

Project Evaluation

Country: Republic of Croatia

Project Title: “Assistance to returnees and vulnerable groups in FSN / FSS”;
(currently referred to as: “**Community Support Programme**”)

Project Activity: a. Netherlands Red Cross: 50557 and donation DAF truck
b. Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs: HR 00390,
NRCS 50635

Project Budget: - Netherlands Red Cross Society : Hfl 355.910,=
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs : Hfl 1.437.602,=

Evaluation: 8 November - 21 December 2001

NRCS counterpart: Croatian Red Cross Society

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Acronyms

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
EVI	Extremely Vulnerable Individuals
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
FSN	Former Sector South
FSS	Former Sector North
ICRC	International Committee Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOs	International Humanitarian Organisations
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
ODPR	Office for Displaced Persons, Returnees and Refugees
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RMDB	Return Mode Data Base
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNTAES	United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium

Aim of the evaluation

The aim of the evaluation, as stipulated in the Terms of Reference of 5 November 2001, is a.o. to “*evaluate the project performance, impact and effectiveness, ...and evaluate whether the beneficiary criteria were adequate and adhered too.*”

Of particular concern to assess has been the post 2001 vulnerability among beneficiaries, after phasing out the project support by the Netherlands Red Cross to the Croatian Red Cross. An additional aim has been to identify needs based activities for a continued partnership between Netherlands Red Cross and the Croatian Red Cross, possibly in the framework of the Regional Population Movement Programme.

Methodology

The evaluation has been carried out by the Croatian Red Cross and Netherlands Red Cross, whereby both National Societies allocated a representative with the task to achieve the aim of the evaluation.

The evaluators, the Croatian Red Cross Population Movement Coordinator, and a consultant of the Netherlands Red Cross, did fact finding through desk research, field visits and through interviews with relevant Red Cross Movement staff and volunteers, with beneficiaries, with NGO, governmental and embassy representatives.

The evaluation mission complements an identification mission to Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The latter mission, carried out only by the Netherlands Red Cross consultant, had the aim to identify needs proposed activities in former Yugoslavia that can be supported by the Netherlands Red Cross in 2002-2003, taking into account the Netherlands Red Cross focus in the region on elements like emergency assistance, Regional Population Movement programme and Health and Care.

The structure of the report comprises:

- I** Context;
- II** Results;
- III** Conclusions and Recommendations;
- IV** Annexes;

Visited branches in Croatia have been Donji Lapac, Gracac, Benkovac, Sisak, Sinj, Knin and Vrlika. The duration of the mission has been approx. two weeks: 12 - 20 November and 8 -17 December 2001.

Summary

The Croatian Red Cross, supported by the Netherlands Red Cross and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is assisting some 6.400 vulnerable beneficiaries on a monthly basis in Croatia's areas of special state concern: Banovina, Kordun, Lika and Dalmatian Hinterland.

Evaluated is the "Community Support Programme", a programme which consists of several project components: Grassroot Information Volunteer Network; Food parcels; Welcome parcels; Hygienic parcels; Other relief supplies; Logistical services.

Of indispensable importance, funded by UNHCR, are 18 Mobile Teams which the participating branches of the Community Support programme have operative in their committees. The Mobile Teams make the services happen, on a daily basis, often to beneficiaries in remote hamlets.

The activity is complimentary to the Croatian Government's Social Programme, which is operative in the target region since April 2001, using the Croatian Red Cross distribution network.

The input of the Netherlands Red Cross in the programme has been to procure and ship bulk food items from the Netherlands to Croatia, provide funding and logistical support, and monitor the implementation.

The Croatian Red Cross programme complements humanitarian assistance projects carried out by other agencies in the region. The added value to each of the NGOs' projects of reconstruction, income generation, distributing humanitarian aid and services clearly contributes to a better quality of life for those who did return, and for those who remained in the area of special state concern.

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Evaluating the achievement of the programme **objective**, which was set in the project proposal in mid 2000, it can be concluded that the objective has been met, realising the difficulty in quantifying this. The objective has been set to get an "*improved humanitarian situation for extremely vulnerable persons (EVI) in the regions Banovina, Kordun, Lika and Dalmatian Hinterland (also referred to as "areas of special state concern")*".

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From cost effectiveness point of view, the total expenditure per beneficiary is an estimated 9.80 euro p/month.

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Considerable importance is given to the presence of the Croatian Red Cross volunteers in the field. Beside cherishing reconciliation between remainees and returnees on the spot, the role of the volunteers is described by beneficiaries as vital.

The distribution of a welcome (food) parcel to newly arrived returnees is well received by the beneficiaries, and it is a good tool for the Red Cross volunteers to make the first contact, bridge a gap in communication, and makes further contact

much easier.

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The Netherlands Red Cross support covered an intermediate moment for the Croatian Government to settle the procurement procedures with the Ministry of Emergencies and Supplies. The Netherlands Red Cross food support can be regarded as the trigger for the Croatian Government to take over the food distribution part of the Netherlands Red Cross. The Croatian Red Cross remains the distributor in humanitarian supplies, thanks to its existing delivery network.

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Expected results as to lower the reluctance of refugees to voluntary return to Croatia is less evidently proven. Refugees' reluctance to return is due to some other significant and complex impediments such as extremely poor economic situation or pending reconstruction.

Future Red Cross projects might contribute to this effect, in particular when a Red Cross regional exchange of information on returns will take place.

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The Croatian Red Cross will advocate to the Government of Croatia to give high priority to continue humanitarian aid and services distribution to vulnerable persons [in four categories, see page 22] who the Croatian Red Cross considers as beneficiaries.

The Croatian Red Cross estimates that at least 3'000 beneficiaries can be regarded for the categories, who are in the areas of special state concern, after 2001.

I. CONTEXT

1. Country overview

1.1. Background to the situation

Croatia has been severely affected by armed conflicts, that during the last decade resulted in the breakdown of the former Yugoslavia. From 1991 till 1998, external forces occupied parts of its territory. In 1995, most of it was recaptured in two large-scale military operations, which resulted in massive displacements. In November 1995, these areas were placed under the mandate of UNTAES. In 1997, the “operational agreement on return” paved the way for voluntary return of displaced Serbs in the region to their former homes in Croatia. The following year, the UNTAES mandate ended and all Croatian territory was brought into governmental control.

1.2. Facts and numbers on the return process

The Croatian governmental Office for Displaced Persons, Returnees and Refugees (ODPR) informs that up to 1 January 2001, a total of **289’181 persons** have returned home, consisting of 200’763 IDP (Croatian) returnees, and 88’418 minority returnees (Croatian Serbs).

In 2001, the number of returnees is smaller than it was the case in previous years: 10’572 minority returns from FRY and BiH.

UNHCR reports that by the end of June 2001, a total of **124’389 refugees** had returned from FRY and Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia since 1995.

<i>Persons of Concern to UNHCR, field offices in Sisak, and Knin</i>		
<i>Population Groups</i>	<i>Sisak Area of Return (ODPR and RMDB Database 19.11.01)</i>	<i>Knin Area of Return (UNHCR, May 2001)</i>
Bosnian refugees	41’265	3’600
Croatian Serb returnees	44’052	46’000 (estimation)
Croat and Serb IDPs	14’117	3’300
Croatian Serb remainees	not available	3’400 (small number receives UNHCR support)
Bosnian Croat settlers	Included above	18’5000
TOTALS:	99’434	74’800

ODPR informs that about 50’000 persons of concern are on its welfare, holding a status of displaced, refugee or returnee.

From interviews with various agency representatives in Croatia and FRY, the expectation on returnees from FRY to Croatia during 2002 and 2003 is that approximately 20’000 persons are expected to return to the areas of special state concern in Croatia.

UNHCR reports that some 17.500 persons awaiting return to BiH.

Retro-return, i.e. returnees whose stay in Croatia is temporarily for instance to collect

pension in Croatia while de facto living in FRY is observed by relevant governments and agencies. Currently, efforts are made by Croatian and FRY government to get a better view on who gets a pension in which country.

Overall, figures on returnees are somewhat flawed. Returnees, registered with ODPR are in some cases still registered as refugees in FRY. The system of de-registering refugees in FRY upon returning to Croatia is not functioning optimal. In Banovina, Kordun area, some 17'000 returnee data of the ODPR database were not in UNHCR database. These data differences are being verified, with Croatian Red Cross support.

As for demographic trends, more younger people and families return, contrary to elderly returnees previously. In general, most of the returnees have rural occupation and over 70% is older than 60 years.

1.3 Socio / economic factors

As a UNHCR survey shows, the main impediments for return to Croatia are slow reconstruction processes, unresolved property issues, poor job opportunities and citizenship rights in the area of return.

There is little hope for rapid economic recovery in the area of special State concern. Villages are not developing as civil society centres.

The state Social Welfare and Health assistance network in the area does neither cover all persons in need nor sufficiently. A decentralisation process of health services from State to districts has possibly been implemented too early. Sufficient health services are predominantly available at larger cities, rather than in villages.

Too much of a dependency on humanitarian aid, created by humanitarian agencies, is seen as an important reason why community self sufficiency has not been developed sufficiently in the area of special state concern. The agencies, up to now, have not been able to raise community spirit well enough. All relevant parties interviewed, consider the emergency stage in support as finished. Self sufficiency promotion in all services delivered by humanitarian agencies is now being brought forward as a priority.

On the other hand, though, Croatia is less and less seen as a recipient country for humanitarian support by donor societies in this respect.

1.4. Security

Little physical or verbal harassment is being reported on. Tensed areas are Gospic and Vojnic. Mistrust exists regarding lists of suspected war criminals. Even though ones name is not on the list of suspected war criminals (list completed and verified by OSCE, pending new evidences appearing), there is a certain hesitation of potential returnees to return out of fear of being arrested and questioned by the police even for a couple of hours.

The impression is that some Croatian refugees in Serbia are having a misperception of the socio/economic and security situation in Croatia. Public information on arrested suspected war criminals upon return to Croatia caused a slow down in the return

process, as it is perceived.

1.5. Government, International Organisations and NGO policies:

The intervention of government institutions, International Humanitarian Organisations and NGOs directly or indirectly related to the project are:

1.5.1. Government of Croatia

The Government of Croatia's emphasis on the area of special state concern is given to the repossession of property, fostering of reconstruction of damaged housing stock and public utilities, demining, and economic revitalisation.

As an example to this respect, is the Croatian Government's donation of construction material to Bosnian refugees who return to Posevina (BiH), who reconstruct houses with this donation. The target group is some 500 to 1'000 families who are currently occupying private property in Croatia. The Croatian Red Cross is giving logistical support (in Croatia- not the transport itself) to the government, while Caritas in Bosnia and Herzegovina is on the recipient side.

The Government of Croatia decided on 20 September 2001 that repossession of all temporary allocated property should be finalised by the end of 2002, for which a comprehensive action plan is developed. The Government of Croatia requires additional funding up to 80 million euro to facilitate the completion. Some 7'000 houses were surveyed to be made vacant for this purpose. This means that the same amount of houses need to be offered either in BiH for returnees to BiH, or alternative accommodation need to be offered. Increased international assistance would be very useful¹. The Government of Croatia is planning to organise a donor's conference on this, in February or March 2002.

The Croatian authorities initiated a "Social Program for intervention assistance to Persons in Social need". In this programme, the government of Croatia targets, from April 2001 to December 2001, a total of 125.000 vulnerable persons for one-off assistance: food aid, subvention of costs of electricity, additional cash allowances for displaced and returnees.

The Croatian Red Cross is the implementing agency for the food assistance component: packaging and distribution to beneficiaries. Some 70.000 beneficiaries monthly, out of which some 30'000 beneficiaries are situated in the areas of special state concern.

As a result, partly an overlap occurs with the beneficiaries who are eligible for the Croatian Red Cross community service programme in the areas of special state concern, financed by the Netherlands Red Cross. Therefore, the food distribution component of this ongoing programme has been reduced since April 2001.

Croatian Red Cross programme beneficiaries are those who fall out off the government criteria, like refugees, undocumented settlers, and other EVIs who are not on the government distribution list.

¹ Progress report on return to the Republic of Croatia; ODP, 16.11.2001

Refugees and some EVIs are not included in this Government assistance programme, and therefore still are dependent on Croatian Red Cross assistance. Also, the Government criteria for distribution are “status” based (returnee, or IDP) rather than based upon vulnerability criteria.

The Croatian Red Cross Law passed Parliament 12 October 2001. Significant references to the auxiliary role of the Croatian Red Cross role for services to refugees, returnees and displaced in Croatia are referred to in this Law.

1.5.2. UNHCR

UNHCR’s objectives in the area of special state concern are:

- Promote and facilitate voluntary return;
- Support Bosnian refugees to repatriate to their homes;
- Provide essential humanitarian aid for the most vulnerable refugees and IDPs;
- Safeguard the rights of refugees, returnees and minorities through monitoring and interventions with the authorities;

UNHCR has several partnerships established with NGOs (national and international), as well as with the Croatian Red Cross, to achieve the objectives.

Noteworthy to mention are some activities of the Croatian Red Cross, financed by UNHCR which complement the programme which is being evaluated by this report:

- UNHCR is financing the running costs of the 18 Mobile Teams who deliver services in the remote areas of special state concern. Non food items like stoves, mattresses etc, financed by UNHCR, are being delivered by the Mobile Teams;
- UNHCRs Voluntary Repatriation programme (VOLREP) includes a large role for the Croatian Red Cross: UNHCR / Danish Refugee Council and IOM convoys are bringing returnees from FRY to a collective centre in the area, from where the Croatian Red Cross mobile teams transport each returnee to their home. The Croatian Red Cross is therefore the first contact in the return area between the returnee and the (new) community / village. Besides bringing people home, the Mobile Team members deliver the first humanitarian aid, and does minor repair on the house if necessary.

From January 2002, it is planned for the Croatian Red Cross to take over escorts of agricultural machinery owned by returnees transported from FRY to respective villages in Croatia.

1.5.3. NGOs

There are over 30 NGOs in the area of special state concern, all active with projects

like repair/ reconstruction of houses, distribution of construction material or households, income generation activities like strengthening agricultural cooperatives, legal advises, and checking –monitoring houses re. reconstruction.

Coordination meetings between the agencies are regularly organised, and all agencies interviewed see the cooperation as constructive and complementary to each other. Overlap has been reported upon in some cases, where beneficiaries informed that income generation activities (donation of chicken, pigs etc) were received from several NGOs. This however, should most likely be seen as incidents.

2. Project aims and objectives

2.1. Project background

Early 2000, the Netherlands Red Cross decided to continue support to a Croatian Red Cross assistance programme for thousands of extremely vulnerable individuals in the former war zones, also referred to as former UNPAs “Sectors North and South”. The assistance programme effectively started in 1995.

The Netherlands Red Cross initially planned to phase out its assistance by the end of 2000, but it was assessed that still too many persons were unable to cope with the prevailing social / economical situation. With remaining funds at the Netherlands Red Cross, it was decided to make a re-start and parallel make contacts with the Croatian authorities on behalf of the EVIs and advocate the poor long-term prospect they will have if the Croatian Government assistance would not be forthcoming.

In February 2000, a Netherlands Red Cross grant was made available to cover immediate needs and allow a re-start.

The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs made mid-2000 an additional grant available to the Netherlands Red Cross as a contribution of the project. In addition to this humanitarian assistance, the Netherlands Red Cross donated a 10 MT DAF truck, with a cash grant to cover the running costs for a period of 6 months.

The Croatian Red Cross assistance project was especially appreciated as most humanitarian organisations phased out of Croatia. Food assistance was during 2000 and 2001 only provided by the Croatian Red Cross on a structural basis. UNHCR asked the Croatian Red Cross and Netherlands Red Cross to remain with the existing project after August 2001.

2.2. Project duration

The duration of the project being evaluated in this report is as planned for 1 July 2000 to 31 August 2001. Approval for a budget-neutral extension until 31 December 2001 was obtained from the Ministry, mid July 2001.

2.3. Project objective

The objective of the project, as described in the project proposal is to get an *improved humanitarian situation for extremely vulnerable persons (EVI) in the regions Banovina, Kordun, Lika and Dalmatian Hinterland (also referred to as “areas of special state concern”)*.

The number of identified EVI’s planned to be assisted is 6.000 persons monthly during year 2000, and 6.500 persons monthly during year 2001.

2.4. Project purpose: why do beneficiaries need the project

Through distributed food, hygienic and welcome parcels, as well as through the Volunteer Information Network, the following results are envisaged:

- Contribute to reconciliation process;
- Improve conditions in Croatia thus contributing lower refugees reluctance for voluntary return;
- Improve capacity of the Croatian Red Cross branches in the region;
- Increase regional Red Cross cooperation;

2.5. Project Beneficiary target group criteria

Beneficiary criteria as per project proposal are:

- Low income (less than 100 DEM/month), or
- Age over 60; individual household, or
- Poor physical, mental health, psychological state, disability, or illness, or (often in combination with) geographical and / or social isolation .

The assistance is targeted towards a maximum of 7.000 beneficiaries from the following groups in Croatia: Returnees (especially new arrivals if they have had no other form of support), Returning refugees, Internally Displaced persons, Extremely vulnerable individuals (among remainees and other).

3. Activity overview Croatian Red Cross in programme

3.1. Organisation and management

3.1.1. Internal organisation

The implementation of the programme is under the responsibility of the Croatian Red Cross Community Support Programme department. This team of three is steering two coordinators, one in Knin and one in Sisak, who are both on the UNHCR payroll.

The 2 field coordinators are managing the participating Red Cross branches in both project regions.

In fact, the organisation structure as such exists since 1995 when the Croatian Red Cross programme “Save Lives” was introduced. Experiences acquired there, have made the management performance as an experienced and efficient one.

Communication between Croatian Red Cross “Headquarters” and “field” has significantly improved thanks to the introduction of personal computers and email facilities in the Croatian Red Cross branches.

3.1.2. External communication and coordination

NGOs and IOs build on each other’s strengths and network. Biweekly meetings in Sisak area, of all NGOs as well as in Knin contribute to good coordination. Some 30 NGOs are present in the region, many of them international. Most of the NGOs present have indicated that phasing out will take place in 2002.

3.2. Activities and results

The components and results of the Croatian Red Cross assistance programme to returnees and vulnerable groups in the areas of special state concern are as follows:

Project: COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The programme consists of several project components. Here evaluated and reported on below more in detail are the Netherlands Red Cross funded components: Grassroot Information Volunteer Network; Food parcels; Welcome parcels; Hygienic parcels; Other relief supplies; Logistical services.

Of indispensable importance, funded by UNHCR, are the Mobile Teams which the participating branches of the Community Support programme, have operative in their committees. The Mobile Teams make the services happen, on a daily basis, often to beneficiaries in remote hamlets.

Programme Components:

a. Grassroot Information Volunteer Network

An excellent tool to get individual beneficiary data and apparent problems on the table.

The purpose is to give information and assistance to returnees, refugees, displaced

persons and remainees in the area of special state concern.

Forms of support are: information regarding obtaining documents, social benefits, humanitarian aid; referral; sharing information with relevant national and international bodies; participation in all activities organised by local Croatian Red Cross branch.

The Netherlands Red Cross is financing 10 Red Cross branches which have 6 to 12 volunteers per branch: Two branches in Dalmatian Hinterland (Gracac and Benkovac), and 8 branches in the Banovina and Kordun region (Ogulin, Karlovac, Duga Resa, Slunj, Vojnic, Daruvar, Grubisno, Okucani). The Volunteer Network also works with youth, home care staff/volunteers, and with First Aid specialists.

Three branches (Korenica, Donji Lapac and Otocvac) are sponsored by UNHCR.

Total number of beneficiaries: 170-250 per branch per month. This gives an average of 210 beneficiaries per branch x 10 branches involved in the Netherlands Red Cross funded programme, which totals to 2.100 beneficiaries per month of the Grasroot Information Volunteer Network.

Each branch has its branch secretary involved in the programme implementation. The salary of the branch secretary is paid by local municipality, while salaries of the mobile teams workers are paid by UNHCR (for the time being). Some of the branches are exploring possibilities of getting more sustainable funding for their field staff since donor input is drying out.

The branch secretaries are ultimately responsible for the volunteers in the Volunteer Information Network, and the Mobile Teams (with its distributions, and Social and Reconstruction support activities to the beneficiaries in the field).

Some 70 % of staff and volunteers are returnees or ex-refugees themselves, in some areas almost 100 % (Gracac, Vojnic, Topusko), meaning that they have had first-hand experience of displacement and return.

With reference to capacity building support, volunteers received 2 regular trainings per branch and some occasional small-scale meetings organised in some branches on topics specific for that area. The local Red Cross Branch secretaries also received additional trainings in topics related to issues of displacement and return, organised by the International Federation and by UNHCR.

The computerized network on beneficiary data has been introduced to the relevant Red Cross branches. The proper use of the software needs to be disseminated to the branch secretaries whose computer skills are moderate. Trainers have been hired to give an on the job training for this. This will facilitate the monitoring tasks to be done by the volunteers and branch secretaries considerably. So far, the main database is hand written, compiled by the branch secretaries on outstanding needs.

Ten computers and printers have been distributed to the branches to set up databases on beneficiaries, and to improve communication practices.

Incentives are given to the Croatian Red Cross branches for volunteer activities, transport costs, refreshments etc, up to a level of some 100 euro per month per branch. The actual start of the Volunteer Information Network was January 2001.

b. Food parcels²

During the implementation period, **88'000** parcels (28'000 parcels financed by Netherlands Red Cross and 60'000 parcels chiefly financed by Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs) have been distributed to the relevant Croatian Red Cross branches in the areas of special state concern. Distribution to beneficiaries has been made through the Croatian Red Cross Mobile Teams (**18**) in the region. End December 2001, about 7'000 parcels have yet to be distributed to the beneficiaries which will be organised in January 2002.

c. Welcome parcels³

In the reporting period, **6'000** parcels have been distributed to newly arrived returnees, who arrived spontaneously. Distribution was carried out by the Croatian Red Cross Mobile Teams. A small number of parcels is with the relevant branches, in reserve for distribution to new returnees who arrived without UNHCR – IOM support. Distribution rate has been approximately 500 parcels a month, divided over a one-year period.

d. Hygienic parcels⁴

During the project implementation period, **39'000** hygienic parcels have been distributed to the target beneficiaries through the Croatian Red Cross Mobile Teams. Distribution rate is once per 2 months.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has donated to the Croatian Red Cross 37'000 hygienic parcels for distribution in the same target areas and also for Eastern Slavonia and Western Slavonia, not covered by the Netherlands Red Cross parcels.

Distribution of this was planned for the period directly after the ending of the Netherlands Red Cross funded programme (originally planned in August 2001). The distribution of the International Federation funded parcels has started and lasts till approximately end of April 2002.

The International Federation parcels are the only parcels now in the programme, to cover beneficiaries previously covered with the Netherlands Red Cross NLRC hygiene parcel distributions.

² Food parcel contents: 1 kg. Wheat flour, 1 kg. Corn flour, sugar, salt, yeast, dried soup, rice, oil, canned fish.

³ Welcome parcel contents: 1 kg. Coffee, sugar, tea, vitamin juice (instant), chocolate, oil, candles, canned fish, biscuits, shampoo, washing powder, soap, toothpaste

⁴ Hygienic parcel contents: 100 gr. soap; 250 ml. shampoo; 1 kg. Detergent. Distribution frequency: 1 x per 2 months

e. Other relief supplies

180 cartons of adult diapers, 13.500 bed linen sets and 1.300 kitchen sets (for spontaneous returnees) are being distributed throughout early 2002.

A modification to the original programme outline results from the implementation of the Government of Croatia's assistance programme. This programme partly overlaps with the distribution programme of the Croatian Red Cross. As a result, the Croatian Red Cross distribution rate was reduced since April 2001, therefore, leaving space for extending the duration and for utilisation remaining funds for procurement of the a/m items.

f. Logistics

Logistic expenses covered for macro/microdistribution costs like distribution, packing, boxes and a contribution to running costs of the Mobile Teams (gasoline) in amount of approx. 10% of the value of parcels.

3.3. Activities by Netherlands Red Cross

The input of the Netherlands Red Cross in the programme has been to procure and ship bulk food items from the Netherlands to Croatia and monitoring. Recognising that local procurement is preferred over import from (in this case) the Netherlands, procuring in the Netherlands was that more cost effective that it was decided to procure most of the items in the Netherlands.

II: RESULTS

4. Relevance

While comparing the *project objectives* with the *context* (problem description) in the area of special state concern, the following observations can be noted:

Objective:

..”*Get an improved humanitarian situation for extremely vulnerable persons (EVI) in the areas of special state concern..*”

Context:

- *Slow reconstruction processes, unresolved property issues, poor job opportunities and citizenship rights in the area of return.*
- *Too many persons where unable to cope with the prevailing social / economical situation.*

Humanitarian aid is being distributed and considered necessary for extremely vulnerable particularly in the remote areas. Also in cities like Knin, large quantities of food parcels are being distributed 3 times per week. It is hard to assess how dependent recipients are on food parcels. Calls for “teach me how to fish, rather than give me fish” have been heard during the evaluation mission, though particularly made by distributing agencies on behalf of beneficiaries.

Food parcel distribution is an important complementary input in the nutritional basket, important for those who have little resources due to low or non-income, but it keeps on sustaining a dependency.

The objective of the programme has undoubtedly been achieved through it’s implementation, realising though that the Red Cross, by nature, focuses on needs alleviating among the most vulnerable in the Society. Beneficiaries that require NGO support in income generating activities, and with that become more self-sustainable, are to a lesser extent beneficiaries of the Croatian Red Cross Community Support programme. The Red Cross, in this matter targets mainly, but not exclusively, beneficiaries who are too frail to qualify for income generating projects, as per the criteria agreed upon.

Of relevance to this effect is that the Croatian Red Cross programme complements humanitarian assistance projects carried out by other agencies in the region, which might well focus on having the economic well-being of returnees and remainees in the area empowered.

This complementing factor makes the Croatian Red Cross programme even more relevant. The added value to each of the NGOs’ projects of reconstruction, income generation, distributing humanitarian aid and services, clearly contributes to a better quality of life for those who did return, and for those who remained.

Economic and social revitalization of the war-affected areas is slow and burdened with various difficult problems, which follow post-war period, such as reconstruction

of dwellings and infrastructure, community development, reconciliation process and disrupted family structure.

In light of this difficult situation, input of the donors was crucial for successful fulfilment of the objectives, in terms of material assistance and developing capacities (equipment, training, voluntarism, enhancing the role of RC in the local communities).

5. Cost Effectiveness

A financial analysis on means and costs has not been carried out by the evaluators, since a financial audit of the project is foreseen in the course of year 2002.

Also, imprecise data on exact number of beneficiaries make a cost effectiveness calculation difficult to quantify.

A rough cost analysis of the Netherlands Red Cross funding of the programme can give some indication of whether the Community Service Programme is an expensive programme in relation to its effectiveness as far as donor support is concerned. It needs to be stressed that cost recovery by other donors to the programme, like UNHCR and local municipalities, has been taken into account only when it refers to UNHCRs salary reimbursements to Mobile team staff in the following calculation:

Expenditures1:

- Netherlands Red Cross	:	160.000 euro
- Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	:	<u>650.000 euro</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE NETHERLANDS DONATION	:	810.000 euro

Expenditures2:

- Salary costs Mobile Teams (UNHCR funded): 1.000 euro per team x 18 teams x 18 months	:	325.000 euro
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME : **1.134.000 euro**

(not exclusive, see notes below).

Beneficiaries:

- Grassroot Volunteer Network: (210 beneficiaries on average per month x 10 Red Cross branches)	=	2.100 beneficiaries per month
- Food parcels (88.000 parcels / 18 months of distribution)	=	4.888 beneficiaries per month
- Welcome parcels: (6.000 / 12 months)	=	<u>500</u> beneficiaries per month
TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES:		7.488 persons per month

It can be estimated that about half of the Grassroot volunteer network beneficiaries are also recipients of food/hygiene/welcome parcels, therefore the number of beneficiaries per month can be set at around: **6.400** persons per month

Total expenditure per beneficiary: 1.134.000 euro / 6.400 persons / 18 months = **9.80 euro** p/month, p/beneficiary.

Note: 1) transport costs recovered from a 10% overhead on food parcels value, while

the vehicles for the Mobile Teams are donated by UNHCR to the branches. 2) the beneficiaries for hygiene parcels are same as beneficiaries for food parcels ; 3) it should be realised that the food, hygiene and welcome parcels are family parcels, therefore the actual number of reached beneficiaries is higher.

6. Impact

What has been the impact of the programme is indicated by the evaluators as well as by those interviewed, relating the programme's objective to its purpose.

Objective:

..”Get an improved humanitarian situation for extremely vulnerable persons (EVI) in the areas of special state concern..”

Project Purpose:

1. *Contribute to reconciliation process;*
2. *Improve conditions in Croatia thus contributing lower refugees reluctance for voluntary return;*
3. *Improve capacity of the Croatian Red Cross branches in the region;*
4. *Increase regional Red Cross cooperation;*

6.1. Evaluators views

1. Considerable importance is given to the presence of the Croatian Red Cross volunteers in the field. Besides cherishing reconciliation between remainees and returnees on the spot the role of the volunteers is described by beneficiaries themselves as vital; A point of reference, trust, and comfort.

The regular presence and visits of the Mobile Teams staff and volunteers is time after time been described by the beneficiaries interviewed as very pleasant and necessary. It may be an occasional chat, or a window repair, or a delivery of humanitarian aid. The Red Cross volunteer is one of the few who pay a visit and looks after the well being of the beneficiary.

Beneficiaries who live in remote and deserted hamlets did make their own choice to go back and live there again, often in harsh conditions. They accept the fact that the village is empty, but at least they are back in their own house again, which is all that counts for them. Red Cross volunteers are one of the few who bring some light to their daily solitary existence, and care for their social and health status. This is not a luxury service, but a civil society obligation, and an act of protection.

Volunteers and mobile team members are of different ethnic origin themselves, belonging to different groups (refugees, returnees, domicile persons) which is a significant contribution in itself towards reconciliation. They work together and have the same goal, which brings benefits to the whole community. This is one model of successful building of tolerance, understanding and communication.

The distribution of a Welcome parcel to newly arrived returnees is well received by the beneficiaries, and it is a good tool for the Red Cross volunteers to make the first contact, bridge a gap in communication, and makes further contact much easier.

2. Expected results as to lower the reluctance of refugees to voluntary return to Croatia are less evidently proven. Refugees' reluctance to return is due to some other significant impediments such as extremely poor economic situation or reconstruction pending. Future Red Cross projects might contribute to this effect, in particular when Red Cross regional exchange of information of return will take place.

3. Before 2000, the food component of the Community Support Programme was supplied by ECHO. When ECHO abruptly and unexpectedly faced out its food supply, the Netherlands Red Cross response was well appreciated to cover the existing gaps in food distribution (parcels). The Croatian Red Cross distribution and packaging facilities were in place, but means lacked due to the sudden pull out of ECHO support.

It was understood by ECHO that the Croatian Government had become the responsible body to take over the ECHO role of food distributor to returnees, refugees, IDPs and EVIs, in the areas of return. Although the Government of Croatia understood its role and responsibility, at that time (around June 2000) the resources were lacking.

The Netherlands RC support (Netherlands Government) covered an intermediate moment for the Croatian Government to settle the procurement procedures with the Ministry of Emergencies and Supplies. The Netherlands Red Cross food support can be regarded as the trigger for the Croatian Government to take over the food distribution part of the Netherlands RC. The Croatian Red Cross remains the distributor, thanks to the existing network.

If the Netherlands Red Cross at that time would not have supplied the food parcel components, the Croatian Red Cross would have been less efficient, not to mention the destitute condition that vulnerable beneficiaries would have found themselves in due to this sudden phasing out of ECHO Food programme.

It also would have forced the Croatian Government to build up a complete own network and logistics system for distribution, which surely would have been less efficient.

From April 2001 onwards, the government distribution of food parcels through the Croatian Red Cross, is some 28'000 parcels per month. It remains to be seen however, whether this form of Croatian government support will continue in the year 2002.

Direct support in terms of material assistance is also important, particularly during the initial period of integration of returnees. Red Cross field workers operate as "extended hand" of the Social Welfare system, filling the gaps of that system. Information and advocacy activities of Croatian Red Cross workers and volunteers, together with other civil society players, contributed to the strong involvement of the Government of Croatia of Croatia during 2001 in solving the most pressing social problems.

The Croatian Red Cross Law, adopted in October 2001, has cast in stone a sustainable role for the Croatian Red Cross in the society. Sustainable income for Red Cross branches for activities in the local community should not be a fantasy anymore,

provided branch development on self-sustainability continues. The training seminars for the participating branches in the Community Support programme, and the 4 grass-root Population Movement seminars (jointly facilitated with UNHCR and IOM), have boosted the capacity and confidence among the branch members to take ownership on project development at own initiative.

4. The present Federation Regional Population Movement programme should be viewed as a logical sequence to the already extensive national society and Federation involvement in the Former Yugoslavia. Following the Federation assessment mission in May 2000, the regional Population Movement Conference for Croatia, FRY and BiH was held in June 2001. It set the frame for future activities and laid the ground for more adequate and sustainable national society-led programming. Technical support given by the Regional PM delegate enhanced the know how and resource base of the branches, enabling them to respond better to displacement in their own right.

6.2. Perceptions by others

Also NGOs, while asked, valued the Croatian Red Cross volunteers' presence high, as being the ones who know the situation on the spot as no other. The volunteers are regarded as "knowledge centres" when it comes to outstanding humanitarian needs outstanding reconstruction issues in villages.

CARE Canada's 2 million USD reconstruction project in Donji Lapac was based on the reports and assessments of the Croatian Red Cross volunteers who had "mapped" the area for outstanding needs in advance at own initiative.

The perception of the Croatian Red Cross by those interviewed (beneficiaries, NGOs, and government) is very positive.

Strengths mentioned have been:

- The volunteer network in the field, their expertise and presence;
- The logistics capacities, notably packaging, warehousing and distribution throughout the entire country;
- The experiences in Social Welfare and Health project implementation;
- The auxiliary role to the Government;

When asked on what the role of the Croatian Red Cross in the society could be, a common answer by those interviewed was: .."be an advocate, keep up the network with volunteers, strengthen the auxiliary role with the government, act as a voice of the people, continue do needs analyses on economic needs and on opportunities for and with beneficiaries, be project planners in the field.."

Overall comments additionally made where that the Croatian Red Cross .."might be heading for hard times: different tasks ahead, more important ones. Social Welfare is a niche. The social service system of the Government is changing, therefore a bigger role for the Croatian Red Cross can be targeted for, as auxiliary..". Other roles mentioned: "Give youth activities a meaning, give jobless youth who do not follow school a useful occupation or social activity. Training. Reactivate civil society..."

Government officials interviewed see the present and future CRC role as being the biggest humanitarian network in the country, with high experience in social welfare and logistics.

6.3. Perceptions by beneficiaries

During the evaluation mission, field trips were made in the areas of special state concern. Mostly elderly and handicapped beneficiaries were visited and interviewed by the team. The beneficiaries declared their dependency on the Red Cross Mobile Teams and gave their appreciation. Besides the delivery of a parcel, the simple fact of being there for a chat, do a small repair in the house, or do shopping, is very much appreciated. Since most of the beneficiaries live in remote areas, a contact with others than the Red Cross volunteers is rare. Family support is received from time to time.

The beneficiaries visited appeared to have a day-to-day approach to life, and could not, therefore clearly indicate their opinion on the possibility that the Netherlands Red Cross food parcels might not be continued to be distributed again in the future. Quite frankly, for the beneficiaries, it does not really matter whether the Netherlands Red Cross, or the Croatian Government finances the food parcel, or hygiene parcel, as long as it is being distributed on a regularly basis.

Also visited was a family which returned recently from Vojvodina, back to their home in the Dalmatian hinterland. On their return they temporarily stayed at a reception centre in Sisak while waiting for the repair of their house. This family has got good support from UNHCR, IRC and the local Red Cross towards rebuilding their house. The wish to return back home, no matter what, was clearly an overriding factor. The fact that their stay is lonely and remote (the children have to walk to school several kilometers), the hamlet is damaged and the local economy in shatters are still less important than the fact of being displaced somewhere else, even if conditions sometimes may be better.

Annex 3 provides brief overview of family situations typical for beneficiaries of this assistance, and beneficiary feedback.

7. Beneficiary criteria analyses

The beneficiary criteria as stipulated in the July 2001 project proposal does not inform on the definition of “returnee”. Key question in this is, how long a person is considered to be returnee? The Government of Croatia gives a returnee status for a 6-months period. De facto, however, many remain to be regarded as returnee, or become “EVI” if they are vulnerable after this 6-months period.

Although the project proposal is not exclusive in reaching certain target groups more than others - the main criteria is vulnerability, not favouring any category more than others, an average percentage of categories reached with the programme can be concluded on, in the former sectors North and South:

Between 70-80% of the beneficiaries are returnees, IDPs or refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the remaining 20-30% are among “EVIs”.

Most of the beneficiaries are of rural background and some 70 % of the beneficiary population are over 60 years old. In comparison to the last couple of years, it is obvious that younger people are returning, families with children, which implies that they have different needs and require different approach when providing assistance. House rehabilitation and, first of all, job opportunities remain crucial preconditions for sustainable return and dignified life of the whole population in the target areas.

A constant check by the Croatian Red Cross staff and volunteers with the beneficiaries to see whether there is a need for further continued distributions and, to see whether the criteria for distribution are adhered to is carried out.

Beneficiaries are asked to inform whether there are any forms of alternative support given, like family support, so that the Croatian Red Cross can continue the relief action to serve the most vulnerable only.

A setback is the fact that a computerized database is not operational yet in the Croatian Red Cross on their beneficiaries. Thanks to the Netherlands Red Cross donation, and additional International Federation support, a start has been made to use 10 computers (delivered to relevant branches) to prepare a database on the current project beneficiaries.

Up to now, the volunteers have a record for each beneficiary being visited and supported by the volunteer, but the sheet is filled in on paper. This needs to be entered in the branch computer. The programme department has hired trainers who will train the branches on how to use the software. Support is promised by UNHCR to share relevant software, UNHCR plans to hand over its own database (computerized) to the Croatian Red Cross during 2002, which will further facilitate the Croatian Red Cross to systemise its database. No duplication is foreseen in this, the UNHCR database will compliment the Red Cross database.

The total number of beneficiaries of the programme, on any given period in the programme implementation is around 6.400 beneficiaries, as mentioned in par. 5.

8. Post- 2001 Vulnerability

The most vulnerable, as per Croatian Red Cross terms, related to the Community Support Programme, similar to as it was described in the project proposal of the programme, could be better broken down as follows:

- Vulnerable persons not on the ODPR lists (if returnee status has expired which is the case after 6 months of stay), or remainees;
- Vulnerable persons, but who are not on the list of Ministry of Social Welfare. This can easily be the case if one for instance owns a piece of land, even if the piece of land is far out of any city, village or even hamlet;
- Vulnerable persons without income, pension (applies to farmers for instance), or any form of income less than 55 euro per month;
- Vulnerable persons without family support available;

The Croatian Red Cross will advocate to the Government of Croatia to give a high priority to continue humanitarian aid and services distribution to vulnerable persons in the above four categories who the Croatian Red Cross considers as beneficiaries, on top of any other beneficiaries identified by the Croatian Red Cross, ODPB, Ministry of Social Welfare, like new returnees or refugees.

The Croatian Red Cross estimates that at least 3'000 persons can be considered for the above categories, which are in the areas of special state concern, after 2001.

If no government food parcels for these 3'000 persons can be made available by the Government of Croatia, the Croatian Red Cross will have to find other ways for support and appeal for that accordingly.

9. Setbacks in programme implementation / lessons learned

There were few setbacks to report on, while implementing the Community Service Programme. One was that the workshops for the Grassroot Volunteer component were held rather late, another setback is the fact as mentioned in par. 7 on the lack of a computerized Croatian Red Cross database on beneficiary figures. The latter point has been overcome by the hiring of trainers / instructors. Also, support is promised by UNHCR and support was given by the International Federation with extra computers and printers, for branch development purposes, which complements the Community support programme.

III: CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

10. Conclusions

1. Looking at statistics on returnees, it can be concluded that there is a trend of a slow down in returns of refugees to Croatia. For the next two years of 2002 and 2003, an estimated number of 20.000 persons are expected to return to Croatia's area of special state concern. Further returns should possibly be seen more as "shuttling ones" pending a slow local integration process (and limited support for that) in FRY.

Also, the only new cases that could occur would be if the property issues become suddenly resolved, at least significant number of pending cases

Many of those who did return, unfortunately, find little of what should have been an economically recovered area of return. To break this impediment factor for return, self sufficiency promotion in all services delivered by humanitarian agencies is being brought forward as a priority.

2. Evaluating the achievement of the programme **objective**, which was set in the project proposal in mid 2000, it can be concluded that the objective has been met, realising the difficulty in quantifying this:

- From service delivery point of view, beside countless positive responses from beneficiaries, a second indicator is the responses from partner organisations in the field. Main factor of success is the coordination among all relevant organisations, as well as the complementing components of each of the agencies programmes.

An excellent cooperation between the agencies present in the area, complementary to each own operations, has been established. Where most NGOs focus on starting income generating projects, it is the Red Cross who cares for the extremely vulnerable, many of who are too frail to be eligible for implementing income generating projects by themselves sufficiently.

The programme is complementary also to the UNHCR-funded program of assistance which includes warehousing-distribution services, individual/family support and shelter activities. Besides Netherlands Red Cross, Government of Croatia and UNHCR, other donors are taking part in funding certain components of the Croatian Red Cross humanitarian program, or with in-kind donations: Catholic Relief Service, German Red Cross, IOM, Canadian and Norwegian Embassies, as well as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The Croatian Red Cross, strengthened with a recently adopted Red Cross Law, remains undoubtedly as one of the few agencies in the area, since most of the NGOs, particularly the international ones, are planning their phase out during year 2002.

- From food distribution point of view, important is that when agencies decide to cease food parcel distribution that this is done with sufficient notice. When ECHO stopped its distribution during mid 2000, practically overnight, numerous recipients were not able to find alternative sources in such short moment and could have come

into a destitute condition. Thanks to the Netherlands Red Cross support, the Croatian Red Cross could quickly continue with needed delivery of food parcels.

A condition set for this was that the Government of Croatia would in due course take its responsibility and take over the food distribution component, what indeed has happened a year after.

3. Evaluating the **purpose of the programme**, or better, why do beneficiaries need the programme, some two points can be looked at:

- Reconciliation is not an activity but a (desired) side effect from being present while implementing. The continuous presence of the Mobile Teams and of the volunteers of the Grassroot Information network in the areas of return serve as a form of protection to the returnees and remainees, and brings people together at the same time.

- Expected results as to lower the reluctance of refugees to voluntary return to Croatia is less evidently proven. Refugees' reluctance to return is due to some other significant and complex impediments such as extremely poor economic situation or reconstruction pending. Future Red Cross projects might contribute to this effect, in particular when Red Cross regional exchange of information of return will take place.

- The training seminars for the branches and the grass-root Population Movement seminars have boosted the capacity and confidence among the branch members to take more ownership on project development at own initiative.

- The present Federation Regional Population Movement programme should be viewed as a logical sequence to the already extensive national society and Federation involvement in the Former Yugoslavia. It set the frame for future activities and laid the ground for more adequate and sustainable national society-led programming. Technical support given by the Regional PM delegate enhanced the know how and resource base of the staff involved at headquarter and branch level, enabling them to respond better to displacement in their own right

4. With regard to the post-2001 vulnerability in the area of special state concern, the Croatian Red Cross will advocate to the Government of Croatia to give a high priority to continue humanitarian aid and services distribution to vulnerable persons in the area of special state concern. The Croatian Red Cross estimates that at least 3'000 persons can still be regarded as vulnerable in line with criteria, additionally to the existing state criteria which are "status" based (refugee, returnee or IDP), rather than based upon vulnerability.

11. Recommendations

1. As for the design of income generating projects for beneficiaries, it can be recommendable for the Community Support Programme to assess the feasibility for the inclusion of small income generating activities in the Programme. For some of the current programme beneficiaries, activities can be thought of like seeds distribution, poultry etc.

Also, it can be an opportunity for some of the participating branches, to further develop a certain “community rooms” concept. A facility at the Red Cross premises where beneficiaries, or youth (displaced, returnees and local population) can meet, do social activities, or get training sessions like language training, computer skills training, vocational trainings etc.

2. UNHCR dependency:

Since the Community Support Programme is rather dependent (financially) on UNHCRs input, it is of utmost importance for the Croatian Red Cross to find sustainability in its activities with own resources or with Government and local municipalities funding acquired. This goes in line with branch development exercises (recommendation 5).

3. Advocacy:

One of the most pressing issues in any post-war community is reconciliation, living together again after traumatic experiences of displacement. Promotion of voluntarism, organizing small community based projects involving different groups of population, developing of proactive approach in addressing the problems of the most vulnerable community members, contribute significantly to the improvement of general situation, as well as to the trust building. This is something to be developed further, the “advocacy role” of the CRC worker or volunteer.

4. Emergency fund:

An emergency fund, to be kept at branches might be considered for serving most vulnerable with a tailor made package, like medicines or food support. Preferably, this emergency fund is to be a revolving fund, supported by the relevant municipality. Funds to be released in coordination with the Croatian Red Cross programme coordinators in Knin and Zagreb.

5. Branch development:

New needs for training seminars occur for training the Croatian Red Cross branches (and local municipality) in Project Cycle Management, Participatory planning, local fundraising techniques, self awareness of strengths and opportunities in Civil Society (particularly now the Croatian Red Cross Law has been adopted which gives numerous opportunities to Red Cross branches to gain its own income from for instance municipalities or local companies), and public.

6. Regional exchange:

The Community Support Programme of the Croatian Red Cross has many aspects to share with refugee/IDP related projects implemented by the Yugoslav Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Naturally, it can only be encouraged to continue to share experiences, complement each strength, and assess possibilities for joint (cross-border) projects in the framework of the Regional Population Movement Programme.

ANNEX 1 : Future programme vision Croatian Red Cross

The Croatian Red Cross vision in the Community Support programme is as follows:

1. Increased Mobile Teams support for elderly care in remote areas;
2. Designed small, tailor made activities, which give better quality of life of the programme beneficiaries;
3. Designed with Yugoslav Red Cross and Red Cross of Bosnia and Herzegovina an Information Exchange Network (regional) for beneficiaries to better inform themselves on return options;
4. Set up Community Centres and women groups in a targeted number of branches in the area of special state concern;
5. Identify possibilities for implementing activities for youth (in the areas of special state concern): free time activities for youth, community rooms, Internet or teaching facilities;
6. More volunteers recruited and keep them;
7. Continued to organise trainings for local Red Cross branch development;
8. Decided on a policy on Croatian Red Cross role in asylum processes in Croatia;

Appeal proposal 2002 / 2003:

The regionally co-ordinated Red Cross “Population Movement Programme”, launched in 2001, is involving three countries in the region: Croatia, BiH and FRY. It aims to enhance regional co-operation in working for the successful repatriation and integration of refugees and the displaced persons in the respective countries and moreover, to empower knowledge, experience, exchange best practices among Red Cross staff when dealing with relevant issues.

The Population Movement programme is closely coordinated with UNHCR, IOM and the respective governments. In June 2001, the Netherlands Red Cross participated in the first regional Red Cross conference on Population Movement in Zagreb, where during three days representatives of the three Red Cross societies, UNHCR, IOM and respective government from the three countries discussed the humanitarian situation in the three countries as well as protection and asylum issues.

- Croatian Red Cross:

The 2002 Communities Support Programme activities for returnees, remainees, IDPs, refugees, have been integrated in Federation Appeal for 2002 / 2003. A continuation of the current Netherlands Red Cross supported programme is included in that appeal, with a contribution required for covering running costs and salary support to 6 Mobile Teams; maintain the Grassroot Information volunteer Network and implement public awareness campaigns.

Yugoslav Red Cross and Red Cross of Bosnia and Herzegovina plans for 2002 /2003 is further referred to in the Identification Mission report for the Netherlands Red Cross, January 2002 - and the Federation Emergency Appeal 2002/2003.

The Regional Population Movement budget is 1.800.000 CHF.

ANNEX 2 : List of persons, agencies met

CROATIA

Netherlands Red Cross - desk and logistics

Croatian Red Cross - management, staff, volunteers

International Federation Zagreb - representatives

ODPR Zagreb - Ms. Annamaria Radic, Head of International Relations

ICRC Zagreb - Mr. Christoph Vogt, Head of Delegation:

ICRC Zagreb - Ms. Maja Stanojevic, Department for Cooperation and Promotion of International Humanitarian Law;

UNHCR Zagreb - Ms. Kabi Bernander, Protection Officer;

UNHCR Zagreb - Ms. Solange Senaize, Assistant Chief of Mission (Programme);

UNHCR Sisak - Mr. Gunther Scheske, Head of Office

UNHCR Knin - Mr. Nasir A. Fernandes, Field Programme Officer

IOM Zagreb - Mr. Gregoire Goodstein, Chief of Mission

IOM Zagreb - Mr. Miralem Delic, CBR Operations Assistant

IRC Zagreb - Mr. Slaven Aljinovic, Programme coordinator

SDF Zagreb - Mr. Stanko Janic, President

ASB Ivanic Grad - Mr. Hugo van Veghel, Deputy Head of Office

CRS Zagreb - Mr. Drago Vrunic, Director of Return Programme

CRS Knin - Ms. Zdenka Gugo, Deputy Programme Director

Royal Netherlands Embassy - Mr. Hans van den Dool, Counsellor

ANNEX 3 : Beneficiary feedback

1. Ms. Gordana Ban, returnee to Knin, mixed marriage, she is Serb, her husband Croat. He is hospitalised, mentally ill. She lives alone with two children in temporary accommodation, low income, CRC provides everything: food, regular visits, toys for kids, information on her status, helps with documents, hospital etc. She says: "I would be lost without these people (meaning Croatian RC), couldn't survive on my own with children, without my husband to take care of us".

2. Nikola(1926) and Milica(1924) Bjelobrk, live in village Cetina near Vrlika/Knin; they returned with UNHCR convoy from FRY. They live alone in their remote hamlet, he is bed-ridden. Mobile team provided them with all necessary nonfood items, regularly provides food and hygiene, assistance with documents, medical care (brings doctor to the village). They say: "they are just like our children, even better because they come and ask if we feel good, if we need anything, bring oil, wheat-flour what we need every day."

3. Milica Djukic, returnee, 79 years old, Civljane village: lives alone, low income (less than 50 Euro); remote hamlet; mobile team visits her regularly, brings her all necessary items. She says: "You see how poor I am, I cannot work the land any more and what they bring to me keeps me alive. I always wait and look at the road, maybe I see their car coming."

4. Spiro and Manda Preocanin, remainees, he is blind, she is deaf and dumb, vulnerable couple. He was touching Dragan's hand (mobile team worker) as he was somebody very dear to him, just saying how good it is to have them here.

5. Milica Kurbalija, returnee, 75 years old, Strmica village: lives alone, no income, receive everything from CRC. She is saying: "I like them better than my neighbours who don't care about me. They always talk to me, bring food, soap, what I cannot get myself, I have no children to take care of me, they live far away in FRY, who knows if they will come at all."

See also the additional photo page annexed to this report (annex3photos.doc).

ANNEX 4 : End note to Evaluation report on Croatian Red Cross programme
“Community Support”: View from the Netherlands Red Cross consultant

The current **Community Support Programme** of the Croatian Red Cross builds further on its “Save Lives” programme (with “Mobile teams”), which has started in October 1995 in areas of special state concern in Croatia. Experiences and practises acquired since that time are used in the daily operations of the Croatian Red Cross. This makes that the operation is moving ahead in a solid way. The provision of protection and social services by the Mobile teams is an important role in the area.

Needs for many beneficiaries who live practically alone in remote areas still exist and needs to be looked after. Beneficiaries are pleased with support and presence of the Mobile teams. The Grassroot volunteers network performs well, being conveniently rooted in areas of return, literally welcoming newcomers in the area. Most of the Red Cross volunteers are returnees themselves, which is bridging a gap of first contact.

Over the years, the Croatian Red Cross in the areas of special concern has built up a database on the beneficiaries which contributes to an effective and necessary response mechanism for emergency care and rehabilitation. The Mobile Teams work efficiently through combining different tasks for different beneficiaries on behalf of and with different partners. UNHCR financially supports the Mobile teams, but the Netherlands Red Cross, and other donor agencies like IRC, CRS and American Refugee council, contribute with material in kind and with trainings for the Red Cross staff and volunteers.

The Croatian Red Cross upholds high standards of delivery in the distribution of the food, hygiene and welcome parcels. They have acquired a good standard in logistics, by carrying out in-country transport from bulk items with own transport (DAF truck) and equally important, by doing the packing from bulk to individual (or family) parcels by their own packing lines in Knin and Zagreb.

Last but not least, there is an opportunity for a future sustainability of the Mobile teams: to obtain more support from local government - backed by the recently adopted Red Cross Law. Meanwhile, until the programme is fully sustainable and can do without financial support from international sources, the consultant supports the aim and objectives stipulated in the Federations Emergency Appeal for the Regional Population Movement programmes which includes an appeal for continuation of the Community Support programme during 2002 and 2003.