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Picture on the cover page:
RHP beneficiary family in Bosnia and Herzegovina
What is the Regional Housing Programme?

As a consequence of the armed conflicts in the 1990s, over three million people were displaced both within and beyond the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Over the past two decades, sustained efforts by the four affected states as well as support from the international community have enabled the majority of those affected to return home or find other durable solutions. Despite these considerable efforts, almost half a million people remain displaced throughout the region.

The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) – a joint initiative by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia (the Partner Countries) – was set up in 2012 to address this protracted displacement situation. Its aim is to provide sustainable housing to the most vulnerable refugees and displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia, including internally displaced persons in Montenegro from 1999. In the Belgrade Declaration of 7 November 2011, the RHP Partner Countries committed themselves to the principle of respect for the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons and to the mutual obligation to closely coordinate activities in order to ensure truly durable solutions, either through voluntary return and reintegration or local integration of the displaced.

The RHP consists of four individual Country Housing Projects, each implemented at country level. Contrary to most other housing projects in the region, the RHP is not just about providing housing. It is also about fostering the institutional capacity of the Partner Countries to deliver sustainable housing solutions not just to RHP beneficiaries but also to other population groups with unmet housing needs. Thanks to its regional character, the RHP encourages the four Partner Countries to co-operate closely in solving common problems, thereby improving neighbourly relations and fostering security and stability in the region.
Forewords by CEB and European Union

The CEB plays a major role in the implementation and smooth running of the Regional Housing Programme: it manages donor funds, coordinates stakeholders, and oversees the implementation of the Programme by the four partner countries, which also involves the management of substantial technical assistance support. Indeed, the CEB was invited to manage the Programme because it was well-placed to do so, not only thanks to its relevant experience in the region but also because assistance to migrants, refugees and displaced persons has been at the heart of its mandate since it was established over 60 years ago.

In recent years, the Bank’s social mandate has become particularly relevant in Europe. The influx of migrants and refugees and their uneven inclusion—economic, social and cultural—remains a key challenge for many European countries. The CEB has mobilised a considerable amount of resources to provide assistance in the current circumstances.

In the coming years, the Bank will continue to work closely with all RHP stakeholders in order to deliver additional housing. With the funds made available by the donors so far, 34,000 vulnerable persons are expected to have a decent home by end-2021, thanks to the Programme.

More broadly, the CEB will continue to foster inclusive growth throughout Europe, for the benefit of migrants and refugees as well as of their host communities.
The Regional Housing Programme is changing lives. In 2017, the number of beneficiaries of the Programme more than doubled. More than 8 000 vulnerable persons now have a decent home.

To support more people, the European Commission provided an additional EUR 45 million to the action in 2017. The Commission is the largest donor to the Programme with EUR 232 million pledged or 82% of all contributions.

The European Commission supports the Regional Housing Programme because it makes a difference for the citizens of the Western Balkans. The Regional Housing Programme is an investment in the peace, reconciliation, stability, good neighbourly relations and prosperity of the Western Balkans and of Europe at large. It creates jobs and economic development. It promotes inclusion and reflects European values.

That is why I invite all stakeholders, but first and foremost the Partner Countries, to forge ahead with the implementation of the Programme.

I am confident that, together, we will continue to make this Programme a success.
RHP Facts And Figures

8 100
VULNERABLE PERSONS NOW HAVE DECENT HOMES

4
PARTNER COUNTRIES IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, CROATIA, MONTENEGRO, SERBIA

MORE THAN
28 000
VULNERABLE PERSONS WILL HAVE A HOME THANKS TO ONGOING PROJECTS

14
DONORS WHO PLEDGED DURING SARAJEVO DONORS’ CONFERENCE IN 2012

3
IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
EUR 284 million
FUNDS PLEDGED BY DONORS

EUR 183 MILLION
GRANTS APPROVED

EUR 85 MILLION
GRANTS DISBURSED

EUR 33 MILLION
NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION BY PARTNER COUNTRIES
Main Achievements in 2017

8 100 VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED WITH DECENT HOMES

2017 was a record year in terms of RHP deliveries: altogether, some 5 000 vulnerable persons were provided with access to decent housing.

In all, since 2014, the RHP has enabled 8 100 persons who had been displaced since the armed conflicts in the 1990s to gain access to dignified housing conditions.

SUSTAINED DONOR SUPPORT

In recognition of the Programme’s progress and its tangible impact on regional reconciliation, Donors made sizeable new contributions to the RHP in 2017. The United States of America provided a new contribution of USD 10 million, while Germany and Norway contributed an additional EUR 1.5 million each. The European Union, represented by the European Commission, committed an additional EUR 45 million, which will finance both housing solutions and implementation support measures. This new contribution confirmed the European Union’s status as the largest donor to this Programme, with approximately EUR 193 million committed, representing almost 80% of total contributions.

RENEWED COMMITMENT BY PARTNER COUNTRIES

In November 2017, in a joint statement, the RHP Partner Countries reiterated their continued commitment to the RHP and highlighted the Programme’s uniqueness as a post-conflict reconstruction programme both in the region and worldwide.

They further stated that the RHP is also making an important contribution to poverty reduction, social inclusion and economic empowerment as well as supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia in their European Union accession process.
CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

The RHP covers a large territory and provides an array of housing modalities tailored to the needs of its beneficiaries. To implement a programme of such magnitude, it is indispensable to have systems and procedures in line with international standards. To help the Partner Countries achieve such standards, they are provided with comprehensive technical assistance, financed by the European Commission and embedded in the implementing structures. Since 2013, this technical assistance has been provided by a consortium comprising EPTISA, GIZ and the Danish Refugee Council. Following a tender launched in September 2017, the consortium was again selected as the provider of technical assistance for a four-year period. The CEB is entrusted with overseeing and coordinating all RHP implementation support activities, including managing the provision of technical assistance.

MORE FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

As more and more vulnerable families access a housing solution in their places of origin or displacement, more emphasis is being put on the sustainability prospects of the beneficiaries. In 2017, the RHP stakeholders agreed to analyse what gaps exist in terms of access to services, rights, etc. for RHP beneficiaries, and how and by whom they could be addressed.

The role of UNHCR and OSCE is crucial in this respect, as – in addition to monitoring beneficiary selection – they assist the Partner Countries in providing detailed plans for the sustainability of the housing solutions offered.

OUTLOOK FOR 2018

In 2018, implementation is expected to further accelerate: the Programme should deliver housing to 9 000 persons, almost twice as many as in 2017.

Moreover, the delivery of homes will continue in subsequent years: by the time they are completed in 2020, the projects approved to date (24 in total) should make it possible to reach some 28 000 persons.

In addition, several new project approvals are in the pipeline in the four Partner Countries. By 2021, when the Programme is expected to be concluded, the RHP should have significantly improved the living conditions of an estimated 34 000 vulnerable persons.

RHP beneficiary family moving into a new apartment in Konik, Montenegro
As at end 2017, the RHP in Bosnia and Herzegovina had provided durable housing solutions for close to 500 beneficiary families. The RHP is now entering its most intensive phase in delivering the results, with 1,200 housing units planned to be completed in 2018. By targeting the most vulnerable displaced populations, the RHP is also making a substantial contribution to fulfilling national obligations in addressing poverty reduction, social inclusion and economic empowerment.

We also recognise that, in addition to housing, vulnerable beneficiary families must be provided with access to utilities, economic opportunities and social rights. With this aim in view, we have developed sustainability plans and identified measures to ensure the lasting and sustainable (re)integration of the families.

Importantly, cooperation with the Partner Countries in the region has proved critical to the RHP’s success. It has also had a positive impact in restoring mutual trust and stability, and in promoting peace and coexistence; as such, it will be maintained and further enhanced.
MEHO ĆUROVIĆ, Foča Ustikolina, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Between 1992 and 2000, Meho Ćurović lived in the Home for Disabled Children in Herceg Novi, Montenegro. When he returned to his pre-war place of residence, he had to live in extremely inhumane conditions in a greenhouse. When the municipality of Foča found out under which conditions he had to live, it provided him with a container. Meho lived there until moving into the new RHP financed building in Ustikolina in November 2017. Now, he will finally be "among people", he says with a smile on his face.

Key Facts and Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing units</th>
<th>€ 49 million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of sub-projects approved</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of beneficiaries (estimate)</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants approved</td>
<td>€ 17 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants disbursed</td>
<td>€ 8 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>National contribution</td>
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Sub-project Locations

- **Sub-project BiH1**
  Provision of building materials to 20 families and turnkey reconstruction assistance to 150 families
- **Sub-project BiH2**
  Provision of housing solutions to 780 households for return and reintegration or local integration in BiH
- **Sub-project BiH3**
  Construction of 512 flats in multi-apartment buildings for local integration of refugees and IDPs
- **Sub-project BiH4**
  Reconstruction of 435 family houses for the return of refugees and IDPs and construction of 45 family houses for local integration of IDPs in BiH
- **Sub-project BiH5**
  Re/construction of 50 family houses for local integration and re/construction of 500 family houses for return of refugees and IDPs in BiH
Throughout the year 2017, the Republic of Croatia has continued implementing projects within the scope of the Regional Housing Programme, and has successfully completed three sub-projects: a home for elderly and disabled persons in Glina for 75 beneficiaries, construction of two apartment buildings in Knin for 40 families and the construction of an apartment building in Benkovac for 21 families. The sub-project “Purchase of 101 flats” is in its final phase with four flats remaining to be purchased.

The focus is now on implementation of the sub-project “Organized renovation, reconstruction and construction of 62 houses”. The Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care is fully committed to continue with implementation of the RHP in the forthcoming years through three newly proposed sub-projects, and recognizes that the RHP is part of a wider political process that has contributed to fostering stability in the region and cooperation between the Partner Countries.
SLAVICA ZUBONJA, Benkovac, Croatia

Slavica comes from Kakanj, Bosnia and Herzegovina, from where she was banished to Croatia in 1993, together with her family. Her husband died, leaving Slavica alone with her sick mother and two young sons. They decided to come to Benkovac in 2013 and have since lived in a simple accommodation, paid by the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care/Caritas.

The family was on the priority list and moved into an apartment in the new RHP building in Benkovac in February 2018.

Key Facts and Figures

328 Housing units

6 Number of sub-projects approved

732 Number of beneficiaries (estimate)

Grants approved € 14 million

Grants disbursed € 11 million

National contribution € 5 million

Sub-project Locations

- **Sub-project HR1**
  Construction of an apartment building for 29 families in Korenica [completed]

- **Sub-project HR2**
  Construction of two residential buildings in Knin for 40 beneficiary households [completed]

- **Sub-project HR3**
  Reconstruction of a home for 75 elderly and disabled persons in Glina

- **Sub-project HR4**
  Purchase of 101 flats within and outside the Areas of Special State Concern

- **Sub-project HR5**
  Construction of a residential building for 21 families in Benkovac [completed]

- **Sub-project HR6**
  Renovation, reconstruction or construction of 62 family houses
We are proud to emphasize that, in the year 2017, the most remarkable results were achieved in the implementation of the Regional Housing Programme in Montenegro, in terms of the number of completed housing units and the number of families who were given a roof over their heads.

2018 will be even more successful than the previous year, with the completion of an additional 51 apartments in Konik that is expected in the summer, which means that, after 18 years, this refugee camp will finally be closed. The construction of home for the elderly in Pljevlja and the project for the construction of 94 apartments in Berane will also be completed in 2018.

We are especially proud of the fact that all the dwellings are completed and occupied, which indicates that the process of selecting the beneficiaries has given excellent results.

Montenegro is continuing with implementation of the RHP through new projects. In addition to the two new grant agreements that were signed in September 2017, in January 2018 Montenegro submitted applications for two more sub-projects, which will resolve the issue of accommodation for about 200 vulnerable families.

In addition, the Regional Housing Programme also provided an outstanding contribution to the promotion of regional cooperation and I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the donors, the partner institutions and the countries concerned.
ŠEMSIFA GAŠI, Konik camp, Podgorica, Montenegro

Šemsija came from Kosovo in 1999 and has lived through the whole Konik Camp history: first, the family lived in canvas tents, then in small wooden barracks until 2012 when a big fire burned down all the tents and cabins.

Thanks to the quick reaction of the Government of Montenegro, tents were provided immediately, soon replaced by containers with water and electricity installations, fridges, stoves and basic furniture. In November 2017, Šemsija and her son moved into a new apartment in one of the 12 newly constructed buildings financed by the RHP.

### Key Facts and Figures

- **481** Housing units
- **6** Number of sub-projects approved
- **1 800** Number of beneficiaries (estimate)
- **€ 16 million** Grants approved
- **€ 11 million** Grants disbursed
- **€ 2 million** National contribution

### Sub-project Locations

- **Sub-project MNE1**
  Construction of two blocks of flats for 62 internally displaced/displaced families in Nikšić **completed**

- **Sub-project MNE2**
  Provision of housing to 171 most vulnerable families from camp Konik 1 and its surroundings, through construction of 17 buildings in the city of Podgorica

- **Sub-project MNE3**
  Construction of a home for 68 elderly/ handicapped persons in Pljevlja

- **Sub-project MNE4**
  Construction of 94 apartments for 271 persons in the municipality of Berane

- **Sub-project MNE7**
  Purchase of 36 apartments in the municipality of Herceg Novi

- **Sub-project MNE8**
  Construction of a minimum of 50 individual houses in various municipalities in Montenegro
The settlement of the refugee problem is a long and a complex process. The Government of the Republic of Serbia, together with its partners, remains strongly committed to the implementation of the Regional Housing Programme that will provide housing for 18,000 refugee families in Serbia. The RHP demonstrates that, when there is a will, it is possible to find a way to reach a solution. This is a very important message.

The RHP implementation is now in full swing. The Regional Housing Programme is currently one of the biggest construction sites in the Republic of Serbia and the region, since more than 20 sites have been opened across Serbia, and we expect that new beneficiaries will move into their flats, whose construction is now in the final stages, this spring. Serbia, today, is implementing seven sub-projects within the framework of the Regional Housing Programme, for a total grant amount of EUR 105 million. We are close to accommodating almost two thousand families under this Programme.

We know that the provision of housing units alone cannot be a durable solution. We need to ensure the Programme’s sustainability, i.e. infrastructure and the social and economic conditions for the sustainable return and integration of refugees. We therefore believe that, in order to reach a comprehensive solution, it is important that all aspects of the Programme and the Sarajevo Process be consistently implemented by all the Programme participants.
MILENA TINTOR, Krnjača, Belgrade, Serbia

Milena was 13 years old when she fled with her parents and two brothers from Croatia. Upon their arrival in Serbia, they settled in their cousin’s house, which was in a very bad condition. For years, they moved from one apartment to another in Belgrade, one worse than the other.

Finally, they heard about the possibility of getting an apartment in Ovca. Milena and her children moved into the new RHP financed building in Ovca at the beginning of 2018.

Key Facts and Figures

6,200 Housing units

Sub-project Description

- **Sub-project SRB1**
  Provision of 70 pre-fabricated houses and 125 building material packages for 195 families

- **Sub-project SRB2**
  Support to 870 refugee families through four different housing modalities

- **Sub-project SRB3**
  Support to 715 refugee families through four different housing modalities

- **Sub-project SRB4**
  Support to 1,233 refugee families through four different housing modalities

- **Sub-project SRB5**
  Support to 1,712 refugee families through three different housing modalities

- **Sub-project SRB7**
  Provision of minimum 490 housing solutions for beneficiaries selected under sub-projects SRB2, SRB4, SRB5

- **Sub-project SRB8**
  Provision of 938 housing solutions for refugee families through the construction of apartments and prefabricated houses, provision of building material and purchase of village houses
The Regional Housing Program continues to embody the spirit of regional cooperation that is necessary to find lasting solutions for refugees and displaced people. Its needs-based selection process, multi-stakeholder engagement, and regional character make it a model to be emulated.

Last year, the number of houses delivered through the RHP was almost twice what we saw in the preceding three years combined. This is excellent progress.

Success within the RHP depends not only on housing solutions, however. In 2017 governments at all levels worked together with civil society, international organizations, and beneficiaries themselves to make these solutions sustainable. The United States continues to support complementary programming to foster integration and economic self-reliance of RHP beneficiaries. We commend Partner Countries for their support in these efforts.

In 2018, we should build on successes and redouble our joint efforts to find lasting, sustainable solutions for those still displaced, as we look to close the chapter on displacement in the Western Balkans.
Promoting the Regional Housing Programme, which aims to resolve the ongoing shortage of housing for refugees and IDPs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, remains an important part of Germany’s Western Balkans policy. In response to the good progress made by the programme in recent years, Germany increased its contribution to the RHP Fund by a further 1.5 million euros in 2017. Alongside achieving its primary aim of building housing, the RHP has had an impact in many other areas. For example, the close involvement of municipalities in all implementation steps, with hundreds of communities now involved, ensures that knowledge is transferred to the administration at municipal level. This impact continues at national level, where competent planning and implementation structures based on EU standards have been established.

Finally, the standard regulations agreed with the Partner Countries by the Council of Europe Development Bank for the implementation of the Programme have necessitated an in-depth exchange of information and experience at intergovernmental level. This creates an opportunity to share experiences of best practice and leads to better neighbourly relations, which I see as the greatest benefit to the region. I thus wish the Programme every continued success.

Dr. Christian Hellbach
Ambassador, Federal Foreign Office’s Special Envoy for South-Eastern Europe, Turkey and the EFTA-States
The Regional Housing Programme has finally reached a solid implementation pace and there are several reasons to be optimistic. The outlook for 2018 and the years to come looks promising with delivery of over 8,000 housing units. At the Steering Committee meeting in December 2017, Norway announced a new contribution of EUR 1.5 million to the RHP Fund. This is a token of Norway’s confidence in the Programme and appreciation of recent good progress. Efforts must now focus on ensuring the durability of the results and achievements.

In particular, Norway would like emphasize the Programme’s important social and reconciliatory impact. Furthermore, by getting the Partner Countries to work together, the RHP paves the way for deeper and broader regional cooperation. Hence, the regional character of the Programme should not be underestimated. Norway will continue to be actively involved in the Regional Housing Programme. We are looking forward to cooperating closely with the Partner Countries and donors.

Olav Reinertsen
Senior Advisor
Department for European Affairs
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
In 2017 Italy served as co-chair of the Regional Housing Program, reiterating its commitment to the Program, unique of its kind, aimed at upgrading the lives of refugee and displaced persons in the Balkans. We are proud of an initiative which has the ambition of overcoming boundaries and targeting the most vulnerable, including the Roma people.

2018 will be the peak year for delivering on infrastructure. We need to sharpen the focus and place more emphasis on sustainability, keeping in mind the need for striking the right balance between support to returnees and host community involvement. Adequate beneficiary targeting also remains a key priority.

We will be capable of turning “houses into homes” to the extent the program “hardware” (i.e. construction) is equipped with the necessary “software”: house electricity services, access to social services, pension schemes, care for the elderly, maintenance services, community integration programs.

As Europeans, also through our own capacity development, institution strengthening, and technical cooperation bilateral programs, we reiterate our commitment to supporting transition to a stable, safer and prosperous region.
In 2017 we saw a significant increase in the delivery of concrete housing solutions to the most vulnerable beneficiaries of the Regional Housing Programme in all four Partner Countries.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) are particularly pleased that selection of beneficiaries, as an essential precondition for a truly successful implementation of the Programme, for the approved RHP sub-projects in all four Partner Countries is progressing well, in spite of challenges.
As in previous years, UNHCR and OSCE continued to support transparent, consistent, and fair implementation of the RHP in 2017, in particular in the aspects of selecting beneficiaries, as well as by assisting the Partner Countries in providing more detailed plans for the sustainability of the solutions offered by the housing projects. In that regard, our two organizations worked in very close co-operation with local authorities to ensure their active engagement in support of access to rights, social integration and employment opportunities.

Throughout 2017, UNHCR and OSCE have taken into consideration the overall positive results achieved in all Partner Countries, focusing on the intensified regional co-operation, as well as highlighting the numerous good practices. UNHCR and OSCE have further recognized the strong progress made by the Partner Countries in their implementation of the RHP.

In executing their role, UNHCR/OSCE will continue to act in unison on all aspects of RHP implementation. Subsequently, after careful consideration and following extensive consultations, UNHCR and OSCE have jointly decided to redefine their engagement in the RHP beyond 2017 by taking a more strategic approach to support, through advice and technical assistance, the Lead Institutions of the RHP Partner Countries to conduct the selection of beneficiaries in an impartial and transparent manner. This should provide unimpeded access to the RHP for the most vulnerable refugees and ensure that the Programme reaches those who most require assistance, irrespective of their formal status.

It is of the utmost importance that the pace of RHP implementation in the next years is maintained. We call on the Partner Countries to further focus their efforts on proposing mature sub-projects, including examination of the social integration and employment opportunities to help the displaced in greatest need to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity.

Finally, UNHCR and OSCE would like to reiterate their encouragement to RHP donors to continue supporting the RHP, the Partner Countries and, ultimately, the Programme’s beneficiaries.
Project Highlights

Sub-project BiH3
Construction of 512 apartments in multi-apartment buildings in 19 municipalities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, for local integration of refugees and IDPs. The sub-project is advancing well: 73 apartments were completed in 2017, 399 are planned for completion in 2018 and the rest – 40 – in 2019.

Sub-project HR2
Construction of two residential buildings in Knin for 40 beneficiary families or 92 persons. The works were inaugurated in November 2015 and were completed in September 2017 when the beneficiary families moved into their new apartments.
Sub-project MNE2
Provision of housing to 171 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1 and its surroundings, through construction of 17 buildings in the city of Podgorica. The project will be completed in two phases: the first 120 apartments were handed over in 2017, and the remaining 51 will be completed in 2018.

Sub-project SRB3
Support to 715 refugee families through four different housing modalities. One of the components concerns the construction of 235 apartments in Ovca, Belgrade. The construction works started in August 2016 and were finalized in November 2017, with a total cost of EUR 6.9 million. In March 2018, 235 RHP beneficiary families - or 652 persons – received keys to their new homes.
RHP beneficiaries
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The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) was set up to provide durable housing solutions to vulnerable refugees and displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The RHP is implemented by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia and mostly financed by the international donor community. The main donor is the European Union. The other donors are the United States of America, Germany, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Turkey, Luxembourg, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic.

www.regionalhousingprogramme.org