

INFORMATION NOTES

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Regional Reports

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WITH
CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM:

IOM - International Organization
for Migration

WHO - The World Health Organization

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United Nations
High Commissioner for Refugees
Office of the Special Envoy

UNHCR is the UN lead agency for humanitarian assistance in the region.

The division of responsibilities of the UN humanitarian agencies is as follows:

UNHCR

lead humanitarian agency primarily tasked with repatriation of refugees and return of internally displaced persons as well as protection and legal assistance. UNHCR cooperates with NGOs which implement reconstruction and social services programmes;

WFP

mobilization and delivery of basic food and provision of supplementary food; keeps donors and implementing partners fully informed on all aspects of the food aid process, including assessment of needs, status of food aid pledges, delivery and distribution;

WHO

primary agency for health sector, including health monitoring, nutrition evaluation, public health interventions, support to war victims, rehabilitation of health services and provision of medical equipment and supplies;

UNICEF

multi-sectoral assistance for ensuring provision of survival and development needs of women and children (in nutrition, domestic needs, health, psycho-social rehabilitation, water, sanitation, and education)

In addition, the EC, through the ECHO and DG-IA, supports programmes throughout the region, while several governments provide teams and second personnel to UNHCR. Many NGOs are active in the region, making a major contribution to the humanitarian assistance programme. The ICRC carries out protection activities related to detainees, missing persons, family contacts, also undertaking direct deliveries of assistance. IOM operates a family reunification programme, special medical evacuations and international transport.

Information on each agency may be obtained directly from:

UNHCR: phone +387 71 666-160, fax +387 71 447-868

WFP: phone +387 71 667-497, fax +387 71 668-244

UNDP: phone +387 71 665-679, fax +387 71 665-681

WHO: phone +387 71 205-403, fax +387 71 444-439

UNICEF: phone +387 71 523-754, fax +387 71 642-970

UNHCR: phone +387 71 454-247, fax +387 71 454-247

ICRC: phone +387 71 652-407, fax +387 71 656-835

IOM: phone +387 71 651-928, fax +387 71 656-481

IMG: phone +387 71 666-020, fax +387 71 668-280

GENERAL

Elections dominated Bosnian politics during the fall months. The OSCE - supervised elections for Republika Srpska's legislature produced no clear winner in the political struggle between supporters of Republika Srpska's President Biljana Plavsic and the Pale-based backers of internationally indicted former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

According to provisional election results released by the OSCE, the hard-liners represented by the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and their ultra-nationalist allies from the Serb Radical Party obtained 39 seats in Republika Srpska's 83 seat assembly. The pro-Plavsic Serb People's Party (SNS) will have 15 seats while Republika Srpska's Socialist Party linked to Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic obtained 9 seats. Federation -based parties have 18 seats between them.

Even though the SDS appears to have lost absolute control of the Assembly, extreme nationalists continue to be the single strongest political force in Republika Srpska.

Plavsic's main opponent, Krajisnik, rushed to publicly denounce the election results as "rigged", in a clear signal that the nationalists are not willing to relinquish power in the eastern part of Republika Srpska which they firmly control. Speaking on the eve of the Peace Implementation Council meeting in Bonn, Krajisnik also said he would oppose any strengthening of the High Representative's mandate.

In contrast, the Federation co-Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haris Silajdzic, called for the High Representative's mandate to be strengthened.

Most observers believe that it is far from certain whether the Republika Srpska Assembly elections will resolve the current situation in which the entity de facto has two governments and two rival centers of power in Banja Luka and Pale.

In the run-up to Republika Srpska elections, the High Representative stepped into the RS increasingly nasty propaganda war and asked the NATO led Stabilization Force to take control of four transmitters which were broadcasting hate propaganda directed against the Dayton Peace Agreement and the International Community. The transmitters will be handed back on condition that the RS television is reformed and depoliticized which the Pale leaders have so far re-

fused to do.

Yet to be fully implemented are the results of Bosnia and Herzegovina Municipal elections held last September. Even though most of the municipal councils have been formed the establishment of multi-ethnic councils in some municipalities such as Serb-controlled Srebrenica and Croat-controlled Drvar continues to be blocked.

Despite intense efforts by the Office of the High Representative, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina has failed to agree on a number of key issues such as the Law on Citizenship, the uniform license plates for vehicles, the uniform passports, the common currency and the Bosnia and Herzegovina flag.

Speaking in Sarajevo just days before the Bonn Conference, Germany's Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, said the Bonn meeting would support the High Representative in imposing his own solutions.

In September, the International Community suffered a great loss when a UN helicopter carrying Deputy High Representative Gerd Wagner, Deputy International Police Commissioner, David Kriskovic, and 10 other international officials crashed in central Bosnia killing all 12 passengers.

RETURNS

During a brief visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia in mid November, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, pushed for greater openness to minority returns in meetings with the leaders of the two Entities. The High Commissioner made clear that blockages of minority returns had to be removed to achieve further progress in returns in general. Republika Srpska's President, Biljana Plavsic, told the High Commissioner she would welcome the return of Croats and Bosniaks to Banja Luka - Republika Srpska's largest city. Plavsic, however, also said a solution would have to be found for Serb refugees and internally displaced now living in someone else's housing. Ogata urged a greater international effort to construct housing saying that return should not cause new displacement.

In another promising development, the authorities of Central Bosnia Canton, working with UNHCR and the Office of the High Representative, prepared a detailed plan of return to and within the Federation Canton 6 -



UPDATE

the Central Bosnia Canton.

The plan, endorsed by the Federation President Vladimir Soljic and Vice President Ejup Ganic, could open the way to over 100 thousand minority returns in Central Bosnia. The plan will need the support of the newly reformed joint police force, the judicial system and a flexible inter-sectoral approach assistance, with a particular emphasis on job creation. The plan's initial stage envisages cross-ethnic returns to a number of villages which are damaged but virtually uninhabited.

Good news on the return front was marred by yet another brutal murder of a Croat returnee, in the village of Turbe, in Travnik municipality (Central Bosnia Canton), the fifth such unsolved case in the last 6 months. Police investigations are being conducted by

the joint Croat/Bosniak police in Travnik and closely monitored by IPTF.

Returns have proven sensitive in Martin Brod near Drvar, with 14 Serb families returning under the procedures agreed upon with the Croat authorities. The tension finally decreased after IPTF, strengthened by an agreement from the Federation, escorted in members of a multi ethnic police force to patrol the area under its supervision.

In Mostar, an agreement on the Procedures for Registration for Return in Canton 7 has not yet been reached despite a previous commitment for their implementation from President Tudjman. UNHCR is working to bring the parties together to finalize an agreement.

December 1997



REPATRIATION

Overall, the actual rate of repatriation in 1997 has not shown a pronounced peak during the summer months as had been forecast. While there has been a modest increase in numbers during July and August, what is noteworthy is the steadiness in the monthly numbers of repatriates from the beginning of March to the end of September. As the 'easy return cases', i.e. those whose homes are in majority areas, have dwindled over the year, those who remain in host countries are less concerned with choosing the optimal month for return than with their diminishing prospects if they remain where they are, counter balanced by uncertainties upon return. Studies published by the Danish Refugee Council and the University of Bern for the Swiss Government found that over 90 percent of those returning face unemployment.

The repatriation of 96 persons from the Czech Republic during September and October, represents the last organised group movement from that country where there are no remaining Bosnian refugees in need of a durable solution. Bosnian refugees still remaining in asylum countries are now mostly minorities and vulnerable groups who do not have any accommodation possibilities in BiH.

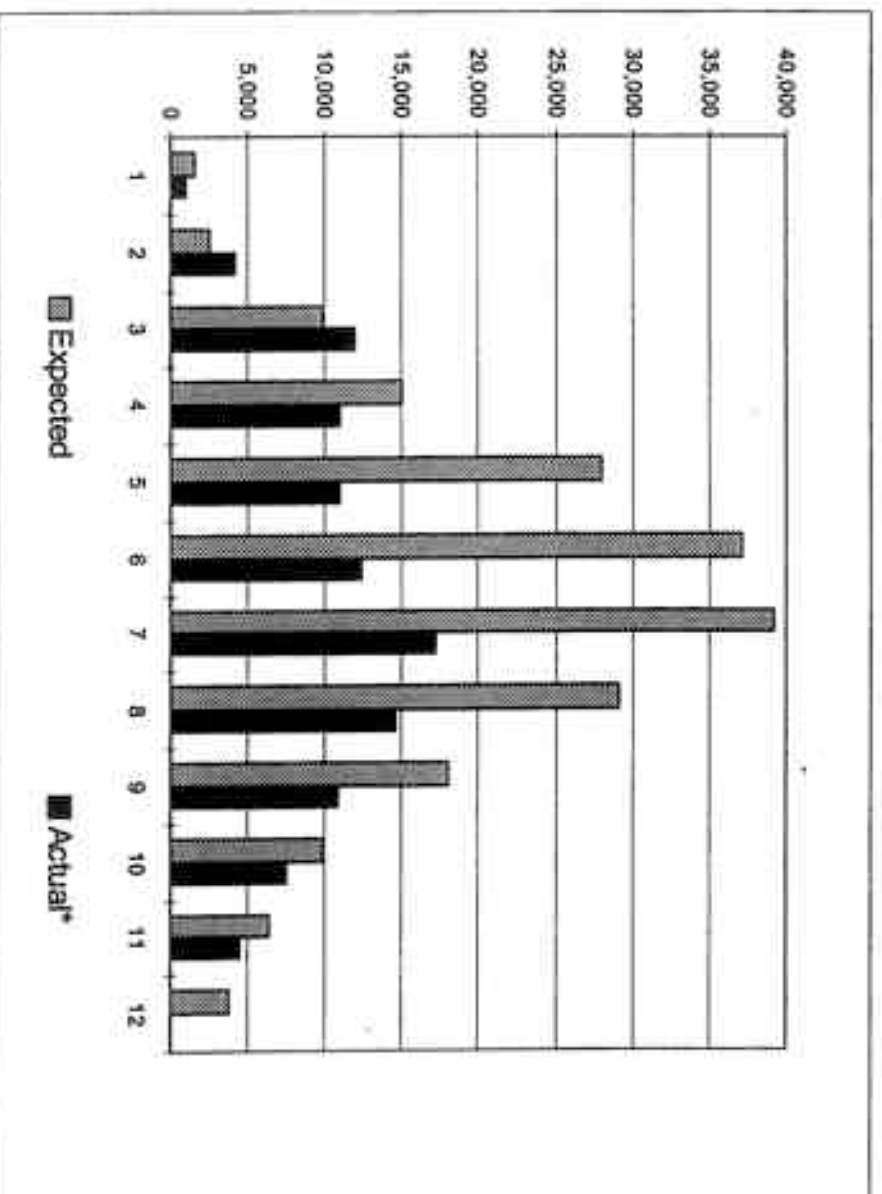
On 13 and 14 September, the much awaited municipal elections took place throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, giving refugees and displaced persons the chance to vote for authorities either in their municipality of origin or in their new place of residence. Now the challenge facing the authorities is the implementation of election results. If implemented, they could have a significant impact on minority returns, opening possibilities which have until now remained remote.

The creation of a Returns Programme by the Central Bosnia Canton is a welcome development. Although the process of translating an initial plan into a programme of action has been affected by delays, progress has been made. A Cantonal Coordinating Body has been established incorporating all relevant ministries in the detailed planning process and a series of steps to obtain political endorsement of the programme from the municipal, Cantonal and Federal levels has been initiated successfully. The operational plan is expected to be finalised in early November, with the implementation phase beginning in a modest manner this year, weather permitting, and is expected to gain momentum during the coming spring. This initiative represents an important window of opportunity for minority returns.

REPATRIATION

EXPECTED AND ESTIMATED ACTUAL PACE OF ORGANISED AND SPONTANEOUS REPATRIATION MOVEMENTS TO BIH IN 1997

Month	Expected	Actual*
January	4,500	900
February	2,500	4,100
March	9,300	11,900
April	15,000	37,300
May	23,000	10,900
June	30,000	12,300
July	39,200	37,200
August	29,000	14,600
September	18,000	10,800
October	9,800	7,500
November	6,300	4,200
December	3,800	
TOTAL	200,000	105,600



* Provisional estimate: 64,814 repatriated organised/assisted under UNHCR/IOM programmes

REPATRIATION

ORGANISED/ASSISTED REPATRIATION RETURNEE SUMMARY BY HOST COUNTRIES

(assisted repatriation represents some 60% of total refugee returns)

HOST COUNTRY	PERIOD		TOTAL
	01/01/96 - 31/12/96	01/01/97 - 30/11/97	
	Total	UNHCR ass.	UNHCR ass.
AUSTRALIA	54		54
AUSTRIA	3	1,601	1,604
BELGIUM	80	24	104
BULGARIA	49	8	57
CHINA	10,484		10,484
CYPRUS	7	6	13
CZECH REPUBLIC	289	186	475
DENMARK	732	291	1,023
EGYPT	9		9
FINLAND	52	15	67
FRANCE	174	6	180
FRY	773	188	961
GERMANY	1,162	346	1,508
GREECE	1,651	52,442	54,093
HUNGARY	3		3
IRELAND	227	5	232
ITALY	86	1	87
JORDAN	463	77	540
LECHTENSTEIN	48		48
MALAYSIA		24	24
MALTA	86		86
NETHERLANDS	2	2	4
NORWAY	114	4	118
PAKISTAN	844	448	1,292
PORTUGAL	24		24
SLOVAKIA	7		7
SLOVENIA	132	23	155
SPAIN	1,674	1,498	3,172
SWEDEN	16	3	19
SWITZERLAND	292	670	962
THAILAND	1,800	39,221	40,021
TUNISIA	6	1	7
TURKEY	6		6
UNITED KINGDOM	1,672	754	2,426
USA	230	271	501
	100	1	101
TOTAL	23,845	17,060	64,814
			2,261
			88,659

Note: some of the figures in 1996 have been adjusted.



BUFFER ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED BY UNHCR IN SARAJEVO

UNHCR's main mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to facilitate the return of refugees and displaced persons. The local capacity to absorb a large number of potential returnees remains a major challenge for the authorities and international organizations involved in the process. In most cases, the home of a potential returnee is either destroyed or occupied by a displaced person. To help the authorities in overcoming these obstacles, UNHCR has developed various shelter projects, targeting returnees and/or displaced persons occupying the homes of returnees.

Buffer Accommodation is one of UNHCR's projects aimed at providing shelter to those people returning to Sarajevo Canton whose homes are damaged or occupied and who are in need of short-term accommodation while they wait to re-enter their own homes.

So far, two buildings have been repaired for this purpose with the agreement of the owners (local companies) and put at UNHCR's disposal for a period of three years as from date of completion. Both buildings are located in the municipality of Ilijas and can accommodate up to 237 persons.

To apply for Buffer Accommodation, returnees should approach the respective municipal or Cantonal authorities, responsible for displaced persons and refugees. The main criteria for acceptance is that the potential user is an original inhabitant of Sarajevo Canton. Although priority is given to returnees, Buffer Accommodation can also be provided to persons displaced within the Sarajevo Canton whose homes are currently being repaired under one of the projects financed by the international community. A returnee/displaced person stays in the Buffer Accommodation until her/his home is repaired or the property right regained. It is expected that most families will stay between two and six months, after which a durable solution should have been found for them by the authorities. The period during which people may stay in the accommodation is restricted, as the Cantonal authorities want to avoid the possibility of the Buffer Accommodation turning into a Collective Centre.

Unlike the residents of Transit or Collective Centres, Buffer Accommodation beneficiaries are not catered for as they are expected to lead autonomous lives. If necessary, UNHCR will distribute non-food items (e.g. bed, mattress, stove, kitchen set, blankets) to these beneficiaries when they move into the Accommodation.

The project has received generous financial support from the European Commission (ECHO) and was implemented by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA).

This existing buffer accommodation does not meet the needs of all persons falling within the described categories. UNHCR is planning to create additional Buffer Accommodation in consultation with the local authorities.

Supporting "Open Cities"

The UNHCR "Open Cities" initiative aims to encourage cities or municipalities to come forward and declare their willingness to allow minority groups to return to their former homes. Once this willingness has been demonstrated with actual returns, the community will, it is hoped, receive rapid international assistance.

The initiative has been warmly welcomed by the international community, which is actively supporting the programme. UNHCR particularly welcomes the early support of the U.S. Government which has contributed an initial bilateral donation of US\$ 5 million to the Open City support to assist some 10 municipalities. Subsequently the U.S. Government granted a substantial contribution directly to UNHCR's "Open Cities" initiative, followed by a contribution from the Government of Japan.

Those communities who "volunteer" for the programme will need to show genuine commitment by meeting some basic criteria which include:

- Genuine and consistent political will demonstrated by local authorities
- Confirmation that minority returns are occurring or will take place without any abuses of those minorities.
- Confirmation that local authorities are genuinely committed to consistent and equal support for all members of the population for which they are responsible. This should include
 - a demonstrated willingness by local authorities and the existing community to reintegrate minorities into the normal life of the community;
 - equal rights and opportunities for employment, education and appointment to public office;
 - freedom of movement which remains a fundamental pre-requisite for viable minority returns; assessment visits by minorities will be encouraged and
 - respect for human rights, to be monitored carefully by international organisations
- Confirmation that these human rights criteria have been applied to minorities who remained in the community or who returned earlier.
- Due recognition of the relative numbers of minority returnees in relation to the size and location of the communities to which they will return.
- The demonstrated impartiality and involvement of local police, in cooperation with IPTF as needed, in ensuring that security, law and order prevail for all. The integration of returnees into the local police force is to be encouraged.
- A positive use of the media to prepare the resident community for the return of minorities, to invite minorities to return and to promote reconciliation. Inflammatory statements must be banned.

It is hoped that the lists of potential and recognized "Open Cities" will grow over time, as communities and their leaders see the positive results which follow the reintegration of minority groups.

The selection process and the application of the criteria will be simple, field-level procedures involving all players interested in Open Cities, including national authorities. Equally, the implementation of assistance projects, once it is agreed that criteria have been met, will be rapid, community-based and designed to be handed over to the local authorities. Assistance should be incremental in accordance with progress, and flexible enough to meet specific community needs.

OPEN CITIES PROGRESS

RECOGNIZED OPEN CITIES

Konjic municipality, Neretva Canton

(Recognized 1 July)

Various steps have been taken to prepare for returns of former residents to Glavatičevo and Bijela, which in the case of the latter village led to the return of 15 Bosnian Croat families in October. In addition, the Konjic authorities agreed to support the return to the municipality of eight Bosnian Serbs currently living in collective centres in Visegrad (RS). While four of the houses of this group could be made available for immediate return, the other houses remain occupied by displaced families. The Konjic authorities indicated their willingness to find alternative accommodation for the latter if the Serb families in Visegrad did indeed agree on a definite return date. If this return takes place, it may have a snowball effect leading to further Serb returns to the area in view of the interest expressed in this regard by some 200 Serb displaced persons from Konjic currently residing in RS.

The Joint Shelter Task Force Eligibility Committee met on 26 September and 8 October 1997 to review the applications for house repairs for consideration under the UNHCR shelter programme implemented by PTU and UMCOR. Guided by the principles of the Open City Initiative, priority is given to repairs which will facilitate the return of minorities. UMCOR has approved and completed repairs to 53 private houses while PTU has completed repairs to 84 apartments with works ongoing on 76 approved apartments. In addition, PTU repairs for 59 houses have been approved. The first phase of the reconstruction programme of UNHCR's implementing partners as well as of CRS, DRC and IRC were nearing completion by end October, which will permit further returns to take place in November.

The Open City Working Group which met on 8 October, continued to review the cases of the 37 persons who are occupying other persons' apartments in the city although their own homes have been repaired. Despite some actions by the local authorities to put an end to these cases of double occupancy, the situation has not yet been resolved. Once the municipal election results have been implemented, the local Working Group will be following up this issue more vigorously with the authorities.

Several meetings were held to coordinate the activities of all NGOs working under the umbrella of UNHCR in this municipality. Some initial difficulties in accessing information on all agency projects were overcome, allowing the creation of a comprehensive databank recording all beneficiaries included in reconstruction projects and another recording all realised and ongoing projects. The databanks will be updated on a monthly basis.

OPEN CITIES PROGRESS

Busovaca municipality, Central Bosnia Canton

(Recognized 2 July)

The creation on 1 September of Cantonal police force, comprising Bosniak and Croat members, provides an important boost to security for minority returns. Continued progress has been made on returns to this municipality with the latest figures indicating that almost 200 persons have returned to their former residence in Busovaca. Reconstruction works under the UNHCR shelter programme are ongoing for 40 houses in Busovaca. In addition, CRS, funded by the US Open Cities Support programme has been repairing 30 homes and is working on the establishment of a Savings and Loan Association. Both the UNHCR and CRS reconstruction programmes have equal numbers of Bosniak and Croat beneficiaries.

In September, the Cantonal Government launched the Programme for the Return of all Refugees and Displaced Persons to the Canton. Under the first phase of this programme, returns to empty homes are foreseen in all 11 municipalities of the Canton. In the case of Busovaca, the potential return of 123 families to 12 villages has been targeted. At the end of the month, a Coordinating Body was established at the Cantonal level to prepare operational procedures and coordinate implementation of the Programme. The Coordinating Body involves the Ministries of Reconstruction, Planning, Interior and is chaired by the Ministry of Labour, Social Policy and Refugees. This initiative, whose inception has been aided by the positive experience in Busovaca, is expected to bolster the return process in Busovaca and may lead to an expansion of the Open City concept to all municipalities of the Canton.

Vogosca municipality, Sarajevo Canton

(Recognized 3 July)

UNHCR remains committed to assisting the Vogosca population. However, UNHCR has realized that return to Vogosca of the pre-war resident population is currently limited by a number of constraints which generally affect Sarajevo Canton. These include difficulties in allocating socially-owned apartments due to existing property legislation, the large number of displaced persons unable to return to RS or unwilling to return to their pre-war address and who are occupying the apartments of potential returnees as well as many demographic changes in family situations (eg marriages and divorces) which have led to the occupation of additional living space. The support of the municipal and Cantonal authorities for overcoming these obstacles has not been demonstrated in an unequivocal manner, hence, UNHCR has modified its approach in implementing the Open Cities Initiative in this municipality. One project that was due to start in September was put on hold until the authorities assist the reinstatement of six families to their homes, whose cases remain unresolved for several months. UNHCR wrote to the mayor of Vogosca municipality to express disappointment at the slow progress to reinstate minorities who have applied to return. The municipal authorities were notified that UNHCR is reconsidering its status as an Open City. A local NGO has been assessing the psycho-social needs of the Srebrenica women in Vogosca with a view to identifying how to best address the needs of this vulnerable group which is presently preventing minority returns to the municipality.

OPEN CITIES PROGRESS

Bihac municipality, Una Sana Canton

(Recognized 21 August)

Following the Interim Municipal Assembly's twin decisions on 8 August to proclaim Bihac as an Open City and establish a Commission to prepare and monitor the implementation of a return programme, together with prior support by the local authorities for the return process, Bihac was officially recognized as an Open City by UNHCR on 21 August. Subsequently, follow up meetings have been held at which the villages of Zlopoljac, Jasika and Jankovac were agreed as return destinations for the first phase.

In September, the representatives of the US Government and CRS met with the authorities to discuss support for the municipality in the context of the Open City Initiative. During the meetings, the authorities pointed out improvements in security through the enhanced collaboration of local police with IPTF in joint investigation teams, which should increase confidence for minority returns. The international monitors expressed concern regarding constraints on the independence of the local media. The Mayor signed an agreement with the US Embassy and CRS which provided for the creation of a technical working group to implement the CRS project. The group comprises two members of the Commission, an engineer of the municipality and a representative of Serb displaced persons. UNHCR is an observer in this working group. During the visit, the CRS project identification team discussed various potential project activities. It was decided to place priority on the repair of sanitation facilities and (re)construction of private houses. A list of all minority returnees and their houses was compiled and submitted to UNHCR.

A number of promotional activities were undertaken to inform the general public on the Open City Initiative and support the return process. The RS independent media was invited for a briefing on the Bihac Open City programme by UNHCR which generated great interest among the RS media participants. As a result, a further meeting was organised by UNHCR in Bihac, between independent media in Banja Luka and the Bihac authorities, in the presence of Bihac media. At the meeting, the authorities committed themselves to preventing possible incidents and facilitating returns. A decision to establish a UNHCR bus line between Banja Luka and Bihac was also made.

Gorazde municipality, Gorazde Canton

(Recognized 19 November)

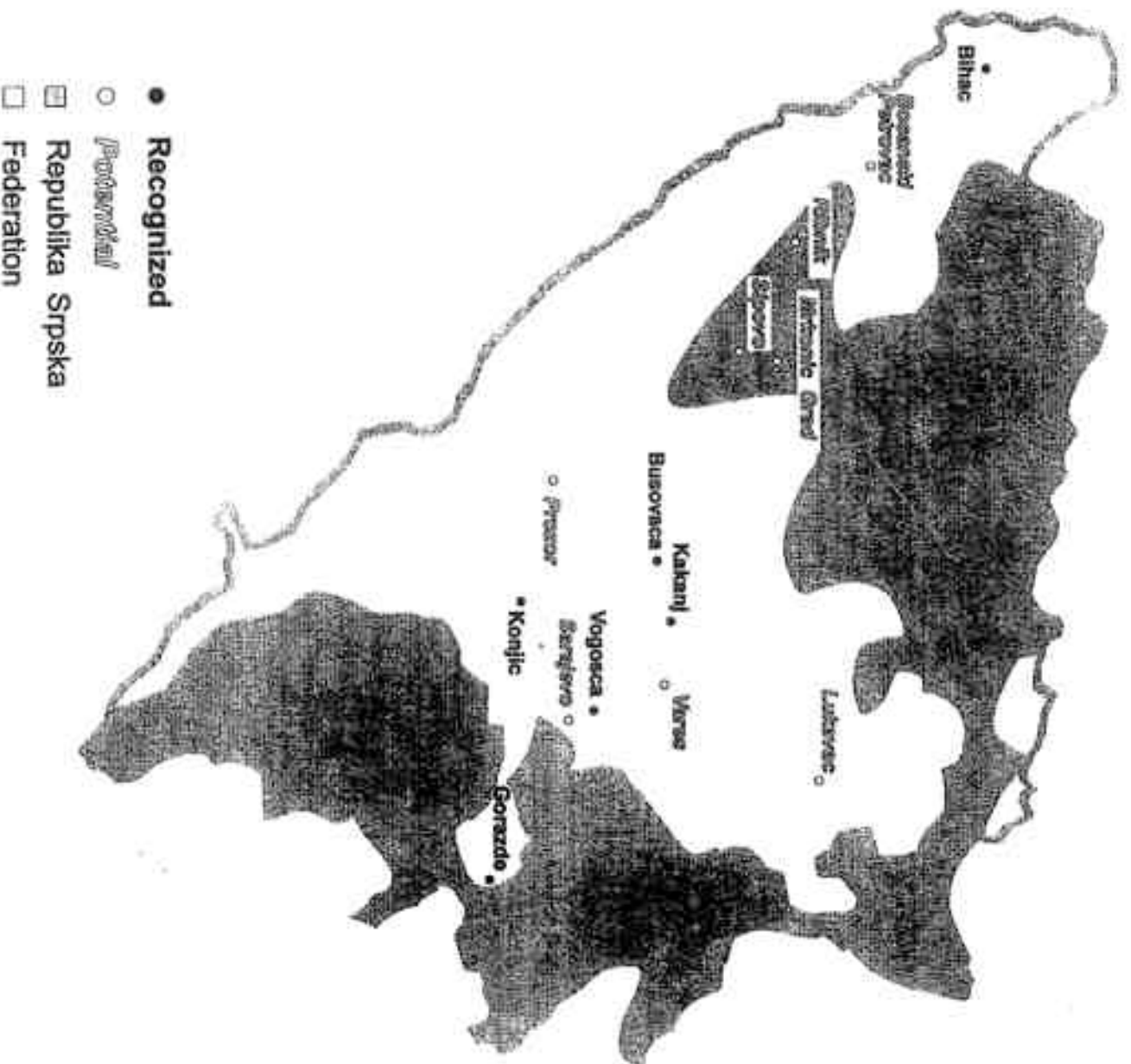
The Gorazde municipality earned the Open City status in November, following the authorities explicit commitment to allow the return of minority Serbs and Croats. About a dozen Bosnian Serbs have already returned. Gorazde -- a former besieged enclave much tried during the war time, has a particularly difficult geographic position being linked with the Federation by a narrow mountainous corridor.

Kakanj municipality, Zenica-Doboj Canton

(Recognized 28 November)

The municipal authorities have displayed a sustained positive attitude towards the return of Bosnian Croats which is occurring at a small rate. Following the violent destruction of two houses that had just been repaired for returning Bosnian Croats, by unknown persons in late August, the authorities publicly condemned this act of violence through various media channels. Their stated commitment to apprehend the perpetrators and to ensure that the incident does not hinder returns was supported by a police investigation and increased police patrols. The affected houses were rebuilt and at UNHCR's instigation, the local authorities agreed to meet the Bosnian Croat owners from Kakanj currently in Capljina in late October. During the meeting, the municipal authorities reiterated their commitment to accept minority returns. As a consequence, UNHCR decided to formally confirm and recognize Kakanj as an Open City.

RECOGNIZED AND POTENTIAL OPEN CITIES



30 November 1997



UNHCR

FUNDING TO THE 1997 UN CONSOLIDATED/INTER-AGENCY APPEAL FOR THE REGION

UPDATED FINANCIAL SUMMARY - BY APPEALING AGENCY AS OF 31 OCTOBER 1997

Appealing Agency	Requirements (Jan-Dec 97) (US\$)	Revised Requirements (US\$)	Contributions / Pledges (US\$)	Carryover Funds (US\$)	Total Funds Available (US\$)	Shortfall (Surplus) (US\$)	% Needs Covered (%)
UNHCR	235,864,950	235,864,950	144,818,578	33,200,000	178,018,578	57,846,374	75.5 %
WFP	127,460,908	80,866,590	19,408,280	43,862,929	83,081,219	17,805,971	78.0 %
UNICEF	18,859,700	18,859,700	2,646,814	8,172,257	10,818,871	8,040,829	57.4 %
WHO	19,800,000	19,800,000	3,013,553	5,047,020	8,061,473	11,538,527	41.1 %
FAO	8,000,000	7,017,000	157,000		157,000	8,860,000	2.2 %
UNDP	16,000,000	16,000,000	11,508,550		11,508,550	3,491,450	76.7 %
UNESCO	16,580,000	14,529,000	1,746,008		1,746,008	12,863,984	12.2 %
ILO	21,134,200	3,273,800				3,273,800	0.0 %
UNV	1,512,500	712,800	300,000		300,000	412,500	42.1 %
UNHCHR	2,500,000	2,500,000	600,000	190,515	796,515	1,703,485	31.9 %
UNFPA		1,886,800	370,414		370,414	1,286,186	22.2 %
ROM	25,648,404	20,928,784	5,181,000	1,341,390	8,522,380	14,406,404	31.2 %
OHA	324,000	196,000		33,000	33,000	162,000	16.9 %
UNMAC	62,200,000	23,000,000	7,000,000		7,000,000	16,000,000	30.4 %
Total	554,682,862	443,813,734	198,748,003	81,644,011	288,393,014	155,428,729	65.0 %



CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNHCR PROGRAMME (Former Yugoslavia)

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNHCR's PROGRAMME IN THE REGION

as of 8 December 1997

Australia \$763,359			
Denmark \$3,091,190	United Kingdom \$5,705,912	Canada \$2,167,883	
			Espana con ACNUR \$179,856
Finland \$731,355	United Kingdom for UNHCR \$17,008	Netherlands \$7,731,959	USA \$44,000,000
Japan \$33,570,000	Norway \$2,297,090	Switzerland \$1,379,310	
Germany \$2,647,064	Private donors USA \$82,709		
			EC  \$36,198,608
France \$342,466	Cyprus \$3,000	Sweden \$3,947,368	
	Holy See \$80,000		
		TOTAL \$144,936,137	

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

GARP- Government Assisted Repatriation Programme

With GARP, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany aims to facilitate the reintegration of Bosnian returnees into their communities. The programme provides refugees, who have decided to return to Bosnia and Herzegovina voluntarily, with a one-time financial assistance package. GARP is administered by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on behalf of the German Government and its Federal States. The Federal States decide individually whether or not to participate. Presently all sixteen Federal States participate in the programme.

GARP is funded equally by the German Government and the Federal States, each carrying 50% of the cost. The defining overall criterion for eligibility in the programme is that the applicant must have been a social welfare recipient during his/her time as a refugee in Germany. Applicants whose earnings did not exceed the equivalent of social welfare entitlements may also be considered. Each Federal State, however, decides individually on the criteria that define a candidate as eligible for GARP.

GARP provides a one-time payment of 450 DM per adult and 225 DM per child paid on arrival in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The maximum amount paid to any one family cannot exceed 1,350 DM. Payments are made through IOM offices in Sarajevo, Bihac and in Tuzla.

Besides the GARP payment, some Federal States offer a one-time additional payment.

GARP is an adjunct to the REAG/GARP programme (see note below). Refugees applying for voluntary return under REAG, complete an application form, which includes an application for the GARP assistance. If the applicant is accepted, IOM Bonn issues him/her the original payment order, which specifies the amounts to which the applicant for GARP is entitled and, if the case, for 'Starthilfe'. On presentation of this original payment order, together with their passport or travel certificate, at either IOM Sarajevo, Bihac or Tuzla the applicants will be paid out their entitlements. The payment office is designated prior to leaving Germany, on the original payment order and becomes, once stated on the approval obligatory.

Please note: Once the returnee is in Bosnia and Herzegovina, he/she can generally not be retroactively included in GARP.

The returnee has to apply for REAG/GARP assistance in Germany, before leaving the country. GARP will only be disbursed if the returnee can produce an original IOM payment order. The document has to be stamped and individuated as an authentic document by the authority, through which the returnee directed his/her initial application for REAG/GARP.

Applications for the REAG/GARP Programme may be made only in Germany and through a responsible local or regional authority, a voluntary Welfare Organisation, or through UNHCR. Applications must be submitted to IOM Bonn by one of the agencies mentioned above and not by the individual returnee. With the application the returnee has also to decide in which of the presently three IOM GARP payment offices the returnee wishes to receive his/her entitlements.

For further information please contact the following IOM Offices:

IOM SARAJEVO: Vilsonovo Setaliste 10; 71000 Sarajevo; Tel: (00387- 71) 651 829, 656 436

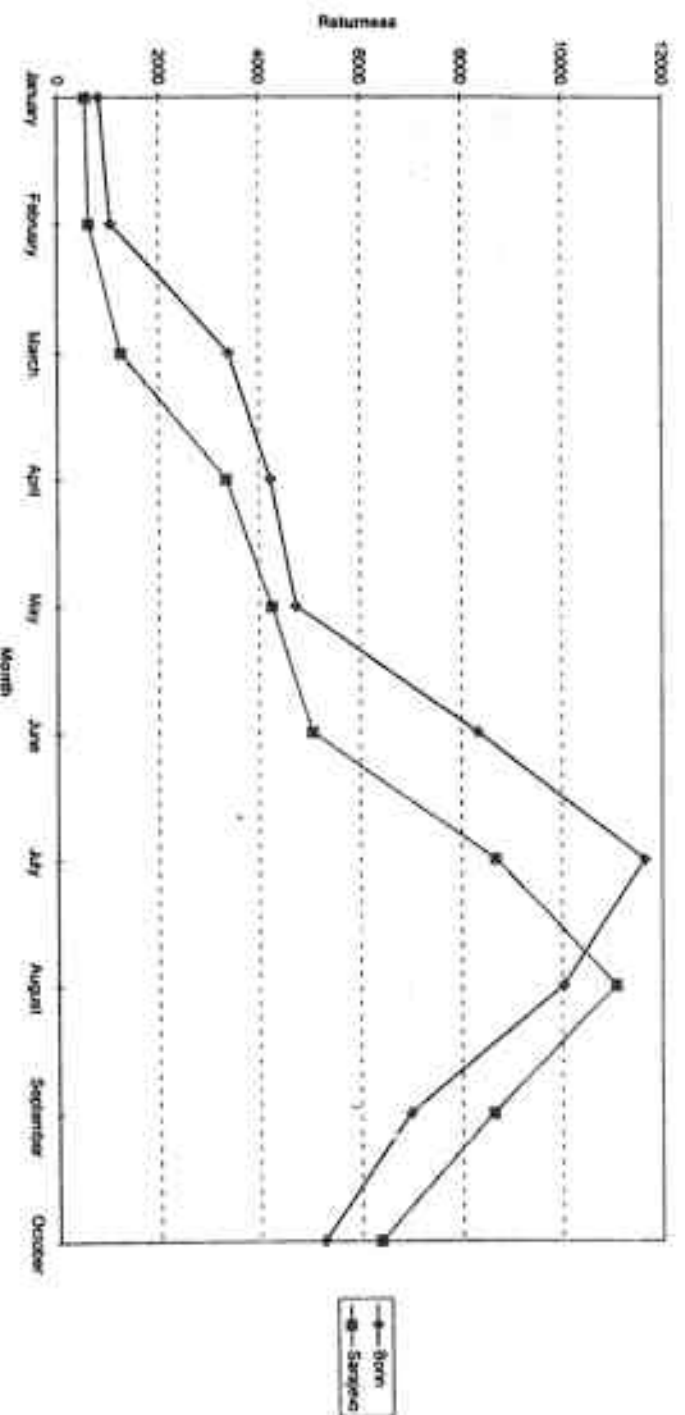
IOM BIHAC: Dr. Sime Milosevica 1; 77 000 Bihac; Tel: (00387- 77) 33 10 37

IOM TUZLA: Dorda Mihajlovica 2 Jugovica bb; 75000 Tuzla; Tel: (00387 - 75) 252440

The REAG (Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum-Seekers in Germany) programme is designed to support the voluntary return of Bosnian refugees to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The programme covers the costs of the return by either plane, train, bus or private vehicle. It additionally provides a payment of 150 DM per adult and 75 DM per child to cover out-of-pocket expenses en route.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

APPROVED AND RETURNED GARP APPLICANTS Time period 31/01/1997 - 31/10/1997



Series 1 - Bonn approved GARP Applicants

Series 2 - Sarajevo processed GARP Returnees



STRENGTHENING PEACE THROUGH HEALTH

During the war, WHO discreetly brought together health professionals from all sides to discuss public health measures and to protect civilian populations from further suffering. In the post-war period, WHO has continued to carry out such efforts, address mutual health concerns and to develop unique program to strengthen the peace process.

Through its field offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, WHO Bosnia and Herzegovina has managed to increase the role of the health sector in the reconciliation and peace processes. While dealing with apolitical health issues and searching for satisfactory solutions to common problems, the health field is proving to be one of the most progressive sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of reconciliation.

WHO now has six field offices representing geographical areas of responsibility, regardless of ethnic and political boundaries. While this initially met resistance, WHO now has people in Travnik seeking advice from the Banja Luka office, professionals from Trebinje referring to Mostar, and the health needs of the Bjeljina region being coordinated by the field office in Tuzla. The day-to-day negotiations, facilitation of contacts, and joint activities in the community are the foundations for peace.

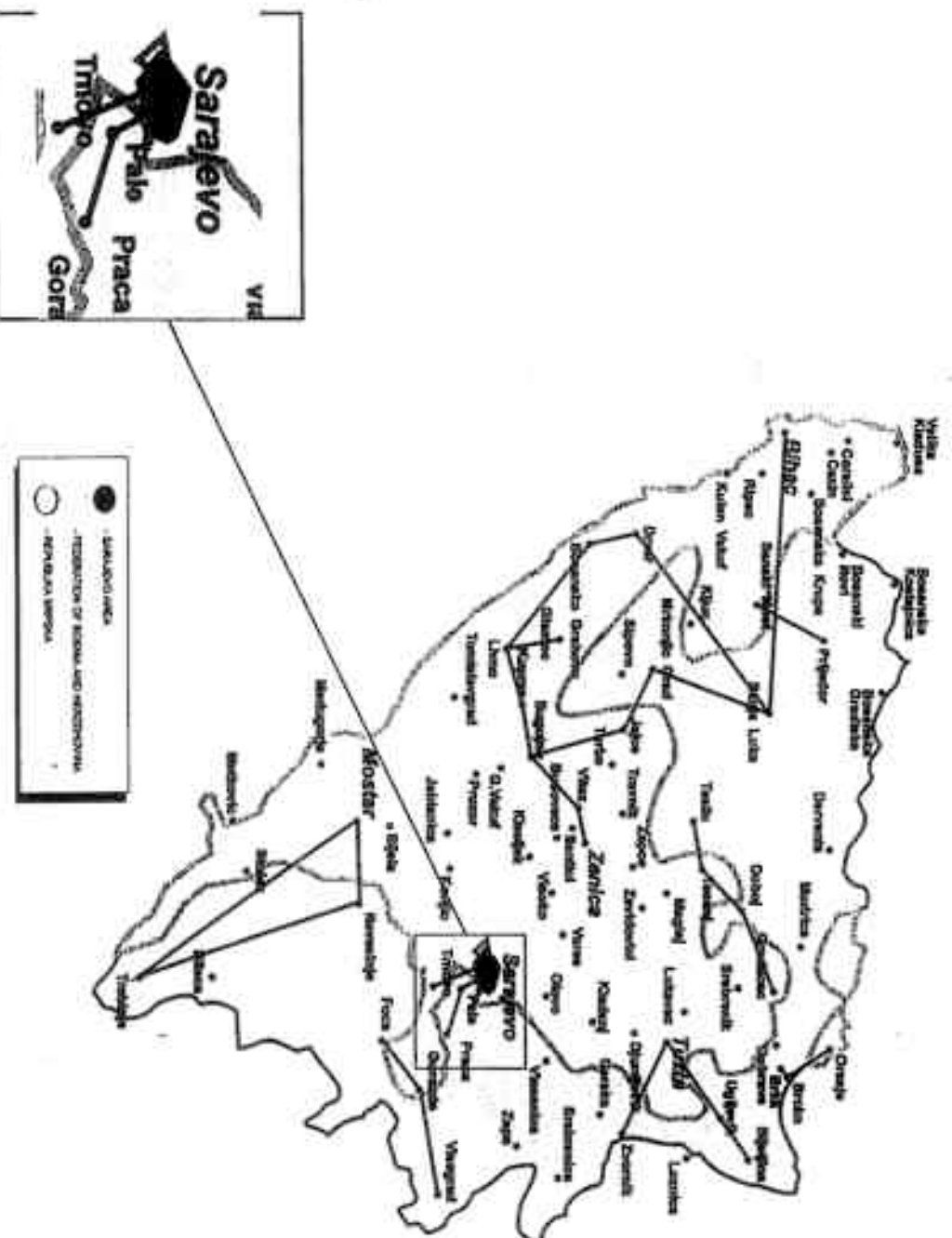
WHO has worked hard to enlist the support of the local health authorities at every level. Now with the support of the authorities, health professionals have become less hesitant to meet and participate in joint activities. Building bridges between people has taken time, effort and patience. However, WHO has been working for nearly five years in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a neutral filter for health data, as an umbrella for open discussions on health issues, and as a link between health authorities at the local, national, and international levels.

Health messages and information are very much needed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Apolitical issues such as health have become ideal vehicles for combating underlying issues of discrimination and polarization which have become entrenched through war and continue to impede security and stability. The capacity building needs of both entities are also nearly identical and joint training activities as well as education of health professionals have brought together health professionals to improve their skills. These have proved successful vehicles for reconciliation.

However, health should not be limited to medical services. An emphasis on multisectoral approaches will provide communities with skills and resources to enable them to improve and increase control over their citizen's health. Peace through health is dependent upon the efforts of many agencies and organizations. WHO is continually seeking partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina and across the globe to discuss how health can strengthen peace, to share experiences, and to develop new initiatives in this field.

For more information, please contact: Gregory Hess, World Health Organization, c/o Public Health Institute, Marsala Tita 9, 71000 Sarajevo Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UNHCR BUS LINES



In order to facilitate freedom of movement across the Inter Entity Boundary Line (IEBL), build confidence among the population on both sides of the IEBL and promote minority returns, UNHCR and its implementing partner the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have established 9 bus and 3 minibus lines (for test runs) across the IEBL. In addition, UNHCR's implementing partner Bosanski Humanitarni Logisticki Servis (BHL'S) has taken over the bus lines across the IEBL previously operated by DRC in the area of UNHCR's Field Office in Eastern BiH, specifically across both sides of Sarajevo.

Despite some minor incidents, the bus lines are a great success. At the beginning of November, over 460 000 passengers (44% male and 56% female) had been transported across the IEBL by the UNHCR "white buses", as they are

known. It is also an ongoing process, expanding with increasing demand: the latest bus line was established between Banja Luka and Bihac on 4 November 1997.

These bus lines have proven to be a crucial factor in building up confidence in areas where they are operational as well as a significant way to exchange information between people from both Entities or to travel to visit their friends and relatives living across the IEBL.

UNHCR bus lines continue to receive generous financial support from the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO).

Ultimately, UNHCR hopes that the bus lines will become commercialized through private local contractors.

UNHCR MINE ACTION STRATEGY

The presence of mines in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be a major obstacle to the safe return of refugees and Displaced Persons. Injuries and deaths from mine accidents occur at the rate of 50 to 80 per month, some 20% of whom are children. Neither UNHCR, nor any other International Organization working to facilitate return, can prevent people voluntarily returning to mined areas. Nevertheless, UNHCR adopts the fundamental principle that the risk from mines must be considered, and appropriate action taken, if return operations it facilitates.

On 22 October 1997, the UNHCR published its new policy and strategy on de-mining. UNHCR is to work with the UN Mine Action Centre (UNMAC) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to create its own de-mining capability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The plan is to recruit, equip and train local people from each ethnic group to form the UNHCR de-mining force. Six de-mining teams, each consisting of 35 de-miners and 4 support staff, will be operational for the de-mining season in 1998. Each team will have the resources and skills to conduct surveys, mark mined areas, instruct returnees and local inhabitants on the risks, and remove other unexploded devices such as artillery shells.

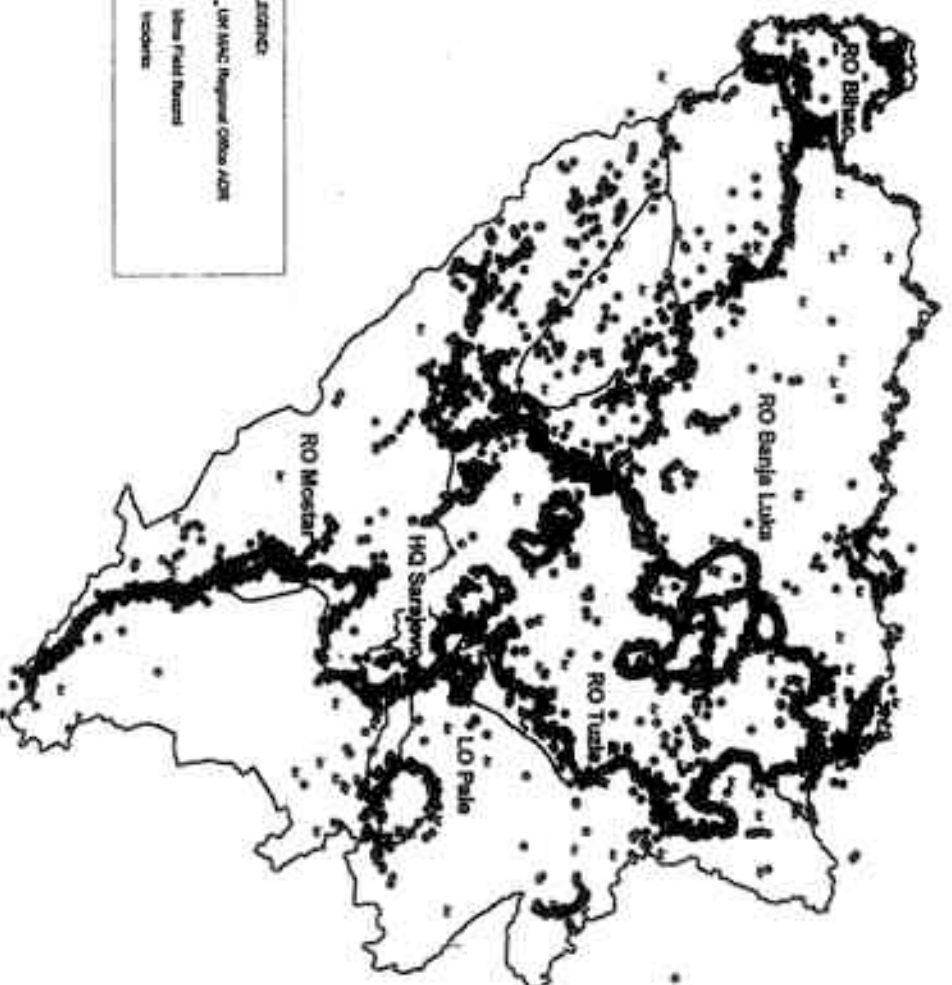
UNHCR will also work with the World Explosive Ordnance Disposal Foundation in its parallel initiative to create women's de-mining teams. The women are expected to work initially on survey and mine-marking as well as "mines awareness" programmes, but will hopefully progress to actual de-mining activities. They will have a focus on humanitarian de-mining to facilitate "safe" return.

All UNHCR facilitated return projects embarked upon from now on, will have a "mine plan". The UNHCR mine policy includes detailed procedures for the drawing up of such plans.

UNHCR has recruited a consultant with special skills and experience in humanitarian de-mining to plan and implement the strategy and procurement of the necessary equipment is already in progress.

MINE RISK ASSESSMENT

MINE CONTAMINATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

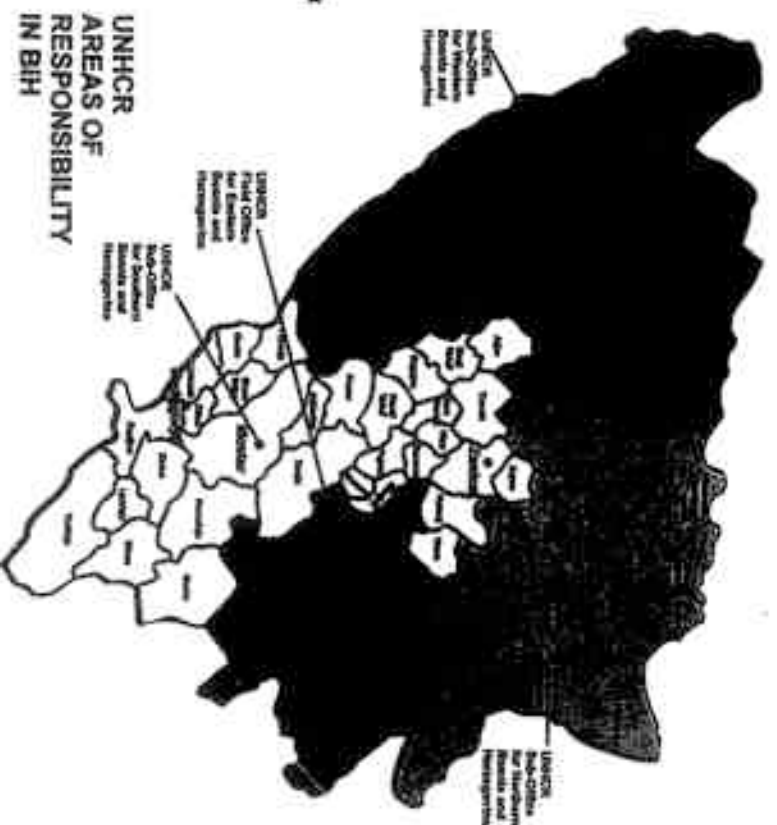


As of August 1997
Prepared & Revised by UN HMC, Sarajevo



CURRENT SHELTER PROJECTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SEA: Scottish European Aid
 SRSA: Swedish Rescue Services Agency
 UNACOR: United Methodist Committee on Relief
 WVB: WorldVision-Bosnia
 PILU: Project Implementation Unit
 THW: Technisches Hilfswerk
 GTZ: Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit



1997 UNHCR Shelter Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina Current Allocations per AOR (housing units) as of September 1997

	WESTERN BH		EASTERN BH		NORTHERN BH		SOUTHERN BH		TOTAL
	Federation Usta-Sana West Bosnia	RS Western RS Avni	Federation Sarajevo Gorazde	RS Eastern RS	Federation Tuzla Doboj Posavina	RS North-East RS	Federation Neretva Cent. Bosnia Zenica W. Herzog.	RS E. Herzog.	
THW	667	133					400		1,200
SRSA	1,000		600(*)						1,600
UNACOR	170	130			523	100	850		1,773
SEA					580	1,000			1,580
GTZ					300				300
PILU							350		483
WVB			1,000						1,000
Sub-total	1,837	263	1,743		1,403	1,100	1,800	0	7,946
TOTAL	2,100		1,743		2,503		1,600		7,946

Note: Housing unit allocation among areas is indicative, and project resources may be re-deployed between AORs, depending upon actual repatriation movements. (*) Includes 150 buffer accommodation units.



The 1997 UNHCR Shelter Programme is currently being implemented in some 78 municipalities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is expected to result in the rehabilitation of 7,950 housing units, benefiting some 35,700 persons.

UNHCR implementing partners include the Technisches Hilfswerk (THW), the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA), the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), the Mercy Corps/Scottish European Aid, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the Project Implementation Unit of the Federation Ministry for Physical Planning and Environment (PTU), and World Vision Bosnia (WVB).

Shelter assistance is provided through direct deliveries of construction materials such as roof tiles, timber, blocks, bricks, cement, windows, doors, sanitary, plumbing and electrical equipment. Whenever required, labor assistance is provided as well. All shelter materials are being produced and procured locally or, when not available, are being imported through Bosnian owned companies, as an additional input to the local economy. Moreover, most implementing partners are operating simultaneously in both Entities, and cross-Entity trading is encouraged.

Shelter projects are being implemented in priority areas which are facing significant repatriation and return movements (i.e. the 15 identified Target Areas for Return), as well as in municipalities which are receptive to minority returns (e.g. the Open Cities). The Zone of Separation is also an area of particular interest for UNHCR, since it combines housing capacity, repatriation and return movements, as well as opportunities for minority returns. Joint Shelter and Repatriation Task Forces have been established in the five UNHCR regional offices in Banja Luka, Bihac, Mostar, Sarajevo and Tuzla, for the selection of beneficiaries. The International Management Group (IMG) is providing its technical expertise in cooperating with UNHCR on the damage assessment of the housing units. To promote the sustainability of the returnee communities, the rehabilitation of social infrastructure, such as schools and health facilities, is being undertaken in parallel with housing.

In order to ensure a smooth reception of the refugees repatriating to Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNHCR has facilitated the establishment of transit centers which offer overnight accommodation and food to repatriates, before they move to their home of origin or join relatives or friends. In 1997, UNHCR has entered into a new agreement with the Federation Ministry, for the maintenance and running of the existing transit centers, as well as for the rehabilitation of four additional transit centers, to be located in the Una-Sana canton (Bosanski Petrovac), Sarajevo, Travnik (Nova Bila) and Gorazde.

Despite the closure of most collective centers since Dayton, there were still 131 collective centers operating by the end of September 1997, accommodating some 13,867 persons.

The total financial resources that have been committed so far by UNHCR to implement shelter related activities amount to USD 53.4 million, out of which some USD 49.1 million are being allocated for housing, USD 1.9 million for the repair of social infrastructure, USD 0.9 million for the maintenance and rehabilitation of transit centers and USD 1.5 million for the maintenance of collective centers. UNHCR is grateful for the special contributions received for its shelter program from a number donors, including the European Commission and the Governments of Japan, USA, Canada, UK, Norway and Australia.

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UNHCR OFFICES IN THE REGION



 UNHCR Branch/Head Office

 UNHCR Sub-Office

 UNHCR Field Office

 Eastern Slavonia

As we are approaching Ribnik, we can see the white school building up on the gently sloping hillside, glistening in the clear autumn sunshine. It is nicely situated, overlooking a green valley amid the mountains. The location is pristine and the building brand new. Our spontaneous reaction is that this must be one of the nicest schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina. ..

We have made it in time for the inauguration of this new school. The reconstruction work has been carried out by the German governmental organization THW (Technisches Hilfswerk) and funded by UNHCR from a European Commission contribution. A delegation of representatives of the local authorities is waiting on the grassy lawn, together with contractors, workers, personnel of the school and local media.

We are in Ribnik, the part of Ključ municipality situated in Republika Srpska, on the Serbian side of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line running through Bosnia and Herzegovina: an area extensively damaged during the war where UNHCR is now supporting the reconstruction of three schools and two ambulanta (first aid medical dispensary).

The inauguration begins with a blessing ceremony conducted by the local Orthodox priest, Father Petar. He is a man in his late fifties, of imposing stature, with a long black beard and an air of authority. But his friendly eyes and his pleasant smile somehow make him look younger.

After the ceremony, I exchange a few words with Father Petar. When we met earlier, I had jokingly asked him if Protestants like me would be allowed to attend his ceremonies. With a broad smile, he had answered that we all worship the same God, and that anyone of any faith is welcome to attend his church services.

Now he wants to tell me more. He explains me that he is the only Orthodox priest who has returned to Ribnik - he has spent almost a year as a refugee in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. "When I re-

turned, I immediately went to Ključ [on the Federation side] to meet the Imam, my Muslim colleague. We had not seen each other for years. We fell into each other's arms and cried. I wondered where his family was. He told me in Zagreb. He then asked me the same question, I answered in Novi Sad [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]... We both share the same fate - the fate of refugees."

Father Petar insisted he now meets with his friend the Imam regularly, to have coffee and discuss matters of common interest. "You see, it does not matter whether you make the sign of the cross with three or five fingers, or whether you worship the Muslim way. We are all children of the same God."

Later the same day, Father Petar conducted the blessing ceremony of the inauguration of the ambulanta in Drinic - another part of Ribnik municipality. He made a short but impassioned sermon to the assembled dignitaries, contractors and workers, urging all refugees to return to Ribnik and the international community to help them to rebuild their houses. Then he raised his voice: "I also want all destroyed and damaged churches to be repaired - and all destroyed mosques to be rebuilt as well!" At this point there was a strong response from the assembly, the workers shouting approvingly: "Yes, yes!"

This remarkable man preaches love and forgiveness amongst his people. He also appears to be extremely popular and easily accessible. The workers at the inauguration ceremony spoke very fondly of their 'Father Petar'.

What Bosnia and Herzegovina now needs is more people like Father Petar to preach love and togetherness, and fewer leaders who still continue to spread the poisonous gospel of hatred and separation.

by Mans Nyberg,
UNHCR Banja Luka

The fall months saw a number of encouraging political decisions from the Croatian Government, aimed at facilitating the peaceful reintegration of the UN-administered Eastern Slavonia and the two-way return process - Croats back to Eastern Slavonia and Croatian Serb displaced persons and refugees back to their former homes elsewhere in Croatia. On 2 October, the Government of Croatia adopted a "Program on the Establishment of Trust, Accelerated Return of Displaced Persons and Normalization of Life in War-Ravaged Areas of Croatia", with the regional implementation by "Committees", including two regional committees already operational in Vukovar and Beli Manastir. The main task of these ethnically-mixed committees is to promote conditions for a speedier two-way return, and to demonstrate that "co-existence is possible even without international supervision", as the Croat Vice-President of the Vukovar Committee said.

To date, 5,000 displaced Croats have returned permanently to Eastern Slavonia. The Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees (ODPR) also announced that 20,000 Croat displaced persons will be able to return to the region by the end of the year, out of a total of seventy-two thousand who have indicated their wish to do so. In the meantime, around 10,000 Croatian Serbs have left the region and returned to their pre-war homes in other parts of Croatia.

The Joint Working Group for Two-way Returns, comprising ODPR, UNTAES and UNHCR representatives, simultaneously reported that out of 27,802 ethnic Serbs, registered by the ODPR, 15,105 have applied for return to their former places of residence, while 8,980 decided to stay in the region. Sale or exchange of property has been requested by 5,153 Serb families.

Numbers of returns to damaged and occupied houses have also considerably improved, while the Croatian Government's Real Estate Agency continues to purchase houses from persons who have expressed their wish to leave Croatia. The Agency said the first credits needed to acquire a house from the Agency could be expected by the end of the year.

In another positive development in Eastern Slavonia, 10,000 displaced Croats visited 42 cemeteries in the region, including two cemeteries in Vukovar on All Saints Day. No tension was reported.

In an effort to address more directly the needs of the displaced populations in Vukovar and its immediate surroundings, UNHCR established a presence in the area with a Field Office in Vukovar.

There are still some 80,000 Bosnian Croat refugees accommodated in Croatia of whom 67,000 originate from Republika Srpska. Solutions for some 4,500 Croats who have arrived from other parts of former Yugoslavia, particularly from the FR Y provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina, are also problematic since most of them are currently occupying Serb houses in the former UN sectors.

On 5 November, Croatia confirmed to the Council of Europe that it had ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Charter on Regional and Minority Rights. On 15 September, Croatia and Yugoslavia (FR Y) signed a package of six agreements, including border trade and border crossing, international road and railway traffic, social insurance and legal aid. A soft border regime between the two states was expected to come into effect on 1 December. Another six bilateral agreements should be signed by the end of this year. Regrettably, the number of refugees able to return from FR Y to Croatia has remained low.

The World Food Programme has decided to end its programme of support to refugees in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by the end of March 1998. The European Community's Humanitarian Office (ECHO) is committed to continue its food programmes until June of 1998.

These developments have raised concern about the future situation of vulnerable refugees who are dependent on humanitarian assistance. The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) has appealed to the international community and donors not to overlook the needs of this population, lately dubbed "the forgotten refugees of Europe". Reports in the local press about impending hunger and even starvation among refugees have recently been echoed in international media (The Guardian, BBC). UNHCR will continue to provide fresh food for refugees in collective centers until April 1998, as well as search for alternative food sources for a quarter of a million refugees who continue to rely on humanitarian food aid.

UNHCR is deeply concerned about unmet humanitarian needs. The 50,000 refugees living in collective accommodation are totally dependent on food assistance, while for the 200,000 vulnerable refugees in private accommodation, humanitarian aid makes all the difference to their capacity to survive, their average income being \$ 20 per month.

UNHCR's winter fuel programme for collective centers, implemented with CARE International, will continue this year, for the fifth season. Already by the end of October, all 432 collective centers and special institutions within the program had been provided with their first supplies of coal or oil

UNHCR's projects for the settlement of refugees are off to a good start. On 31 October, a new refugee settlement for 26 refugee families was officially opened in Zitiste so allowing 149 refugees to move out of temporary accommodation and collective centers into permanent homes with guaranteed employment opportunities. The municipality donated three hectares of arable land for farming families, while UNHCR provided them with one year's supply of tools and seeds. Five other similar settlements are at the planning stage. The first such settlement in the FRY was opened in Niksic in Montenegro in July. This program will be expanded in 1998, with UNHCR focusing more on self-sufficiency projects and less on care and maintenance. These construction projects are implemented by the Swiss Disaster Relief, in conjunction with the Refugee Commissioner and the local municipal authorities.

The Income Generating Programme has emerged as one of the most important initiatives to assist refugees in finding a way to overcome their dependency on humanitarian aid. From the start of the UNHCR programme in June 1996 until October this year, 1,130 projects were approved, benefiting a total of 9, 833 refugees. UNHCR will continue with this successful programme, which is being implemented by six NGOs, covering most of Serbia and Montenegro. At the same time, governmental and international development agencies are expected to adopt programmes that put an increasing emphasis on self-reliance for refugees.

The UNHCR assisted repatriation process was still operating at a snail's pace. To speed up the process, UNHCR has initiated discussions between the Commissioners of Serbia and Montenegro and the Refugee Ministers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The discussions are aimed at an agreement on an operational procedure for voluntary repatriation between FRY and Bosnia and Herzegovina.



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