



## CARDS

### Country

Bosnia and Herzegovina

### Implementation period

2003-2004

### Funding

€2,293,364

### Results

The reconstruction of approximately 350 returnees' dwellings, rehabilitation of related technical infrastructure, local capacity building, economic development and sustainability measures, including income generation

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## No place like home

During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-95), more than 2.3 million people fled their homes either as displaced persons – obliged to leave their homes but staying within the country – or as refugees – crossing an international border because they were unable to enjoy the protection of their country of origin. In 2002, the numbers of people returning to their pre-war homes increased significantly, indicating the desire by the local populations to go home. But for such a move to be successful and sustainable, the people had to have something to go back to.

### Homing in on the problems

With so many people wanting to return home, field research was required to identify the problems of return and to prioritise the most suitable locations. Previous experience has shown that the identification and selection of beneficiaries is one of the key factors determining the overall success of such a project. For this reason, the task was given to the World Vision UK agency, with its field office based in Sarajevo, with a record of over six years of successful implementation of EU-funded return projects in the complex environment of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### The job in hand

The 'Integrated return and rehabilitation programme for the support of the return of refugees and displaced persons to cantons 1-10 of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina' project targeted the five municipalities in the north-west region prioritised by the RRTF programme (Reconstruction and Return Task Force). Its overall objectives, which also support minority PLIP (Property Law Implementation Plan) beneficiaries and spontaneous returnees, have focused on a number of concerns.



The first priority is promoting the return of at least 305 families – comprising Serb refugees and displaced persons and Bosnian internally displaced persons – by reconstructing at least 300 dwellings. To ensure such return is sustainable, supporting technical infrastructure must be provided. And, in order to consolidate the rehabilitation, more people need to be encouraged to return both inside and outside the target areas.

Likewise, for the project to succeed it is essential to create a climate of reintegration, co-existence and reconciliation amongst the selected beneficiaries and the communities as a whole.

Finally, with an eye to future development and advance, the project is organising sustainable economic development activities to encourage income generation through job creation in the area.



### **Integration is key**

Past conflict throughout this region means that a special effort is necessary to ensure the successful reintegration of these communities. Consequently, World Vision's experienced Integrated Return Team – comprising return, reconciliation, economic regeneration and capacity building specialists – has, where possible, worked with the returnee community itself, including the NGO Refugee Return Centre based in Drvar and Belgrade.

Feedback on the number of returnees successfully integrated into the return areas by the project teams suggests that the approach has benefited individuals and local communities alike. It is hoped that increasing numbers of returnees, refugees and displaced persons will benefit from the rebuilding of homes, infrastructure and all those aspects of civil society that are essential for economic and social prosperity, in a region trying hard to build a better future for generations to come.