



Regional
Housing
Programme

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Construction works in Niksic

Cover story



START OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS IN NIKSIC

The implementation on the ground of the first RHP sub-project approved for Montenegro, ***MNE1 - Construction of two blocks of flats for 62 IDP families in Niksic***, started on 25 May 2015. The construction works were officially launched in the presence of Ms Zorica Kovacevic, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare of Montenegro, Mr Veselin Grbovic, Mayor of Niksic and Mr Zarko Zivkovic, Director of the Directorate for Public Works of Montenegro (newly appointed PIU for RHP).

On 30 of June 2015, the representatives of RHP stakeholders also visited the construction site in Niksic. The Donors' representatives from the European Commission, the U.S.A., Norway, Switzerland and Germany were present, as well as the representatives from partner organisations UNHCR, OSCE and CEB.

The total sub-project cost is EUR 2.6 million, out of which EUR 600 000 is covered by the national contribution of Montenegro. The first grant tranche for an amount of EUR 594 000 was paid out in July 2014, and the building is estimated to be completed in the summer of 2016.

Minister Kovacevic praised the performance of the Municipality of Niksic saying that it was the first municipality in Montenegro to offer land for a housing project for internally displaced and displaced persons. Mr Morten Jung, Head of Unit for the Western Balkans, Regional Cooperation and Programmes, European Commission said: "I would like to state that the European Commission remains committed to support the Regional Housing Programme both politically and financially in the years to come".

BENEFICIARY STORY

Bora Cvijetic (54) came from Mostar to her uncle's apartment in Niksic when the war started. She has progressive muscle atrophy, with no recovery possible. To get an apartment means a lot to her as she needs to use a wheel-chair. This is not possible in her current apartment.

Newsflash

Delivery of building material packages continues in Serbia

The delivery of the remaining 104 building material packages under the sub-project **SRB1 - Provision of 125 building material packages and 70 prefabricated houses to the benefit of 195 households**, continued in June with the delivery of 14 packages of building material to selected beneficiaries in Ruma. The value of each package is EUR 9 000.

The building material packages for the family Skoric, which fled from Croatia in 1994 and now lives in Nikinci village, were delivered in the presence of Mr Ivica Dacic, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr Vladimir Cucic, Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration; Mr Michael Davenport, EU Ambassador and; Mr Gordon Duguid, USA Embassy Deputy Head of Mission, as well as representatives from the Swiss Embassy, OSCE Mission and UNHCR Country Office in Serbia.

This sub-project's total cost is EUR 2.2 million and comprises the delivery of 66 prefabricated houses and 129 packages of building material. The first 25 packages, distributed in October last year, were financed by the Serbian contribution to Serbia's Country Housing Project.



Beneficiary Family in Serbia

Beneficiary family

Bogdan Skoric (41) fled from Croatia to Serbia in 1994; his wife Biljana (37) also came from Croatia to the village of Nikinci, near Ruma, where they met and got married. They have three children Jelena(19), Predrag (11) and Milica (9). The building material that they received will enable them to renovate the house in which they have lived for the last 12 years.

6th RHP Steering Committee and 10th Assembly of Donors meetings held in Montenegro

The 6th meeting of the Steering Committee of the Regional Housing Programme and the 10th meeting of the Assembly of Donors of the RHP Fund took place on 29-30 June 2015 in Podgorica, Montenegro.

The RHP Steering Committee meeting was opened by

Montenegro's Deputy Prime Minister Vujica Lazovic, who said: "The RHP has a very strong political support in Montenegro and is an excellent example of good regional co-operation and reconciliation. Please allow me also to thank the Donors for their continuous efforts". Donors, Partner Countries and international stakeholders agreed that, despite multiple challenges, the RHP was making good progress. In 2014, the Partner Countries delivered the first homes to beneficiaries. Throughout 2015, the delivery of housing solutions to RHP beneficiaries has continued at an increasing rate. All RHP stakeholders agreed that pace should be further intensified in order to have more results in the following months. Whereas this year should see the delivery of an additional 350 homes, this number is expected to increase to 2 000 in 2016 and 3 300 in 2017.

The meeting participants also had a chance to see a regional RHP film and a photo exhibition of the RHP construction sites and beneficiary families, presenting the main Programme's results on the ground up to now.



Mr Vujica Lazovic, Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro and Mr Morten Jung, European Commission

CHP Implementing Structures' Verification

Montenegro

In April 2015, Montenegro changed the organisational structure of RHP in the country. Montenegro's PIU PROCON was replaced by the Directorate for Public Works as the PIU in charge of RHP implementation. As a result, CEB undertook the verification of the newly appointed PIU. In order to not delay implementation, the verification exercise started immediately in May and was successfully completed on 27 June 2015.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Brcko District was included in the organisational structure of BiH's RHP implementation for sub-projects **BiH3 - Construction of 438 flats in multi-apartment buildings for refugees and IDPs** and **BiH4 - Reconstruction of 435 family houses for return of refugees and IDPs and construction of 45 family houses for local integration of IDPs**. For this reason, CEB undertook the verification of the PIU in Brcko District in March-April 2015. The exercise was successfully completed on 2 June 2015.

Partner Countries' Highlights



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SUCCESSFUL VERIFICATION OF BENEFICIARIES

In response to the announced public calls in BiH in 2013, 25 900 applications were received for integration or return related assistance for approximately 87 900 potential beneficiaries. Out of this number, 8 300 applications were for local integration and 17 000 for both return and reintegration. The two Joint Commissions composed of members from BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR) and the entity ministries (FBH MDP - Federal Ministry of Displaced Persons and Refugees and RS MRDP – Ministry of Refugees and Displaced Persons of RS) have reviewed all applications received. UNHCR and OSCE representatives have monitored the process.

As a result of the joint efforts of the Joint Commissions, the selection of RHP beneficiaries for BiH1 is completed following the verification by the Lead Institutions in Croatia and Serbia.

The selection of BiH2 beneficiaries is in its final stages. The pre-selection of beneficiaries is completed in 51 municipalities throughout BiH and an on-site interviews have been conducted with more 2 000 families. In the second stage of the selection process, as agreed with UNHCR and OSCE, about 700 applicants in six municipalities which are identified as priority areas of intervention will be interviewed at reconstruction sites. The field verification of refugees from BiH currently residing in Croatia and Serbia was done with the internally displaced persons currently residing in Mostar, and will also be conducted in Mostar, Bosansko Grahovo, Glamoc and Drvar (all in the Federation of BiH) and Derventa and Brod (in Republika Srpska).



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

STRMICA COLLECTIVE CENTRE CLOSED

The Collective Centre Strmica near Knin, which was providing accommodation to mainly returnee families since 2001, was closed on 31 March 2015. Within the 14 years of existence of this Centre, 66 families had found their temporary homes there. The Centre was set up in a primary school building, and the tenants were taken care of by the State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care together with NGOs and UNHCR.

The State Office for Reconstruction and Housing Care provided accommodation to the last six families; four of which got a permanent housing solution in Knin, through the sub-project HR4 - Purchase of 101 flats within and outside the Areas of Special State Concern. The other two were accommodated with the assistance of the Centre for Social Work in Knin.

Partner Countries' Highlights

TWO MORE FAMILIES RECEIVED KEYS OF THEIR NEW APARTMENTS

On 6 May 2015, families Matic and Bjelanovic received the keys of their new apartments in Benkovac, provided through the sub-project **HR4 - Purchase of 101 flats within and outside the Areas of Special State Concern**.

The two families, former tenants' rights holders from the same city, who had gone through different, but equally difficult war and post-war years, finally received permanent housing solutions on the same day and became neighbours again.

Family Matic, which is composed of five members was divided by life circumstances and has now been reunited in Benkovac.

Family Bjelanovic has managed to receive a permanent apartment and finally leave the temporary accommodation in Benkovac, where they had been living since 1995.

Within the scope of the sub-project HR4, 101 apartments are to be purchased as permanent housing solutions for persons from collective centres and former tenancy rights' holders. So far, 44 apartments have been purchased under this sub-project. By the end of June, 21 flats have been handed over to the selected beneficiaries. The additional 16 identified families are awaiting decision on their right to housing care, while seven families still need to be identified by the Joint Working Group (UNHCR, SORHC).

A new public call for the purchase of second round of flats was closed on 20 April 2015; out of 117 flats that were offered, 81 were defined as eligible. In the last few months, a site visit to all eligible flats was carried out.



MONTENEGRO

FIRST GRANT TRANCHES DISBURSED FOR KONIK AND PLJEVLJA SUB-PROJECTS

Following the finalisation of the removal of the 44 housing containers from the building location for sub-project **MNE2 - Provision of housing to 120 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1** in April 2015, the first grant tranche, in the amount of EUR 1 681 356 was disbursed on 29 April 2015.

The Montenegrin Agency for Planning and Design is working on the preparation of the main project design, compatible to the European Commission's financed IPA project in Konik Camp, including the installation of solar panels for water heating. Procurement for works will be conducted according to an open international procedure, and is estimated to be launched in September 2015. As foreseen in the updated implementation plan, commencement of construction works is estimated to start in 2016.

Furthermore, the first grant tranche for the sub-project **MNE3 - Construction of a home for 68 elderly/handicapped persons in Pljevlja** was also disbursed on 29 April 2015, in the amount of EUR 518 066.

Partner Countries' Highlights



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

IMPLEMENTATION CONTRACT SIGNED BETWEEN THE CITY OF BELGRADE AND KIRS SRB3 - SUPPORT TO 715 REFUGEE FAMILIES

On 6 April 2015, the contract between KIRS and the City of Belgrade was signed. This contract will enable the continuation of implementation for the construction of 235 housing units and 80 pre-fabricated houses, the delivery of 350 packages of building materials and the purchase of 50 village houses. Through this sub-project, around 2 000 persons should be provided with permanent housing solutions on the territory of the City of Belgrade.

The contract was signed by Mr Vladimir Cucic, Commissioner for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, Sinisa Mali, Mayor of the City of Belgrade and Goran Kvrjic, Director of Project Management Unit in Serbia.

The public call for beneficiaries for all four housing modalities under this sub-project was published in May 2015 and it is expected that in 1.5 years, the families will be settled. The overall value of this sub-project is EUR 13.6 million, out of which EUR 11 million was provided from the RHP Fund.

SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES FOLLOWED BY FIELD VERIFICATION

In the previous period, 33 selection committees were operating, while 2 342 families applied for 906 housing solutions. In May 2015, the implementation of SRB3, which is completely dedicated to beneficiaries in the Serbian capital, began and four Joint Selection committees launched public calls for a total of 715 housing solutions. The process of beneficiary selection in Serbia implies several sequential steps and is conducted in line with the envisaged timeframe.



RHP Fund Status

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE RHP

At 1 July 2015, the financial situation of the RHP can be summarized by the following figures:

Aggregate figures on RHP

(in EUR million, at 1 July 2015)

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---|
| pledged to RHP | | 268 |
| Contribution Agreements signed | 148 Sub-projects | 27 Technical Assistance and operating costs 175 |
| Paid into RHP Fund | | 120 |
| Grants approved | | 133 |
| Grant Agreements signed | | 71 |
| Grants disbursed | | 21 |

DISBURSEMENTS FROM APRIL TO JUNE 2015

During the 2nd quarter 2015, a further four grant tranches were disbursed for a total amount of EUR 5.0 million:

EUR 0.3 million in favour of BiH2

Provision of housing solutions to 780 households for return and reintegration or local integration in BiH: in early April 2015, the first grant tranche amounting to EUR 350 000 was paid out of the RHP Fund.

EUR 1.7 million in favour of MNE2

Provision of housing to 120 most vulnerable families from Camp Konik 1, through construction of two buildings in the City of Podgorica: at end-April 2015, EUR 1 681 356 was disbursed.

EUR 0.5 million in favour of MNE3

Construction of a home for the elderly in Pljevlja: at end-April 2015, the first grant tranche, for the amount of EUR 518 066, was paid out.

EUR 2.4 million in favour of SRB3 (Components 2, 3 and 4)

Support to 715 refugee families through four different housing solutions: in early June, EUR 2 402 500 was paid out of the RHP Fund.

Additionally, on 1 July, the first grant tranche in favour of **SRB4 – Support to 661 refugee families through four different housing modalities**, for the amount of EUR 3 835 100, was disbursed;

These five disbursements bring the total amount paid out from the RHP Fund in favour of housing projects to EUR 20.6 million.

RHP Fund Status

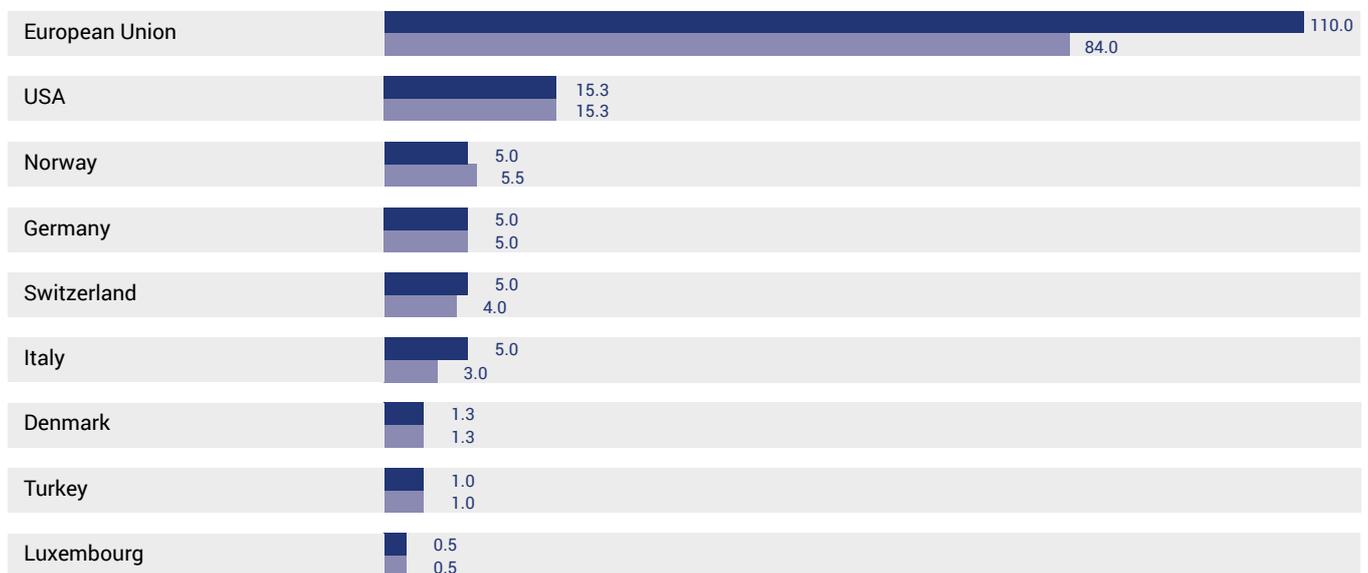
CONTRIBUTIONS BY DONORS

For the record, the Donors have committed EUR 148.1 million, of which they have paid in EUR 119.5 million. With EUR 110 million committed and EUR 84 million paid in, the European Union is the main Donor to the RHP.

Contributions committed and paid into the RHP Fund are split as follows:

Contributions committed and paid in

(in EUR million at 1st July 2015)



Total committed EUR 148.1 million

Total paid in EUR 119.5 million

Regional Activities

CEB'S VICE-GOVERNOR VISITS SERBIA, MONTENEGRO AND BIH

CEB's Vice-Governor Mikolaj Dowgielewicz visited Serbia, Montenegro and BiH during the last weeks of April and May 2015 to meet with high-level officials of the countries' governments, and to discuss RHP implementation and CEB's co-operation with the countries in general.

In **Serbia**, Vice Governor Dowgielewicz met with Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ivica Dacic. In **Montenegro**, he met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information Society and Telecommunications Mr Vujica Lazovic as well as with the newly appointed Minister for Labour and Social Welfare Ms Zorica Kovacevic. Ms Kovacevic is heading the Montenegrin Lead Institution in charge of the RHP. In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Mr Dowgielewicz met with the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees Ms Semiha Borovac, as well as with Minister of the Ministry of Refugees and Displaced Persons of Republika Srpska Mr Davor Cordas. Other senior officials from the Federation of BiH were also present.

In all three countries, CEB was reassured of the Partner Countries' strong commitment to successfully implement the RHP. The Partner Countries are determined to mobilise all efforts to move forward with implementation without delay. Mr Dowgielewicz thanked the authorities for the excellent cooperation; he added however, that further efforts are needed at all levels to remove administrative barriers slowing down project implementation, especially as concerns RHP. He also emphasised the importance to keep the attention of the general public on the refugee housing issue in the region.

RHP REGIONAL COORDINATION FORUM HELD IN PODGORICA

The 13th RCF was held on 12 May in Podgorica, with participants from all Partners Countries within the Regional Housing Programme, and representatives from EU Delegation, American Embassy and CEB.

The main conclusion of the meeting was that cross border beneficiary verification is key to further progress in RHP. PCs will continue carrying out these activities with the available resources in order not to delay implementation, while insisting on assuring the additional resources promptly.

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

Contract Management Training: On 10-12 June 2015, TA organised this training for the representatives of R&D PIU in Serbia. The purpose of the training was to provide guidance on the procedures foreseen under the Project Implementation Manual as well as working practices of the Works, Service and Supply contracts, in order to help PIUs to run the contracts efficiently.;

Control Environment and Horizontal Issues Training: On 29-30 June 2015 the training was organised for the representatives from R&D PIU and KIRS in Serbia. The objective of the training was to raise knowledge about the concept of control environment (internal and external audit functions) and integrity (irregularities and fraud, code of conduct, segregation of duties and handover procedures.). In addition, the training covered risk management as a tool to be used in project implementation.

About RHP People

Mr Joe Livingston who has been following RHP matters in the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration in Washington DC for the past three years is moving on to a new post. He will continue to be a Program Officer in the same Department where now he will advise on policies and programs for Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Mr Livingston will be replaced by **Mr Jerry Kalarickal**. Jerry has previously worked with the U.S. State Department in Bogota and New Delhi. Prior to joining the Department of State he worked on urban development and urban housing issues as a consultant for the World Bank and for the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Upcoming Activities (July-September 2015)

RHP Events

16 September 2015

Inauguration of the construction site - HR3 Reconstruction of a home for 75 elderly and disabled persons in Glina

16 September 2015

Beneficiaries moving in - HR1 Construction of an apartment building for 29 families in Korenica

RHP Meetings

15 September 2015

14th Regional Coordination Forum, Zagreb, Croatia



Bosnia and Herzegovina



Republic of Croatia



Montenegro



Republic of Serbia

The Regional Housing Programme is financed and supported by the International Community



The Regional Housing Programme was set up to offer durable housing to 74,000 vulnerable individuals who became refugees or displaced persons following the 1991-1995 conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The RHP is to be implemented with the support of the international community.

www.regionalhousingprogramme.org