty reduction strategies applied in 'developing countries' with the mechanisms of pre-accession that have been used in 'transitional countries' (Christoplos, 2007). The goals of post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization are no longer adequate for dealing with the current problems (Huliaras, 2010). Nowadays, most agricultural programmes in BiH are primarily directed toward promotion of commercial production (Christoplos, 2007).

During the period 2009-10 donor agencies and international financial institutions had development activities within the sectors of education; health; good governance and

institution building; conflict prevention and resolution, peace and security; infrastructure; economic development and social protection; local governance; agriculture and forestry; environmental protection without forgetting cross-cutting programmes and projects (MoFT, 2010).

In 2009, total allocations of the DCF (Donor Coordination Forum) members amounted to €727.75 million out of which €195.73 million was in the form of grants. These figures represent an overall decrease of €33.90 million in total ODA (Official Development Assistance) allocations. In comparison with 2008, there was a €23.70 million increase in grants but a €57.60 million decrease in loans. In 2010 total allocations by the DCF members to all ten sectors was €726.93 million, out of which €507.36 million was in the form of loans (MoFT, 2010). The EC, USA/USAID, Sweden/Sida, and the Netherlands provided the largest amount of grant aid in 2009 followed by UNDP, Norway, Germany, Italy/IC and Switzerland/SDC/SECO. The three largest international financial institutions, the EIB, EBRD and the World Bank, as well as bilateral donor, Germany, provided loans in 2009-2010 (MoFT, 2010).

The agricultural, forestry and rural development sector is characterized by the presence of a number of international donors and financial institutions, such as the USA/USAID, Sweden/SIDA, Italy/IC, UK/DFID, Japan/JICA, Spain/AECID, Switzerland/SDC/SECO, Czech Republic/CzDA, the European Commission (EC), the World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), UNDP, FAO, etc. However from 2009, due to the world economic crisis, the investments of donors in BiH have decreased (MoFT, 2010). Key governmental partners of donors in the agriculture and forestry sector are the Sector for Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Rural Development (SAFFRD) at the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (MoFTER); RS Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; FBiH Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry; State Veterinary Office; BiH Food Safety Agency and BiH Plant Health Protection Agency (MoFT, 2010).

The agricultural and forestry sector received 6% of total ODA allocations in 2009 and 2% of total ODA allocations in 2010 (MoFT, 2010). The total allocation to the agriculture and forestry sector by DCF members was €46.61 million in 2009, which includes €32.15 million in loans (including commercial loans from EBRD in the amount of €28.7 million and the World Bank loan tranche of €3.45 million) and €14.46 million in grants. For 2010, donors have contributed €13.10 million including EC Pipeline projects for 2010 in the value of €1.3 million and the World Bank loan tranche of €4.26 million (MoFT, 2010).

The distribution of aid in the agriculture and forestry sector recorded a steady increase from 2007 to 2008 and a significant increase in 2009. However, it should be noted that 2009 figures include commercial loans provided to private enterprises working in this sector (MoFT, 2010).

According to the Donor Coordination Forum in BiH, total allocation to aid in Bosnia in 2011 was about € 1.503 billion of which € 34.200 million were dedicated to agriculture and forestry sector (2.28%). Data of the DCF-BiH, show a sharp decrease of official development assistance to BiH from 2011. The delayed impact of the economic crisis on financial allocations to cooperation for development is due to the long programming periods adopted by donors. Assistance to agriculture and forestry sector as well as its share in total assistance decreased in a dramatic way from 2010 showing an increased focus of bilateral and multilateral donors on crisis response projects and supporting the financial sector (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1. Share of agriculture and forestry sector in total official development assistance to Bosnia in 2005-2012 period.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Foreign assistance total budget (€)	692,836,667	1,050,366,016	1,564,286,725	1,889,549,159	1,917,426,361	1,981,415,749	1,571,850,127	824,363,623
Agriculture and forestry (AF) sector (€)	47,004,376	53,862,045	74,239,583	59,321,956	126,572,392	64,531,297	39,142,542	34,137,461
Share of AF in total budget (%)	6.78	5.13	4.75	3.14	6.60	3.26	2.49	4.14

Source: Authors' elaboration of data from the Donor Coordination Forum in BiH).

Regarding the agricultural sector, some projects cover the entire country but many specific activities target vulnerable groups such as returnees and socially excluded people in the Srebrenica and north-western regions. Other projects are created with the purpose of revitalising traditional farming methods in agriculture in areas such as the Herzegovina region. The forestry sub-sector is one of the least funded sectors with only a few donors implementing programmes and projects in this area (MoFT, 2010). According to the Donor Coordination Forum in BiH, as of December 2011, the ongoing projects in the sectors of agriculture, food and forestry are listed in table 2.

Table 2. Main projects dealing with agriculture and forestry in 2011 in BiH.

Project Title	Donor	Implementing Agency	Start Date	End Date	Amount (€)
REGA - Rural Employment Generation Activity	USAID	USAID/MKO Partner	19.12.2008	30.9.2013	468,195
Capacity Building of Agricultural Business in Drought Adaptation in BiH	USAID	USAID/ Association Centre for Development and Support	23.9.2010	22.3.2012	230,876
FARMA - Fostering Agriculture Market Activity	SIDA, USAID	Sida, USAID/Chemonics International Inc.	1.9.2009	1.9.2013	8,653,695
Food Safety	SIDA	SWEDAC	1.9.2008	1.6.2012	1,503,000
Fostering Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas by Improving Competitiveness and Market Potential Project in BiH	USAID	USAID/Fruit Grower Association-Integralna proizvodnja voca	1.4.2011	31.3.2014	1,043,514
Increasing Quality and Market Production of Milk North-East Bosnia and Herzegovina	Czech Republic	CRP Tuzla, PRUNUS Zvornik, Bijeljina cooperative	1.12.2010	1.12.2013	712,000
Sectoral analysis for IPARD	EC	EC	23.12.2010	23.12.2011	500,000
SUPPLY-Strengthening and harmonisation of BiH agriculture and rural sectors	EC	EC	1.10.2010	1.4.2012	130,980
Supply of Satellite Imagery for Agriculture and Rural Sectors in BiH	EC	EC	23.11.2010	23.3.2011	126,000
Support to BiH plant health administration	EC	EC	3.11.2010	12.1.2013	790,451
Women Empowerment through Organic Farming in Bosnia and Herzegovina	USAID	USAID/ MOZAIK Community Development Foundation	8.9.2010	9.9.2013	1,062,525

Donor coordination meetings, as a platform for information exchange between all stakeholders in the agriculture sector, are organised and chaired by MoFTER. The improved, focused collaboration of international assistance has prevented overlapping of activities. Project ideas compiled by MoFTER are presented to the donor community at international

donor conferences. Harmonisation with international standards and further strengthening of state and entity-level capacities are essential for further progress. MoFTER organises regular donor meetings to present the agricultural sector priorities. There is no formal coordination mechanism in the Forestry sector at the state level. Donor agencies emphasise the need for further enhancement of state-level and entity capacities for better aid coordination (MoFT, 2010).

Despite the massive destruction, reconstruction and rehabilitation in general in the country have been rapid. However, it is important to compare the relatively lacklustre recovery in agriculture with the much more dynamic performance in other sectors (Christoplos, 2007). In spite of the efforts made by international organisations, Bosnian rural areas still lag behind in terms of socio-economic development, which puts in question also international aid and support effectiveness. The effectiveness of a donor's assistance in a partner country is affected by the nature of the institutional framework for its relations with the partner government and with other donors, and by its own internal rules and culture. Different objectives and interests between donors and partner governments can impair aid effectiveness (OECD, 2003).

The five core principles on which are founded the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008) (*i.e.* ownership, alignment, harmonisation, results, and mutual accountability) are guiding principles for providing more co-ordinated and effective development assistance as well as specific good practices donors may adopt for developing the overall framework for donor-partner government relations (OECD, 2003). In December 2009, the Council of Ministers of BiH signed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which committed the state to work with donors on the five areas of aid effectiveness. These principles oblige both BiH's institutions and donor community to strengthen their mutual partnership for implementing of aid initiatives in line with the new Country Development Strategy (MoFT, 2010).

For many observers, foreign aid to the Balkans has a mixed record. A 2005 Report by the International Commission on the Balkans, reached a rather damning indictment stating that despite ploughing billions of aid and Europe dispatching to the region, the medium-term returns have been meagre. Other studies that focused more specifically on the economic effectiveness of assistance have also reached dull conclusions, arguing that external aid has had a very weak positive impact on the economic performance of the Balkan countries. However, from another point of view aid to the Balkans can be considered as particularly successful in alleviating poverty, in providing food and shelter to refugees and in establishing a secure environment for resettlement. Moreover foreign aid helped preserving peace (Huliaras, 2010).

In recent years, many analysts have expressed concern that the international community's efforts over the past 15 years to stabilize Bosnia are failing (Woehrel, 2011). In fact, there are still many socio-economic issues which need to be addressed. Youth unemployment in BiH is among the highest in the region. According to the recent State commission's study on Youth Issues, BiH unemployment rate is about 4 times EU average. According to Eurostat data (2011), in 2010 the welfare of BiH citizens was the second-lowest among all EU member states and candidate/potential candidate countries (Pasic, 2011).

Although in aggregate human development terms BiH is progressing well, social exclusion and poverty are pressing problems, with increasing inequalities. 2007 data suggests a poverty rate of 18.6%, with 22.9% at risk of poverty. The National Human Development Report 2007 suggests that over 50% of the population is socially excluded. Registered unemployment reached 43.1% in June 2011. It was particularly high among the young population (57.9% for people aged between 15 and 24) (EC, 2011). In 2004, almost 20% of the population lived below the poverty line, while another 30% were close to the poverty line,

reported the IMF in 2005. According to the UNDP's Human Development Report 2011, BiH ranked 74th worldwide (UNDP, 2011). Just over half (53%) of the total population of BiH and close to 80% of the poor reside in rural areas (IFAD, 2011).

Another concern, is that BiH is still suffering from high levels of corruption. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2011 (Transparency International, 2011), BiH ranked 91 out of 183 countries, lagging behind all its neighbours. In 2006, Germany's Spiegel reported that more than €2 billion have been lost in Bosnia; the destiny of these funds being not known (Pasic, 2011).

Conclusions

For the average citizen of BiH, the billions of Euros of foreign aid have not brought much progress. The average Bosnian has not seen any – or a very meagre share - of the \$1,400 per capita of international assistance given to the country. As Bosnia's international assistance keeps on decreasing, finding a comprehensive development strategy is becoming a higher priority. If the issues of unemployment, socio-economic inequality and corruption are not addressed, Bosnia will continue to lag further behind its neighbours. The hope is that aid will gradually become less significant for the stability and economic development of BiH.

If BiH's agriculture and forestry is to develop in the face of the increased competition, international aid assistance as well as investments are needed to create the institutions required for the government, civil society and the private sector to work together to achieve longterm sustainable development of the sector.

Evidence shows that for increasing aid effectiveness there is a need to have a greater sharing of objectives between donors, and Bosnian State and Entity governments, clearer expectations of each other and more predictable and transparent aid flows. In particular, donors should coordinate in a way that would be transparent and minimise unnecessary transaction costs. Moreover, legal and legislative frameworks at State and entity levels should be harmonised and horizontal and vertical coordination between the competent and involved institutions and organisations should be improved. Improving targeting accuracy in the aid delivery process can yield improved coverage and reduced leakage and can have a sizable impact in terms of poverty reduction and sustainable agricultural and rural development.

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