



Survey
on Displaced Persons in Tuzla Canton
from the
Podrinje Area, Eastern Republika Srpska

June 2003

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The patience and willingness of the displaced persons who participated in this difficult process, even though it could trigger painful memories, must be emphasised and UNHCR is very grateful to them for sharing their views and opinions. We considered it to be of paramount importance to collect the direct views of those affected by displacement prior to formulating recommendations for the future. This represents only the first step in what we hope will be their more active involvement in determining their future.

This report is intended as a catalyst for discussion on the recommendations outlined and as a tool for reviewing the work with displaced persons from Podrinje in North-Eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UNHCR Sub - Office Tuzla,
Bosnia and Herzegovina

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1. INTRODUCTION

The return process of refugees from and internally displaced within Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in north-eastern BiH began in earnest in 1998, although some returns occurred as early as 1996. A total of 141,885 minority returns have been recorded since 1996. Improved security intensified property law implementation and increased access to education and health services are some of the factors contributing to a better return environment. After seven years of supporting the process, donor interest is increasingly focusing its attention on other competing priorities and funding for return throughout BiH is rapidly diminishing. Yet the plight of many displaced persons (DPs) remains largely unresolved. While significant progress has been made with regard to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement (GFAP) Annex 7, there are certain issues which, although highlighted in the past,¹ have become even more apparent and urgently require solutions. One such issue is the future of the displaced who still wish to return, but have been unable to access assistance to date and do not have the independent personal means to develop a solution. Another serious concern is the fate of those unable to return for very valid humanitarian reasons and who do not have the means to build an alternative future without assistance. If the situation of these displaced families is not analysed carefully with a view to pursuing viable durable solutions and developing realistic responses, long-term problems will arise and may haunt both the local authorities and the international community for years to come. Faced with the reality of a large displaced population remaining in north-eastern BiH, particularly Tuzla Canton in the Federation, and concerned that for some no real durable solution options are likely to become available in the foreseeable future, UNHCR invited four non-government organisations, Tuzlanska Amica², HMD International Response³, Swiss Red Cross⁴ and Viva Zene⁵ to jointly undertake a sample survey of the displaced population.

1.1. Background

In July 2002, the Tuzla Canton authorities reported a total of 67,785 displaced persons still remaining in the Canton⁶. The Canton comprises of 13 municipalities⁷ and all received displaced persons during the war, with the highest numbers concentrated in Lukavac, Srebrenik, Tuzla and Zivinice. The majority of these displaced persons originate from the northern part of Eastern Republika Srpska (RS) which comprises of 10 municipalities⁸. Of the latter, Bijeljina, Bratunac, Milici, Srebrenica, Vlasenica, and Zvornik generated most displaced persons during the conflict.

¹ See for example the report *Daunting Prospects- Minority Women: Obstacles to their Return and Integration*, UNHCR, with the assistance of UNOHCHR, Sarajevo, April 2000.

² Tuzlanska Amica: a local NGO, offering psychological, social and educational support to children and their families.

³ HMD International Response: a UK based NGO, providing medical and psycho-social support services to a large number of DPs in Tuzla Canton and to an increasing number of returnees in the RS.

⁴ Swiss Red Cross: Swiss-based Red Cross, implementing a community development project in the biggest collective settlement in Tuzla Canton.

⁵ Viva Zene: a local NGO, providing psycho-social care and community development activities.

⁶ 54,713 displaced were recorded by Tuzla Canton authorities in May 2003.

⁷ Banovici, Celic, Doboj East, Gradacac, Gracanica, Kalesija, Kladanj, Lukavac, Sapna, Srebrenik, Teocak, Tuzla and Zivinici.

⁸ Bijeljina, Bratunac, Lopare, Milici, Osmaci, Sekovici, Srebrenica, Ugljevik, Vlasenica and Zvornik.

In fact, the majority of displaced persons in Tuzla Canton originate from the Podrinje region which comprises Bratunac, Milici, Srebrenica and Vlasenica. Many people were displaced more than once during the conflict, prior to reaching the "other" entity, in this case the Federation. People from the surrounding municipalities of Bratunac, Milici and Vlasenica had moved to Srebrenica for safety prior to 1995. Therefore, those who fled to the Federation following the fall of Srebrenica in 1995 in fact originate from these four municipalities. Since the war ended, many families have been forced to move several times due to property law implementation among other factors, hence, repeated displacement is a norm for many.

Tuzla Canton has the highest number of displaced persons living in collective centres (CCs)⁹, and collective settlements (CSs) and other housing units built with international funds. Figures indicate that a high number of female headed households (FHH) are concentrated in such accommodation. The future of these families and the elderly is of particular concern since they are probably the least likely to be able to generate long-term solutions without assistance.

Given the concentration of displaced persons from the Podrinje region in north-eastern BiH, this area became the focus of the survey with a view to better understand the current situation and future aspirations of these families. The interviews provided the basis for formulating recommendations for potential durable solutions for DPs originating from Podrinje. The survey consists of three stages and this report presents the results of the first stage.

1.2. Objectives

- Stage 1: February - May 2003
Identify the differing needs and concerns of the displaced persons, the obstacles to return and their long-term intentions by conducting 600 individual interviews and formulating preliminary recommendations.
- Stage 2: June - July 2003
Validate and expand on the recommendations through discussions in focus groups, based on common needs and aspirations identified in the analysis of the first stage, to ensure appropriate and targeted responses to the displaced families.
- Stage 3: July 2003 onwards
Seek support for the implementation of the recommendations in co-ordination with the displaced families, non-governmental organisations, local authorities and international community.

1.3. Methodology

In September/October 2002, UNHCR Tuzla conducted bilateral consultations with four NGOs which have considerable experience in working closely with displaced families from Podrinje in the fields of health, psycho-social care and community development. Their experience provided important insights into how families currently viewed their situation and facilitated the development of the survey. Their participation also ensured that the interviews were conducted by staff with an

⁹ Pre-war existing community infrastructure assigned to DPs. There are currently 6 official CCs and 39 unofficial CCs in Tuzla Canton.

understanding of the context. UNHCR organised five preparatory meetings between November 2002 and February 2003. A questionnaire was jointly developed and tested twice through 25 pilot interviews. After an internal briefing session for the interviewers from each agency, confidential interviews with 600 displaced persons from the Podrinje region were conducted in local language by 18 local interviewers.

Gender and age were incorporated into the selection of those interviewed. Based on the national re-registration exercise of DPs in 2000, the number of different family structures (see tables 2A and 2B) was calculated proportionately and provided to interviewers in advance. Interviewers co-ordinated among themselves on a daily basis to follow the proportions assigned, although this proved difficult in practice, particularly as the re-registration data is no longer accurate. As a result, more FHHs and fewer single women and middle-aged couples were interviewed than originally planned.

The survey was also designed to ensure adequate coverage of the different types of accommodation in which the DPs currently live. It covered 31 CCs, 5 CSs, 14 DHs, and 230 private addresses. The interviews were conducted during February and March in the five Tuzla Canton municipalities which house the majority of the targeted population: Banovici, Lukavac, Srebrenik, Tuzla and Zivinice. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes to one hour. The completed questionnaires were collected by UNHCR on a regular basis and subsequently evaluated during March and April 2003.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

- ***Future aspirations:*** 55% (328/600) of those interviewed wish to return to their pre-war properties, the majority stating that they have no other place to go and wish to go back to their **own** homes to spend the remainder of their lives. 23% (140/600) expressed a wish to remain in their place of displacement due to various reasons mainly relating to the conditions in the pre-war municipality, particularly poor security. The fact that their children are attending school in the Federation and that they consider the education there to be better were also important for this group. The number who expressed a firm desire to return was higher than expected and demonstrated that the return process still requires ongoing support.

It is important to underline that the stated aspirations may vary according to the changing conditions and support available. Thus, should further support for the return process be forthcoming, the “undecided” 13% (80/600), the majority being FHH, may also opt for return as conditions improve and sustainability opportunities increase.

- ***Uncertain or wish to remain:*** Those indicating the greatest uncertainty and most likely to opt to remain are female headed households (FHH), couples aged between 20 to 40, and single women. However, in all the highlighted groups, the majority still wish to return. The reasons for staying or feeling uncertain are different for each group, but FHHs and couples between 20-40 expressed particular concerns regarding education. Moreover, some in each group do not have a property to return to and/or are unable or do not wish to live with the 1991 pre-war family.
- ***Status of pre-war property:*** 82%(492/600) of pre-war properties are destroyed.

This determining factor is also reflected in the main reason for not returning yet - lack of reconstruction assistance. 6%(37/600) of those interviewed have properties which are still occupied. Some properties are located in town centres and the interviewees indicated that they intended to exchange or sell them.

- **Reconstruction assistance:** 330 persons have approached various NGOs to request reconstruction assistance, of whom 186 reside in CCs or CSs and 133 in rented or occupied property. FHHs, single women and those under other¹⁰ family structures are less likely to have applied. This could be because they may not find it easy to access reconstruction NGOs, unless they are connected to people who are fully informed on the process, as lobbying for assistance takes place in the area of return and not in the place of displacement. Reconstruction selection criteria, which can include: self-help, ownership documentation, priority to larger families and younger people, may discourage certain people from applying and lead to a process of self elimination. Of the people who applied for reconstruction assistance, elderly couples, single women, single men and FHHs fall below the average percentage in terms of successful applications. Furthermore, displaced persons in CCs and CSs have benefited less from reconstruction assistance, proportionately and in absolute numbers, than those in occupied and rented property. One reason for this might be that as beneficiary identification and selection is usually made at the return village after demonstrated willingness to return through housecleaning, etc., those in CCs and CSs may have less resources to visit their pre-war municipality and start house cleaning, etc. For the FHH with children and elderly parents to care for it may be difficult to mobilise the energy and resources to participate in return movements unless additional support is provided.

While reconstruction assistance is clearly still required for all groups, a different approach to designing the projects and in identifying beneficiaries should be developed, in order to better meet the demands of all sectors of the displaced population, particularly the most disadvantaged.

- **Obtained property in the Federation:** 5% (30/600) live in built or purchased property in the Federation. A further 2%(11/600) have obtained land in the Federation and are seeking further assistance to complete the construction and move. For this minority group, an increasing dilemma is whether DPs, who have landplots, but survive on pensions and are making enormous sacrifices to build a house and integrate locally, should be evicted without accommodation if they are temporary occupants, as foreseen under the law. Should this happen, the ones with no additional income are unlikely to ever be able to save the money to build a house and their attempts to remain in their current locality may well be thwarted.
- **Women and property rights:** Of the 293 FHH and 54 single women interviewed only 133 (38%) considered themselves to be direct owners of their property, the remainder being dependent on other family members for housing. Some women have either lost their access to their pre-war property due to the change in their marital status both formally and within the family, or may face serious difficulties in obtaining documentation regarding their ownership. Apart from 8 pre-war

¹⁰ Other family structures refers to single male headed households with children or siblings living together.

tenants, there are several *de facto* “no property” cases, of which many are FHHs or single women whose pre-war properties belonged to in-laws or husbands who have died or are missing. Traditionally, properties were not always legally transferred and therefore, women in this situation are dependent on the good will of the parents/mother-in-law to obtain access to the property. In some of the cases when they were sharing the same house pre-war, the relationship now is less harmonious. Also, in UNHCR's field work, a few examples have been found of priority being given to another surviving son with children or other family members.

- ***New families:*** Couples between 20-40 are faced with a problematic accommodation situation. They see themselves as independent from their parents and are seeking separate housing in urban areas with better prospects for employment and education. Hence, a lower number among this age group wish to return. This often results in split families; the elderly return and the young remain. Nevertheless, this can also be seen as a common trend of urbanisation in many developed countries in Europe and should not be entirely attributed to the impact of the conflict.
- ***Single men (age 20-60)¹¹:*** Given the overall employment situation, single men can be extremely vulnerable if they are not eligible for any kind of social support/pensions due to their age. They may have no income at all, no pre-war property to return to and they may also be traumatised, as this age group includes persons who were detained in prisoner of war camps. To date, this group has not been the focus of any assistance, and current psycho-social programmes mainly target women.
- ***Health care:*** Older DPs indicated more concern over access to health care in the pre-war municipalities, which is understandable given their more fragile health situation. In fact, 54% (44/81) of those above 60, who wish to return, stated they had concerns about access to health care and 48% (39/81) are in need of medical or psycho-social care. A total 114 DPs wishing to return expressed concerns about access to health care, which e.g. was due to that they are returning to remote areas and that they are reluctant to approach the health institutions in the place of return because of lack of confidence.
- ***Source of income:*** Only 25 interviewees stated that someone in their household was permanently employed, while 76%(465/600) indicated that no family member had any kind of steady work. These latter households reported that they were dependent on pensions (for fallen/missing soldiers, family, invalid, or regular), while some in urban areas may also have sporadic work through informal precarious activities such as selling second hand clothes at the street market, reconstruction work, etc.. For young adults access to the informal labour sector might be essential as they do not have pensions.

This high dependence on state support confirms impressions in the field which would suggest that for certain categories of families, particularly the elderly and FHHs, employment is not necessarily a determining factor with regard to their

¹¹ This category includes both unmarried men and widowers or divorced men who no longer live with their children.

ability to return. Access to pension entitlements and additional sources of support, such as domestic livestock, vegetable gardens and small income generating projects, are as important in sustaining return.

- **Security, fear of reprisals and psychological trauma:** Of the 220 individuals who indicated that they wished to remain in the Federation or are uncertain, among the most common reasons given were: poor security (151), fear of reprisals (113) and psychological trauma (84). The fact that these three issues, which relate to the nature of the conflict and the individual's physical integrity and well being, were raised consistently would suggest that there is a significant number of people who feel unable to return in safety due to the experiences they faced. More women than men are concerned about security in the pre-war municipalities, while DPs from the more urban areas expressed less concern about security.
- **Individual protection needs:** 7 of the above 220 interviewed persons described particularly severe security/protection problems related to the fact that they were ex-detainees, witnesses of war crimes, or suffered acute trauma.

3. OVERALL ANALYSIS

3.1. Demographics

Of the 600 interviewed persons, 426 were female and 174 male currently residing in CCs (121), CSs (249), bought private property(7), built private property(23), occupying private property(112), and renting private property(88).

Age and future aspirations of female interviewees							
Age	Return	Stay	Uncertain	Other	No answer	Total	%
Over 60	48	11	6	0	2	67	15.7
40-60	111	46	27	10	2	196	46
20-40	60	46	31	11	4	152	35.7
Under 20	5	2	1	3	0	11	2.6
Total	224	105	65	24	8	426	100

Table 1A

Age and future aspirations of male interviewees							
Age	Return	Stay	Uncertain	Other	No answer	Total	%
Over 60	33	5	3	0	0	41	23.6
40-60	29	15	3	4	0	51	29.3
20-40	36	15	9	10	4	74	42.5
Under 20	6	0	0	2	0	8	4.6
Total	104	35	15	16	4	174	100

Table 1B

For men between 20-40, the interest to return is lower than the average for all men interviewed, 49% compared to 60%, while elderly and young men overwhelmingly (80% and 73% respectively) stated they wished to return. The majority of the men aged 20-60, who wished to remain, appeared to be [suggesting they are gamarried (see table 2B)]. While 52% of the interviewed women expressed a wish to return, women above 40 years of age are more interested in return, especially those above 60.

3.2. Family structure

Family relationships play a key role in any society but they are particularly important in Bosnian society. The displaced persons from the Podrinje area come from a mainly rural background. Parents have traditionally had a strong influence on decision making in their son's/daughter's family, affecting issues such as housing and income. For many of the displaced from Podrinje the disruption of these family structures led to marked changes in their roles. This was particularly true for women who lost their husbands during the conflict. Today, many have acquired new skills and adopted quite different roles, while maintaining some traditions. Some of the women, who were in their early twenties when displaced, have undergone more long-term changes due to the above, combined with the exposure to a more urban society.

Elderly couples from rural areas, who could reasonably have expected to be cared for by their children, may now find themselves with few traditional support mechanisms. The young are becoming increasingly urban in their outlook as they have often been displaced in areas near towns. All of these factors have had an impact on return. Therefore, family structures were highlighted in the survey in order to differentiate between the needs of the different groups, in addition to gender and age.

Family structure of female interviewees							
Fam. Structure	Return	Stay	Uncertain	Other	No answer	Total	%
FHH	134	84	47	14	5	284	66.7%
Couple over 60	8	0	1	0	0	9	2.1%
Couple 40-60	27	6	1	2	2	38	8.9%
Couple 20-40	24	6	7	5	0	42	9.9%
Single women	29	9	9	3	1	51	12.0%
Other	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.5%
Total	224	105	65	24	8	426	100.0%

Table 2A

Family structure of male interviewees							
Fam. Structure	Return	Stay	Uncertain	Other	No answer	Total	%
FHH*	5	1	0	3	0	9	5.2%
Couple over 60	26	4	2	0	0	32	18.4%
Couple 40-60	27	14	3	3	0	47	27.0%
Couple 20-40	32	13	7	6	2	60	34.5%
Single men	11	2	2	4	2	21	12.1%
Other	3	1	1	0	0	5	2.9%
Total	104	35	15	16	4	174	100%

*FHH in this table refers to households headed by females where the interviewees were sons.

Table 2B

92/105 of the interviewed women who expressed a wish to stay were in the age groups 20-60, and from table 2A it can be seen that the majority are female headed households (84/105). Of the 65 women who were undecided about their future, again most were female headed households (47/65). This situation reflects the complexity of return for female headed households in relation to property ownership, accessing reconstruction assistance which is not self-help, education services, security and future employment for the family members. Interestingly enough, women in couples aged 20-60 were more likely to return than men in couples of the same age. This might be

partly due to men's experiences during the war and/or access to the informal labour market in urban areas which offers at least a glimmer of hope in terms of work, but this will be further explored in the focus group discussions.

3.3. Place of origin and pre-war property

Of those interviewed, 216 originated from Bratunac, 88 from Vlasenica, 29 from Milici and 267 from Srebrenica. It is interesting to note that the majority of people (338) were in fact first displaced in 1992 and many (485) have moved three times or more since then. The survey did not address at what point interviewees actually crossed into the Federation.

The pre-war municipality and the year of displacement seem to have little effect on the desire to return or not. However, pre-war urban residents are less inclined to return than rural ones. Of the 54 originating from Bratunac, Srebrenica and Vlasenica town centres, only 43%¹² said they wished to return. This issue will be further explored in the focus groups, but it may be linked to the better housing market in urban areas and as property is less likely to be totally destroyed and therefore, can be offered for sale.

Ongoing contact with neighbours from the pre-war village/town seems to be the norm. The overwhelming majority (515) of those interviewed have stayed in touch with other persons displaced from their pre-war village and there is very little difference in this respect between those who wish to return, stay or are uncertain.

In the case of those who wish to return, the majority, 51% (or 167/328), confirmed that there had already been returns to their pre-war villages. The majority of the DPs who wished to stay or were uncertain stated that there had been no returns thus far to their villages, although UNHCR's information indicate that return has occurred to a number of these villages.

Prior to the war, most lived in privately owned property (576) of which only three were apartments and the remainder houses. However, 16 persons had no property and 8 lived in socially owned property prior to the war. Today, the private property is destroyed/ damaged in 506 cases, while 37 properties are still occupied and 25 have had their properties partially/fully reconstructed.

In the case of those who wish to return, the property is usually owned by the interviewee, spouse, or parents. "In-laws" is a further category of pre-war property owners highlighted by some wishing to remain or uncertain, particularly FHHs, as their options may be defined by their in-laws. 22% (85/388) of the interviewees, who were not the pre-war owners of the property, indicated that they could not live in the pre-war home. Reasons for this vary, but not all were property ownership related and the main ones included: security concerns (13), want to stay in Federation/do not want to go back (12), unable to live with in-laws (10), and got married (9). This reality would also appear to impact on their future aspirations as 59% (50/85) wished to stay and only 8% (7/85) expressed a wish to return.

10 interviewees reported that they would not be able to live with their in-laws. In addition, return to the husband's property is also rare after divorce or separation. The

¹² 31% for Bratunac, 50% for Vlasenica and 44% for Srebrenica town centres.

legal process for inheriting the property is costly, time consuming and not very accessible to women from rural areas, where female illiteracy rates were relatively high pre-war.

The majority, 420 or 70%, of those interviewed do have official proof of ownership, while 129 stated that they did not have any documents, of which about 34% (44/129) are having problems in obtaining them, which can be due to administrative complexities or inheritance and transfer of ownership procedures,

Of the 37 families with occupied property, 16 wish to stay, 11 want to return, 6 expressed a desire to resettle¹³, three are uncertain, and one did not answer. Most have filed a request for repossession and are still awaiting a decision on their claim for repossession or are unaware of the current situation. 14 of the occupied properties are in the town centres of Srebrenica, Bratunac and Vlasenica. In general, people with occupied property showed greater interest in remaining, 43% compared to 23% overall, which might be related to the greater potential for selling or exchanging non-damaged property in urban areas where there is a DP population.

3.4. Access to reconstruction assistance

As destroyed property is the major factor reported to determine return, an analysis of who is accessing reconstruction assistance is important to ensure that the diminishing resources are reaching those most likely to return. 60% (330/547) of persons with damaged/destroyed property have approached different NGOs to request reconstruction assistance, 66% (219/330) of whom wish to return.

Family structure per accommodation of those who applied for reconstruction								
Fam. Structure	CC	CS	PA-bought	PA-built	PA-rent	PA-occupy	Total	%
FHH	22	63	0	2	21	28	136	41.2%
Couple over 60	7	13	3	1	2	6	32	9.7%
Couple 40-60	8	14	0	2	10	17	51	15.5%
Couple 20-40	12	22	2	1	11	20	68	20.6%
Single women	10	9	0	0	3	4	26	7.9%
Single men	4	0	0	0	4	6	14	4.2%
Other	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	0.9%
Total	64	122	5	6	52	81	330	100.0%

PA refers to private accommodation.

Table 3A

The table above shows that 46% (136/293) of FHHs, 78% (32/41) of elderly couples, 61% (51/62) of couples 40-60, 66% (68/103) of couples 20-40, 51% (26/51) of single women, 67% (14/21) of single men, and 43% (3/7) with another family structure have applied for reconstruction. Worthy of note is that of the 330 persons who approached NGOs for assistance, 66% (219/330) wish to return while 53 want to stay, 32 are uncertain, 19 wish to resettle, 6 gave no answer and one person wanted to join her/his children.

¹³ By "resettle", the interviewee is referring to moving to live in another country.

Family structure per accommodation of those who got reconstruction assistance								
Fam. Structure	CC	CS	PA-bought	PA-built	PA-rent	PA-occupy	Total	%
FHH	4	4	0	1	8	13	30	40.0%
Couple over 60	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	4.0%
Couple 40-60	2	4	0	0	4	7	17	22.7%
Couple 20-40	2	3	1	0	1	11	18	24.0%
Single women	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	2.7%
Single men	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	4.0%
Other	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	2.7%
Total	9	14	1	1	15	35	75	100.0%

PA refers to private accommodation.

Table 3B

From table 3B it is evident that the majority (50) of those who obtained reconstruction assistance currently live in occupied or rented private accommodation and only 23 live in CCs or CSs. In comparison, of the 330 who applied for reconstruction assistance, 133 live in occupied or rented private accommodation and 186 live in CCs or CSs. DPs in CCs who obtained assistance tend to be families targeted under small projects especially developed for CC residents¹⁴.

As mentioned earlier, these results may be related to the methodology adopted by those offering reconstruction assistance. It involves beneficiary selection taking place at the return site after the person/family has demonstrated commitment to return through house cleaning and by staying overnight for a long period in the pre-war property. Access to this process largely depends on being a member of an organised group with representatives and being very active at the return site. The groups tend to be led by men and those accessing support will probably be the most mobile and active, as they are more likely to draw the attention of the supporting agencies.

While this is a rational approach to reconstruction and one which was developed in response to the "empty reconstructed houses problem", the current methodology does little to recognise and include the specific needs of the elderly and female headed households living in collective centres and settlements.

The above combined with the tendency to exclude single people, the elderly and female headed households for financial reasons (cost versus no. of beneficiaries and only a small number of key in hand houses), have led to these people becoming the ones "left behind".

23% (75/330) of the applicants have received a positive decision or assistance so far, including 49 who wish to return, 14 who want to stay, 8 who are uncertain, and four who wish to resettle. This situation confirms the difficulties that reconstruction NGOs are having in relation to ensuring that the beneficiaries selected are genuine in their desire to return. Currently the beneficiary selection process for reconstruction does not focus on events relating to trauma and health. Problems relating to these aspects may be overlooked and can also contribute to a failure to return later.

25 persons have had their houses partially or fully reconstructed and are currently still

¹⁴ One example is the Swiss Humanitarian Assistance agency, SHA, which is only targeting CC residents with reconstruction assistance.

in the Federation. Of these, 14 expressed a wish to return, 5 want to stay, 3 are uncertain, and 3 wish to resettle. For the 14 persons who have had their houses reconstructed and wish to return, three are planning to return immediately and three after the school year is finished. In three of the five cases who wish to remain, the interviewees also identified psychological trauma as an obstacle to return.

3.5. Future aspirations

Of the 600 persons interviewed, 328 (or 55%) stated that they wish to return, while 140 (or 23%) opted to stay, 80 (or 13%) are uncertain, 40 stated other intentions (mainly to resettle) and only 12 did not answer¹⁵. In general, however, there are several obstacles for all of the above mentioned aspirations and people may change their minds depending on the available options. Thus, these figures only provide an indication of people's intentions.

A comparison between future aspirations and the current accommodation shows that those more inclined to return are living in CSs (148/249 or 59%), occupied property (72/112 or 64%) or are renting property (48/88 or 55%), while for CCs the figure is 45% (54/121) and the 30 DPs living in bought or built private properties have very little interest to return. DPs in CCs showed a higher degree of uncertainty with 23% (28/121) stating they are uncertain whether they want to remain or return.

As seen below, the reasons for not returning yet, for wanting to stay or for being uncertain about one's future aspirations are very similar.

Reasons for returning and not having done so earlier

The main reasons for wishing to return are not so much governed by the conditions in the pre-war municipality, but rather a clear wish on the part of the interviewees to live in their own property (229/328) and remain there for the rest of their lives (224/328). Of noted importance, however, is that 75% (247/328) stated that there is no other place to go. This is a clear indication of the perceived lack of available opportunities in both place of displacement and origin. Two other major factors were that friends or neighbours had already returned and that the security situation in the pre-war municipality had improved.

The overwhelming reason for not returning yet was lack of reconstruction assistance, 79% (258/328). Of these, 187 have actually approached a reconstruction NGO. Other factors which have kept people from returning are poor security in the municipality of origin (47% or 155/328), poor infrastructure (43% or 142/328), difficulties in accessing health care (35% or 114/328), fear of reprisals (35% or 113/328) and that the children are at school in the Federation (31% or 100/328).

Women and men above 60 and men under 20 expressed the greatest interest in returning, 72% (48/67), 81% (33/41) and 75% (6/8) respectively. The 108 interviewees

¹⁵ In comparing the responses given to UNHCR and the NGOs regarding future aspirations, a greater degree of certainty was reflected in responses provided to the NGOs. Consequently, a higher percentage stated that they wished to return as well as to stay in the interviewees conducted by the NGOs (NGO – 60% and UNHCR – 49%, NGO – 27% and UNHCR 20%, respectively). In addition, a higher number indicated other future aspirations, mainly to resettle, in the UNHCR interviews; 11% compared to 3% for the NGOs.

over 60 show several similar characteristics, such as only 15 having children in primary and/or secondary school, and in the majority of cases the interviewee is the owner of the property and has ownership documents.

Reasons for staying

The situation in the pre-war municipality, combined with the existing conditions in the current place of residence, form the basis for the main reasons for wanting to remain in the place of displacement. The three main reasons are poor security in the pre-war municipality (64% or 89/140), children attending school in the Federation (54% or 76/140) and fear of reprisals (53% or 74/140). Other factors were psychological trauma (63/140), that family members wanted to stay in the Federation (56/140) and that the education in the Federation is better (50/140). Given the high number who expressed concerns about security and fear of reprisals, and the number indicating psychological trauma¹⁶, a further analysis of trauma, security and fear will be done in the focus group sessions.

The current accommodation of the persons who wish to remain also affects their future perspectives. 15% (21/140) have managed to buy or build a house in the Federation and have, thus, taken steps to ensure a durable solution for themselves and their family members. For the remainder, however, there is great uncertainty regarding how long they can stay in their current accommodation, as they know that it is a temporary solution. Some 60 (50%) persons stated that they wished to buy or build a flat/house in the Federation, while 21% would like to negotiate to continue residing in their current accommodation, mostly CSs, 16% do not know what they will do, and 10% will rent a flat/house. The prevailing family structure of this group is FHHs (62%).

Reasons for uncertainty and interest in go-and-see visits

The obstacles to returning to their pre-war homes for those who are uncertain mostly relate to the conditions in the pre-war municipality, the five main ones being: poor security in the pre-war municipality (80% or 62/80), lack of reconstruction assistance (60% or 48/80), fear of reprisals (49% or 39/80), difficulties to access health care (49% or 39/80), and poor infrastructure (43% or 34/80). However, 34% of this group stated that they have not visited their pre-war homes since they fled, 85% being women of whom 65% are FHHs. 68% of the whole group expressed an interest in participating in organised go-and-see visits to their pre-war homes.

This group also expressed concerns relating to the possibility of remaining in their current accommodation. Only one person has managed to build a house in the Federation, while the others feel insecure and fear evictions and the closure of CCs.

3.6. Health

When answering questions about the health of all the household members, 298 (50%) interviewees stated that they had a health concern. Proportionately, they are mostly elderly couples, couples between 40-60, single women and "other" family structures. 111 of these indicated that the family member was unable or had difficulties in managing daily life, while as many as 158 indicated that medical or psychosocial care

¹⁶ While 36 stated that someone in the household suffered from psychological trauma, 63 highlighted it as a reason for not returning.

was extremely necessary.

52% (169/328) of those wishing to return stated that they had a health concern, while it was 67% (87/140) in the case of those who wished to stay and 46% (37/80) of those who were uncertain whether to return or not. As mentioned above under 3.5, 114 persons wishing to return stated that their concerns regarding access to health care has been a factor for not returning yet. There are several reasons for this, such as many originating from rural and remote areas, lack of confidence in the health institutions and therefore reluctance to approach the ones available, etc.

A total of 128 interviewees stated that at least one family member in his/her household suffered from trauma. These persons originate from the following municipalities; Bratunac (46), Milici (7), Srebrenica (58), and Vlasenica (17). 71 of the 128 expressed an interest in returning, 36 stated that they wished to stay and 16 remained undecided. Interestingly, 60 of the 328 who wished to return named psychological trauma as one of the reasons for not returning thus far, while the figure for those who wish to stay was 63/140 and 21/80 for those who were uncertain. The presence of psychological trauma could relate to ongoing problems in relation to the war experience, and/or fears of reliving the trauma on return, and/or strong feelings of insecurity in the place of return. If medical services are a scarcity in the return areas, psychological support on return is rarely available and has not been considered a priority need by donors.

3.7. Financial situation

The financial situation is fairly similar for all those interviewed. Only 25 persons said that someone in their household was permanently employed, the majority being men. A possible explanation to this might be that most women are busy with many domestic duties. In addition, pre-war, it was not so common for rural women to go out to work and therefore, they may not have the required education or skills for formal employment. Despite living in relatively isolated rural areas, in many families, one spouse (usually the husband) worked in the local factory and agriculture was a secondary source of income/food. As the factories are at a standstill or operating well below their capacity, there is little work available both in the area of displacement and return. Hence, return to rural areas does not lead to people simply picking up where they left off in terms of agricultural production with some notable exceptions. Sustainable return to rural areas requires the development of agricultural production accompanied by the latest techniques and the opening up of markets.

As many as 465 stated that no family member had any type of employment. These latter households stated that they mainly survive on pensions (for fallen/missing soldiers, family, invalid, or regular) and/or irregular work. In addition, 44 interviewees indicated that they received remittances from abroad.

Given the profile of the group surveyed and the limited employment opportunities both in the place of displacement and return, employment appears to have little affect on the desire to return or not. However, the precarious financial situation and the extraordinarily high dependency on pensions makes it difficult for families to decide on a future. Any reduction in pensions will have a dramatic effect on the capacity of these families to sustain themselves.

3.8. Education

A closer look at the 351 households with primary and/or secondary school aged children shows that of the 50% (174/351) who wish to return, as many as 62% (107/174) stated that one of the reasons for not returning yet was that their children are at school in the Federation. In addition, they stated that the facts that there were no schools in the pre-war villages/towns (60/174) and/or that the nearest school is far away (53/174) also were reasons for not returning thus far. Not surprisingly, in comparison with the entire group who wish to return (see above under 3.5), these factors play a bigger role amongst families with school aged children. They also expressed a slightly greater interest in staying, 28% (99/351) compared with 23% (140/600) for all interviewees. Interestingly, as many as 32 have property in the Federation, although it may not yet include a habitable house. Several of those who wished to remain in the Federation explicitly referred to their children's education, e.g. one interviewee said that s/he did not want her/his children to go to school in the RS. Some also perceived that they and their children will have a better future in the Federation.

In comparison, among the 125 interviewees with no children in their current household, the interest in return was higher than average: 64% (80/125).

4. ANALYSIS BY FAMILY STRUCTURE

4.1. Couples over 60 years

41 households fall in this category and the data revealed that the majority of elderly couples:

- own the pre-war property (95% or 39/41).
- applied for reconstruction assistance (32) but only three were successful in obtaining the assistance or a positive decision.
- currently live in collective accommodation, of which 20% (or 8/41) in collective centres and 41% (or 17/41) in collective settlements.
- rely heavily on pensions or other kinds of social support (88% or 36/41).
- suffer from sickness, disability or trauma and need medical/psychosocial care (83% or 34/41).
- wish to return (83% or 34/41).

These elderly couples appear tired of the endless moving around and uncertainty for the last 10 years. They wish to spend the rest of their life peacefully in their own pre-war homes. Some did indicate that they had no other option and this will be explored further in the focus group phase. Although having been repeatedly disappointed in terms of accessing reconstruction assistance, they still wish to return.

The exceptions are three couples who have independent financial means. They managed to find a solution either by building or purchasing houses in the Federation with financial assistance from their children, who are working abroad. Another couple is planning to do the same after selling their pre-war property, which has yet to be repossessed.

4.2. Couples between 40-60 years old

83 households belong to this category, which has a broad variety of characteristics including:

- The majority of these couples have school/university aged children.
- 79 % own their pre-war property and in the remaining cases the property belongs to parents/in-laws or grandparents, with whom this category has no personal relationship problems.
- They survive on various sources of income. 29% (24/83) have regular income from some kind of employment (permanently, temporary, or self-employed), while 22% (18/83) rely on pensions/social assistance and 42% survive through other sources of income. There are also 6 couples without any income at all, financially supported by NGOs.
- 66% (51/83) do not have any disabled, sick or traumatised family members in their households.
- 65% (54/83) wish to return.

This category are most attractive to reconstruction agencies; namely parents and children. Co-ordination is easier because they tend to consist of the same family members of the pre-war household. In fact only 24% (20/83) have other pre-war family members, displaced in the Federation.

4.3. Couples between 20-40 years old

102 households fall in this category. The main characteristics of these couples:

- Many do not own their pre-war property (76% or 77/102), and in the majority of cases the property is owned by parents (66% or 67/102).
- 59% (60/102) have at least one school aged child in their household and 17% (17/102) of the households include at least one child of kindergarten age.
- 72% (73/102) either have some form of employment or are able to find some spontaneous job in the place of displacement.
- 59% (60/102) have no disabled, sick or traumatised family members in their households.
- 54% (55/102) wish to return, but only a few have a concrete idea of when they will return due to insufficient conditions in the place of return.

Mainly because of serious concerns about employment and education, this group is unable to pursue a durable solution. Almost all referred to education for children as the main obstacle to return, while lack of property ownership also discourages them. Thus, they are likely to stay in their place of displacement, especially as it usually is more urban than their place of origin.

As this urbanisation process may lead to split families, it would seem appropriate to develop strategies to assist young couples in becoming self-sustainable. They may then be better able to support themselves and their parents in the future, whether it be in the pre-war municipality or through integration in the place of displacement. Younger

people may associate the urban areas with employment and education¹⁷ and the rural areas with weekend family activities or a longer-term future.

4.4. Female-headed households

293 interviewed households were female headed and can be classified into the following 6 groups according to the situation with regard to children and property ownership. There are two characteristics common to all the groups:

- The majority, 65% (191/293), live in collective centres or settlements.
- They are dependent on pensions and/or social welfare.

4.4.1. FHHs without children (9)¹⁸

- Wish to return to the destroyed properties owned by themselves or their dead spouses (if reconstruction assistance is available).
- Failed to get reconstruction assistance.
- Are aware that some returns have already occurred to their pre-war villages.
- Half needs psychosocial care for traumatised family members.

Education is not an obstacle for this category in terms of return. To a certain extent illiteracy and/or less physical access to reconstruction agencies have resulted in the failure to obtain such assistance. To fulfil their strong wish to return, some interviewees emphasised the need for a labour component to be included in the reconstruction projects and for all family members to return.

4.4.2. FHHs with children and no property (7)

- Five were sub-tenants before the war.
- All except one wish to stay and build/purchase a property in the Federation.
- Stated that no return has taken place thus far to their pre-war villages or that they were unaware of the situation.

Lack of a pre-war property has compelled them to choose to remain in the Federation. Better access to education in the Federation is another determining factor. Excluded from the competition for reconstruction assistance, they have virtually no other option than to save part of their limited pension/other kinds of social support in order to buy property in the Federation. For many of these, however, a durable solution is very much in the distant future.

4.4.3. FHHs with children whose pre-war property is owned by in-laws (79)

- Of the 20 FHHs whose in-laws are alive, many wish to stay in the Federation or are still uncertain.
- 59 FHHs are faced with a situation of their in-laws being dead or missing. They are

¹⁷ A group discussion with young DPs from Srebrenica currently displaced in Vozuca, Zavidovici municipality revealed that partial return, parents return – children stay, was the most realistic option from their perspective.

¹⁸ For example, widowed sisters, mother and widowed daughters, etc.

diversified in terms of needs and future aspirations.

- 38% (30/79) wish to remain, 16 of whom have obtained property in the Federation.
- 29% (23/79) wish to return to their in-law's properties, but have various concerns mainly in relation to education and security.
- 27% (21/79) are uncertain about the future, many of whom are afraid of CC closures and possible eviction from CCs or CSs.

Their limited access to property - caused by cultural and legal reasons - discourages them from returning. With their in-laws alive, they have less influence on the decision-making given the traditional family dynamics. As the legal ownership of their pre-war property remains with their in-laws, to return they must maintain harmonious relations with the in-laws. This can be more difficult without their husbands' presence. Thus, many of these FHHs are likely to choose options other than return.

In cases where the in-laws are dead or missing, the transfer of property ownership may be an obstacle. This expensive and time-consuming legal procedure prevents them from obtaining their pre-war property, with which they could develop a durable solution. To date, no option for a more permanent solution has been developed for this particular group.

4.4.4. FHHs with children who own their pre-war property (85)

- 65% (55/85) wish to return to their destroyed properties by getting reconstruction assistance, but only 15 FHHs currently residing at rented or occupied houses succeeded in getting assistance.
- Of the 15 successful cases, 7 FHHs are not ready for return although other family members have already returned.
- 18% (15/85) wish to remain either by obtaining property in the Federation or by negotiating with local authorities.

Their ownership of the pre-war property enhances their return potential. However, some are still not fully ready to return even at the time of reconstruction. For these FHHs, sustainability does not seem to exist in the place of return. This observation is shared more strongly by those who wish to remain. For this category, sustainability rather than property determines their future aspirations.

4.4.5. FHHs with children whose pre-war property is owned by their spouse (69)

- 49% (34/69) wish to return.
- 32% (22/69) wish to stay, of which 5 have built houses in the Federation and another 13 have the similar plan.
- 15% (10/69) are uncertain, many of which have never visited their pre war villages.

The lack of direct ownership is reflected in the lower percentage wishing to return. Unique is the fate of women after divorce/separation. The three divorced/separated women are de facto no property cases and all wish to stay. It should be noted that of these 69 women, a further three do not wish to return for protection reasons.

4.4.6. *FHHs with children whose pre-war property is owned by parents or other family members (44)*

- 43% (19/44) wish to return, of whom only one family obtained reconstruction assistance.
- 27% (12/44) wish to remain, none of whom have obtained property in the Federation.
- 18% (8/44) wish to resettle.

Outstanding is the high percentage of those who wish to resettle. As their pre-war properties are owned by their cousins, grandparents, or uncles/aunts, they can be left homeless. Their “homelessness” has led some of them to seek to resettle. This phenomenon is not reflected in other groups.

4.5. Single women/men

74 households fall in this category. Based on gender and age, they can be roughly divided into the following four groups:

4.5.1. *Single men over 40 years old (11)*

- 6 receive pension or other kinds of social support and one is employed, while four have no income at all, of whom three are over 60 years old.
- 7 of 8 who own their pre-war properties wish to return.
- Three single men with other family member's properties do not wish to return.

Not being entitled to pension/other kinds of social support and without close family members of the pre-war household, four of the single men have to rely on financial support from neighbours or relatives. Regardless of their current accommodation type and albeit a small number, they are extremely vulnerable in light of the lack of social security. In terms of future aspirations, property ownership is the major determining factor.

4.5.2. *Single men under 40 years old (10)*

- Half are employed or have temporary jobs, the other half rely on other kinds of social support.
- Except in one case, they have no health problems.
- Their pre-war properties belong to their parents apart from one case where the in-laws own it.
- No single men under 40 years old wish to remain in the Federation.

Rather than remaining in the Federation, these single men are seeking better economic opportunities elsewhere. A teenage man confessed, “I'll return if I don't manage to resettle”. This is shown by the fact that three single men got properties reconstructed, of whom two wish to resettle, while their mothers are returning¹⁹.

¹⁹ Single men may live separately from their mothers, but are presented as one family for reconstruction assistance. The larger the family, the more potential for accessing assistance and generally single people are excluded.

4.5.3. *Single women over 40 year old (47)*

- Rely heavily on pensions or other types of assistance.
- Single women with in-law's or other family member's properties do not wish to return.
- 67% of single women with own, spouse's or parents properties wish to return, while 16% wish to remain, all of whom except for 1 case have health or mental challenges.

Their access to property, health condition and/or trauma affect their future aspirations. Those who wish to remain are not actively seeking a solution to remain. Without any independent means, they seem to be simply left behind and reluctant to think ahead.

4.5.4. *Single women under 40 years old (4)*

- Rely heavily on pension or other types of social assistance.
- All pre-war property is owned by their parents and is destroyed.
- All are uncertain about their future except for the one wishing to resettle.

Here is a clear contrast with young single men. A teenage woman expressed her desire to "get married and stay in the Federation" at the end of interview. For young women, marriage with a man from the Federation might be perceived as the easiest way to remain and resolve their future.

5. CONCLUSIONS

While some of the results from this survey could be applied to other DP populations, it is important to highlight that it is difficult to make generalisations regarding the displaced population in Bosnia and Herzegovina given the specific local dynamics in each area. As with all surveys we can only present a snapshot of people's aspirations at the time of conducting the interviews. If conditions in the affected areas change, the aspirations of the displaced families from Podrinje are also likely to shift, therefore, the views of the population with regard to their concerns and priorities should be sought continuously in order to determine appropriate policies and programmes.

Based on the analysis of the 600 interviews with Podrinje DPs, ten main conclusions have been drawn up to guide the work with this specific population. The conclusions presented here should form the basis to urgently review current efforts to address the situation and needs of these displaced persons and to develop projects which can help them find durable solutions either in the place of return or for those who are objectively unable to return, in the place of displacement.

1. 55% of the 600 interviewees indicated a strong desire to return, therefore, it is essential for donors to continue with their support to the return process. Depending on the options available and as conditions in the return areas improve (opening of schools, health facilities, de-mining of agricultural and housing areas and electricity reconnection) the numbers interested in return may well increase. Priority should be given to those in CCs and CSs, as to date, attention given to these displaced persons has been limited. If those most in need are to be provided with an opportunity to return, a change in the methodology employed by the reconstruction agencies is

required. A different approach to beneficiary identification is needed, including evaluations of mental and physical health needs, as well as care available in the place of return. Infrastructure funding has been seriously affected by decreasing finances therefore, return to remote villages is becoming even more difficult. Current housing programmes need to factor in the corresponding infrastructure costs to encourage return. Generally, if additional funding is not forthcoming, return will begin to drop significantly.

2. The elderly, singles and female headed households in CCs and CSs are the least likely to access assistance. Therefore, beneficiary selection criteria need to become more inclusive and creative to ensure that these groups are included. Without such a change and additional support for sustainability, only a limited number will be able to return.

3. While the majority wish to return, some are opting or have opted to integrate locally. For exceptional humanitarian reasons, several of these families require support to exercise this option if they do not have independent financial means. This matter should be resolved by the local authorities within the context of the current drive to establish social housing policies and given Tuzla Canton's ample DP housing stock. Good management of this housing stock would enable the speedy resolution of many cases requiring an assisted alternative to return.

4. The issues of security and fear of reprisals were frequently raised by interviewees as a reason for not returning yet, wishing to remain and for those who are undecided. One way to address this is to enhance trust in the police through regular interaction between returnees and the local police. Employment of more minority police women/men would also contribute to confidence building. A pro-active approach is required by both the police and the local authorities, so that returnees are seen to be citizens of the area with the corresponding rights and obligations.

5. For families with school age children, access to education in the place of origin was a major factor affecting their future aspirations. The work undertaken by OSCE in this regard is important to help decrease these concerns. Also, it is crucial that steps such as the Interim Agreement and the planned Education Reform are carried through and fully implemented. At present the reform is largely driven by the international community. The local authorities' role needs to be strengthened through active follow up on returnee related education issues and visits to the communities to inspire greater confidence for a future inclusive approach to education.

6. Many raised concerns about access to health care. Given that the majority originate from rural areas and the nearest health clinic/hospital may be far away, the local authorities should be encouraged to provide outreach services to return areas. Trust in health institutions at the place of return may be enhanced by employing staff of different ethnicities. In addition, apart from having more "regular" health problems, some may face flashbacks and start reliving traumas upon return. Psychosocial support in the place of return is needed and additional donor support is required in this regard.

7. The tendency of some younger couples not to return should be considered in the context of a process of ongoing urbanisation. Actions are urgently required to develop targeted responses to the needs of the displaced, otherwise there are strong indications

that younger people may see migration to another country as the only solution²⁰.

8. The DPs who wish to return seemed to have a more accurate picture about the current situation in their pre-war Municipality. However, UNHCR field work has revealed a lack of information amongst the DP population regarding their rights and how to exercise them, e.g. concerns about access to health care and pensions upon return. This needs to be systematically addressed to ensure informed decision making by DPs.

9. The financial outlook is alarming in view of the high dependency on pensions/social welfare. Currently there is a move to decrease some benefits. Although an economically sound step, it may have serious detrimental effects on the DP population irrespective if they have returned or not, unless compensated by or undertaken jointly with other actions.

10. Currently, the RRTF global strategy, which seeks to transfer the responsibility for return and reconstruction to the local authorities, is being implemented in north-eastern BiH. All actors have displayed enthusiasm and commitment to the process. However, as highlighted by the concerns of the displaced interviewed in this survey, there are many long term development issues which require planning and programmes, particularly in the economic arena. The current RRTF strategy and other initiatives focus a great deal on the capacity building of the local authorities, which is an important element to complement their current expertise and knowledge. However, in this process, the shift from a humanitarian relief driven country-wide operation to a development phase, in north-eastern BiH at least, would appear to require greater co-ordination and support on the ground, particularly in areas such as health, agriculture, and industry.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

As highlighted through the survey, many people still wish to return, while others are finding themselves with few options available and some are in serious danger of "being left behind". Now more than ever, international funding is required to ensure that the process begun seven years ago is not prematurely interrupted and that:

- a) the return process is consolidated for those who would like to go back but need sufficient basic infrastructure and support to do so;
- b) those with greatest needs do not fall between the cracks and remain in an undignified and inhumane situation, fearful for their future.

In order to develop durable solutions, the following actions are recommended to local authorities (LA), displaced persons (DP), non governmental organisations (NGO), International Community (IC), Donors, and Legal Aid and Information Centres (LAICs).

²⁰ Other surveys, such as the UNDP Humanitarian Development report on BiH, 2000, have highlighted this issue.

For those who wish to return**1. Promote and facilitate the collective return of persons with specific needs**

- **IC/LA/DP:** Compile profiles of DPs and sort them by pre-war villages. Arrange a meeting for the DPs from the same pre-war village to discuss the possibility of return.
- **IC:** Provide DPs with the updated information about their pre-war village and facilitate go-and see visits, if their return aspirations are positive and return is feasible.
- **DP/NGO/IC:** Encourage other family members (displaced in another place) and neighbours to return together and facilitate further visits for housecleaning, etc.
- **DP/NGO/IC/LA:** Jointly plan integrated projects, incorporating infrastructure, psychosocial services and economic components, with communities which display serious return interest and jointly present them to donors.

2. Facilitate access to property ownership

- **LA:** Simplify and speed up the legal process to transfer the ownership of pre-war property and examine the possibility of providing exemptions for those on pensions/social welfare from all charges for a period of 12 months. Conduct an information campaign during this 12-month period.
- **LAIC:** Continue to assist potential returnees in transferring property ownership by organising regular office hours at selected locations; e.g. CCs, CSs, returnee villages.

3. Ensure appropriate and accessible reconstruction assistance for singles, the elderly and female-headed households

- **NGO/DONOR:** Adapt criteria for reconstruction assistance to facilitate single people, the elderly and FHH exercising their right to return, for example by lowering the restrictions on numbers and increasing the number of houses built with a labour component (i.e. key-in-hand), as some do not have the means and skills to build their own houses, etc.
- **DP:** Encourage male relatives and/or male pre-war neighbours (they themselves may not be interested in return), if any, to offer labour.
- **NGO/DONOR:** Provide technical support for unskilled male relatives if necessary.
- **DP:** Consider the possibility of sharing accommodation in one pre-war property to reduce reconstruction costs.
- **LA:** Encourage municipalities to develop projects targeting returnees with specific needs, particularly FHH, single persons and the elderly, for example, by preparing projects to be submitted to the SCRDP and establish municipal housing funds for returnees.

4. Increase employment opportunities

- **DP/LA/IC:** Create a list of potential returnees with skills and previous working experience, share it with local authorities, employment bureaux and entrepreneurs in the place of return.

- **IC/LA:** Promote fair employment policy.
- **LAIC/NGO:** Invite micro-credit agencies to LAIC office hours or information sessions in returnee areas, and arrange a consultation for those who would like to start or expand business.
- **DONORS/NGO:** Adapt the restrictive criteria for micro-credit (e.g. no. of employed guarantors) to ensure that the projects will support people to develop durable solutions and provide services to those who cannot access bank loans.
- **NGO/DP/LA/IC:** Jointly develop income-generation projects in returnee areas which also target the domicile population.
- **NGO/IC:** Offer vocational training for those who are unskilled in line with market opportunities, particularly to the young and FHH.
- **NGO:** Employ returnees as unskilled labour on reconstruction sites.
- **LA:** Improve road access to the towns where there are more employment opportunities and increase transportation services.
- **LA:** Adopt measures to promote conditions for the self-sustainability of returnees, by facilitating the establishment of small businesses, linking returnees to larger scale municipal economic projects and by increasing municipal development funds.
- **IC/LA:** Lobby for an increase in the presence of development agencies on the ground in north-eastern BiH.

5. Provide information on education options

- **LAIC/LA/IC:** Inform potential returnees of the rights to education of returnee children, and who to contact when they encounter a problem, and how the problem is addressed and resolved.
- **IC/LA:** Arrange meetings between potential returnee parents, returnee parents and minority teachers (if any), in the place of return, if not, in the closest returnee area in order to update the situation.
- **IC/LA:** Organise class visits to mixed schools in their pre-war municipalities and arrange a meeting with school director/staff in order to clarify doubts and share concerns.
- **DP/LA/IC:** Monitor and assess the transportation needs. If the cost is too high, negotiate with local authorities/communities on how to share the burden.

6. Ensure access to pensions/social welfare and health care.

- **LAIC/LA:** Inform potential returnees of their rights to pension and health care in their pre-war municipality, and conduct information sessions and/or office hours in returnee areas.
- **NGO/LA:** Continue assisting returnees, expand their activities to other returnee areas in co-ordination with the local authorities, and develop a pro-active approach to delivering health services and psychosocial care in returnee and neighbouring communities to build confidence and strengthen relationship.
- **IC/DP/NGO/LA:** Facilitate the reconstruction of ambulanta in the returnee areas and employment of qualified medical staff preferably from different ethnic groups.
- **NGO/DONOR:** Include a psycho-social care component in return projects.

7. Enhance security

- **DP/LA/IC:** Hold meetings with local police in returnee areas to discuss security concerns and ensure regular police interaction with returnee communities through visits to the communities, schools, etc.
- **LA/DP/IC:** Work with municipal return commissions/focal points to encourage the incorporation of returnees into all regular municipal programmes.

For DPs with specific needs who are unable to return and wish to remain

1. Create conditions for DPs to become self-sustainable.

- **LA/NGO/DP:** Develop income-generation projects which would utilise DP's skills and previous working experience.
- **NGO:** Offer vocational training for those who are unskilled in line with the current employment market, with a particular focus on the young and FHH.
- **NGO:** Arrange information sessions with micro-credit agencies for DPs, and provide consultations for those who would like to start or expand business in the place of displacement.
- **LA:** Establish a special Housing Fund for DPs and offer special credit facilities with low interest rates targeting young couples.
- **LA/NGO:** Initiate a process of transition to becoming a domicile and inform people on their rights and obligations and ensure their incorporation/representation at a municipal and MZ level.

2. Provide a durable solution to all humanitarian cases

- **LA/NGO/IC:** Identify humanitarian cases, traumatised ICs and people with special needs, who would be unable to access credit facilities and develop special projects adapted to their situation.
- **LA:** Identify and move the aforementioned cases to better accommodation options.
- **LA:** Accommodate seriously mentally-challenged DPs and the frail elderly without family support requiring care either in a system of home care, or if no other better options are available, in specialised institutions, based on agreements between them, their families and professional medical advice.
- **NGO:** Continue to provide psychosocial care to displaced families in need thereof.

3. Promote community development

- **NGO/LA:** Continue implementing on-going community development projects in CCs/CSs (e.g. Mihatovici, Spionica), and expand these to other CSs.
- **DPs:** Organise themselves at each location to identify, address and solve problems within the community and with local authorities.

ANNEX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DPs IN TUZLA CANTON ORIGINATING FROM THE PODRINJE AREA

Reference Number: _____

Interviewed by (Name/Agency): _____ **Date:** _____

Basic Information

Q1. Gender of interviewee

- 1. Female
- 2. Male

Q2. Age of interviewee:

- 1. ~20
- 2. 21~40
- 3. 41~60
- 4. 60~

Q3. Type of current accommodation

- 1. Collective Centre
- 2. Collective Settlement
- 3. Private Accommodation (rented)
- 4. Private Accommodation (bought)
- 5. Private Accommodation (built)
- 6. Private Accommodation (occupied)

Family situation

Q4. Family structure of interviewee:

- 1. Young couple (20-40ys)
- 2. Middle-aged couple (40-60ys)
- 3. Old couple (60ys-)
- 4. Female-headed family
- 5. Single woman
- 6. Single man
- 7. Others (please specify) _____ .

Q5. Number of school children in the current (nucleus) household of interviewee: please indicate in the table below.

Gender/ Age	Kindergarten	Primary school	Secondary school	University	Total
Female					
Male					

Q6. Status of the other family members of the pre-war household of interviewee: please indicate the relationship with them (e.g. sister/brother, mother/father in law, aunt/uncle, etc).

- 1. Returned _____

- 2. Still displaced in BiH _____
- 3. Locally integrated _____
- 4. Resettled in the third country _____
- 5. Refugee _____
- 6. Working abroad _____
- 7. Others (please specify) _____

Q7. Is anyone disabled in your current household?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q8. Is anyone sick in your current household?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q9. Have you or any family member (of current household) ever enjoyed psychosocial care due to war-related trauma?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q10. (For those who chose "yes" for Q7, 8 or/and 9) How serious is your or your family member's disability, sickness or war-related trauma? Please provide brief details.

- Unable to manage a daily life
- Difficult to manage a daily life
- Able to manage a daily life, but sometimes have problems
- Others (please specify) _____
- No Answer

Q11. How necessary is medical treatment or psychosocial care today for the person(s) mentioned in Q7, 8 and 9?

- 1. Very necessary
- 2. Slightly necessary
- 3. Unnecessary
- 4. Don't know
- 5. No answer

Financial situation**Q12. Employment status of interviewee**

- 1. Self-employed
- 2. Permanently employed
- 3. Temporary employed
- 4. Worker on waiting: employed but no work
- 5. Unemployed
- 6. Pensioner
- 7. Others (please specify) _____

Q13. Is any other family member (of current household) employed?

No.	Employment status	Who?
1	Self-employed	
2	Permanently employed	
3	Temporary employed	
4	Worker on waiting: employed but no work	

Q14. Financial sources of the whole family (current household); please tick all applicable items.

- 1. Salary
- 2. Income from temporary job
- 3. Pension
- 4. Pension for fallen soldiers
- 5. Widow's pension
- 6. Benefit for missing person
- 7. Selling products from the land
- 8. Selling handicrafts
- 9. Rent
- 10. Remittances from abroad
- 11. Savings
- 12. Others (please specify) _____

Pre-war address & displacement history**Q15. Pre-war Municipality of interviewee: please specify.**

Q16. Pre-war village/town of interviewee

Q17. Do you still keep in touch with the DPs from the same home village/town? If no, why?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No – why? _____
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q18. Have anyone returned to your home village/town? If yes, how many families?

- 1. Yes – _____ families
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q19. Date of displacement from the pre-war property (mm/yyyy)

_____/_____/_____.

Q20. Date of entry at the current address (mm/yyyy)

_____/_____/_____.

Q21. How many times have you changed accommodations after the displacement from the pre-war property?

- 1. None
- 2. Once
- 3. Twice
- 4. Over three times

Pre-war property situation

Q22. Type of your or your family member's (pre-war household) property:

- 1. Socially owned property
- 2. Privately owned property
- 3. No property (please proceed to Q33)
- 4. Don't know
- 5. No answer

Q23. If you or your family member (pre-war household) has some kind of property, what kind?

- 1. House
- 2. Apartment

Q24. What is the condition of the pre-war property?

- 1. Destroyed (please proceed to Q25-27, 31-32)
- 2. Occupied (please proceed to Q25-30)
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer
- 5. Other (please specify) _____

Q25. Who is the owner of the property?

- Interviewee
- Spouse
- Father/Mother
- Father-in-law/Mother-in-law
- Other family member. Please specify _____

Q26. If it is not your own property, can you live there if conditions allow (i.e. if repossessed, reconstructed, etc.)? If no, please specify.

- Yes
- No, because _____

Q27. Do you have any document to prove the ownership of your or your family member's property (pre-war household)? If yes, please specify. If no, why?

- 1. Yes _____
- 2. No, because _____
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q28. If your or your family member's property (pre-war household) is occupied, have you or your family member submitted a claim for repossession? If no, please specify.

- 1. Yes
- 2. No, because _____
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q29. If you or you family member have submitted a claim, did you receive an answer? If rejected, why?

- 1. Accepted
- 2. Rejected, because _____
- 3. Still waiting
- 4. Don't know
- 5. No answer

Q30. If a positive decision was issued but a temporary occupant did not vacate the property, have you or your family member requested an enforcement of the decision? If no, why?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No _____
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No Answer

Q31. If you or your family member's property is destroyed, have you or your family member approached any agency regarding housing reconstruction/repair assistance? If no, why?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No, because _____
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No Answer

Q32. Have you or your family member succeeded to obtain housing reconstruction/repair assistance? If no, why?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No, because _____
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No Answer

Q33. If you or your family member (pre-war household) have no pre-war property, please provide brief details.

Future Aspiration

Q34. Do you want to stay or return to your pre-war home? If you prefer another option, please specify.

- 1. Want to stay (please proceed to Q35-38)
- 2. Want to return (please proceed to Q39-41)
- 3. Don't know (please proceed to Q42-45)
- 4. Prefer another option _____
- 5. No Answer

Q35. If you want to stay, why? Please tick all applicable items.

- 1. Friends and neighbours are all in the Federation.
- 2. Other family members want to stay in the Federation.
- 3. More entertainment/social activities in the Federation.
- 4. Have property in the Federation.
- 5. Have no property in pre-war Municipality
- 6. Lack of reconstruction assistance.
- 7. Poor basic infrastructure in pre-war Municipality.
- 8. Poor security in pre-war Municipality.

- 9. Fear of reprisals in pre-war Municipality.
- 10. More employment opportunities in the Federation
- 11. Children attending school in the Federation
- 12. Better education in the Federation
- 13. No school in pre-war village/town
- 14. Nearest school to pre-war home is far away
- 15. Difficult access to health care in pre-war Municipality
- 16. Difficult access to pension in pre-war Municipality
- 17. Own/family member's psychological trauma
- 18. Discrimination in pre-war Municipality
- 19. Political environment in pre-war Municipality
- 20. Lack of information on pre-war Municipality
- 21. Others (please specify) _____

Q36. Do you think you can stay in the current accommodation?

- 1. Yes, forever.
- 2. Yes, for a certain period.
- 3. No
- 4. Don't know
- 5. No answer

Q37. Why do you think so?

Q38. If you want to stay in the Federation but do not think you can stay at the current accommodation, what will you do?

- 1. Purchase a house/apartment in the Federation
- 2. Rent a house/apartment in the Federation
- 3. Build a house/apartment in the Federation
- 4. Negotiate with local authorities/others to let you stay
- 5. Don't know
- 6. Other (please specify) _____

Q39. If you want to return to your pre-war home, why? Please tick all applicable items.

- 1. Some neighbours/friends returned.
- 2. Other family members returned.
- 3. No other place to go
- 4. My or my family member's property is in pre-war Municipality
- 5. Want to spend the rest of my life in my home village/town
- 6. Security situation in pre-war Municipality has improved
- 7. Some employment opportunities in pre-war Municipality
- 8. Education environment in pre-war Municipality has improved
- 9. Health care system in pre-war Municipality has improved
- 10. Enough pension in pre-war Municipality
- 11. Political environment in pre-war Municipality has improved
- 12. Others (please specify) _____

Q40. Do you have any idea of when you will return to your pre-war home?

Q41. If you want to return, what has prevented you from returning so far? Please tick all applicable items.

- 1. Friends and neighbours are all in the Federation
- 2. Other family members want to stay in the Federation.
- 3. More entertainment/social activities in the Federation.
- 4. Have property in the Federation.
- 5. Have no property in pre-war Municipality.

- 6. Slow PLIP procedure
- 7. Lack of reconstruction assistance.
- 8. Poor basic infrastructure in pre-war Municipality.
- 9. Poor security in pre-war Municipality
- 10. Fear of reprisals in pre-war Municipality.
- 11. More employment opportunities in the Federation
- 12. Children attending school in the Federation
- 13. Better education in the Federation
- 14. No school in pre-war village/town
- 15. Nearest school to pre-war home is far away
- 16. Difficult access to health care in pre-war Municipality
- 17. Difficult access to pension in pre-war Municipality
- 18. Own/Family member's psychological trauma
- 19. Discrimination in pre-war Municipality
- 20. Political environment in pre-war Municipality
- 21. Lack of information on pre-war Municipality
- 22. Others (please specify) _____

Q42. If you don't know if you want to stay or return, have you ever visited you pre-war home?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't want to. Please specify why _____

Q43. Would you be interested in an organised go-and-see visit to your pre-war home?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. No answer

Q44. If you don't know whether you want to stay or return, what are the obstacles to return to the pre-war address? Please tick all applicable items.

- 1. Friends and neighbours are all in the Federation
- 2. Other family members want to stay in the Federation.
- 3. More entertainment/social activities in the Federation.
- 4. Have property in the Federation.
- 5. Have no property in pre-war Municipality.
- 6. Slow PLIP procedure
- 7. Lack of reconstruction assistance.
- 8. Poor basic infrastructure in pre-war Municipality.
- 9. Poor security in pre-war Municipality
- 10. Fear of reprisals in pre-war Municipality.
- 11. More employment opportunities in the Federation
- 12. No school in pre-war village/town
- 13. Nearest school to pre-war home is far away
- 14. Better education in the Federation
- 15. Difficult access to health care in pre-war Municipality
- 16. Difficult access to pension in pre-war Municipality
- 17. Own/family member's psychological trauma
- 18. Discrimination in pre-war Municipality
- 19. Political environment in pre-war Municipality
- 20. Lack of information on pre-war Municipality
- 21. Others (please specify) _____

Q45. If you don't know whether you want to stay or return, what are the obstacles to stay

in the current accommodation?

- 1. Possible eviction from the current accommodation by PLIP
- 2. Possible eviction from the current accommodation by reconstruction
- 3. Closure of Collective Centres
- 4. Feeling uncomfortable about staying in someone else's property
- 5. Feeling of uncertainty in general
- 6. Harassment from local residents
- 7. Financial difficulties
- 8. Others (please specify)_____

Q46. Please make any free comment on your future aspiration, in connection with the difficulties you are facing now.

Q47. Any free comments from the interviewer