Service delivery problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) are compounded by the lingering after-effects of the conflict that left vast portions of basic infrastructure destroyed or severely damaged. A case that vividly illustrates the problem is waste water collection and treatment in the city of Sarajevo. A Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) was built close to the confluence of the Miljacka and Bosna Rivers in the early 1980s on the occasion of the 1984 Winter Olympics. Construction of the plant was supported by the World Bank-financed Sarajevo Water Supply and Sewerage Project (Loan 1263-YU), which closed in December 1982. However, the plant was extensively damaged in the spring of 1992 at the outset of the conflict, during which the sewer network was also destroyed in various places. Since the end of the conflict in 1995, the WWTP has been largely out of commission with only minimal conservation works carried out to prevent further deterioration. As a result, virtually all of the city’s waste water is discharged into the Miljacka and Bosna Rivers without any treatment, causing severe pollution of the rivers and impacting the communities downstream of the discharge point.

The Project Development Objective is to improve the living conditions of populations in the areas covered by the Sarajevo Water and Waste Water Company and in downstream riverside communities by: (a) reducing the population’s exposure to, and reliance on highly polluted water from the Miljacka and Bosna Rivers; and (b) improving the efficiency of the waste water collection network in the Sarajevo Canton.

The expected results will be measured through the following indicators:

- Reduction in river pollution measured by amount of BOD5 removed at the WWTP
- Volume of waste water collected treated at the primary level (m3/day)
- Number of sewer connections benefiting from rehabilitation works
- Number of sewer blockages per year

Key Partners: The Bank team is working closely with the BH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations; Sarajevo Cantonal and Municipal Institutions; as well as with “VIK” the Sarajevo Water Utility.

Key Development Partners: Close coordination has been established with the EBRD and the EC.