

# People in Need in Western Balkans

A Position Paper on Climate Change

September, 2023



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# 1 Overview – PIN Western Balkans Position on Climate Change

People's livelihoods often depend on agriculture and the direct consumption of natural resources. The quality of life is thus directly influenced by the condition of the environment. Climate change influences traditional ways of living, and many people will need to adapt their livelihoods for the future. Improving ecological stability, increasing self-sufficiency and resistance to climate change are important agendas for People in Need (PIN).

In line with the European Green Deal and commitments from the Sofia Declaration on The Green Agenda<sup>1</sup> for The Western Balkans, PIN is committed to supporting national and local authorities to tackle climate change by improving the climate resilience of local communities and contributing to climate change mitigation through the diffusion of green solutions, such as the uptake of Green Economy, Energy Efficiency, and Resilience Building.

PIN Western Balkans focuses on two pillars: Climate Resilience and Emergency Response and Recovery to accelerate the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. Under the Climate Resilience pillar, we are working on effective waste management in Canton Sarajevo, funded by the Czech Development Agency (CzDA), to help reduce waste production by improving solid waste management and contribute strengthen the capacity of responsible and relevant institutions (RAD and Dekonta). Additionally, with support from the European Commission and co-implemented with Let's Do It Peja<sup>2</sup>, PIN is contributing to transitioning to a circular economy in Kosovo by building the capacity of civil society actors to influence policy reform and empower and mobilize civil society organizations (CSOs) to advocate for a gender-responsive transition towards a circular economy in Kosovo.

In the country programme's pipeline, PIN Western Balkans is looking into supporting on the advocacy and policy level. To accelerate the collaboration with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)<sup>3</sup>, PIN will support planning efforts and implement mitigation actions to respond to short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs). Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) joined the Global Methane Pledge in 2021, committing to contribute to a collective effort to reduce global methane emissions by at least 30 percent from 2020 levels by 2030.

Moreover, under the Emergency Response and Recovery pillar, through PINnovation<sup>4</sup>, PIN aims to promote early prevention and response to wildfires through the implementation of an early warning system. The proposed early warning system can prevent wildfires during the smouldering phase which can fill the gaps of the scarce firefighting resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PIN Western Balkans stands ready to work closely with the government in face of the climate crisis. PIN understands that climate change exacerbates poverty, inequality, and conflict, and is actively working to address these interconnected challenges. Through its sustainable development projects, disaster response initiatives, and advocacy for climate

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<sup>1</sup> The Green Agenda is structured along five pillars: (1) Cleaning energy sources and protecting the climate; (2) Moving to a circular economy; (3) Depolluting air, water, and soil; (4) Building sustainable agriculture and food systems; and (5) Protecting biodiversity and eco-systems.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ldipeja.org/#>

<sup>3</sup> CCAC is a network of over 160 governments, intergovernmental organisations, and non-governmental organisations founded in 2012. <https://www.ccacoalition.org/content/climate-and-clean-air-coalition>.

<sup>4</sup> People in Need's innovation initiative: exploring technological innovation for humanitarian aid and assistance.

action, PIN demonstrates its commitment to protect the planet for all. PIN empowers communities to adapt to a changing climate, ensuring that those who are often overlooked are equipped with the knowledge and resources to thrive in a sustainable future. Supporting climate change is not just commendable; it is a moral imperative.

With unwavering dedication and a clear vision, PIN has taken stance in the fight against climate change. We recognize that the climate crisis is not just an environmental issue, but a humanitarian one, affecting the world's most vulnerable communities. PIN's commitment to supporting climate change is not merely symbolic; it is a testament to their proactive efforts in mitigating the impact of climate change on the people who need it the most.

## 2 People in Need (PIN) Globally on Climate Change

Climate change tends to have the greatest impacts on the world's most vulnerable populations, many of whom lack the resources to adapt to new climate realities. People in Need (PIN) has included climate change in its educational and awareness programmes, and as part of its strategy in the development of new projects. Our goal is to influence change with lasting impacts, thus, we strive to programme activities in areas where real difference can be made.

Globally, PIN plays a role in addressing climate change by enhancing the resilience of vulnerable people through solutions that align with green growth and circular economy principles. These solutions aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester/stock carbon. In the locations where PIN operates, greenhouse gas emissions per person are lower than the global average, yet many populations will still be disproportionately affected by climate change.

PIN's climate change work builds on its global expertise in building resilience to climate shocks for vulnerable communities, promoting sustainable livelihoods through a market systems development approach, and strengthening governance at the local and sub-national level.

### 2.1 PIN's Work on Climate Change

PIN has been working on natural resource management, environmental restoration and agriculture projects for over 20 years and addressing the consequences of climate change was a natural part of them. Climate change intensifies the pressures on vulnerable people, which is why PIN has mostly worked to adapt the population to extreme weather events by promoting climate **resilient, mitigation, and adaptation** solutions. The organisation empowers younger generations to become important actors of change to achieve sustainable development.

#### Some of PIN's priority topics are:

- Promoting its *Productive and Climate Resilient Landscapes* concept which is a 4-step approach to landscape restoration and climate-smart agriculture, combining participatory landscape mapping, expert data, GIS and spatial analysis, novel techniques and technologies and actual field work.
- Sustainable energy solutions such as solar panels and biogas plants are meant to tackle energy poverty of distant communities, which also contribute to the reduction of GHG and air pollution. Here market systems development is the priority approach to promoting these solutions.
- Reducing the risk of disasters using the Early Warning Systems and readiness training.
- Improving drought and flood resilience by improving WASH infrastructure and governance.
- Using a market systems development approach to diversify livelihood opportunities, using food and nutrition security indicators to measure impact.
- Awareness raising and education. Campaigns, *One World Film Festival* and other awareness raising activities help us to bring the topic of climate change closer to the Czech public. Through climate education, we bring teachers and other multipliers concrete methods and tools to be used at schools, and we help to establish climate education within Czech educational system.

- Climate justice issues are integral part of PIN's communication, also, PIN is actively involved in the protection of the rights of environmental activists and fighters, who are increasing being targeted by oppressive regimes, companies and other agents.

## 3 PIN Western Balkans' Projects on Climate Change

In the Balkans region, People in Need is working on multiple projects that focus on the pillars for Climate Resilience and Emergency Response and Recovery to contribute to the global efforts of tackling climate change.

### 3.1 Effective Waste Management in Canton Sarajevo

The Project *Effective Waste Management System in Canton Sarajevo* aims to contribute to the reduction of waste production in Canton Sarajevo by improving solid waste management, and contributing to the development of responsible and relevant institutions. The project supports KJKP "RAD" d.o.o. Sarajevo with the procurement of equipment, technical assistance, capacity building, and the creation of a campaign for communication with citizens and users of KJKP "RAD" d.o.o. Sarajevo services.

Municipalities in Canton Sarajevo and the responsible Ministry are very important links in the implementation of the project and activities. In close cooperation with Municipalities and the Ministry, the project aims contribute to the improvement of waste management, including relevant regulatory documents and responsible departments.

### 3.2 Circular Economy for Green Transition

This project aims to foster a transition to a circular economy in Kosovo through the promotion of sustainable practices and responsible waste management by empowering CSOs and creating a gender-inclusive network to shape policy reforms. The project is funded by the European Union, and co-implemented by People in Need and Let's Do It Peja.

Through increased citizen awareness, the project seeks to promote understanding and engagement in circular economy principles, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable future for Kosovo. The project supports the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans by adopting circular approaches, to transition towards a more resilient and low-carbon economy. Embracing the circular economy will enable Kosovo to enhance its sustainability, reduce waste, and promote the efficient use of resources, contributing to a greener and more prosperous future.

### 3.3 Developing a National SLCP Plan, National Methane Roadmap, and MRV Framework

The project aims to initiate national planning efforts and implement mitigation actions to respond to short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs). Among SLCPs, methane, black carbon, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons stand out as major contributors to the human-induced global greenhouse effect, following carbon dioxide. They are responsible for a substantial 45% of the ongoing global warming<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ccacoalition.org/content/short-lived-climate-pollutants-slcps>



The process of national planning and the ensuing National SLCP Plan will play a significant role in executing BiH's Climate Change Adaptation and Low-Emission Development Strategy, as well as its National Energy and Climate Plans (NECP). Furthermore, it will enhance the country's ability to monitor and report on SLCPs and establish a comprehensive framework for monitoring, reporting, and verifying greenhouse gases and SLCPs.

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition, acting as a Core Implementer of the Global Methane Pledge, is actively aiding countries in reaching their methane emissions reduction goals within this decade through the development and utilization of methane roadmaps. BiH, as a signatory of the Global Methane Pledge, has voluntarily committed to reducing global methane emissions by 30% by 2030 compared to the 2020 levels.

The National Methane Roadmap will complement BiH's National SLCP Plan to advance priority measures for climate and clean air. Ideally, it will support international obligations, including the Sofia Declaration, the Energy Community Treaty, and the Paris Climate Agreement.

By developing policies that integrate climate and clean air objectives, countries can maximize the benefits of action, helping to reduce the rate of near-term warming - which contributes to achieving the long-term Paris Agreement targets – while at the same time realizing immediate, local benefits for public health and wellbeing and supporting the attainment of many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### **3.4 Forefront Initiative for Rapid Early Suppression (FIRES)**

The *Forefront Initiative for Rapid Early Suppression (FIRES)* project aims to pilot the ultra-early smoke detector system as measures for early prevention to wildfires. This early warning system will be integrated with existing systems, increasing their effectiveness while raising awareness among citizens about climate change through the use of RapidPro<sup>6</sup> and social media.

Apart from the immediate dangers, wildfires also contribute significantly to global carbon emissions, responsible for up to 20 percent of the annual total. This amount is equivalent to the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by all the vehicles on the world's roads.

In 2021, a wildfire in Herzegovina Neretva Canton destroyed two-thirds of the largest national park, home to the endemic species of *Pinus heldreichii*. With such a large-scale wildfire, firefighting becomes more challenging due to insufficient firefighting equipment to extinguish wildfires.

PIN will work closely with the Municipality of Jablanica to implement an early detection and prevention system that can cover large forest areas. This is essential to ensure the safety of communities around the forest, protect the life in the forest, and to avoid further harm on the environment caused by wildfires<sup>7</sup>. This technological solution will be controlled by local authorities who can also ensure a rapid 24/7 response and quick action.

By utilising cutting-edge technology, this initiative can be scaled up on both national and regional levels.

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<sup>6</sup> RapidPro is an open-source platform that allows to build and scale mobile services from anywhere in the world. It supports two-way communication.

<sup>7</sup> Apart from the immediate dangers, wildfires also contribute to global carbon emissions, responsible for up to 20 percent of the annual total. This amount is equivalent to the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by all vehicles globally.

## **4 For more information, you may visit our websites:**

### **4.1 People in Need Global**

<https://www.peopleinneed.net/>

### **4.2 People in Need in Western Balkans**

<https://westernbalkans.peopleinneed.net/en/>



