

COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN FOR 2002

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Excluding Kosovo)

Executive Committee Summary

(a) Context and Beneficiary Population(s)

In late 2000 there were far ranging changes to the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Vojislav Kostunica was elected President of the Republic on September 24 and took office on October 7. In Serbian parliamentary elections on 23 December, the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) obtained an overwhelming majority with Zoran Djindic as their candidate for Prime Minister of Serbia. These changes opened the way for ending a decade of international isolation. Economic sanctions were progressively lifted. Yugoslavia rejoined regional and international institutions. Yugoslavia also strengthened its relations with its neighbours.

The changes allowed for new possibilities with regard to refugee solutions. Dialogue on return issues has begun again between the FRY Government, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Government is also for the first time actively promoting the possibility of local integration. The 1997 citizenship law, was amended in early 2001 to make it easier for refugees to gain citizenship. The Government also established dialogue with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and an UNMIK office is to be established in Belgrade. The security situation for minorities in Kosovo however, is still poor and significant return movements remain remote.

The economy of the Federal Republic is severely weakened after years of war, sanctions and mismanagement. The Government has announced restructuring measures including privatisation and a reduction in public sector employees, which are - in the short term - likely to increase unemployment and social hardship, which impact disproportionately on refugees and IDPs.

Security situation

Since the change of regime, the political and general security situation has improved in most parts of Serbia and Montenegro. Governmental and law enforcement authorities have become supportive of international organisations. The general attitude of the population towards foreigners from Western countries has improved since the time of the NATO bombing campaign in 1999. However, the political situation is still unfolding and there remains potential for unrest. There are two major sources of concern: the tension between ethnic Albanian groups in Southern Serbia, and Montenegro's pursuit of independence, which may cause a deterioration of the political and the security situation at least in some parts of the country.

Protection issues

By mid-2001, the refugee population in Yugoslavia was estimated at 399,100 of whom 133,800 were from Bosnia Herzegovina and 242,200 from Croatia. The major influxes occurred between 1991 and 1995 from Bosnia-Herzegovina and from Croatia. Refugees fled conflict and persecution. There were also new arrivals from Croatia after 1997, when the UN administration of Eastern Slavonia ceased.

Repatriation to Bosnia and Herzegovina is a real possibility for many, due to the active programmes for property repossession in Bosnia; while the possibilities of repatriation to Croatia are more modest due both to administrative difficulties and the absence of concrete possibilities for

repossession and reconstruction of properties in Croatia. There are also increased opportunities for local settlement of refugees in FRY.

Currently there are 230,000 internally displaced persons from Kosovo registered in FRY. The IDPs started arriving in Serbia and Montenegro upon the withdrawal of the FRY security forces from Kosovo in June 1999. The outflow from Kosovo continued on a small scale throughout 2000. The prospects for return of the internally displaced are limited, even though a "Framework for Return" (i.e. a plan outlining the changes needed to create conditions in Kosovo conducive to return), was drawn up and endorsed by the UN administration of Kosovo in January 2001.

In general, refugee and IDPs are not confronted with particular protection problems in the FRY. The Roma/Ashkalia/Egyptian communities, which make up a significant proportion of the IDP population, remain especially vulnerable. They are subject to the discrimination and ostracism that is often characteristic of the attitude towards Roma throughout the region. Many Roma IDPs live in illegal settlements, without access to electricity, drinking water or sewage systems. Occasionally they are evicted. Registration and attendance of Roma children at school is very low.

UNHCR's role

UNHCR, both directly and through NGO implementing partners, provides material, legal and social assistance to a large part of the refugee population. This task is implemented in close co-ordination with the Serbian and Montenegrin Refugee Commissioners. UNHCR dedicates much of its efforts to assist the refugees in their search of durable solutions. UNHCR is instrumental in the implementation of the organised return programme to Croatia and works closely with the UNHCR offices in Bosnia and Croatia to promote repatriation and advocate for the removal of administrative obstacles to return. UNHCR is implementing a modest project to facilitate local integration of refugees who do not wish to return to their countries of origin. With the change of Government, UNHCR is hopeful that a more comprehensive policy for refugee integration can be designed, within which UNHCR will play an important advisory role. UNHCR continues a sizeable resettlement programme, which under the current circumstances will gradually be reduced.

In co-ordination with the ICRC, UNHCR continues to provide material, legal and social assistance to many of the estimated 230,000 internally displaced. UNHCR gives special attention to the plight of the Roma, Ashkalia and Egyptian displaced, who have found only very poor structures of support in displacement. Although the situation in Kosovo is still such that sustainable return of minorities is not possible, UNHCR continues to make every effort in providing information to the displaced on the situation in Kosovo, including conditions of return and more specifically on the Framework on Return. UNHCR is actively assessing means to improve the self-reliance of the internally displaced, due to their likely protracted displacement. UNHCR also promotes confidence building measures in southern Serbia, with the aim of creating conditions conducive for the return of the ethnic Albanian population, currently remaining displaced in Kosovo.

Overview of beneficiary populations

Refugees from Former SFRY countries

As at 1 July 2001, there were 399,100 refugees in FRY (including 14,400 in Montenegro). In Serbia, a large majority of refugees are housed in private accommodation in the Vojvodina and in the Belgrade areas. About 30,000 among the most vulnerable live in collective accommodation.

Other Refugees

As in previous years, a small but increasing number of asylum seekers and refugees of other nationalities from outside the area of the Former SFRY are also expected to seek legal and material assistance from UNHCR during the course of 2002.

IDPS from Kosovo

The volatile situation and the lack of security in Kosovo caused a continuing arrival of IDPs (mainly Serb, but also Roma and other non-Albanians) from the province throughout 2000 and into 2001. The greatest concentration of IDPs is found in central and southern Serbia, and in Montenegro. Most IDPs live in private accommodation, with relatives and friends. Some 17,000 IDPs continue to live in collective accommodation.

Policy issues

Recent developments have brought a number of policy issues to the fore. The first stems from the fact that in FRY all three classical solutions to the refugee problem are being pursued. Some have argued that the UNHCR assistance provided to local integration and to resettlement undermines efforts to encourage refugees to return to Croatia and to Bosnia-Herzegovina. It has however, become increasingly apparent that refugees require different solutions depending on family circumstances, the number of relatives who remained in their country of origin, particular economic possibilities, circumstances of flight, the degree to which they have de facto integrated etc. It is therefore policy to promote all three solutions.

A second important policy issue relates to assisting return to Kosovo. UNHCR Kosovo together with local partners has formulated a far reaching and ambitious "Framework for Return" setting out the conditions for return to Kosovo. The framework promotes the creation of conditions for return rather than – at this stage – promoting actual return. Given that security conditions for non-Albanians in Kosovo remain precarious, the policy of UNHCR Yugoslavia at this point is not to promote return to Kosovo.

Linkages to other countries within a defined "situation"

UNHCR promotes a regional approach to the solution of the refugee problem. UNHCR FRY works closely with the UNHCR offices in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) on regional co-ordination of programmes for return. UNHCR advocates and facilitates discussions on durable solutions between the governments of FRY, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is believed that these discussions will gain momentum throughout 2001 and 2002, in light of political changes in the three countries, as exemplified by the recent establishment of diplomatic relations between FRY and BH.

With regard to internally displaced persons, there exists a clear linkage with the UNHCR operation in Yugoslavia's Kosovo province. Based on the principle that all internally displaced have the right to return to their homes, UNHCR offices in FRY and in Kosovo continued to develop closely-linked activities with the aim of fostering the return of internally displaced persons. A Platform for Joint Action for Roma was adopted in April 2000, whereas a Framework for Return for displaced Serbs was elaborated in the second half of 2000.

Under these two basic documents, actors within Kosovo will seek to promote conditions conducive to return of Roma and Serb minorities. UNHCR offices in Serbia and Montenegro will undertake activities to provide the IDP population with information on such activities, in order to allow them to make informed choices with regard to return.

Capacity and presence of implementing partners

UNHCR FRY has been operating in close co-operation with government institutions such as the Office of the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees, the Federal and Republic Ministries for Health and Social Affairs, and the Office of Montenegro for Displaced Persons, as well as their authorities at municipal level. In 2002, it is expected that 23 NGOs (18 international and 5 local NGOs) will be engaged in the implementation of various assistance activities. Additionally, several local NGOs have also been indirectly funded by UNHCR through a number of international NGO implementing partners who act as Umbrella Agencies. UNHCR will continue to assume a co-ordinating role in respect of other NGOs assisting refugees and IDPs from their own resources. As of March 2001, 15 agencies work in close collaboration with UNHCR under the Framework of Operational Partnership Agreements. This number is expected to increase during the year as well as in 2002.

Presence and roles of other UN Agencies and IOs, and efforts made to co-ordinate activities for the implementation of protection and assistance activities for populations of concern

Within the WFP/UNHCR framework agreement in Serbia, the Yugoslav Red Cross distributes relief to selected vulnerable refugees in private accommodation and CARE International for the refugees in collective accommodation. In Montenegro, WFP/UNHCR have recently concluded an agreement to supply WFP-donated food rations, through the Montenegrin Red Cross, to both refugee and IDPs. UNICEF also has a number of separate programmes to benefit both refugees and IDPs, including health promotion and prevention of diseases among the beneficiaries in collective centres, the funding of primary health care centres in Montenegro and supporting out-reach immunisation activities in the areas with large concentrations of refugees/IDPs. Refugees/IDPs also benefit from UNICEF's winter and education programmes. ECHO and BPRM provide direct funding to NGOs active in various fields, such as in psycho-social services, medical programmes, provision of hygiene parcels, winter projects, shelter repairs, and repatriation promotion. In the Assistance Programme, ICRC focuses on providing direct assistance to IDPs which includes food and non-food items, while IFRC focuses on distribution of WFP-donated basic food rations as well as donations from its participating National Societies to vulnerable refugees.

Mechanisms for inter-agency consultation and information sharing among the UN sister agencies in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been well established. There are regular meetings of agency heads, humanitarian working groups, donors, EU Presidency/UN Representatives, security co-ordinators and sector agencies. Various joint assessments were conducted in past years in order to obtain data and information for planning and for implementation of assistance activities.

(b) Programme Goals and Objectives

Name of Beneficiary Population: Refugees from the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in FRY (except Kosovo)	
Main Goal(s): To promote repatriation of refugees to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting and facilitating voluntary repatriation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of the organised Return Procedure ▪ Continued co-ordination mechanism with NGO's active with repatriation ▪ Amendments to the Procedure, with

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage and facilitate Government discussions on return ▪ Address property issue (both private property and tenancy rights). ▪ Assisting the logistical movement of refugees to Croatia and BH ▪ Exchange and dissemination of information aimed primarily at promoting repatriation ▪ Promote and facilitate refugee association capacity building ▪ Advocate with donors for targeting aid in Croatia to better assist returnees from FRY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> less administrative obstacles ▪ Exchange of information between Governments ▪ Availability of free legal advice to refugees mainly with regards to property and tenancy rights and access to reconstruction assistance ▪ Accessible reconstruction and repossession procedures for HRV ▪ Access to property claim procedure in context of PLIP for BH ▪ Assistance to returnees with the transportation of their tractors and household belongings ▪ Go and see visits to Croatia ▪ Exchange visits of Government officials, journalists and NGO's ▪ Public information campaigns with the aid of local media ▪ Refugees are briefed on the Croatian judicial system, with special reference to follow-up on cases of arrested returnees ▪ Refugees make well-informed decision on return ▪ Extended scope of Refugee Associations ▪ Fund raising capacity for Refugee Associations
<p>Name of Beneficiary Population: Refugees from the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in FRY (except Kosovo)</p>	
<p>Main Goal(s): To provide basic assistance to vulnerable refugees</p>	
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<p>Related Outputs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable refugees, whether in collective centers or in private accommodation ▪ Provide community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sub-agreements with implementing partners providing humanitarian food and non-food assistance, psycho-social and medical assistance, and legal assistance

<p>assistance to vulnerable refugees, whether in collective centers or in private accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free legal advice to refugees ▪ screen inhabitants of collective centers and seek alternative accommodation for those deemed capable ▪ review activities that maintain dependency with the aim to achieve increased self-reliance ▪ on a case by case basis target vulnerable refugees with provision of non-food items ▪ facilitate the transfer of vulnerable refugees in collective centers to national institutions and provide support to the latter ▪ provide support to the offices of the municipal Trustees to help identify solutions for the residents of collective centers and private accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective centres monitoring and surveys, and alternative accommodation identified. ▪ Non-food items provided to only the most vulnerable refugees. ▪ Vulnerable refugees transferred to specialised institutions in coordination with the Government and relevant local authorities ▪ Offices of municipal trustees increasingly equipped and trained to help refugees find durable solutions including assistance in finding alternative accommodation for refugees in collective centres.
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<p>Name of Beneficiary Population: Refugees from the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in FRY (except Kosovo)</p>	
<p>Main Goal(s): To facilitate the integration of refugees, who have opted not to repatriate to their country of origin.</p>	
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<p>Related Outputs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote donor investment in the rehabilitation and development of areas where there are large concentrations of refugees with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership set up with development actors, focussing on refugee areas. ▪ Apprenticeship programme offered to refugees through already existing

<p>aim to facilitate their integration process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ support upgrading and development of vocational training institutions and promote the inclusion of more refugees participants ▪ promote access of refugees to non-commercial loans ▪ provide limited construction assistance where deemed cost effective and clearly linked to the cessation of refugee status 	<p>refugee-run businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interest bearing micro loans provided to refugees to set up and develop small businesses/ economic activities. ▪ Local Micro Finance Institutions set up through UNHCR IPs having reached partial operational sustainability by the end of the year. ▪ In close co-ordination with Municipalities and Serbian Commissioner for Refugees, self help construction kits and permanent houses provided to refugees that have, or in the process of obtaining FRY citizenship.
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<p>Name of Beneficiary Population: Refugees from the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in FRY and refugees from other countries recognized under the UNHCR Mandate in FRY</p>	
<p>Main Goal(s): To provide a durable solution through resettlement to a third country</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Principal Objectives</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Related Outputs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To implement efficient and timely resettlement procedure, ensuring consistent application of the resettlement criteria. ▪ To support the effort of case identification by field offices, outside the regular application procedure. ▪ To provide resettlement for Mandate refugees a tool of protection and their only durable solution ▪ To advocate with resettlement countries for the continued need of resettlement as a durable solution for those eligible under the criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access of vulnerable individuals to the resettlement procedure ▪ Resettlement of vulnerable cases ▪ Expedient processing of cases ▪ Co-ordination with UNHCR Field Offices

<p>Name of Beneficiary Population: Internally displaced persons from Kosovo in FRY (except Kosovo)</p>	
<p>Main Goal(s): To provide basic assistance to vulnerable internally displaced persons To promote self-reliance for internally displaced</p>	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide assistance to vulnerable IDP's, whether in collective centers or in private accommodation ▪ pay special attention to the problems faced by RAE displaced communities, and making provisions allowing for specific assistance for this vulnerabel group ▪ screen inhabitants of collective centers and insist alternative accommodation should be sought for those deemed capable ▪ on a case by case basis target vulnerable IDP's with non-food items ▪ facilitate the transfer of vulnerable IDP's in collective centers to national institutions and provide support to the latter ▪ provide support to the offices of the municipal Trustees to help identify solutions for the residents of collective centers ▪ promote with the local authorities and local communities, pending opportunities for return to Kosovo, possibilities for IDP's to increase self-reliance ▪ assist IDPs, given agreement by the authorities, with self-help projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sub-agreements with implementing partners and coordination with other agencies and the Government ▪ Special attention to the vulnerable groups and communities within existing programmes ▪ Collective centres monitoring and surveys. Promotion of alternative solutions. ▪ Non-food items provided to only the most vulnerable IDPs. ▪ Vulnerable IDPs transferred to specialised institutions in co-ordination with the Government and relevant local authorities ▪ Offices of municipal trustees increasingly involved in finding alternative accommodation for IDPs in collective centres. • Decrease of vulnerable IDP's dependant on humanitarian aid • Government planning on assistance to IDP's

Name of Beneficiary Population: Internally displaced persons from Kosovo in FRY (except Kosovo)	
Main Goal(s): To ensure information exchange between internally displaced and their areas of origin in Kosovo To facilitate, if and when conditions allow it, return of internally displaced to Kosovo	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide IDP's with information on the Framework for Return and the Platform of Joint Action ▪ organise go and see visits ▪ provide UNHCR Kosovo with information on the aspirations and concerns of IDP's ▪ ensure that property rights in Kosovo of IDP's are maintained ▪ advocate for establishment of HPD in FRY ▪ register property claims through NGO's ▪ promote the Framework/Platform with the FRY authorities and other relevant actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BO activities with IDP associations; direct contacts; NGO activities. ▪ UNHCR offices in FRY: direct contacts and surveys. ▪ Support to HDP. ▪ BO contacts with authorities and other relevant actors. ▪ Facilitation of IDP decision making process on return.

Name of Beneficiary Population: Mandate refugees and asylum-seekers	
Main Goal(s): To ensure protection and assistance is provided to mandate refugees from countries other than the former Yugoslavia To advocate for the adoption of asylum legislation, allowing for a Government sponsored refugee status determination procedure	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ conduct status determination procedure of third country asylum seekers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asylum seekers benefit from proper status determination procedures.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ensure access to basic services for mandate refugees ▪ advocate for treatment of asylum-seekers in accordance with international principles ▪ advocate with authorities on urgent need of asylum legislation 	
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<p>Name of Theme: Returnees to the Presevo valley</p>	
<p>Main Goal(s): To advocate for stability and development in the Presevo valley, aimed at the prevention of displacement as well as the return of displaced to the region</p>	
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<p>Related Outputs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ monitor developments that could lead to further population displacement and providing early warning ▪ assisting returnees to the municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja ▪ advocate with donors and others for preventive and confidence building measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring will be undertaken. ▪ Assistance will be provided to returnees. ▪ Advocating with donors to prevent displacement and better assist returnees.