

FIRST EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT MID-TERM FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF

NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME IN BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AF	: Armed Forces of BiH
BiH	: Bosnia and Herzegovina (country)
BC	: Business Creation
CIMIC	: Civil-Military Co-operation
Federation	: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (entity)
HQ	: Headquarters
ICRS	: Information, Counselling and Referral Services
IT	: Information technology
IOM	: International Organization for Migration
JRP	: Joint Review Panel
KM (BAM)	: local currency (1 BAM=0.51 EUR)
LZ1, LZ2	: Perspektiva registration forms
M&E	: Monitoring and Evaluation
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NHQSa	: NATO Headquarters Sarajevo
NPP	: NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme
NTF	: NATO Trust Fund
MoD	: Ministry of Defence
NCO	: Non-Commissioned Officer
PfP	: Partnership for Peace
PMC (AF/KUP)	: Personnel Management Command
PMU	: Programme Management Unit
PS	: Professional Soldiers
PSC	: Project Steering Committee
PTSD	: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PTSU	: Personnel Transition Support Unit
RAPP	: Reintegration Assistance Project Proposal
RF	: Results Framework
RRC	: Regional Resettlement Centres
RS	: Republika Srpska (entity)
SC	: Steering Committee
SO	: Strategic Objective
SSR	: Security Sector Reform
TF	: Trust Fund
TOR	: Terms of Reference
UK	: United Kingdom
USAID	: United States Agency for International Development

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project is on track to reaching its stated objectives, despite some severe constraints that have led to additional delays and have affected the number of beneficiaries registered and requesting assistance under the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme (hereafter referred to as NPP). As of 23 September 2011 the number of beneficiaries referred to the NPP was 1,936. The NPP has managed to register 1,413 persons according to IOM data, of which 52% -or 727 cases- have filed applications for assistance. Of these 727 cases, 602 individuals have already received their assistance (83% of those having requested assistance). The BiH MoD has demonstrated commitment to the NPP by providing the second largest pledge to the programme and by providing staff resources and logistic support.

There are three primary reasons for the slower than expected implementation:

1. Doubts about whether the NPP will affect the retirement rights of beneficiaries (particularly in the Federation, given that Republika Srpska has already indicated at the entity level that there would be no retirement/pension for the discharged soldiers). Despite the fact that the MoD has conducted a strong and well targeted information campaign with the support of the international community, financed by NHQSa both in 2010 and 2011 (including appearances in television shows), that the Project Steering Committee has clearly agreed and stated that enrolment in the NP programme would not affect any of the beneficiaries' rights, there is still today some misinformation about this issue and also a level of political use amongst those disgruntled discharged soldiers in relation to the MoD, including an on-going court battle.
2. The delay in opening the additional RRC in Tuzla although its area possesses some 20% of the overall caseload has also contributed to slowing down the NPP implementation. While there can be several reasons for not having inserted this office in the initial plan as well as for such a lengthy opening process, it has been stated that the office was finally going to be opened in the coming days. This led to slower than expected assistance as the coverage areas are much larger and require much more extensive travel with three Regional Resettlement Centres (RRCs) only.
3. Some lack of technical readiness from the MoD to ensure the initial support was made available in timely fashion. While the staff of the RRC (one civilian head of the office, two military staff – one officer and one NCO- in each RRC) were deployed in timely fashion, the logistical and communications support was not always available – and in fact, some issues remain to be solved regarding transportation means of the RRCs. It needs to be underlined that of the various projects to support the discharge process that have taken place in the country, the current project is the only one where the development of the MoD capacity is an integral part of the approach and the design process. Therefore the implementation of a new structure with new rules and procedures is bound to require some additional time as part of a new and learning process.

Nonetheless the programme looks to be on track to achieving its target caseload of up to 2,300 beneficiaries registered and counselled and assisted over a two year period from September 2010 to September 2012. However since MoD projections foresee an ongoing discharge process until the end of 2013, it would be very useful to ensure that the proper support for the NPP was extended until the entire discharging process is completed to ensure quality management and adequate capacity development of the

MoD. In addition it would provide some time to incorporate some suggested improvements mentioned in this report. The NPP is particularly relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries, as it is currently and unlike past programmes the only one offering any form of assistance to the discharged defence personnel (no severance pay like the TAFS where 6,000-10,000 KM was given, approved by the BiH Parliament). In this phase of the downsizing process, all beneficiaries are professional soldiers who have been discharged during year 2010.

In terms of the quality of the NPP, beneficiaries interviewed through a purposive sampling method confirmed the high quality of the advice and counselling services (ICRS) and assistance provided by the staff of the RRCs. In many cases, beneficiaries did not make the difference between the MoD (learning) staff and the IOM (coaching) staff, testifying thus to the good approach used by all RRCs at field level, going to the house of the beneficiaries in pairs (one MoD and one IOM staff), to provide the range of services described under the NPP and prepare the Reintegration Assistance Project Proposal (RAPP) which gives access to the chosen assistance modalities. The **average beneficiary rating given was 4,70 out of 5** (on a scale from 1 minimum to 5 maximum) regarding the overall quality of services and assistance from the NPP. This shows the dedication, outreach capacity, good and professional attitude shown by the RRC staff and deserves a special mention, particularly considering that for the MoD this is the first time such activities are undertaken with beneficiaries.

A key achievement of the programme is the level of transparency and accountability that characterizes the NPP. This was reported by all donor nations interviewed and a member of the Parliamentary Commission as a very important improvement, particularly in comparison to the previous project implemented by the IOM which reportedly did not have such clear and transparent communication channels.

A recognised strength is the good level of collaboration and coordination among MoD, IOM, and NATO, both at HQ and at field level, which has led to a good mutual understanding and a willingness and capacity to address and overcome difficulties as they arise. Given the highly politicised environment in the country, the support of the international community through NATO and the management of an international organisation both add to the credibility and commitment to an effective NPP implementation.

NPP management has been highly responsive to the difficulties encountered and has tried to adapt to solve the constraints quickly and efficiently and NHQSa provided additional funds for a media campaign. The various TV shows where the various members of the MoD, International Community and the IOM have appeared to state that the enrolment in the NPP would not affect their rights, was matched by a surge in the number of people requesting the assistance (as shown on the registration chart contained in the body of the report), particularly for the December TV show aired on national television. NHQSa supported the NPP media campaign, helping in particular to counter misinformation about possible negative implications for potential NPP beneficiaries in relation to early retirement schemes, through funding and participation in talk shows. At the same time, direct discussions were also held by the NPP management with groups of soldiers who opposed enrolment in the NPP in order to listen to their concerns and grievances and clarify the situation.

The political environment remains highly challenging, with the lack of agreement regarding the composition of the government, and the different approaches between

the two entities (Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska) regarding retirement/pension of discharged defence personnel. In this context the coverage of each of the RRCs of communities belonging to both entities and providing service to the various groups is a good example of an equitable approach that is absolutely necessary to avoid further political interference of a well-thought out coverage strategy. The opening of the Tuzla office should also maintain coverage activities in both entities in line with the approach used by the other RRCs. It will be important to verify that there has been equitable services provided to the beneficiaries across the country at the end of the NPP.

A major gap in the NPP is the absence of any psychological support for the discharged personnel. While the NPP has been created to support the MoD PERSPEKTIVA programme, no psychological or psycho-social counselling have been included in its design (unlike in the TAFS design). From key stakeholder interviews, and particularly based on data facilitated by Brigadier Sinanovic -who is preparing to publish a book on the issue of suicides among army veterans-, the statistics in the country appear to be a serious cause of concern: 2,460 people are reported to have committed suicide from 2006 to 2010, war veteran's suicide rate is reportedly above 30% (1,500 people are reported to have committed suicide from 1996 until 2005), and there are reportedly some 1.7 million persons suffering from stress-related mental disorder in the country. During the beneficiaries interviews, their very often distressing psycho-social condition appeared in full light, including very strong emotional reactions to some of the questions. This is further detailed in the body of the report, but there can be no doubt that there are outstanding psychological counselling needs leading to behaviour change that need to be included in the NPP as soon as possible for three reasons :

Firstly, because the beneficiary's attitude towards facing civilian life is the primary key to a successful integration. No matter how much assistance is provided, if the beneficiary is not ready or capable of looking forward into the future with some degree of confidence, the impact and sustainability of the assistance will be questionable. At present a large number of beneficiaries are still in various phases of shock, retreat, self-doubt and apathy, with a smaller percentage moving forward and having passed to the phase of resolve and setting new goals for themselves. But these remain a minority. It should also be noted that from the ten beneficiary interviews where this question was asked, eight indicated that they would have been willing to use psychosocial services if these had been provided on voluntary basis at the time of their discharge from the army.

Secondly, because it is as important to ensure that the MoD is taking advantage of the NPP to develop its skills for the whole cycle of human resource management (from recruitment to discharge), and the NPP offers for the first time the chance of incorporating such an approach into the services provided and contribute much further to MoD's capacity development not only for discharge, but also for the management cycle of human resources from recruitment to resettlement (including returning soldiers from overseas with PTSD). In a country fragmented by political bickering, the Army can appear as a symbol and a model of unity provided the MoD has the capacity to manage these issues impartially and professionally. A weak resettlement package will not contribute to encourage new recruits to join the army, particularly if they feel they will be left out at the end of their contract with no support. The NPP therefore offers an incremental implementation with the possibility of incorporating critical components as the programme unfolds.

Thirdly, because disgruntled military personnel who have left the army are a potential threat to the security and the stability of the country. Hundreds of discharged soldiers already protested in front of the Parliament in Sarajevo on 16 February 2011. Research has shown that downsizing of the armed forces must be coupled with a proper management of the process to avoid any potential outbreaks of violence or destabilisation. Ensuring that proper support is provided to the beneficiaries is not only in the interest of their own transition into civilian life, it is also a matter of contributing to social stability and security in the country.

Another factor strongly affecting NPP implementation is the negative global economic environment. The evaluation has found that 88% of the beneficiaries interviewed are in a worse economic situation today than when they were working in the army. Unfortunately the global economic crisis affects all sectors and little formal employment is made available for this discharged personnel, despite the efforts made by the RRC staff. Compared to past reintegration projects undertaken with a larger grant amount and additional benefits (severance pay), the current NPP is the most challenging for implementing the transition since the economic situation has further worsened and the grant amount is quite small (up to 3,000 KM). To provide a higher opportunity for economic sustainability to those who have been discharged, second grants of 3,000 KM should be given to contribute to the sustainability of business and activities undertaken to date, particularly to those who are most vulnerable (list of the approximately 350 persons not eligible for retirement) and those who are pro-actively attempting to succeed in civilian life through their activities. As such, allocation of second grants to these cases (up to a maximum of half of the overall caseload) would contribute to increasing the chances of sustainability and of a successful transition into civilian life.

2. Introduction and programme background

The NPP has been developed in support of the PERSPEKTIVA programme which was elaborated by the MoD in March 2009. The original MoD programme was itself developed from the Policy on Transition and Resettlement of Redundant Personnel in the BiH Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina of October 2008. Originally the PERSPEKTIVA programme was thought as a stand-alone programme for MoD execution. However given the lack of funding and previous implementation experience, a different implementation mode was decided. NATO, USAID and the International Community supported the NPP under the management and expertise of the International Organization for Migration, which has previous experience in this type of interventions, including in BiH with two previous projects since 2002: TAFS and a NATO Trust Fund project. However the different approach used and the importance of the capacity development for the MoD as a key aspect of the NPP implementation, with all work at the RRC level done jointly between MoD and IOM staff, requires a specific expertise that is not always available in this type of programmes. As a result, the NPP was developed with direct collaboration of the former project manager of the NTF PFP in Serbia, country where MoD capacity development was one of the strategic objectives, and where the project was able at its term after five years to secure an exit and hand-over strategy to the MoD. This allowed to secure commitment and ownership of the MoD and develop its capacity to integrate the resettlement process as part of the regular human resource management function. The NPP therefore rightly incorporates a strong MoD capacity development component as a key objective of its programme design.

The NPP is originally planned for a period of two years, from October 2010 until September 2012. The total target for this period is, according to the MoD downsizing plan, of up to 3,300 professional soldiers. Of these, 2,700 were discharged in 2010, 402 are foreseen to be discharged in 2011, and 217 are foreseen to be discharged in 2012. Since the bulk of the discharge was in 2010, the original target for the first two years of the NPP is to register, counsel and assist up to 2,300 discharged soldiers.

In order to provide direct advice, counselling and assistance to the NPP beneficiaries, the programme uses three Regional Resettlement Centres in Banja Luka, Sarajevo (Rajlovac) and Mostar. An office in Tuzla, in addition to the three foreseen in the original programme, is to be opened in October 2011 given the high workload and in order to ensure proper coverage of this particular area (representing 20% of the total caseload). Each RRC is staffed with three AFBiH staff (one civilian as head of the office, two military staff – one officer and one NCO) and working jointly with the two IOM staff. In total five staff are based in each RRC (three from AFBiH and two from IOM). The approach used is a learning by doing methodology, with IOM and AFBiH staff going jointly to field visits to the beneficiary's dwelling and filing the Reintegration Assistance Project Proposal (RAPP) necessary to obtain the assistance chosen by the beneficiary.

At the headquarters level, the Personnel Transition Support Unit (PTSU) at MoD level is composed of 4 people. The NPP holds regular Steering Committee meetings with all stakeholders and donors to share and exchange information on NPP implementation, progress and challenges as well as financial information. In addition the IOM also holds regularly monthly meetings with its field staff to ensure coherence and consistency in the approach and discuss performance to date.

The original budget was estimated at euros 5,100,801 in the programme document. The funding is obtained through a NATO Trust Fund (NTF) under Norway, Slovenia and Netherlands as Lead Nations (plus additional 6 donors: BiH, Czech Republic, Denmark, Luxembourg, Sweden and Turkey), co-funded bilaterally by USAID, and by the UK for specific capacity development interventions.

3. Evaluation methodology

This is the first mid-term independent, external and formative evaluation of the NPP. As such it is looking back at what has been accomplished, trying to identify good practices for replication as well as constraints and difficulties in order to identify adequate strategies for addressing these, but it is also very focused on learning and improvement over the remaining programme life. To continue the capacity development process the evaluation was undertaken with one person from the PTSU/MoD participating in a number of beneficiary interviews at field level and one IOM staff –not linked to the NPP- assigned as evaluation assistant and interpreter. The approach used was fully participatory.

An initial meeting to present the evaluation objectives, approach and methodology was held on 23.09.11 in Sarajevo for all of the Programme Steering Committee members.

Purposive sampling for beneficiary selection was discussed with the IOM in order to be able to interview at least 30 beneficiaries from a variety of activities. The evaluator requested that case selection include both positive and success cases (for learning and replication of good practice), as well as difficult and failure cases (to learn how to address the issues in the future). In total the evaluation was able to undertake 33 in-depth beneficiary interview of 50 minutes average time per interview.

Prior to the in-country field work, and during the evaluation process, the evaluator undertook an analysis of the available project documentation (bibliography included as annex).

In addition to the literature review, the evaluation carried out a number of interviews as per details hereunder:

- Six individual interviews with MoD (one with the Assistant Minister for Personnel Management, three with PTSU chief and staff separately, one with the Commander of Personnel Management-PMC- in Banja Luka) for 75 minutes average time;
- Six individual donor interviews of one hour (NHQSa, USAID, UK Defence attaché, Slovenia Defence Attaché, US Defence Attaché, Czech Republic First Secretary and Deputy Head of Mission),
- One interview with the Advisor to the Parliamentary Commission – Joint Committee for Defence and Security, for fifty minutes
- Three focus group interviews with MoD and IOM staff in each RRC office (Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Mostar) with all five staff for an average of 75 minutes each;
- 33 individual in-depth beneficiary interviews of 50 minutes each on average;
- Four internal IOM interviews with Chief of Mission and technical staff (database, finance, project management) of 40 minutes average;
- Five individual interviews at field level with project partners (Faculty of Agriculture Banja Luka, REDA in Zenica, Employment Service in Mostar –Canton level-, USAID Farma project in Mostar, REDAH/CRRP in Mostar,) for an average of 45 minutes.

In total 58 interviews were undertaken during the evaluation, not counting informal sessions with project management to provide some feedback on the progress made and seek further explanation and evidence on specific issues identified by the

evaluation. In total 52 hours of continuous interviews have been undertaken that lasted on average just under 55 minutes each.

The evaluation team also used structured observation as a source of findings, particularly given the fact that interviews were undertaken at the homes of the beneficiaries. In a number of cases, beneficiaries' wives (and in one case the husband) and more rarely children also attended the interviews.

The evaluation criteria as set out in the terms of reference were to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, responsiveness, impact and sustainability of the NPP during its first year of implementation.

Findings were triangulated (confirmation by three separate sources). It is therefore different than perceptions, which are based on individual subjective basis and a single source of information. For example, the needs for psycho-social assistance was derived from 1) interview with Brigadier Sinanovic and data provided 2) Responses during beneficiary interviews 3) observation of beneficiaries during interview 4) secondary literature (previous evaluation reports).

On 28 September 2011 the evaluation gave a debriefing to donors and to IOM and MoD stakeholders supported by a power point presentation containing the preliminary evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. Additional interviews which were undertaken after the presentation provided supporting information to the analysis and the findings of the evaluation but did not entail a change in its contents.

The lead evaluator had already undertaken over sixty evaluations, of which several in the SSR sector, including the NTF project in Serbia, and had worked in BiH in 1997, but does not speak the local language.

Potential bias and risks

Interpretation was necessary for beneficiary interviews and some key stakeholder interviews. Good interpretation service was provided by the IOM staff. In order to avoid any potential bias or conflict of interest, the interpreter is not working within the IOM on the NPP. In addition a member of the PTSU/MoD was invited to join the evaluation team in order to witness the evaluation methodology and approach in line with the capacity development of the MoD. As such he was able to attend several beneficiary interviews as well as the focus group discussions with the five RRC staff members (IOM and MoD). RRC staff did not attend beneficiary interviews in order not to influence their response.

The beneficiary sample was selected on purposive basis with specific criteria regarding the type of activity, inclusion of both success and failure cases, and interviews with women beneficiaries. It may not be statistically representative of the overall caseload. Beneficiary interviews were coded to preserve their identity and ensure confidentiality.

4. Programme objectives, expected results and design issues

The specific objectives identified in the original NPP document were :

- Approximately 3,000 released personnel assisted in their process of re-integrating into civilian life through one-on-one counseling.
- Up to 2,301 released defence personnel integrated into the workforce through employment generation, capacity building and business support initiatives resulting in sustainable income generating activities
- Up to 830 among the 2,301 released defence personnel assisted with further sustainability initiatives
- Communities of resettlement, indirectly benefit from the reintegration process by way of services provided and increased business activity at the micro-level
- Capacity of MoD/PERSPEKTIVA to conduct resettlement activities strengthened

No specific Results Framework or logic chain for the NPP was established to support these objectives.

It is difficult to understand how these numbers were identified. The MoD downsizing plans indicate that up to 3,300 soldiers will be discharged by 2012, and the most recent information indicate that there may be some delay and that the caseload will spread until end of 2013. However as the NPP is only supported for a two-year period, it cannot be expected to handle the entire caseload before they are even discharged. If the objective is to reach 3,300 discharged defence personnel, the NPP should be extended until mid-2014 and review the budget in line with the latest discharging figures from the MoD. As the NPP was designed with a caseload of 2,300 assisted beneficiaries, these have been the working figures up to the time of this evaluation, but any change of caseload should be discussed and vetted by the PSC and donors.

In terms of the NPP design, the component regarding 830 "further sustainability initiatives" of 500 KM is insufficient as regards to its objectives, as regards to the amount allocated and in the number of beneficiaries selected. To contribute to beneficiary's economic sustainability, second grants of the same amount (3,000 KM) should be envisaged on merit basis, something that is explained further in the findings part of this report.

The fourth point to have communities of resettlement benefiting from the transition process by way of services provided and increased business activity at the micro-level is more an effect of the NPP than an objective, since locally procured goods are evidently providing increased business to the communities, and beneficiaries businesses contribute to increasing the number of businesses. There are other means to monitor the effect on the local economy which could be incorporated in the NPP monitoring plan but this point should not appear as an NPP objective.

Based on the above, the evaluation has followed the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, in which the NPP has three specific objectives:

- Integration of up to 2,300 discharged defence personnel into civilian life;
- Increase the economic sustainability of up to 2,300 discharged defence personnel through the assistance of the NP programme;
- Increased capacity of MoD/PERSPEKTIVA to provide reintegration assistance to discharged defence sector personnel in two areas : a) capacity to deliver

reintegration assistance through learning by doing and formal courses; b) setting up of mechanisms and tools within PERSPEKTIVA to respond to its future needs

Drawing from the current evaluation findings, a Results Framework should be developed to capture the change and integration process that is affecting programme beneficiaries. It needs to be noted however that a characteristic of the current beneficiary situation is that they are all engaged in multiple activities, only two having a registered business, partly given the political uncertainties affecting their retirement/pension rights but also because one activity is not enough to generate sufficient income (e.g. one beneficiary is very happy with his business, but it only provides him 7 to 10 working days per month, insufficient to cover his expenses). It is necessary for the Results Framework of this NPP to integrate the challenging reality of beneficiaries' multiple activities so that the change level can be better assessed and the full programme impact better understood, and not only in terms of earnings obtained from the assistance received (which only tells one part of the story).

The division of NPP assistance categories into four different types (agriculture, business, salary support and re-training or education) seems also to be arbitrary, since agriculture is also a business for beneficiaries. It would be much more logical to include "agriculture" in the business category, which would have two sub-categories : agricultural and non-agricultural businesses. The other two categories should remain unchanged. An additional difficulty is to determine whether they are "new" or "expanding" businesses. Most beneficiaries had some form of activity in addition to their job in the army, so it is difficult to separate "new" from "expanding" business. As a rule, it is recommended that the term "new" business should only be used in those cases where the beneficiary did not engage into this activity prior to the assistance received from the NPP.

5. Main Findings

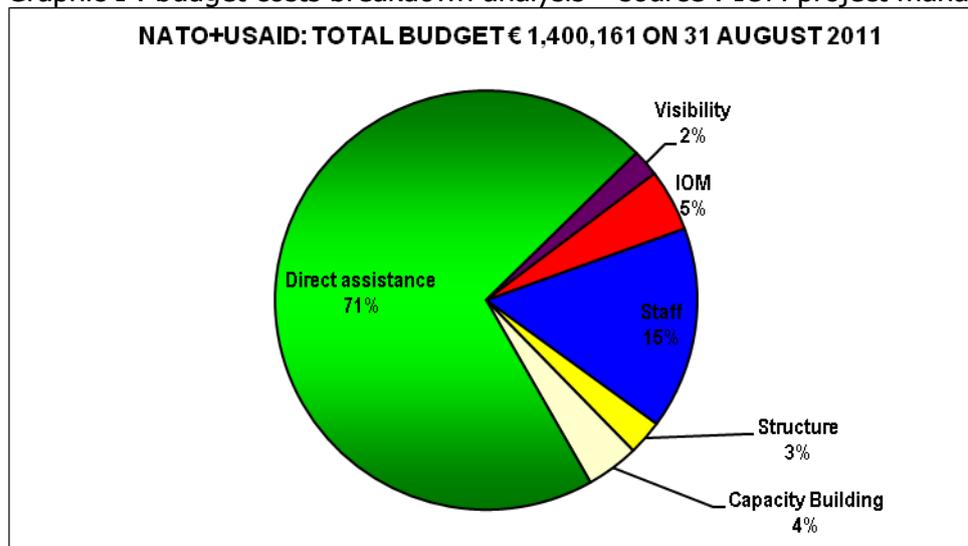
In order to facilitate reading, this report is structured according to the evaluation criteria as specified in the terms of reference (TOR) of this first mid-term external formative evaluation. For each criteria the information is the result of a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis, and the figures (funding and beneficiaries statistics) that are mentioned in this report have been supplied and discussed with the IOM programme management, with the exception of the contents of beneficiaries' interviews which are the sole responsibility of the evaluator as these were transcribed using translation services and subsequently coded for analysis. All names have been withheld to protect the identity of the beneficiaries in line with evaluation practice and code of ethics.

I. Programme management efficiency (or how resources are converted into outputs)¹

A. Staffing and costs - IOM

The programme is showing good efficiency early on in the NPP. Six IOM staff are currently working in the RRCs (two in each RRC) coaching and supporting the MoD staff. Under the leadership of the programme manager, four staff also support the operations from the headquarters (database, finance, procurement, and administration). Normally the cost structure at the onset of the programme tends to be staff and equipment heavy: start-up costs tend to be high until the programme has reached its "cruising speed", meaning that the registration and assistance have been streamlined and beneficiaries are regularly being processed and assisted – something which normally takes place after the second year of operations. In this case, the NPP is showing a very reasonable breakdown of the cost structure with a surprisingly high level of direct assistance and acceptable overhead of 5% (considering others including the UN agencies tend to charge from 7% on up). The evaluation notes however that the NPP would strongly benefit from one additional staff for monitoring and evaluation, as the programme unfolds and more qualitative feedback on programme performance is needed.

Graphic I : budget costs breakdown analysis – source : IOM project management



¹ Evaluation criteria are based on the widely used DAC Glossary of key terms in evaluation and results based management, 2002

The overall project budget of € 1,400,161 as of 31 of August 2011 shows a high proportion given to direct assistance, with 70% of the total budget. Considering that another 4% is spent on one of the project stated objectives of MoD capacity development, the total percentage devoted to operational assistance is 74% of the budget. Staffing costs amount to 16% of the budget which is not high in the programme cycle after only one year of operations, and structure costs (3%) and visibility material (2%) plus the IOM overhead of 5% complete the budget.

The NPP has a specific funding structure and a resulting requirement to report to three separate parties (NATO Trust Fund 2, USAID and UK). This is due to the fact that pledges are collected through three separate channels:

- a) Via the NATO/PfP Trust Fund 2 (NTF2) that is supported by BiH, Czech Republic, Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and Turkey. This is governed by a common policy where the NATO Treasury collects the pledges and transfers funds to the Executing Agent – IOM (with a pledged amount of 3,476,375 Euros).
- b) Via bilateral funding directly to IOM by USAID for US funds (US\$ 2,113,600) and
- c) Via bilateral funding directly to IOM by the UK for capacity building (GBP 100,000).

The IOM reports to the three parties, and is required to maintain detailed consolidated financial statements, which are to be distributed every six months to the Programme Steering Committee in order to maintain transparency in expenditures. In line with these requirements IOM already submitted the first bi-annual NATO interim report for the period 1 October 2010 to 31 March 2011, and three USAID quarterly reports for the period from 1 October 2010 to 30 June 2011.

There is limited funding allocated for media and visibility in the NPP structure, while these activities have proven to be quite critical in addressing the challenges and reticence from some beneficiaries to enrol in the NPP given the uncertainty of their retirement schemes. The NHQSa funding, albeit limited to 87,488 Euros, was an important support to the media campaign undertaken by the NPP.

It should be noted however that the staff is at a minimum and the opening of the Tuzla office should be matched with another three MoD staff and two additional IOM field advisors to be deployed in that RRC, so that there will be four RRCs fully operational consisting of five staff each (MoD and IOM) and the coverage and efficiency of beneficiary advice and assistance and monitoring will be increased.

The work load of the field based client advisors' was estimated on the basis of the IOM calculations for providing the range of services and assistance to add up to almost 11 hours per beneficiary². However this does not include the necessary monitoring which needs to be performed once the beneficiary has received the assistance requested, for

² Calculated in hours as follows : registration 0,4, counseling 3,00, development of the application 1,10, elaboration of business plan including cash flow 1,40, proposal preparation for RRC and JRP 1,10, discussion and review of the proposal 0,50, signature of agreement and sending documents for payment 0,50, contact with supplier and bid analysis 1,00, VAT exemption procedure 0,30, payment 0,50. Total 10,80. Source NPP Analysis of the registered caseload,, 30 June 2011, table 1 page 3.

which an additional two hours should be counted. In total therefore a single beneficiary will require on average 13 hours of direct attention, service and support.

A brief calculation shows that in order to process the additional 711 beneficiaries (1,413 registered minus 602 who have already received the assistance) an average of 2,635 hours are required for each of the four RRC. Considering that no more than three people in each RRC undertake field work regularly (particularly given the terms of reference of the MoD staff where normally two of the three staff undertake the field work and the fact that the RRC only has one vehicle in working order – the one purchased by the NPP-), the workload corresponds to 878 hours per advisor, or based on a 40 hour work week, 22 weeks devoted to beneficiaries' attention.

This without including the monitoring of those 602 already assisted which would increase each advisor's workload by almost three weeks. Therefore in total twenty six weeks are required of continuous work to provide services to beneficiaries and ensure their monitoring. This does not include the time spend on other tasks, such as staff training and staff meetings, vacation or illness time, etc. In total at least an entire six months will be needed just to cover the current caseload – if additional registrations are undertaken, the time-frame for NPP implementation will have to be revised accordingly.

CALCULATION REGARDING WORKING TIME FOR BENEFICIARIES SERVICING AND ASSISTANCE IN THE NPP								
Total hours per beneficiary for counseling and assistance	caseload to be assisted	Total hours	Nr of RRCs	per RRC	Number of field advisors* at each RRC	Hours of field work per each advisor	work hours per week	weeks
13	811	10543	4	2635,75	3	878,58	40	22,0
Total hours per beneficiary for monitoring	caseload already assisted							
2	602	1204	4	301	3	100,33	40	2,5
Total	1413	11747		2936,75		978,92		24,5

* Out of a total of five staff in each RRC

MoD is mentioning a possible increase in the current caseload and a delay in the originally planned discharging schedule 2010-2012. Any increase in the caseload beyond the current number of registered beneficiaries should estimate the corresponding workload in order to appraise the time-frame required for the programme implementation.

B. Management structure and organisation

Different structures were created in order to reach the programme objectives.

A Programme Steering Committee (PSC) chaired by Norway as one of the Lead Nations of the NATO Trust Fund, with the participation of the Assistant Minister for Human Resources of the MoD as co-chair, PTSU representatives, IOM representatives and donors such as USAID, NATO HQ Sarajevo representatives as well as the Netherlands and Slovenia as co-lead nations and NATO/PfP members such as the UK, Sweden, Turkey, the Czech Republic among others are all members of the PSC. The PSC guarantees the strategy and the overall direction and supervision of the NPP. The PSC meets regularly to discuss issues and programme performance. To date ten PSC meetings have taken place, the first on 18 October 2010 and the last on 23 September 2011.

A Programme Management Unit (PMU) comprising the NATO Lead Nations, the MoD and the IOM meet to ensure the day to day operations and reporting to the PSC. However to date meetings has been undertaken under the leadership of the PSC.

At the management level, the programme management and the IOM Chief of Mission ensure that the work is undertaken according to the established rules and procedures, and provide support and supervision to the RRC field office IOM staff, with the support of a small team of human resources described in the previous section.

Within the MoD/AF, the structure is a dual structure : MoD/PTSU ensures overall guidance of the NPP, through their four-staff unit placed in the MoD in Sarajevo, and provide guidance to the RRC staff and are also responsible for maintaining an updated beneficiary database. PTSU staff were actually the ones who elaborated the PERSPEKTIVA programme before the NPP was formalised. The AF/KUP (Personnel Management Command-PMC) Commander of Personnel Management in Banja Luka represents the other line of reporting, and all reports from the RRCs have to be sent by post through the PMC for onward dispatch to all recipients.

At the field level, the programme is implemented through the work of the five staff (three MoD/AF and two IOM) placed within each RRC, each reporting to its own constituency. The RRC MoD/AF structure is as follows : The office is placed under the overall responsibility of a civilian Head of Office (MoD), and one Officer (AF) and one NCO (AF). Each have their TOR and specific duties and responsibilities, and in some cases the two AF staff are involved in joint field work with the IOM field advisors, while in one RRC the MoD Head of Office and one AF staff are undertaking the field work to assist and counsel beneficiaries. On the IOM side, there is one Programme assistant with overall responsibility for the IOM activities and responsibilities, supported by one field advisor. The integrated structure of the RRC with MoD/AF and IOM staff working alongside each other is a key component of the capacity development of the MoD/AF (since this is a new programme for them) and allows for on the job coaching and learning through the support of the IOM staff who have already been involved in previous NTF project implementation – particularly in relation to the approach and advice and counselling given to the beneficiaries.

In order to ensure consistent and coherent application of the rules and procedures regarding the programme, an operational manual was established in December 2010

outlining procedures for providing financial assistance to applicants as defined in the NPP document.

Beneficiaries first decide if they wish to register. In order to do so, a specific registration form was developed by the MoD under PERSPEKTIVA and is being used for the NPP (LZ1 and LZ2). However it should be noted that the form is long and cumbersome and requests information which is not relevant for the purpose of the NPP, with specific service details. It should be useful to undertake a review of the form and shorten the registration information to speed up the process and focus on the information that will be relevant for monitoring the success of the NPP and drop information that will not be used such as particular details of the person's military service records which are of no direct relevance to the NPP.

When the beneficiaries register they receive counselling and advice regarding the different options available under the NPP, and some technical recommendations to support their choice. The NPP offers four different categories of assistance, which are not mutually exclusive : 1) Agricultural production, 2) Business services (start-up or expansion, 3) salary support, 4) re-training/education. However as mentioned in the programme design section this break-down is quite arbitrary, as agriculture is also a form of business. Thus it would be more logical for the future to combine it into the "business" category, with two sub-categories : agricultural and non-agricultural businesses.

- 1) A majority of beneficiaries have opted for agricultural activities, which include a mix of different activities : greenhouses, vegetable and cereal production, machinery for ploughing, harvesting, fertilising, etc. The beneficiaries have in fact the choice to procure from the local markets the machinery that they need most. The objective of the local procurement is two-fold: on the one hand, it contributes to increased monetary injection into the local economy through local purchases, on the other hand, the material procured is also covered by a guarantee and the reputation and quality of the service from the local suppliers are also reviewed. The process is that beneficiaries obtain three separate quotes (wherever possible) from three suppliers for the desired assistance. Based on those quotes the beneficiary normally chooses the favourite supplier in line with the quality of the product and services offered.
- 2) Business services extend to a range of different activities, which at this time are both formal and informal. The support is provided to both new activities and expansion of existing activities. Specific aspects such as locksmiths, carpentry, masonry and construction work, car wash services, stone work and other forms of services are delivered under this component. The process is similar as for the support to agricultural activities, with the presentation of three quotes from local suppliers for the material that has been chosen. Noteworthy that the quality of the materials procured is of high standards and often imported, with well-known and reputable brands such as Bosch, Stihl, Usqvarna, and others: The NPP therefore does not supply the least-expensive material available, but dependable and durable material with a minimum of a one year warranty (in some cases the evaluation was informed of up to a five year warranty for a specific machine). This form of support is the most widely requested with agriculture support.

- 3) Salary support is another option that is offered to the beneficiaries. In order to promote beneficiary's employment capacity, the NPP offers the incentive to any of the interested employers to obtain a salary support of up to the total grant amount. Given the high taxes and benefits that have to be paid by employers in BiH, the employer pays the agreed-upon salary to the NPP beneficiary, and receives normally on quarterly basis the grant payment from the NPP. As in the other two modalities, beneficiaries do not receive any cash into their hands. Unfortunately the negative economic environment and high unemployment are not enabling factors and at this time there are very few beneficiaries who are able to take advantage of this option.
- 4) Another option is to request re-training or education assistance up to the amount of the grant value. Here people who are interested in furthering their education and becoming more competitive on the labour market through targeted training are able to obtain a support. However as was mentioned by the different partner training institutions, it appears that discharged soldiers are not very interested in pursuing or improving their educational level and competitiveness on the labour market through specific training courses. Therefore the number of beneficiaries choosing this option is equally quite low. Here the process is to identify the type of education or training required, the training institution is contacted and the NPP ensures payment of the costs up to the grant amount.

In order to qualify for any of the forms of assistance, the beneficiary has to go through a procedure of approval by the Joint Review Panel (JRP), composed of the IOM advisor and MoD Head of the office. The JRP meets as needed to review the documentation provided (Reintegration Assistance Project Proposal or RAPP, prepared after a visit to the beneficiary's home) for each of the beneficiaries and either approve, reject or ask for additional information if the case is not clear. To be approved, it needs to be signed by the field advisor submitting the RAPP, by the Head of the Office and by the IOM Programme Assistant. The RAPP is then forwarded to the IOM central office in order to initiate the procurement and financial process.

Box 1 : Results obtained

The NPP structures have generally played their role well, with perhaps a little more difficulty at the MoD/AF level since there are two lines of reporting (MoD/PTSU and AF/PMC) and a mixed human resource structure in the RRC (Civilian Head, Military Officer and NCO as assistants). MoD/AF could take advantage of the current evaluation and the ongoing capacity building component to review the RRC structure to ensure a better delineation of responsibilities among the various staff. Different RRCs follow different modes of operation despite having the same objectives, and this is due to varying interpretations of their functions by their respective Head of Offices. It would be useful to enable a single mode of operation for all RRCs.

In regards to the approval process, as decision-making has rightly been decentralised to the local level (JRP meetings and approval by both MoD Head of Office and IOM Programme Assistant), all requests for assistance made to date have been validated and processed. Logically the local context and opportunities are best-known by those who are based in the region. This is a positive result that needs to be continued. At the same time proper monitoring is required to ensure performance and accountability.

Two outstanding needs to improve NPP effectiveness and efficiency have to do with the commitment of the MoD/AF to the programme. It is highly necessary to create a pool of trained human resources (four individuals) who can be replacing people who are ill or on career promotion courses in the Army in the RRCs or PTSU. Because the human resource structure in the RRC is at a minimum any absence due to illness, vacation or transfer has a negative effect on NPP implementation capacity and beneficiary assistance. There have been at least two cases of prolonged illness during this period, and some cases of staff transfer replaced by insufficiently trained and prepared staff. This is a source of concern as the work undertaken in the NPP is very specific and needs to full commitment of an adequate number of trained staff (as a comparison the previous NTF project had 5 IOM staff in the field offices with full logistical and communication equipment). While the IOM staff could well do the work to supplement these human resource gaps in the MoD structure, this runs contrary to the capacity development approach: if MoD is committed to having its own capacity to deliver this type of programme assistance in the future, it must place the proper number and adequate profile of its human resources into the structure, and ensure their retention for the period of the programme, or provide alternative trained human resources to fill-in any prolonged absence.

Likewise the outreach capacity of each RRC is constrained by the fact that there is only one functional vehicle per RRC (the NPP Skoda Octavia car). Because of its diplomatic license numbers, it cannot be driven by the MoD personnel. While MoD has allocated at least one vehicle to each of the RRCs, these vehicles are so worn down they are either not working or don't meet safety standards for its occupants. It is strongly recommended that the MoD/AF shows its unwavering commitment to a successful NPP implementation through providing the proper logistical support to each office. Since the NPP vehicle is a street vehicle, and after having witnessed the difficult access to some of the beneficiaries' place of residence in mountainous areas, it would be very useful for MoD/AF to provide a Lada Niva 4x4 or an equivalent small but sturdy four wheel drive car to reach beneficiaries during the winter season, at a time when the NPP vehicle will not be able to go off the main roads. Such recommendation should be taken into consideration also when procuring the additional NPP vehicle for the RCC in Tuzla.

It also needs to be stated that thanks to the support received from the UK, some small but critical refurbishing and communication work could be undertaken in the RRCs. As such the very critical use of internet communication is also being used by the other offices (Recruitment) who do not have similar communication equipment. However there remains some room for improvement as some of the computer equipment and materials are quite old and have a limited capacity to process large files. Some upgrading would also contribute to more efficient programme implementation without a significant cost increase.

- II. Effectiveness (how effectively the different actions contributed to achieving the project objectives. To which extent beneficiaries received the expected outputs of the programme and to which extend programme results have been achieved, as well as timeliness of the support provided).

A. Effectiveness of the different actions contributing to achieving the programme objectives.

Recall: The three specific objectives (SO) of NPP according to the evaluation TOR :

SO1 : up to 2,300 discharged defence personnel integrated into civilian life

SO2 : Up to 2,300 discharged defence personnel increase their economic sustainability through the assistance of the NPP programme

SO3 : Increased capacity of MoD/PERSPEKTIVA to providing reintegration assistance to discharged defence personnel in delivering reintegration assistance through learning by doing and formal courses; and setting up of mechanisms and tools within PERSPEKTIVA to respond to its future needs

In quantitative terms, the NPP has managed to register 1,413 potential beneficiaries as of 23.09.2011 of which 727 have requested assistance. Of these 727 cases 602 (83%) have already been assisted. The qualitative analysis is mentioned under the impact section IV.

As regards to the MoD capacity development objective, it is easier to identify the interactions at the RRC level, since all the work is done jointly between the MoD/AF and the IOM. At the headquarters level, it is more difficult to appraise the level of capacity development as no clear targets have yet been identified. There is however evidence of regular communications and coaching by the IOM staff to the MoD, including for the development and maintenance of the NPP database, though central data base management at PTSU needs to be improved. The NPP needs to identify clear targets for the capacity development component over the remaining programme period.

B. Effectiveness in providing beneficiaries services and timeliness of the assistance

In terms of beneficiary satisfaction this report draws on the 33 in-depth individual interviews undertaken in each of the RRC catchment area (10 from Banja Luka, 13 from Rajlovac, 10 from Mostar) on purposive sampling basis. Various communities within these areas were visited, including Bihac, Prijedor, Gradiska, Banja Luka, Kakanj, Visoko, Kiseljak, Bilalovac, Sarajevo, Bakovici, Hadici, Gnojnice, Nevasinje, Luka, Grabovo Vilo-Vitina, Mostarko Cerno, Bilatic Folja, Jablanica. While the results are not statistically representative of the overall caseload, the sampling criteria did include failures cases and covered the range of beneficiaries' profiles and assistance requests with a specific focus on gender even though women reportedly only represent 3% of the target caseload.

Quotes and qualitative evidence show the good quality of the work undertaken by the RRC staff, evidencing good staff's skills and approach, availability and commitment to beneficiary's satisfaction. **The evaluation registered an impressive 4,70 rating out of 5 for the overall quality of the services provided** on a scale of 1 minimum to 5 maximum (details mentioned under the beneficiaries' perception section). **The most common requests were the possibility of a higher grant amount or**

obtaining second grants under the programme to contribute to economic sustainability.

Beneficiaries were quite happy and thankful for the services and the assistance that was provided. In a number of cases, it was stated that the grant amount was not enough to change their lives, but it was a good starting point and an positive initial push in the right direction.

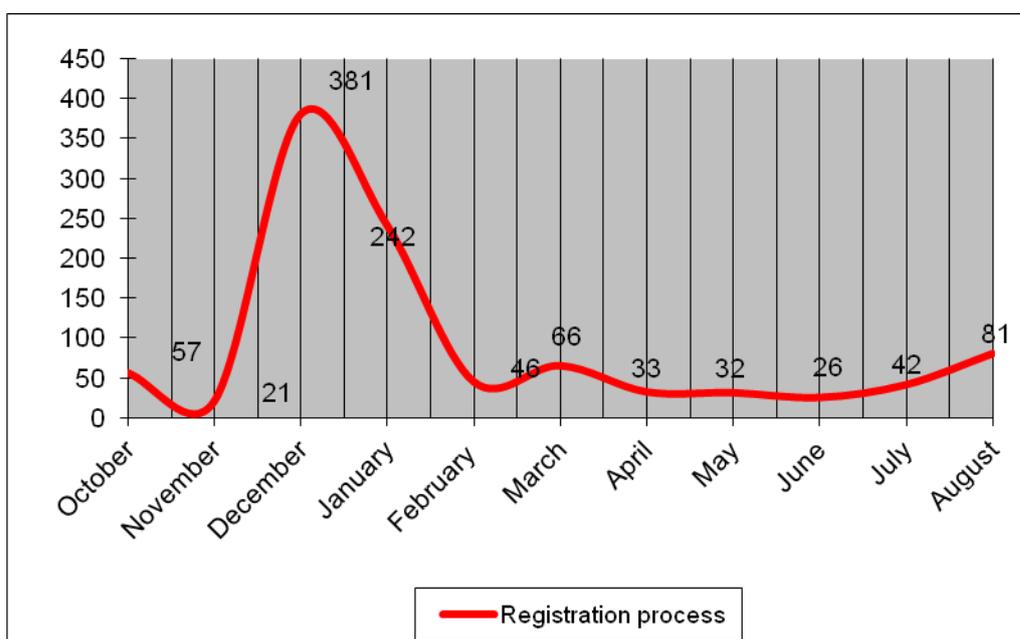
Timeliness of the assistance was another strong point of the programme implementation, with a large majority of the beneficiaries reporting the very swift handling of their application and the very short time between the application and the receipt of the assistance (often within one month). There was two cases where the assistance was received later: in one case it was because the beneficiary wanted to buy equipment for an amount higher than the grant: therefore modalities had to be found as the maximum grant amount is 3,000 KM and any additional purchase has to be funded by the beneficiary. In the second case there were some delays from the suppliers and the assistance was received after the planting period (seasonal activities). Beneficiaries were largely able to obtain what they wanted and from the supplier of their choice as described in the programme document, except in one case where a supplier offering better services was chosen over the initial beneficiary's choice.

Considering the limited amount of the grant money, the evaluation finds that the decision to allow beneficiaries to purchase up to 4,500 KM of materials, provided they pay the extra 1,500 KM from their pocket, is very useful and also allows to offset the limit of the grant amount to a certain extent. In fact, if the NPP would accept that the beneficiary may match the grant amount with his/her own funds, therefore allowing purchases of goods and equipment up to 6,000 KM in total (half grant money, half beneficiary contribution), this would enhance the choice of equipment that could be obtained under the NPP and the likelihood of running a more sustainable business.

III. Responsiveness –capacity of the organisation to adapt to changes keeping in focus the stated objectives

The project has had to cope with the very complex and difficult political situation in BiH as a whole. The country remains fragmented and divided into two separate entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska (RS) with the institutions at BiH level. Each entity has its own rules and laws, and separate ways to address the primary concern of discharged soldiers who are beneficiaries of the NPP : their retirement and pension rights. The Armed Forces have only recently merged the former armies into one single army (in 2006) and they have been undertaking various downsizing of defence personnel in line with the on-going security sector reform (SSR) in order to bring the Armed Forces at the level of the Euro-Atlantic Alliance standards. The difficulty of the current process is two-fold : on one hand, while the Army has rightly chosen the path of integrating the different ethnic backgrounds of formerly opposed combatants, in the RS it appears that the retirement rights will not be assured for those soldiers, and therefore a large majority of the RS beneficiaries are registering and taking advantage of the only current programme supporting them during their transition phase. In the Federation however, political considerations from among the discontented soldiers has fed resentment and doubt versus the MoD. Therefore a number of soldiers have actually chosen not to register yet, being both misinformed about the fact that enrolment in the NPP would not affect their rights, and in some

cases being subject to political manipulation in order to undermine the credibility of the MoD. This can be seen by the different percentage of registration among the RRCs, with Banja Luka RRC having a 93% registration rate versus 57% in Sarajevo³. To offset this problem, an information campaign was launched by the MoD and subsequently by NHQSa through IOM as a contractor in order to explain publicly that participation in the NPP would not affect any of the beneficiaries' rights. Media supported the campaign and proved an effective mechanism to mobilize the undecided discharged soldiers. In particular, the television shows which were undertaken with representatives from the MoD, the International Community and the IOM in December 2010 and May 2011 were seen by various of the beneficiaries interviewed, and in some cases proved decisive for their registration and enrolment in the programme. The statistics hereunder show the direct relation with the number of registrations following the first television show on national television in December 2010.



Source : NPP, Statistics as of 31 August 2011, provided by IOM management

In addition to the various dissemination activities, meetings have been held by NPP management staff and the IOM Chief of Mission with groups of discharged soldiers to explain and clarify the situation, showing a clear willingness and availability to potential beneficiaries to provide transparent information on the NPP and listen to their concerns.

The NPP management has therefore been highly responsive to the needs and difficulties encountered and has reacted quickly to address the situation. While there remains a group of soldiers who are also reportedly preparing for a court battle on their pension rights, as the NPP enrolment has increased the doubts have started to subside, although it is recommended to continue with the information campaign as beneficiaries have indicated that the information was still not sufficiently widely known to their discharged colleagues. Two indicated that they were convincing their

³ Based on figures from the NP programme "Analysis of the Registered and Assisted Caseload", 30 June 2011, table 2

colleagues since they had gone through the process and received the assistance and were willing to further talk to and bring into the NPP other still-reticent soldiers.

IV. Relevance – or how does the programme respond to the needs of the MoD and of the beneficiaries

The NPP is relevant to the needs of the MoD since PERSPEKTIVA was actually elaborated prior to and partially served as a basis for the NPP, before it was supported by NATO/PfP donor countries through the NTF 2 and implemented by the IOM, to deal with the resettlement of discharged defence personnel. The MoD is also funding the NPP as the second largest donor, and is supplying the staff and structures in order to implement the programme jointly with the IOM. The NPP is therefore fully aligned with the PERSPEKTIVA programme and the priority needs of the MoD.

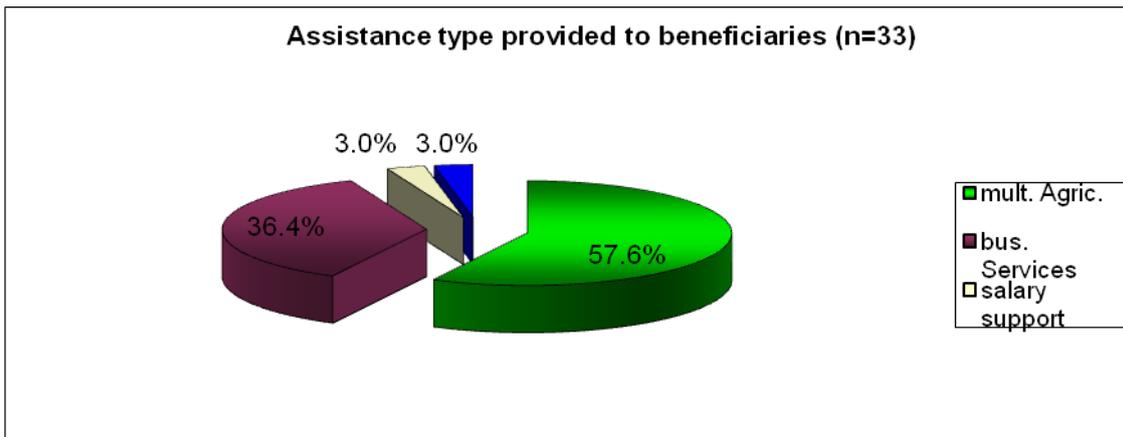
From the beneficiaries' perspective, the NPP is highly relevant to their needs, as it is the only support most of them are currently receiving. This means that unlike previous downsizing exercise (e.g. previous NTF), there is no severance pay (such as the 10,000 KM-the funds for severance have been approved by the Parliament) provided to beneficiaries, and therefore the NPP is the only assistance that can be obtained by beneficiaries. There is also support provided through the Employment Services, but since these are structured at the Canton level, there have been some differences between entities and amongst cantons. A number of beneficiaries interviewed did receive unemployment subsidy for a period of nine months for most (having served some 19 years). But at the same time in the Federation several interviewees indicated that their papers had to be turned over to the MIO/PIO for filing their pension and consequently they did not receive the full nine months of unemployment subsidy. Again the amount of unemployment subsidy varies from case to case and there is no standardised approach to unemployment benefits, which are largely dictated by budget availability. The NPP is therefore seen as the only concrete assistance scheme provided to all discharged soldiers and additionally is widely perceived by beneficiaries as a sign that the international community, and NATO in particular, still remembers their services to the country, as war veterans feel somewhat bitter and abandoned by the MoD.

V. Impact (positive and negative, intended or unintended, direct or indirect effects of the project intervention) – Qualitative appraisal of the Project's impact on the social and financial integration of the assisted beneficiaries.

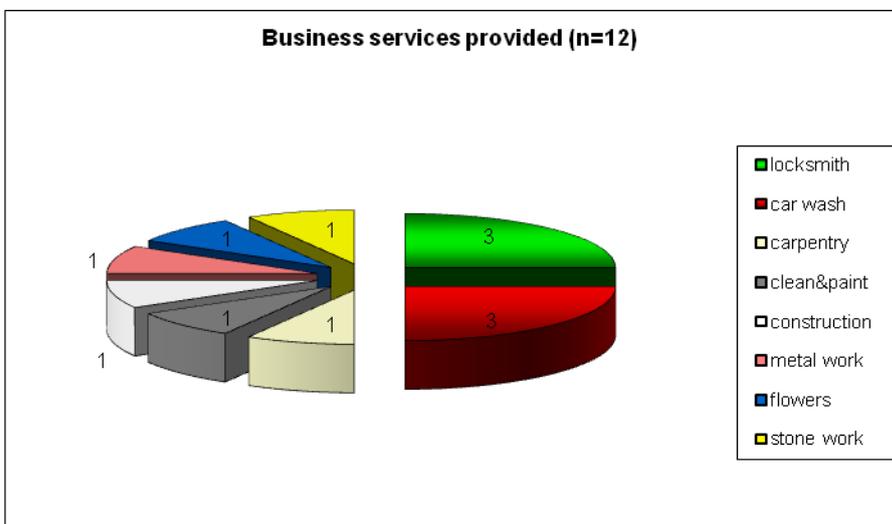
Impact on the social and financial independence of beneficiaries

This section presents the results from the beneficiary interviews undertaken during the evaluation. The contents and data are solely those resulting from the 33 in-depth interviews undertaken, and the evaluator assumes full responsibility for the transcription and interpretation of the contents. The wording has been revised where necessary for ease of reading, but without any content change.

In terms of the selected type of assistance, beneficiaries profiles were as follows:

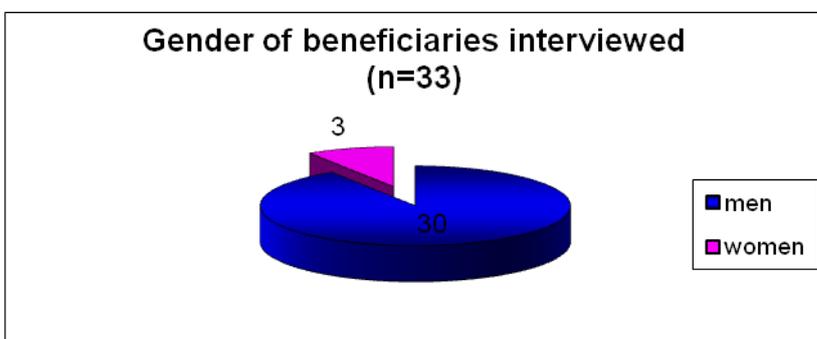


A large majority opted for agricultural activities, while over one third opted for business services. A very small percentage chose salary support and education. The breakdown for those choosing business activities is as follows:



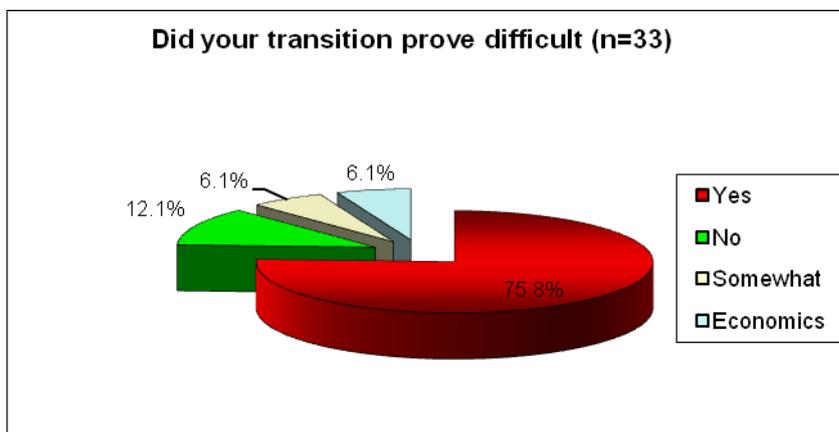
Half of the business are car wash and locksmith in addition to a range of different activities under the service sector.

Only three women were interviewed given their very small caseload in the discharged personnel (3%), as represented in the following graphic:



The Social dimension

Beneficiaries were asked if their transition to civilian life proved difficult. The results are as follows :



An overwhelming three-fourths said it proved difficult or very difficult, with 6% stating it was "somewhat" difficult. In total 82% of respondents indicated a difficult transition, and an additional 6% mentioned their economic situation as the main difficulty for the transition. Only 12% (or one of every eight persons) did not have a difficult transition.

However the full extent of the difficulties are better understood through the explanations provided by beneficiaries. Since there are a range of different stories, the evaluation has picked from all the responses those that appear to hold the strongest message in regards to their transition process.

- Nobody visited me from the army at my house. Nobody ever asked me how I felt, this project or any other person.
- It was really difficult, in the army everything was regulated with a set time. There is no guaranteed source of income now, we are 6 and one disabled
- I spent 20 years in the army, the day I took off the uniform I thought I would go crazy. I'm adjusting now.
- Not so difficult – (wife: I wouldn't say it was easy, he had a stable income)
- It was really hard, and even harder now. My tractor is as old as I am, and it's hard being without an income for almost two years now
-It's the job security that makes the difference
- It's not that difficult, being unemployed is – (wife: it was very hard for him)
- Economic situation was the worse – (mother: he was greatly affected and his wife put tranquilizers in his water when he was too nervous)
- Yes, I still suffer and think about the army a lot. Nobody cares about you
- Awful, for two months I couldn't stop drinking. I still wake up at 6:00 a.m. I've been to the psychologist 6 or 7 years, my cousin committed suicide some years ago.
- The problem was not the discharge, it was they were taking our honour away from us and trying to sc..w us on the retirement issue
- Yes, the hardest was to loose a regular pay. Legally there's a barrier to finding employment, because I would be out of the retirement process, so I can't have a formally declared job

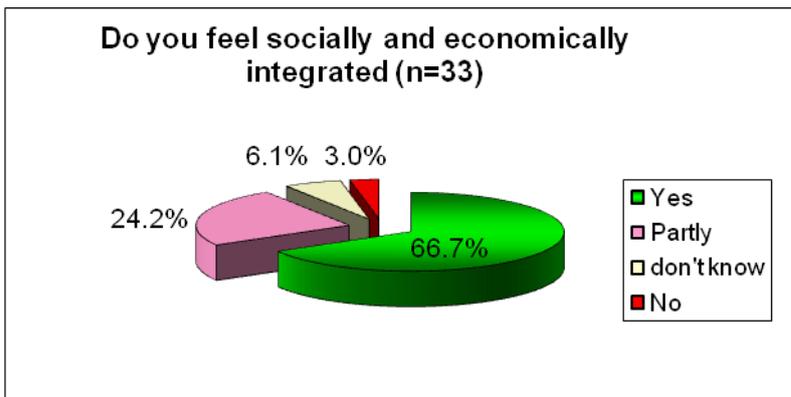
In addition to these testimonies, it needs to be said that the wives are often more open to describe the transition process as a traumatic one for their husbands, while men tend to downplay or suppress their emotions to a large extent. It is also important to note that the family, and particularly the wife, is a strong emotional support for discharged military personnel. Often discharged soldiers will share their story and problems with the family. During the interviews, the evaluation came across two families where the wives are suffering from severe illness (one case of brain tumour, the other some sort of blood infection such as leukaemia), developed during the time the husband was being discharged. While the illnesses cannot be directly attributed to the loss of the husband's job, there is however a link in time between the discharging process and the appearance of the illnesses, perhaps due to the very strong tensions arising from the loss of a fixed income source. It was particularly obvious during the interviews that most people had a very difficult transition and are still experiencing coping difficulties at present, which would require specialised attention as explained hereunder.

Beneficiaries were also asked about what they felt when they were discharged. Almost all beneficiaries expressed unanimously negative feelings (lost, angry, disappointed, strange, awful, empty, lost, sad, etc.) despite the fact they all knew they would be losing their job at the end of their contract. Nonetheless, in many cases beneficiaries became very emotional when discussing these issues. In one case a beneficiary who had said that he had had no transition problem confessed he had been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) while in the army and was going to the psychiatrist for years. Another beneficiary broke down crying during the interview, while another confessed that he spent everyday drinking during the two months immediately following his leaving the army. Another two recognised that it was difficult to change the mindset and adapt to civilian life. Based on the information received from Brigadier Sinanovic regarding the very high level of some stress-related mental disorder in the country as a result of the war (reportedly 1.7 million people are mentally ill) and the very high war veteran's suicide rate, the evaluation also asked to the following ten beneficiaries interviewed if they would have used psychological services if these had been made available on a voluntary basis at the time of their discharge. **A surprising 80% of them claimed they would have welcome and used such a service!** (Eight out of ten). The lack of any psychosocial support, both while in the army and during the discharging process, appears to be a major gap affecting beneficiaries' coping attitude and making their transition more difficult. Some beneficiaries also told the evaluation team that no one had asked them how they felt and they were appreciative of having a foreigner come and ask that question, which, in their view, showed that "somebody cares about us". Hereafter are some selected quotes from beneficiaries on their feelings at the time of discharge :

<i>- Really hard, I couldn't sleep at night, now a little better</i>
<i>- Really hard, I was attached to the life-style, nobody took care of me after that. I spent half my life there and I had tears in my eyes. I felt disappointed, nothing to look forward to</i>
<i>- I don't know how to put it-wife says: nervous as we had lots of debts and no work</i>
<i>- Disappointed, angry and empty of all feelings all at the same time</i>
<i>- Like losing a family member, big loss, I didn't see any open doors</i>
<i>- You feel thrown out and useless at the height of your life</i>
<i>- How would you feel? I talked about it with the commander of the barracks, no reason to talk to the people in the RRC</i>
<i>- No one feels good about losing their job</i>

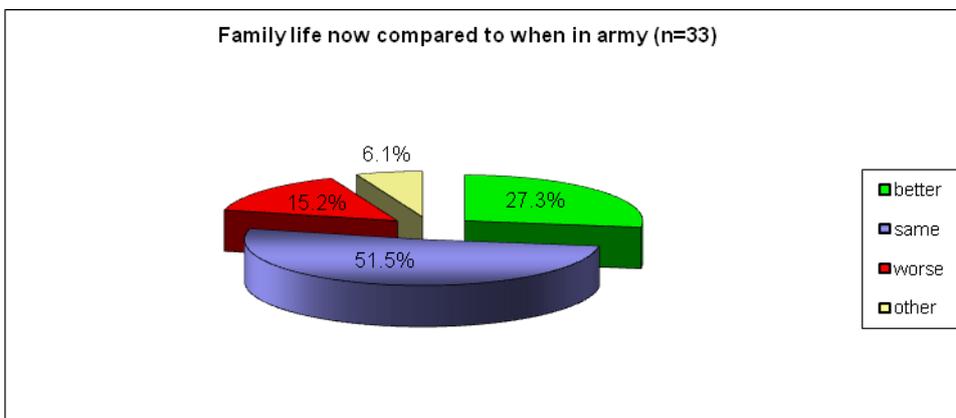
It is also surprising that the NPP did not look to incorporate in its design a psychosocial component to deal with mental health and traumatic stress, particularly given that it was included in some of the earlier projects (TAFS). It would also be useful for the programme stakeholders to review the past four evaluations undertaken of the IOM projects in BiH since 2002 as a number of findings and recommendations are relevant and applicable to the NPP.

Another question was whether beneficiaries felt currently socially and economically integrated in civilian life. Two thirds stated that they did, one fourth only feels partly reintegrated, and 6% claim not to know (largely not integrated according to interview notes), with 3% openly stating they did not feel integrated at all.

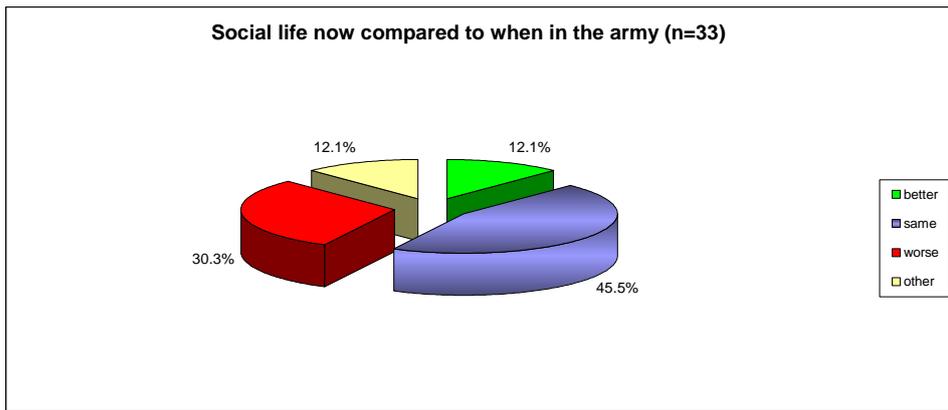


When asked about the missing elements to feel fully reintegrated, the answers were primarily the wish for a permanent job and financial security as the key missing elements.

Again from a social perspective beneficiaries were asked to compare their family and social life today with the one they had while in the army. Half considered to have a similar family life today, over a quarter thought to have a better family life (partly due to the fact that they can spend more time with the family now), and fifteen percent indicated having a worse family life (related to lower income and financial worries and tensions). 6% indicated their family life was changed, but was neither better nor worse. In percentages the figures are:



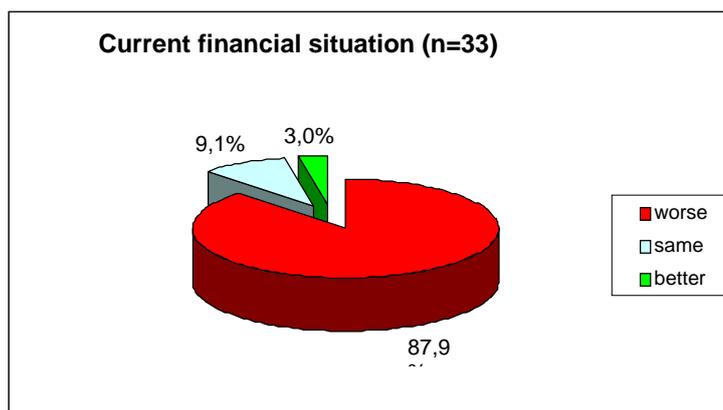
A similar question was raised concerning their social life



Interestingly while the proportion of people who answered “same” is similar if somewhat lower, a much larger portion of almost one third considered to have a worse social life, and only 12% stated to have a better social life, with another 12% indicating simply they had a different social life, neither better nor worse. When comparing the two graphics, it seems that the effect of the transition is more positive as regards to the family life than the social life. A possible explanation in addition to the lower income level has to do with the fact that people are reported to be much more closed in the current period of economic hardship, and there is little willingness to listen and open up to other people’s problems. More than one family (beneficiary and wife) indicated that they did not discuss their problems with friends and neighbours because each already had a sufficient share of problems without wanting to add to their burden, and most people didn’t care anyway. Any psychosocial support to deal with mental health and traumatic stress, should encompass the family household (wife, spouse or dependants) and not be offered solely to the beneficiary.

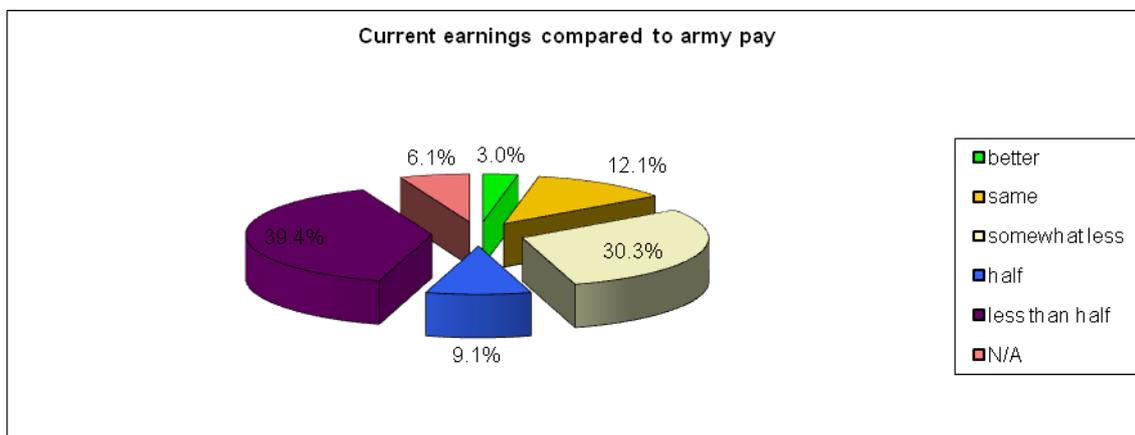
The economic and financial situation

Beneficiaries were also asked about their current financial situation. 88% indicated to be in a worse financial situation today than when they worked in the army. The two primary reasons are that many have to repay debts and loans, and second that their current source of income is very irregular, unlike a government job which provides a fixed income monthly. Both in agriculture and in the business service sectors, income is uneven, seasonal and in the context of a generalized economic crisis which affects all countries and does not facilitate new economic activities. Scarce employment opportunities, limited investments and a general credit crunch are just a few of the visible expressions of this global crisis, which in BiH is additionally further constrained by the complex political environment.



Only 9% report a similar economic condition today as when in the army, with 3% having a better situation.

When looking at the earning level compared to their previous army pay, a slightly higher ratio of 12% indicate having a similar earning level, and almost one third somewhat less.



All together the categories of "better, same, somewhat less" represent 45% of the interviewees. At the lower end, some 55% make half or less of what their earnings were in the army. This could indicate that other factors than earnings are affecting beneficiaries' financial situation as the level of earning is comparatively slightly better (12% same) than their current financial situation (9% same). Their salary was reported to be between 700 to 800 km per month while in the army. In some cases beneficiaries could not estimate their earnings as in agriculture they did not make financial projections since activities are seasonal and they were unable to separate their sales volume from their level of investment and purchases. These are reported separately as N/A in the pie chart above. However from observation these cases are likely not being successful at present in their activities and appear to suffer depression.

While it is not a part o the NPP, a high number of beneficiaries have debts or loans to pay back, and the addition of a credit facility scheme to refinance their debts or loans or develop their business during their resettlement would be interesting for many beneficiaries, and would contribute to the sustainability of their economic situation. It would be very useful if any existing micro-credit or micro-finance project could be linked to this NPP and allow beneficiaries to take advantage of it. Alternatively, it would also be useful to develop a specific micro-credit project for the NPP target group.

Customer satisfaction on programme performance

Beneficiaries were also asked to appraise the quality of the services received through the NPP, inclusive of the range of counselling, advice, services and assistance received from the RRC staff. They provided **an average rating of 4,70 out of 5 on a scale of 1 minimum to 5 maximum**, which is a very high satisfaction rating. Details of individual ratings are as follows:



The rating of 2 out of 5 is based on the grant amount, judged much too small. In general beneficiaries did not reflect in the rating their wish for a higher amount, but they did inquire in a large number of cases about obtaining a larger grant amount or a second grant given the limited amount that was made available through the NPP.

In terms of justification each rating is matched by a qualitative explanation to support the rating given, so that there are many reasons to explain the high marks received. The success appears to be based on a very professional attitude and respectful approach from the field client advisors. Their availability outside office hours was also a key aspect mentioned by a number of beneficiaries. Often beneficiaries did not make the distinction between the MoD and IOM advisors, so the ratings apply both to the work of the MoD staff and to that of the IOM. This is part of the learning by doing approach followed by the programme. Some quotes about the quality of the overall services from the client advisors (RRC staff) are mentioned as examples:

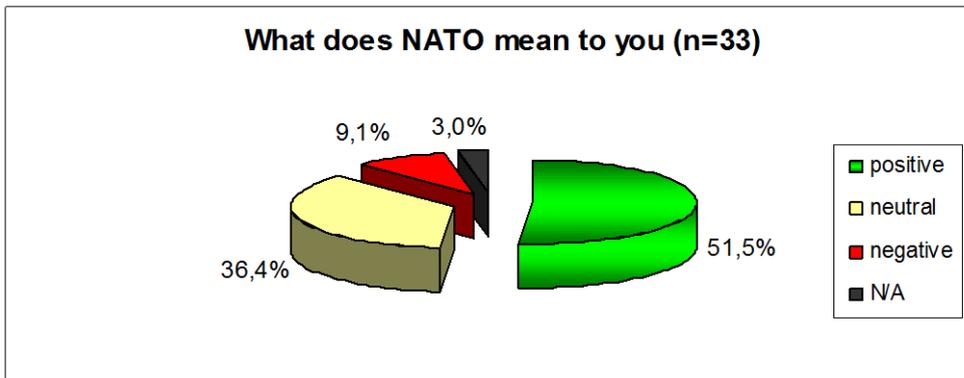
Beneficiaries comments about the quality of the services and assistance received.

<i>* I got everything I requested, very satisfied with the approach. I got the machines within 2 months. Two men (MoD+IOM) down here helped me a lot to realize what I could do, they called home a couple of times to see how my work is going, they care about me.</i>
<i>* I had no concrete idea what I wanted to do, but I have land around the house. It took 3 months to get the tractor because it exceeded the grant amount and I paid the difference</i>
<i>* The advisors did a very good job, we managed to do it all on the phone The help is a beginning, but it's miserable and puny compared to politicians' salaries. We need bigger funds, even on credit basis.</i>
<i>* I'm happy because everything bore fruits and all in this area will say the same</i>
<i>* The RRC staff is superb, I got what I wanted within 20 days, the process couldn't have been quicker</i>
<i>* If everyone was taking their job like the RRC advisers, things would be different. They are real professionals.</i>
<i>* There was so much money in the TF but so little given to the soldiers, so much goes to the information campaign or programme management. I have a lot of friends who don't meet the three retirement criteria, and I've seen other NTF programmes giving 10,000 km and 5,000 km, now only 3,000 km.</i>

* The approach was fair an correct and very friendly and we got the information. They were receptive to my case and sincerely listening, I felt supported and understood. Everyone is busy, but I felt they took time to understand us
* They accepted me in the RRC, they gave me all the information and their services were of exceptional quality. We did talk about my feelings and they were receptive
* We got all the information we needed, of particular concern was the paper that stated that the NPP would not affect our pension rights
* The services provided were exceptional, I got all the information and the RRC staff are very professional at the job they do

Evaluation respondents’ views of NATO

Beneficiaries were also asked about what came into their minds when they thought of NATO. The most common answer was “force and power”. Considering that beneficiaries interviewed were in the different armies during the war, the evaluation also interpreted and slotted the answers as positive, neutral or negative feelings towards NATO. The pie chart shows a majority with positive feelings, over a third have mixed or neutral feelings, and a total of 12% having negative feelings or not responding to the question (associated as negative attitude). The objective was to see what was the vision of NATO from the beneficiaries’ perspective:



A selection of specific answers highlighting the various views is reproduced hereafter:

* Something big, grand, family - wife: in the war huge meaning, they would throw us candy
* Keeping safety and security as well as unifying our two armies
* Both positive and negative experience : They help us on the ground and they've given us an opportunity and vision to join NATO and that's where we belong; the negative: I don't know if it was by mistake, but they bombed me while I was in the army
* As the local saying goes "he is as strong as NATO", meaning super-strong
* They've done a lot of positive things for the country, but not everyone is wise enough to recognize it
* Something better is about to come- when they came it led to the end of the war
* A big army force, security for member countries
* Maybe a better pay if you're in the army, but also war
* I don't even think about it
* From our perspective in BiH, if I was a NATO discharged soldier, I would enjoy full benefits

VI. Sustainability – appraise the degree to which benefits will last even after the programme is completed.

In the context of the NPP sustainability has two meanings and components, one focussing on economic sustainability of the assisted beneficiaries, and the second on the development of the MoD's capacity to provide reintegration assistance to discharged defence personnel with special focus on two areas of strengthening the capacity of PERSPEKTIVA to deliver reintegration assistance and setting up of procedures/mechanisms and tools within PERSPEKTIVA to respond to its future needs.

Economic sustainability of the beneficiaries

As seen under the impact analysis section, beneficiaries are largely not yet able to make the same level of earnings as they were making while working in the army. It is also important to understand that most of the assistance received in the agricultural sector, which is the primary choice of beneficiaries, is used for a range of different activities, and not for a single crop or activity. An important issue is that beneficiaries have all switched from doing agriculture as an additional source of income while they were in the army, as a top-up to their regular salary, but must now learn how to budget for an entire year with seasonal activities where the sales and profits are concentrated on a few months. This type of financial projection is something quite alien to the beneficiaries and requires training support so they can establish some form of budget from which they have to plan their annual (and no longer only monthly) expenses and revenues. It requires moving from a fixed based monthly income to an uncertain seasonal income and the capacity to learn how to manage a budget in these conditions is largely missing among most beneficiaries interviewed. It also applies to the business sector where the volume of activities is uneven (insufficient market and demand) and seasonal and beneficiaries have to combine multiple activities to make ends meet.

The small grant amount is by itself largely unable to ensure economic sustainability of the beneficiaries. For those beneficiaries who are seen to be working on their land and their business, with a positive attitude, there should be second grants of the same amount to consolidate their conversion into farmers and businesses. The current funds allocated in the budget for "further sustainability initiatives" cannot be compared to a second grant as the planned amount of 500 KM is too limited to provide a significant impact on existing businesses.

In addition and in order to avoid inequity amongst the soldiers, the group of discharged soldiers who do not meet the three conditions to obtain a pension (most because they cannot prove having spent two years in the war) and are estimated by the MoD to number some 350 persons should also be given a second grant for the same amount, since they will receive no other support in the future.

Another caseload that requires second grants are women, who are in a very small percentage (3%) and have shown a pro-active and inventive approach to the use of the assistance. If the objective is to ensure the economic and financial sustainability of the beneficiaries, those 45% who are currently striving to develop their earnings should be given the opportunity to consolidate their efforts with second grants. If the MoD and the International Community are committed to developing economic sustainability, a calculation to include some half of the total caseload should be made for second grant eligibility following strict criteria as mentioned above, always mindful

of equitable treatment of the beneficiaries and consider re-allocating the “further sustainability initiatives” budget to this purpose.

However the evaluation has also met a number of beneficiaries whose mindset does not allow them to face the uncertainties of civilian life with the proper attitude and a forward looking vision of their future to invest pro-actively into the productive sector. The incorporation of a psychosocial component to change mindsets from apathy and resignation to resolve and establishing new goals would also ensure a higher sustainability of the different activities and businesses undertaken by the beneficiaries.

Under the current NPP set-up and without second grant support and further training on budget management, it is the opinion of the evaluation that the majority of beneficiaries interviewed will not be able to maintain a sustained source of income by the end of the NPP.

Capacity development of the MoD/PERSPEKTIVA

The MoD/PERSPEKTIVA staff are in the process of developing their skills and capacities for providing reintegration assistance to the discharged defence personnel. The section regarding the impact of the NPP on beneficiaries indicated a very high satisfaction rating of 4,7 out of 5 for the RRC staff. To protect the interview sources and ensure confidentiality of the beneficiaries as well as that of the RRC staff, names have been removed from the quotes. But as an average the names of MoD advisors were mentioned almost as often as those of the IOM field advisors. This indicates that the process of transfer of knowledge through the joint work undertaken in the RRC is ongoing and is being successful, although it is the opinion of the evaluator that additional time is needed for the MoD to be fully self-reliant on the provision of reintegration assistance, particularly in view of the possible introduction of new components. If the NPP agrees to provide second grants and include a psychosocial component in its second year of implementation further capacity development will be required.

If the ratings are compared to the previous NTF project in BiH evaluated by PRISM Research, **average ratings** of quality of procured goods/services; speed with which the goods/services were obtained; advice/support received from IOM staff; training received in the NTF BiH Programme **stand at more than one point less - from 3,50 to 3,65**.⁴ However it should be noted that PRISM uses a randomised sample whereas this evaluation is based on a smaller number of purposive sampling cases and therefore related to different units of analysis.

It is more difficult to appraise the actual level of capacity development of PTSU and PERSPEKTIVA at headquarters level in Sarajevo. Although there is regular interaction between the IOM and MoD staff at the management and technical levels, and one of the MoD staff has been trained in the management of the database and has participated in the evaluation mission as observer member, it is difficult to quantify the level of capacity development at this stage. Overall and based on the results of the NPP implementation to date, there appears to be an informal capacity development ongoing, but it remains a process that should be continued but supported by clear and verifiable indicators of success.

⁴ PRISM Research, Independent final evaluation report, October 2009, p. 10

6. Secondary sources and regional comparisons

In addition to the documentation available from the project and the different evaluations of the earlier projects undertaken, there are also some interesting comparisons with a similar NATO Trust Fund (NTF) project that was just recently concluded in Serbia: the NTF/PRISMA project . Although the context of each country is different a similar evaluation process was followed (purposive sampling of discharged professional soldiers). In this other NTF Serbia project, the beneficiaries' level of satisfaction with services and assistance is very similar to that of the NPP, with an average of 4,89 out of 5 (n=42) compared to 4,70 out of 5 (n=33) in BiH.

More interestingly, the NTF Serbia provided psychological support at the RRC level through PRISMA/MoD, and the level of beneficiaries who experienced difficulties with the transition into civilian life stands at 40%, compared to 82% ("yes" and "somewhat" categories) for the NPP. In terms of social and economic integration, the NTF beneficiaries indicated to be 86% integrated into civilian life, versus two thirds in BiH. Certainly the continuing degradation of the general economic environment has some incidence on this result as well as the fact that the evaluation in Serbia was undertaken in February 2011 versus the current evaluation undertaken in September 2011 in the midst of international financial turmoil.

Another aspect of interest is the different appraisal about the services given under each intervention. If beneficiaries are very satisfied in both cases, the meaningful aspect is that in the NPP, all beneficiaries valued the assistance over the provision of any other service, whereas in the NTF in Serbia, the empathy and caring and psychological support received from the RRC staff was the major source of appreciation, and in some cases deemed more important than the assistance itself.

This appears to indicate that despite some beneficiaries' quotes in the NPP about the caring and friendly attitude of the RRC staff, the approach to beneficiaries is different from the NTF in Serbia. Perhaps because of the absence of psychological support during the process, there seems to be more reticence to talk about personal feelings and problems, and the level of empathy appears to be therefore more limited in this NPP. Staff are very professional in registering, counselling and advising beneficiaries on their options, brands, machines, tools, and they are extremely efficient in providing the material assistance (faster than in Serbia since the approval system through the JRP has rightly been decentralized at the RRC level in BiH). But the nature of the Information, Counselling and Referral Services (ICRS) is somewhat different and could benefit from a more psychosocial capacity development of the RRC staff in general, as a means to help transform the mindset of beneficiaries. However this needs to be embedded with the support of a psychologist in each RRC to be able to work on mental health and traumatic stress as well as behaviour change with the beneficiaries. An important enabling factor for successful integration into civilian life is adopting a positive and pro-active attitude towards the future, despite the difficulties, rather than dwelling on past losses and feeling nostalgic and helpless.

7. Conclusions

The NPP is developing in very difficult economic times and somewhat slower than expected as regards to the figures of registered (1,413) and assisted (602)

beneficiaries, given the difficulties related to the issue of beneficiaries' retirement which has become a political problem. Despite the difficulties the quality of the work is reflected in the high level of beneficiaries' satisfaction but also by that of other primary stakeholders such as NATO, donors, and the Parliament, who indicated being very satisfied as regards to the current NPP performance. There remains a substantial caseload to be registered, counselled and assisted in the future, and the introduction of additional components (second grants and psychosocial support) could also entail a revision of the NPP time-frame, which would benefit of a programme cycle of at least three years. However incremental learning through the adoption of additional components could also provide an opportunity for a full fledged five year programme cycle at the end of which MoD/PERSPEKTIVA would become entirely self-reliant and having developed capacity in other aspects of human resource management (including psychological support).

The approach to MoD capacity development is the right approach, although it also entails a slower implementation rate given this is a learning exercise for all, unlike previous projects which were done under direct IOM implementation. The incorporation of two additional components (second grants and psychosocial support) are likely to play a role as pull factors for the undecided beneficiaries, and may also contribute to a higher volume of beneficiary registration. The NPP is using a creative and flexible approach and should take this opportunity to incorporate the recommendations from the evaluation in order to further enhance its results-based management practice and the NPP performance, both in quantitative and in qualitative terms. These additions are of course subject to donors' approval and availability of funding, as this may likely entail some additional costs, but these will be in any case limited in view of the benefits that a successful NPP implementation will deliver both to the target caseload and civil society. A full and successful programme for resettlement of the redundant defence personnel of all ethnic backgrounds that incorporates the necessary components could also be seen as a model for civilian programmes and institutions that are still suffering from political and ethnic cleavages. Should the higher levels of the MoD be supportive of this approach, this may lead to a change of how MoD is seen and it could strengthen its role as an integrating factor of all of the country's population.

8. Lessons identified

8.1 Lessons at the NPP level

- The NPP has adopted the right approach by putting the MoD in charge and having IOM play a coaching and a support function – useful to develop capacity and build ownership and commitment to the NPP;
- The NPP has also rightly decentralised decision making to the local level (RRC and JRP), leading to swifter and more effective programme implementation – but this requires a strong monitoring component that needs to be developed;
- In line with Results-Based Management and good practice all programmes should develop an exit and/or hand-over strategy;
- To ensure self-sustainability and avoid dependence from external support, NPP stakeholders should review the previous projects implemented in BiH (TAFS, previous NTF) and their evaluations. Two of the major gaps today were already

identified as early as 2004 : the critical need for psychosocial support and access to credit ;

- Equitable treatment of all discharged soldiers must be ensured in the programme to avoid political use or interference of the NPP;
- One other lesson is that the experiences and success stories from beneficiaries could be further used to create a network of former discharged defence personnel, a sort of advisory group for newly discharged soldiers showing the results that can be obtained for the successful cases. Two such cases were identified during the interviews, and similar cases have been reported in the TAFS evaluation report of April 2004.

8.2 Lessons for NATO and donor countries

- Good, regular and transparent communication with the MoD and the IOM contributes to sharing a common approach, problem solving and good NPP implementation procedures;
- This sort of programme – reintegration of discharged defence personnel – cannot and should not be undertaken on an emergency short-term basis if it wants to achieve sustainable results, and particularly when undertaken under a national capacity development umbrella for the MoD. As such, it would be preferable to work as much as possible on a funding modality of a three year cycle as a minimum to ensure results can be achieved and consolidated;
- Qualitative analysis based on primary stakeholders as well as beneficiary interviews that bring out the human stories and faces behind the numbers are crucial to understanding the quality of programme implementation.

8.3 Lessons for the MoD

- Developing a sound and trustworthy collaboration with the NATO and the International Community can be conducive to strong internal capacity development and can help overcome internal challenges if the issue is elevated to the highest levels of Government;
- The NPP has the potential to contribute to MoD being seen as an impartial model of national unity through equitable treatment of its discharged staff, in the midst of a very difficult and politicised environment;
- Civil-military partnership with experienced international organisations such as the IOM can be conducive to improved practices and efficient and effective handling by the MoD of the discharged defence personnel. MoD's participation at all stages of NPP implementation with IOM mentorship, including in the evaluation exercise, is a good example of commitment to the process;
- Commitment to the NPP through funding and staff posting is a positive albeit insufficient sign of ownership that need to be matched with proper logistics and communication facilities for proper programme implementation;
- Posting the proper number of skilled and trained staff and retaining them throughout the life of the programme is key to achieving the objectives, high staff turn-over (illness, transfer, promotion) must be coupled by a back-up pool of skilled and trained resource persons who can take over when gaps appear in the NPP structure.

9. Recommendations

1. Psychosocial support should be incorporated in the NPP with specialised staff on mental health and traumatic stress as well as behaviour change techniques at the RRC level and the service should be made available to the beneficiary household and not only to the beneficiary. Such a support should also be built as a permanent component of the PERSPEKTIVA programme through the capacity building component;
2. Second grants are necessary for facilitating economic sustainability of beneficiaries, as a single grant is not enough in the current context (and the current funds allocated in the budget for "further sustainability initiatives" cannot serve the purpose of a second grant). Those discharged soldiers who do not qualify for retirement should be given second grants on priority basis, as well as women and those beneficiaries who are engaged in developing their agricultural and business activities (based on specific criteria approved by the PSC);
3. Considering the limited amount of the grant money, the limit for the amount the beneficiary could provide to complement the NPP grant could be increased from 1,500 to 3,000 km, representing a 50% beneficiary contribution;
4. Consider training beneficiaries to deal with annual budget projections (instead of monthly) and irregular seasonal income through improved budgetary planning and cost/benefit projections, as beneficiaries have been living on a fixed monthly income base for the past 19 years;
5. Access to credit remains a problem in BiH and a separate project (outside of the NPP) to allow to finance beneficiaries' economic development (many of whom are paying off debts and loans at high rates) would be very useful and contribute to beneficiaries' economic sustainability if any donor had an interest in micro-finance development, or alternatively beneficiaries could be provided with links and entry into any existing micro-finance projects;
6. Use successful cases as ambassadors and examples towards other beneficiaries in their communities who haven't registered or requested assistance under the NPP, or create a pool of successful beneficiaries that could go around the country to talk about their stories in organized meetings (with NPP support);
7. Further efforts to develop linkages with civilian entities would be useful to facilitate beneficiaries' transition into civilian life, particularly at the local levels such as with municipalities which do not always know about the NPP. Beneficiaries recommended more visibility and efforts to publicise the NPP at the local levels (which could be coupled with the previous recommendation);
8. A realistic time-frame for programme that has an embedded national capacity development component should be at least three years and not two years, which does not allow to complete sufficient capacity development through the various stage of programme management cycle (design, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating performance, re-assess design, etc.); in the case of the NPP changes in the caseload and the discharging schedule shall also be considered as they might have an impact on the original timeframe;
9. There is a need to review the Results Framework and establish a monitoring system to capture both quantitative and qualitative information on programme implementation and ensure transparent reporting on results achieved, pending an end of programme evaluation foreseen in the programme document;
10. IOM should recruit a Monitoring and Evaluation officer to develop comprehensive monitoring of the NPP and also develop the MoD's M&E capacity; training should also be considered on M&E;

11. The NPP would benefit from a clear exit and hand-over strategy to the MoD once it comes to the end of its life cycle; identifying in particular the targets of the capacity development in a way that allows to assess progress (means of verifications and specific targets reached);
12. The support of the donor countries to developing an exit strategy for the project to contribute to national ownership through a formal hand-over process should be envisaged before the end of the NPP;
13. Top level support (by officials of the MoD and AFBiH as well as the BiH Presidency, BiH Parliament, and BiH Council of Ministers) is crucial to development of a sound and adequate long-term RRC structure and to the sustainability of the resettlement programme. The current level of support is inadequate and needs to be increased, also partly with additional presentations and feedback by the international community;
14. The further development of the central data base is a key portion of the programme in relation to MoD/AFBiH capacity building, and as stated in the MoD Regulations on Transition. Further work is warranted in particular to ensure that the MoD Personnel Transition Support Unit staff are able to provide proper reporting and analysis based on the data entered in the central data base, which needs to be updated with RRC inputs data bi-monthly. Improvements are compulsory as the data base is not yet functioning as originally envisaged and further efforts from PTSU are warranted.
15. Donors should take the opportunity to join in the evaluations commissioned under the programme as observers to hear some of the beneficiaries' stories and understand that reintegration goes beyond the grant money which is given. They should support the NPP in adopting an incremental and needs-based evolution in line with the specific situation in the country (need of psycho-social support, second grants for sustainability, links to credit facilities, etc.) taking advantage of the responsive programme management structure of the IOM if the objective is to obtain the best possible results as returns on the investment to bring peace and stability to the country.