NATO PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

ASSESSMENT OF THE RESULTS ACHIEVED IN REGARD TO SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING ASPECTS IN THE FRAME OF THE NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME

OCTOBER 2010 – SEPTEMBER 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme marks the fifth international intervention to support demobilised military personnel in BiH since it emerged from conflict some 18 years ago. Its predecessors – the World Bank’s Emergency Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (EDRP) and Pilot Emergency Labour Redeployment Programme (PELRP) and IOM’s Transitional Assistance to Demobilised Soldiers (TADS) programme – have been implemented with a view to immediate post-demobilisation security concerns. The NATO TRUST FUND Programme (NTF 1) implemented by the IOM during 2006-2009 was the first project which presented a need to establish models which are replicable by the national, host government making a full transition from basic livelihoods in the unstable post-conflict phase to more comprehensive economic development assistance. Whereas the previous assistance programmes aimed at dealing with mandatory downsizing of the Armed Forces of BiH (AF), the MoD was faced with a regular reintegration process of a magnitude that by far exceeds its financial and human capacities to cope with such large numbers in such a short timeframe.

War veterans have traditionally enjoyed enhanced social benefits related to health and unemployment and, since 2005, the personnel subject to downsizings received severance pay upon separation from the AF BiH. However, those currently facing discharge do not receive any severance pay at the end of their contracts with the MoD. This comes at a particularly sensitive time for BiH, both politically and economically whereby the release of big number of military personnel may have impact on the overall stability in the country. Discharged military personnel has entered a labour market dominated by high unemployment with no working experiences other than military which additional compounds their reintegration process.

The NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme (NPP) has to be seen in the context of strengthening the stability of civil society, and not as a purely military or defence-related activity. In that sense, the role of the IOM has been highly important in ensuring that the focus of the project is on security and stability in BiH and its social and economic development. The NPP was implemented from October 2010 to September 2013 as a support to the implementation of the MoD Policy and Strategy document ‘PERSPEKTIVA Program’, which was developed as an assistance programme to redundant personnel in the defence reform process in BiH. Unlike previous similar projects implemented in the country and in the region, the NPP has been a rather unique Programme offering multi-level assistance which besides the provision of the financial assistance also entailed psychosocial assistance and capacity building of the MoD.

The NPP has contributed to the Programme’s Overall Objective “to strengthen the MoD Policy and Strategy Document on Resettlement with technical assistance to facilitate the socio-economic integration of up to 1,968 Armed Forces released personnel”. As a contribution to reaching the Overall Objective, the NPP has offered the counselling, financial and psychological assistance to the NPP beneficiaries.

Despite the challenges which the NPP faced throughout its implementation, it managed not only to assist all released military personnel that enrolled in the Programme with the financial assistance up to 1,500 EUR from one of four different programme’s categories: agriculture, business start-up and expansion, employment/job placement and education/training, but more importantly, it has contributed towards the social and security stability in the country. Even though initially planned to target some 2,300 military personnel released from 2010 to 2012, the NPP assisted 2,634 released military personnel including also 791 military personnel released in 2013. Through the assistance offered to 2,634 persons, the NPP assisted 97 per cent of total of 2,735 released military personnel from 2010 to 2013. Only 78 discharged military personnel or 1 per cent decided not to register for the Programme. In comparison with similar assistance programmes previously implemented in BiH and in the Western Balkan region, almost 1,000 NPP beneficiaries assisted per year is an

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1 Final Report NATO/PfP Trust Fund (NTF) Programme for Assistance to Redundant Military Personnel in BiH, p.10
exceptional result. The Programme has also proved to be cost-effective with a very high proportion (76 per cent) of the budget being spent as direct assistance to NPP beneficiaries.

In addition to financial assistance to the NPP beneficiaries, the NPP major achievement is the incorporation of psychosocial support in the transition process. The need for psychosocial assistance was identified as a critical gap in the transition and reintegration process of the redundant military personnel in the First External Independent Mid-Term Evaluation performed in September 2011. The initially set target of assisting 25 per cent of NPP beneficiaries with the psychosocial assistance by the end of the Programme has been increased by 31 per cent amounting to 56 per cent of all NPP beneficiaries visited by the Mental Health and Traumatic Stress (MHTS) counsellors engaged by the NPP to assess the psychosocial well-being of the NPP beneficiaries and to provide psychosocial assistance. Psychosocial assistance together with financial assistance made a comprehensive assistance package offering two key preconditions for the successful reintegration into the civilian life.

Moreover, the importance of psychosocial assistance and training of the MoD staff aimed at capacitating them to recognize when the psychosocial assistance is needed, has been acknowledged by donors and has resulted in the continuation of this activity until June 2014 as part of capacity building efforts targeting relevant staff of the MoD and mechanisms developed within the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme.

Following another recommendation from the First External Independent Mid-Term Evaluation to facilitate economic sustainability of the most vulnerable and most successful beneficiaries, the NPP also introduced the second grant up to 1,500 EUR. The aim of this recommendation was to assist up to 15 per cent of all NPP beneficiaries among which the most vulnerable categories and successful beneficiaries developing profitable business and to ensure that they receive tailored assistance for further development of their business, enhancing their scope for long-term socio-economic integration. Within the available funds, the NPP assisted 198 or 7 per cent of all NPP beneficiaries.

The NPP included capacity building of the MoD and an Exit Strategy into its design, thus creating both necessary expertise and technical preconditions for the MoD to independently plan and implement future transition of the MoD personnel. The MoD has been trained both at the headquarters and field level by applying coaching and learning- by- doing methodologies so to acquire know-how and technical capacity to continue providing support in the framework of the PERSPEKTIVA Program to beneficiaries. The MoD has also been technically equipped for future transition process of redundant military personnel. Also, thanks to the NPP, the MoD capacities to perform transition process as a part of regular human resource management cycle have been additionally strengthened. In the second year of its implementation, the NPP activities regarding the capacity building of the MoD PERSPEKTIVA Program were incorporated into the Exit Strategy designed to ensure handing over of the NPP activities to the MoD, as well as the transfer of knowledge and mechanisms developed through the NPP’s activities.

The Exit Strategy was necessary in order to ensure a smooth transfer of Programme ownership to local counterparts (primarily the MoD), thus ensuring sustainability and long-term impact of donor intervention. The first phase of the Exit Strategy covered the period October 2012 - March 2013, while the second phase ran from April 2013– to September 2013. Given the lack of funds not all of the planned activities were conducted, particularly as regards to the capacity building of the Personnel Transition Support Unit (PTSU). However, through bilateral agreements and financial support of the governments of the United Kingdom (UK), the Kingdom of Norway and the United States of America (USA) capacity building for the MoD PTSU staff will continue until end of June 2014.

Unlike in some similar earlier programmes for discharged soldiers such as the NATO/PfP Trust Programme (NTF 1), where through the means of the public procurement the most favourable company operating at the national level would be selected, and from which all equipment or tools were purchased, the NPP has been organised differently. The NPP included development of the local economy into its design aiming to increase monetary injection into the local economy by allowing beneficiaries to choose independently from which
service provider or company to purchase equipment or tools so the local businesses and thus the local economy can have a direct benefit from the NPP. This approach proved to be very effective allowing the Programme to cooperate and purchase equipment and tools from 381 local service providers and companies providing a total 2,634 discharged military personnel with the equipment and tools for the development of their small business initiatives or self-employment. As a result, the Programme spent up to 3,714,000 EUR on direct reintegration, directly contributing towards development of the local economy. Moreover, the purchases made through the NPP have contributed towards increasing business of small and medium enterprises. The amounts of up to 1,500 EUR to which the beneficiaries were entitled, as well as reliable and timely payment by the IOM in a time of general lack of cash, have positively contributed to financial solvency of the companies. Many companies claimed that the cooperation with the NPP has helped them to remain in the business in the midst of the financial crisis.

Given the Programme’s multilevel approach, the measuring of the NPP Project’s success focused not only on the individual assistance provided to discharged military personnel and their families, but also on the economic effects produced on the local community in terms of support received and benefits gained from the reintegration process of the NPP beneficiaries. The Programme has been relevant for both the discharged military personnel and the MoD/AF BiH in the transition process of military personnel. Some aspects of the Programme such as psychosocial assistance, capacity building of the MoD/AF BiH, and development of the local economy are rather unique and should be expanded and pursued in future programmes. The Programme has performed exceptionally well and created the necessary preconditions and structures for future transition activities in the AF BiH.

However, taking into consideration that the actual economic effects of provided assistance are not always immediate, it is advisable to perform external evaluation one year after the Programme’s closure. It is the only possible way to assess the real impact of the Programme’s on the socioeconomic sustainability of the NPP beneficiaries, as well as of capacity building and other Programmes components.
NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME

The NPP has been developed in a full partnership with the MoD with the goal of supporting the defence sector reform in BiH by complementing activities already planned or implemented by the MoD. The general objective of the Programme has been to strengthen the MoD capacity to manage its downsizing and reform activities, to enhance the social and economic integration of discharged defence personnel into civilian life and to contribute to further stabilization of the country and the region.

Project objectives

The NPP has targeted discharged defence personnel assisting them in their reintegration into civilian life. The Programme, through the individual counselling and financial support, contributed to economic and social reintegration of the NPP beneficiaries through the provision of assistance in four categories of economic activities: agriculture, business start-up and expansion, employment/job placement and education/training. The NPP Field Client Advisors in the Recruitment and Transition Centres (RTC) provided one-on-one counselling to the NPP beneficiaries to help them select the most suitable path of the reintegration i.e. assistance.

Specific objectives identified in the original NPP document were:

- Approximately 3,000 released personnel assisted in their re-integrating into civilian life through one-on-one counselling;
- 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 of the 2,301 released defence personnel assisted with further sustainability initiatives:
  - Communities of resettlement indirectly benefit from the reintegration by way of services provided and increased business activity at the micro-level
- Capacity of MoD/PERSPEKTIVA to conduct resettlement activities strengthened.

However, as a result of the First External Mid-Term Evaluation conducted in September 2011, the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme reviewed the Results Framework (RF) and established a monitoring system in the second year of the project implementation to capture both quantitative and qualitative information on the Programme implementation and ensure transparent reporting on the results achieved. The new Results Framework became the key monitoring and evaluation tool defining the modality for the evaluation of the updated strategic outcomes of the NPP that can be listed as follows:

- **Specific Objective 1**: Assist the beneficiaries who submitted their applications for reintegration into civilian life,
- **Specific Objective 2**: Assist up to 65 per cent of released defence personnel to integrate into the workforce through job placement, business start-up and expansion,
- **Specific Objective 3**: Enhanced potentials for socioeconomic development by way of services provided and increased business activity in the resettlement areas,
- **Specific Objective 4**: Increase the chances of self-sustainability through second grants of the business and activities of up to 15 per cent of beneficiaries,
- **Specific Objective 5**: Assist up to 25 per cent of beneficiaries in their socioeconomic integration into civilian life through psychosocial support,
- **Specific Objective 6**: Strengthen capacity of MoD/Perspektiva to conduct reintegration activities

In addition to this Results Framework, the NPP also incorporated the development of an Exit Strategy into its design to gradually handover all activities to the MoD/PTSU.
## Project components

The Information, Counselling and Referral Services (ICRS) model, developed by the IOM through its worldwide operations over the past 20 years, was the basis of the NPP methodology. The ICRS model has subsequently become a general instrument adapted to the BiH environment and socioeconomic and security conditions for adequately responding to the needs of the target group.

Although the original project document was revised to include new activities as defined by donors and the MoD during the annual extension review process, the NPP remained based on a four-component approach, designed to provide reintegration services to a targeted caseload, identified within the framework of the MoD redundancy plan:

1) **Registration and Profiling** consisted of registration, profiling of the caseload, prior to resettlement, mapping of this individual data against available opportunities and socio-economic conditions in the area of reintegration and analysis to ensure appropriate and targeted service provision in terms of reintegration assistance.

2) **Information, Counselling and Referral Services** (ICRS) consisted of **Information dissemination** through informative meetings with beneficiaries in several municipalities, outreach activities through field presentations, seminars for local communities, and workshops, as well as information campaigns to ensure the provision of relevant information and allow potential beneficiaries to make an informed decision about the reintegration opportunities offered by the Programme. **Counselling** - Throughout the life of the Programme to assist individuals with career guidance, business advice, and confidence building to assist in a smooth transition from military to civilian life. **Referral** - Following counselling sessions individuals are referred to appropriate routes to reintegration, opportunities which may include existing job opportunities or further training, as well as individual solutions to be financed through the Reintegration Fund.

3) **Reintegration Fund** consisted of individual reintegration plans tailored to individual circumstances through provision of assistance in four different areas: agriculture, business start-up and expansion, employment/job placement and education/training. These activities are financed through grants and the approval of each grant is determined by the Joint Review Panel (JRP), which is comprised of experts from IOM and MoD, according to a set of established criteria in the Operational Manual.

4) **Capacity Building** consisted of the Capacity Building Component of the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme focused on strengthening the capacity of PERSPEKTIVA to deliver reintegration assistance through the learning-by-doing approach, formal training courses and setting up of procedures, mechanisms and tools within PERSPEKTIVA. These interventions aimed at supporting the MoD in organising and managing future downsizing processes related to defence reforms, as well as the release of contracted soldiers.
INTRODUCTION

Along with the contribution of the MoD, the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme was funded by 11 donor countries, with the Kingdom of Norway, Kingdom of the Netherlands and Republic of Slovenia as Lead Nations (LN) through the NATO Trust Fund, while the governments of the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) have also financially contributed to the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme through the bilateral agreements, with the USA government being the largest single donor of the Programme.

The two primary stakeholders that collaborated on this assessment, the IOM and the MoD are profiled below:

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

The IOM has over 15 years of worldwide experience in the resettlement and reintegration of regular and irregular military and security sector personnel. It has implemented various programmes that right size military personnel levels and reintegrate them into civilian life: assisting more than 270,000 former combatants and other regular and irregular military personnel in countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Guatemala, Haiti, Mali, Mozambique, the Philippines, Tajikistan, East Timor and Colombia. The IOM has direct experience in BiH in the implementation of the two previous projects in the defence sector in BiH: Transitional Assistance to Former Soldiers (TAFS) and NATO Trust Fund (NTF1) so it has the precious experience, not only in the region but in the country as well.

The reintegration of defence personnel presents a particular set of challenges to which the IOM has responded by developing a core of expertise in applying its reintegration methodologies to the unique situation of a given country. In order to achieve long lasting sustainable stability and security, the IOM links its activities to the host government’s strategy, vision and priorities. Partnership with host governments further enhances their existing capacities in administering and implementing such programmes, which are often implemented in adverse socio-economic realities.

MOD PERSONNEL TRANSITION SUPPORT UNIT (PTSU)

The military personnel reintegration support process in BiH was launched with the aim of providing necessary assistance in a systematic and organized manner. The Personnel Transition Support Unit (PTSU) was established within the MoD and tasked with implementing the MoD policy and strategy document on Reintegration of some 3,000 released personnel from the AF BiH with the aim of facilitating their social and economical reintegration. The PTSU oversees four Recruitment and Transition Centres (RTC) and closely cooperate with the IOM as implementing agent of the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme.

PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CREATION OF THE PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAM AND NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME

The principal objective of BiH remains joining the NATO Partnership for Peace and, ultimately, achieving full membership in the NATO and in the Euro-Atlantic security structures. This requires BiH to build professional and economically sustainable armed forces compatible and inter-operable with the NATO’s forces. To this end, a comprehensive on-going defence sector reform has been initiated in BiH aiming to consolidate defence sector powers at the state level, having abolished the separate entities’ Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces Headquarters. This process inevitably led to surplus of defence personnel, particularly of professional soldiers.

The MoD already completed several phases of discharging professional soldiers in the period between 2006 and 2009, during which 2,893 discharged personnel were assisted. In June 2006, NATO/PfP established the NATO Trust Fund (NTF) Programme for BiH to support the country’s MoD in providing reintegration assistance to defence personnel who were made redundant in 2006 and in previous downsizing in 2004, as a result of
defence reform. The NTF Programme, which also was implemented by the IOM, was meant to contribute to the overall objectives of BiH to maintain peace and stability, foster economic recovery, reduce unemployment, and generate income for its citizens. The NTF was established to assist the MoD to implement what was expected to be the last major downsizing of the AF BiH. However, the Law on Service in the AF BiH, Article 101 thereof\(^2\), imposes an age limit of 35 years to those involved in active service, resulting in over 1,944 soldiers being released from the AF BiH between 2010 and 2012, while an additional group of 791 soldiers was discharged in 2013.

It is in this context the MoD anticipated and pursued development of a support programme for assistance to redundant personnel in the defence reform process named PERSPEKTIVA Program. The Policy and Strategy document on Resettlement, the PERSPEKTIVA Program stemmed from the Policy on Transition and Reintegration of Redundant Personnel in the MoD and AF BiH in October 2008. This is an integral part of the country’s efforts to conduct sustainable and affordable defence reform whilst minimising negative social and economic consequences. Although the PERSPEKTIVA Program was well designed and thought to be as a stand-alone programme for the MoD realisation, it was realized that further support in certain key components such as human resources capacity, technical expertise, and financing of the project assistance to the beneficiaries is required. Given such a state of affairs, the MoD consequently urged the NATO member states and other donors to assist in reintegration support of released military personnel. The NATO and the US Government decided to respond to the MoD request for assistance by setting up a NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund and a USAID Programme, “Assistance Programme for the Resettlement of Discharged Ministry of Defence Personnel in Bosnia and Herzegovina” (NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme) under the management and expertise of the IOM. Because the two interventions were complementary and needed to be closely coordinated at both the management and operational levels, synergies to facilitate cost effectiveness were introduced and the two Programmes are jointly implemented under the umbrella of a NATO-PERSPEKTIVA activity.

In addition to NTF and USAID funds, the Programme was supported by the UK Government, which enabled the implementation of capacity building activities and NATO HQs including specifically designed visibility activities implemented within the framework of the Programme and focused on the presentation of the Programme to the beneficiaries.

The NPP was planned to be implemented from October 2010 to September 2012, but was extended twice and prolonged to September 2013. First six-month no-cost extension was approved by NATO Lead Nations on the basis of the remaining funds, while USAID provided additional funds allowing the Programme to continue until 31 March 2013. The second, cost extension of the Programme after March 2013 was approved in May by NATO HQ Brussels, which enabled the Programme to assist new caseload of persons discharged during 2013. Therefore, the NPP eventually comprised of two phases. During the first phase (October 2010-September 2012) the Programme assisted 1,847 persons out of 1,944 released military personnel, while during the second phase, the NPP assisted additional 787 persons out of 791 released military personnel during 2013, amounting to 2,634 discharged military personnel being assisted.

In order to provide assistance in the transition and reintegration of redundant military personnel, the MoD established three Recruitment and Transition Centres, in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar, to provide personalised guidance to the redundant military personnel in adjusting to the civilian life. Additional RTC in Tuzla was established in April 2012.

\(^2\)The Law on Service in the AF BiH Article 101 imposes an age limit of 35 years to those involved in active service, resulting in over 3,300 soldiers being released from the Armed Forces between 2010 and 2013.
Financing of the NATO-Perspektiva Programme

In addition to significant amount of funds provided by the MoD, the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme was co-financed through the NATO/PfP by a range of NATO countries: Luxembourg, Turkey, Sweden, Denmark, Czech Republic, Finland and Italy. Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Republic of Slovenia as Lead Nations in administering the funding signed the Executive Agreement on 1 October 2010 for the implementation of the NATO Trust Fund (NTF), formally entitled “NATO Programme for Released Personnel of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina”. Besides the NATO Trust Fund, United Kingdom and United States of America supported the Programme through the bilateral agreements (Table 1). The USA contributed to the Programme in the amount of 2,437,206 USD (being the biggest single donor of the Programme), allowing expansion of the Programme activities, as well as the UK fund which supporting the implementation of capacity building activities, and the NATO HQs which directly financed visibility activities during the three years of the Programme implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DONOR COUNTRY</th>
<th>ORIGINAL PLEDGES</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL PLEDGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA</td>
<td>1,499,950.00</td>
<td>150,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINGDOM OF NORWAY (LN)</td>
<td>1,100,000.00</td>
<td>300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS (LN)</td>
<td>300,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUXEMBOURG</td>
<td>200,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKEY</td>
<td>200,000.00</td>
<td>50,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEDEN (SEK 1,500,000)</td>
<td>194,602.70</td>
<td>34,466.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENMARK</td>
<td>100,000.00</td>
<td>50,010.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZECH REPUBLIC</td>
<td>57,176.02</td>
<td>7,779.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLOVENIA (LN)</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINLAND</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,681,728.72 EUR</strong></td>
<td><strong>722,255.97 EUR</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAND TOTAL</th>
<th>4,403,984.69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNITED STATES</td>
<td>2,133,600.00 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,437,206 USD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED KINGDOM</td>
<td>115,301.00 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO HQ Sa</td>
<td>66,991.00 EUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Funds pledged until May 10, 2013

Source: IOM

The NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme budget, totalling to over € 6 millions including the NTF, US, UK and NATO HQ Sarajevo funds, allocated over a three-year period, was broken down into staff, office and operational costs. The IOM applied a 5 per cent overhead rate, which was a rather low rate in comparison with other international organizations. The IOM was directly responsible for the financial management of and reporting on the NPP. At the end of each year, the original budget was revised.

The biggest portion of the funding was allocated to the Reintegration Fund which was comprised of a grant component (1,500 EUR/per capita). The share of staff and office costs (including overhead) in operational costs was 18 per cent.

By September 2013, a remarkably high proportion of 76 per cent was allocated for direct assistance. Considering that another 2 per cent was spent on the MoD capacity development, the total percentage devoted to operational assistance was 78 per cent of the total budget costs. Staffing costs were quite
reasonable, making 13 per cent of the budget, and structure costs and visibility material each accounted for 2 per cent of the total budget (Figure 1).

![Figure 1: Budget costs breakdown analysis (September 2013)](source: IOM)

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Different structures were created in order to reach the Programme objectives:

A Programme Steering Committee (PSC) chaired by the Kingdom of Norway as one of the Lead Nations of the NATO Trust Fund, with the participation of the MoD as co-chair, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Republic of Slovenia as co-lead nations, PTSU and IOM representatives and donors representatives such as USAID, NATO HQ Sarajevo, UK, Sweden, Turkey and the Czech Republic. The PSC oversaw the Programme implementation, provided general guidance and led supervision over the NPP by meeting regularly to discuss the issues pertaining to the Programme and its progress. The PSC held twenty-two PSC meetings, the first on 18 October 2010 and the last on 9 December 2013. Meetings were held every three months and on an as-needed basis since the beginning of the NPP and with full satisfaction of donor countries. Funding issues were also discussed at the PSC meetings, as well as all other issues that emerged during the implementation of the Programme.

The main tasks of the Programme Steering Committee were to:

- Agree upon and monitor coordination, managerial and referral modalities,
- Facilitate coordination with other initiatives relevant to the NPP,
- Meet on a regular basis to ensure that NPP objectives and purposes are met,
- Ensure that the SC’s strategic recommendations are followed,
- Discuss and resolve problems as they arose during the course of project implementation.

At the management level, the Programme Management Unit (PMU) and the IOM Chief of Mission ensured that the work is undertaken according to the established rules and procedures, and provided support and supervision to the RTC field office IOM staff, with the support of a small team of described in the previous section.

Within the MoD/AFBiH, there was a dual structure in place: the MoD Personnel Transition Support Unit (PTSU), that has designed the PERSPEKTIVA Program, ensured overall guidance of the NPP through their four-staff unit placed in the MoD in Sarajevo, provided guidance to the RTC staff and was also responsible for maintaining an updated beneficiary database. The Armed Forces Command of Personnel Management in Banja...
Luka represented the other line of reporting, and all reports from the RTCs had to be sent by post through the KUP for onward dispatch to all recipients.

At the field level, the Programme was implemented by five staff members (three MoD/AF and two IOM) placed in each Recruitment and Transition Centre, each reporting to its own constituency. The RTC structure was as follows: the office was placed under the overall responsibility of the Officer for Recruitment as Head of Office, seconded by one recruitment advisor (civilian MoD staff). The Transition Unit is composed of one Officer, one Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) (responsible for the database) and one Transition Advisor (civilian MoD staff). The RTC staff worked jointly with the IOM field Advisors, who were sharing offices at the same location. On the IOM side, there was one Lead Programme Assistant with overall responsibility for the IOM activities, supported by one Programme Advisor.

In order to ensure consistent and coherent application of the rules and procedures of the Programme, an operational manual was issued in December 2010 outlining the procedures for the provision of financial assistance to applicants, as defined in the NPP document.

**NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME PROJECT**

**NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME PROJECT RESULTS**

The NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme specific outcomes achieved over the three year period were:

- 2,634 discharged defence personnel assisted in their reintegration into civilian life through one-on-one counselling,
- 2,634 discharged defence personnel (1,870 during the first two years and 787 during the third year of activities) integrated into civilian life as a result of strengthening and reinforcing reintegration initiatives through capacity building and business support initiatives resulting in sustainable income generating activities,
- Psychosocial assistance provided to 51 per cent of NPP beneficiaries,
- Positive impact of the NPP on the socioeconomic development of services provided and business activities in the micro reintegration areas,
- PERSPEKTIVA Program IT system updated and upgraded to match the future needs of the unit,
- Recruitment and Transition Centres (RTC) facilities upgraded,
- Published NPP publications to capture and further publicize the NPP experience,
- Exit Strategy implemented.

**Results Achieved by NATO-Perspektiva Programme Project’s Key Components**

**Component 1: Registration and Profiling**

Over the course of the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme, the MoD referred 1,948 discharged military personnel between 2010 and 2012 but after the revision of the caseload by the MoD, the number decreased to 1,944, with four persons having been returned to the service.

In January 2013, the MoD referred to the IOM a group of up to 947 military personnel due to be discharged during 2013 in accordance with Article 101 of the Law on Service. However, by announcing that officer positions would be
available, the MoD allowed all eligible personnel from this group to apply for a promotion in order to extend their contract with the Armed Forces. After the revision, 145 persons were promoted and remained in the Armed Forces, while it was confirmed that 791 would be discharged in 2013, including additional 13 non-commissioned officers. In total, 2,735 discharged defence personnel were referred by the MoD:

- 1,944 eligible personnel – October 2010- February 2013,
- 791 eligible personnel – March - September 2013,

In order to promote the NPP, increase the knowledge about the Programme and ensure that all stakeholders were aware of the scope and purpose of the Programme throughout its implementation, as well as of the aims and goals set by the donors, the Programme undertook a number of visibility events (workshop, seminars and field presentations). The successful implementation of the NPP’s outreach strategy increased awareness among the eligible beneficiary pool about the project, resulting in total of 97 per cent of all discharged military personnel registering for the Programme (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010-2012</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Released</td>
<td>1,944</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>2,735</td>
<td>97.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered</td>
<td>1,870</td>
<td>96.19</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>99.75</td>
<td>2,659</td>
<td>97.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisted</td>
<td>1,847</td>
<td>98.77</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>99.75</td>
<td>2,634</td>
<td>99.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Registration and assistance*

Registration constituted the pre-condition for accessing Programme assistance throughout implementation. Registration data, along with the information collected during counselling, field monitoring, and on-site visits were used to develop tailor-based reintegration plans. The potential for a successful socioeconomic reintegration into the civilian life was enhanced by the fact that each reintegration plan was developed with due consideration of the existing needs, skills, motivations, and assets of each beneficiary.

### Component 2: Information, Counselling and Referral Services

Counselling activities within the framework of the Programme were based on a beneficiary-orientated approach throughout its implementation, whereby the beneficiary was supported by the field client advisors (both IOM and MoD staff) in defining his/her own path towards a successful and self-sustainable reintegration into civilian life, which garnered very productive results. The one-to-one counselling process was tailored to each beneficiary, and followed a flexible procedure without a precise timeframe. The NPP managed to offer information, counselling and referral services to 2,657 referred redundant military personnel. The effectiveness of the counselling services provided by the IOM/MoD staff was important from the aspect that the NPP beneficiaries take informed decisions about their prospects in the civilian life and chose the most appropriate route of integration. Counselling for those who had well developed ideas typically proceeded very swiftly, while completing the assistance process for those registered beneficiaries who did not have a definitive plan for their reintegration process often took a substantial length of time. The Table 3 shows the average time of almost 11 hours needed for the processing the application from the registration to the delivery of the assistance.
Many of the NPP beneficiaries had spent a considerable proportion of their careers in the AF BiH and were understandably anxious about their reintegration into civilian life, particularly those that had limited or no experience of employment in the civilian sector. Therefore, the counselling support constituted a crucial element of the support offered by the Programme, not only in relation to the economic reintegration, but also in providing beneficiaries with the self-confidence to believe that their social reintegration was possible and that there was hope for a positive future within the civilian sphere. Also, the information, counselling and referral services were important from the aspect of providing right information to the potential NPP beneficiaries especially since there were rumours that the enrolling for the Programme would influence their early retirement/pension rights. Through the counselling process, discharged military personnel engaged themselves in a dialogue with people that were ready to help and assist them. This helped to lower the tensions and resentment that very often was present with the discharged military personnel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS ACTIVITY</th>
<th>REQUIRED TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in preparing the application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the application</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of business plan including cash flow</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of the proposal for the RRC and JRP</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of the proposal at the RRC and JRP</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance Delivery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature of the agreement and documents sent for payment</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with supplier and bid analysis</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT exemption procedure</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>10.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Average time for processing of application (presented in hour and minutes)

Source: IOM

Visibility Component of the NATO-Perspektiva Programme

In order to promote the NPP, increase the knowledge and provide right information about the Programme, and ensure that all stakeholders were aware of the scope and purpose of the Programme, as well as of the aims and goals set by the donors, the Programme undertook three visibility campaigns which included a variety of workshops, seminars, filed presentations. In order to increase the visibility of the NPP among potential beneficiaries and dissemination of relevant information, the NPP cooperated with the NATO HQ Sarajevo. The visibility activities during the three years of the Programme implementation were financed by the NATO HQs.

The promotion and outreach strategy implemented by the Programme showed as a key element in reaching the eligible candidates providing the right information about the Programme. The provision of the right information about the Programme was of crucial important since, for a significant amount of time, discharged military personnel were misinformed that the NPP assistance would endanger their early retirement pension rights. Owing to the successful implementation of the NPP’s visibility and outreach strategy, the Programme managed to increase the number of registered discharged military personnel 97 per cent of all discharged military personnel during three years of its implementation.
In addition to the outreach and promotion events and campaigns, the Programme also regularly updated the NPP website (www.perspektiva-program.ba) thus promoting its activities. Moreover, the visibility and outreach activities, along with the Programme’s excellent results, attracted the attention of the representatives of a wide range of countries contributing toward the Programme’s extension.

3: The Reintegration Fund

Following counselling sessions, individuals were referred to appropriate routes to reintegration, opportunities which may include existing job opportunities or further training, as well as individual solutions to be financed through the Reintegration Fund.

By September 2013, 2,659 individuals completed their counselling sessions. In total, 2,634 applications were submitted to the Joint Review Panel (JRP) and all were approved. None of the applications were declined, meaning that the NPP has had a 100 per cent realisation rate in terms of applications for assistance (Table 4). In the course of three years of Programme’s implementation, only 78 discharged military personnel decided not to register for the Programme and consequently not to receive the NPP assistance.

The remarkable result of providing assistance to 97 per cent of all discharged military personnel and approving all submitted applications attest also the abilities and expertise of the IOM and MoD RTC staff to work with beneficiaries in developing reintegration plans efficiently, while remaining sensitive to the particular needs, skills, motivation, and capacities of each individual beneficiary. A significant proportion of the RTC staff were involved in project implementation from its very beginning, and thus acquired considerable experience in assisting beneficiaries with various backgrounds and with a wide range of skill sets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance applications on 30 Sep. 2013</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied</td>
<td>2,634</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisted</td>
<td>2,634</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Outcome of applications to Individual Reintegration Assistance

Source: IOM

Type of NATO-Perspektiva Programme Assistance Chosen

As already stated, the NATO-Perspektiva Programme beneficiaries were assisted through the provision of assistance in four different areas: agriculture/business start-up and expansion, employment/job placement and education/training so to contribute towards the improvement of their economical prospect.

Since the beginning of the Programme, 1,694 (64 per cent) of Reintegration Assistance Project Proposals (RAPP) were related to agricultural activities while 981 (34 per cent) were related to self-employment mainly in the field of agriculture and only 41 (2 per cent) were related to re-training and/or further education (Figure 2). The predominance of agricultural related businesses (agro business start up or expansion) remained the principal sector for the requested assistance. Considering that the majority of the NPP beneficiaries lived in rural areas, owing land suitable for agricultural activities and have experience in agriculture, the choice of agriculture by the majority of the NPP beneficiaries was justified. Besides the fact that the majority of NPP beneficiaries had land suitable for agricultural activities, another key reasons for opting for this kind of assistance was that it ensured that basic needs were met swiftly by providing food/products for the
beneficiaries and their families. The major portion of assistance in the field of agriculture was related to supporting existing or start-up agricultural businesses by purchasing the mechanization or construction material for greenhouses.

Requests for salary support and education remained low, amounting to only 2 per cent of all NPP beneficiaries’ requests for the assistance. This can be explained by economic situation in BiH where finding job is difficult, as well as with the fact that the majority of the NPP beneficiaries lived in rural areas and had arable land. Another difficulty for the beneficiaries was that the NPP beneficiaries were already in a certain age group where the employers were reluctant to employ them, and rather looked for younger manpower. But perhaps the most important reason why not that many of beneficiaries chose this kind of assistance lies in the fact that the NPP covered only their salaries for a period of one year. In practice this meant that the beneficiaries did not have any guarantees that their employer would extend their employment after this period. Nearly 1 per cent of the salary support assistance was job placement in the security sector, where military and security skills were seen as a major asset. This type of assistance was most requested by beneficiaries residing in the more developed areas where the labour market was more dynamic and the number of potential employers higher.

It is important to stress that the beneficiaries were free to chose among the four different assistance packages, the decision was solely theirs, of course with the support and expertise offered by the IOM and MoD RTC staff in the decision making process.

Another important aspect of the Programme was the fact that the beneficiaries were also free to chose from which local provider/company to purchase the equipment/tools, which did not only contribute to the local economy development, but also made it easier for the beneficiaries since they could purchase the equipment/tools on the spot. The approach of purchasing equipment/tools from local companies of beneficiary’s choice will not be case in the future implementation of the MoD PERSPEKTIVA Program by the MoD given that the legislative framework and procurement procedures not permitting such an approach need to be respected.
**Second Grant**

Following the recommendations from the External Independent Mid-Term Evaluation undertaken during September 2011\(^3\), with the aim of facilitating economic sustainability of beneficiaries, the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) approved disbursement of the second grant assistance up to 1,500 EUR. Therefore, the eligibility criteria along with the scoring mechanism to define both the most needed (vulnerable categories) and the most successful beneficiaries were developed for the disbursement of the second grant (Table 5). The aim of this was to assist up to 15 per cent of all NPP beneficiaries among which the most vulnerable categories such as female NPP beneficiaries and successful beneficiaries developing profitable business and to ensure that they receive tailored assistance for further development of their business, enhancing their scope for long-term socio-economic integration. The disbursement of the second grant assistance was combined with a training course aimed at further increasing the capacities of those beneficiaries.

The Programme selected 172 beneficiaries to receive second grant from of 2010-2012 caseload and 26 beneficiaries from 2013 caseload, amounting to a total of 198 beneficiaries receiving the second grant (Table 6).

Second grant was provided to 31 female beneficiaries, 44 beneficiaries not eligible for early retirement, and additional 48 beneficiaries with a vulnerable status identified as eligible to access the second grant, and 75 successful beneficiaries selected by the RTC staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RTC</th>
<th>AG-Expansion</th>
<th>Self Employment - Expansion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banja Luka</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostar</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarajevo</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuzla</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>198</strong></td>
<td><strong>124</strong></td>
<td><strong>71</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6: Breakdown by category of second grant assistance received*  
*Source: IOM*

Impact assessment of the second grant revealed that its provision had positive social and financial implications upon the lives of the beneficiaries. Namely, the NPP beneficiaries surveyed emphasized the importance of the second grant as additional motivation and support for reintegration of the beneficiaries into the civilian life. Furthermore, beneficiaries who developed successful businesses highlighted the positive impact of the second grant on their respective businesses in terms of helping to increase their scope and to maintain their success and profitability.

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\(^3\)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)
Psychosocial Support

Psychosocial support was one of the Programme’s key components introduced in the Programme’s second year of implementation after the First External Independent Mid-Term Evaluation performed in September 2011. In line with the Programme’s decision to include the psychosocial component into its design, the Programme engaged Mental Health and Traumatic Stress (MHTS) counsellors in each of the four RTCs. The NPP has also engaged two international experts in mental health and traumatic stress from King’s College London, UK, who organised a number of meetings in May 2012 performing the initial assessment and designing the methodology, and organised trainings for Mental Health and Traumatic Stress (MHTS) counsellors, as well as for the MoD/PTSU, AFBiH, and RTC staff.

At the start of these activities in June 2012, the MHTS counsellors focused particularly on unregistered and undecided beneficiaries, as well as on the female beneficiaries who constituted a particularly vulnerable group among discharged military personnel. By the end of September, counsellors contacted 2,363 beneficiaries by phone and visited another 1,545, providing psychosocial assistance to 56 percent of 2,634 registered beneficiaries, thus exceeding the planned target of 25 per cent (Table 7). Most of contacted and visited beneficiaries responded very positively to the psychosocial component, though most of them emphasised that this assistance should have been made available prior or immediately after their discharge.

In addition to these activities, and with the aim to facilitate planned group workshops with the beneficiaries, during the Programme implementation, the MHTS counsellors organised meetings with the representatives of discharged soldiers. Taking into consideration large influence of the representatives of discharged personnel by their fellow discharged colleagues, the Programme focused on direct work with the representatives by organizing educational experiential workshops in order to inform the representatives of discharged soldiers about the purpose and importance of providing adequate and long-term counselling as a crucial element of psychosocial support within the process of the reintegration into civilian life and to enhance their capacity as to recognise the behavioural changes among fellow colleagues who might be in need of psychosocial support. These workshops proved to be very useful since the representatives of discharged soldiers expressed the need for continued support from the MHTS counsellors recognising the psychosocial assistance as a crucial element in the well-being of the NPP beneficiaries. Given the specific needs of female NPP beneficiaries the Programme also organised educational-motivating workshops for female beneficiaries. The aim of these workshops was to empower female beneficiaries in their endeavours to successfully reintegrate into civilian life.

The workshops also facilitated the provision of information concerning the civilian health system and how to access available support, which was particularly relevant since many beneficiaries were not fully aware of available health services or how to access them. In this regard, the Programme coordinated with the MHTS counsellors the preparation of three brochures and distributed them among the NPP beneficiaries. The brochures contained basic information on depression, anxiety, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and included contact information of all Mental Health Centres in BiH. These brochures were also distributed in four RTCs and left in most prominent point inside military barracks, and in this way were made available to active military personnel in addition to those being discharged.

The Programme established contacts with Mental Health Centres (MHCs) in BiH in order to obtain appropriate information on the capacities of the MHCs and activities performed therein. This information was shared with beneficiaries and served to assist MHTS counsellors in properly advising beneficiaries and referring them to appropriate centres, if required. Activities related to the psychosocial component will be continued in the period from 01 October 2013 until June 2014, focusing on the psychosocial assistance to NPP beneficiaries released in 2013, evaluation of the services provided and the revision of the methodology required for the proper hand-over to the MoD.
Positive feedback and appreciation from the NPP beneficiaries to introduction of psychosocial assistance and the number of contacted beneficiaries (exceeding initially planned target) confirms the importance of the psychosocial assistance in the reintegration process of all discharged military personnel. Although most of the NPP beneficiaries emphasized that this assistance should have been made available prior or immediately after their discharge, great majority of beneficiaries responded very positively to the psychosocial component. Assisted beneficiaries emphasized the importance of including this support as a permanent component of the project. The introduction of psychosocial assistance and a very positive response from beneficiaries to visits and conversations with the MTHS counsellors had positive impact on their motivation, which was and is a crucial moment in their future endeavours to reintegration. In addition to that, and what was witnessed by the MTHS counsellors in their contacts with beneficiaries, was that the psychosocial assistance contributed towards breaking the stigma largely present in the BiH society that requesting any kind of psychological assistance or going to psychologist is something negative and generally not socially accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RTC</th>
<th>Discharged</th>
<th>Assisted</th>
<th>Contacted by phone</th>
<th>First visit</th>
<th>Second visit</th>
<th>Third visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuzla</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarajevo</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capljina</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banja Luka</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,735</td>
<td>2,634</td>
<td>2,363</td>
<td>1,545</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 7: Total number of beneficiaries contacted and visited by MHTS counselors*

Source: IOM

**Female beneficiaries**

The NATO-Perspektiva Programme was gender-orientated throughout its implementation and recognised specific needs of female population among the NPP beneficiaries. Therefore, the NPP maintained a focus on their reintegration and provided them with the most appropriate assistance. Female beneficiaries, who made only 3 per cent of the total number of discharged military personnel, constituted a specific group in particular because of their ‘double role’, the role of a soldier was often replaced by the role of a mother and wife, and in many cases their reintegration was found to have gone better than this was case with the male NPP beneficiaries. However, problems were identified in relation to their position and status within the family and community and both social and legislative discrimination against women in the society. Recognising the peculiar status and discrimination towards women present in the BiH society and with the aim to contribute to the better reintegration of female beneficiaries, the Programme provided the second grant to 31 female beneficiaries, as well as the training to improve the requisite skills for successful reintegration.

The Programme also conducted two surveys, first during the period July-September 2011, with 42 female beneficiaries registered, and the second one beginning 2013 among 52 female beneficiaries discharged from 2010 to 2012, to measure their specific needs and to deliver recommendation in regard to their successful reintegration into civilian life.
The aim of the surveys was also to promote socioeconomic gender equality in the economic sphere in BiH. The main findings of the surveys were related to the fact that despite the females opinion that the Programme was more efficient in facilitating their reintegration than if they had to find the employment on their own through the Employment Bureaus, the Programme did not adequately assist them in mitigating the specific challenges which they as women faced in the society. The survey also revealed both legislative and social discrimination of women in BiH society. Taking into account discrimination of women in the area of education and employment, the survey, among other things, revealed the need for inclusion of female needs in demobilization and reintegration programmes especially within the area of employment.

Main recommendations from the surveys conducted were that there was need to include women in all phases of the discharge and reintegration process, to adopt a participatory model in order to estimate the needs of women, and facilitate the involvement of women at the decision making level.

These findings are in line with the MoD policy and plans for gender mainstreaming in the AF BiH. Since 2008, the AF BiH and the MoD have included the promotion of gender equality among military personnel with the aim to increase the level of women participation in the AF BiH. In line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, peace and security” adopted on 21 October 2000, which promotes gender equality among national governments, the MoD became involved in developed of an Action Plan in order to implement the UNSC Resolution 1325. The Action Plan covering the period 2010-2013 was the first of its kind to be adopted within the region. The Action Plan aims to promote women participation in the decision making process and, more concretely, to enhance participation of women in the AF BiH to 10 per cent by 20154.

Another important source of information on female beneficiaries needs came from MTHS counsellor’s visits to the female beneficiaries which have identified the necessity of inclusion of psychosocial support and raising the awareness of discharged women concerning their mental health. Female beneficiaries have stressed the importance of the psychosocial support received from the MTHS counsellors especially in identification of problems they were facing and the barriers that impede their reintegration process.

The Programme demonstrated gender sensibility throughout its implementation by assessing specific needs of female beneficiaries and by adapting its services to them accordingly. Further, based on the results and recommendations from two surveys conducted, the Programme prepared the ground for the future work of the MoD and AF BiH including the multi-sectoral solutions for the management of redundant women military personnel. Also, psychosocial support has proven to be very important in the reintegration process of female beneficiaries. Therefore, the MTHS counsellors recommended that in future transition and reintegration processes greater focus should be placed on psychosocial support to female beneficiaries through workshops and self-help support groups prior to the provision of any other form of assistance5.

Local Community Benefit From the Reintegration Process

Different from the previous similar programmes concerning discharged soldiers, such as NATO/PfP Trust Programme (NTF 1), where through the means of the public procurement the most favourable company would

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4 Transition and reintegration of women discharged from the Armed Forces of BiH, Analysis and Recommendations, Sarajevo, February-March 2013, p.7

5 NATO PERSPEKTIVA Programme, Final Report to NATO, p.13
be selected (operating at the national level), and from which all equipment and tools were purchased, the NPP has been organised differently. The NPP included development of the local economy into its design aiming to increase monetary injection into the local economy by allowing beneficiaries to choose independently from which service provider or company to purchase equipment or tools so the local businesses thus local economy can have a direct benefit from the NPP.

During the three year implementation of the NPP (October 2010 - September 2013), the Programme has cooperated and purchased equipment and tools with 381 local service providers and companies in more than 100 BiH municipalities providing a total 2,634 discharged military personnel with the equipment/tools in order to pursue with the development of their small business initiatives or self-employment, spending up to 3,714,000 EUR on direct reintegration of the beneficiaries directly contributing towards the BiH economy and cash flows in the country and keeping small and medium companies operational.

The purchases made through the NPP have contributed towards an increase of business of the small and medium companies. Moreover, the amount of up to 1,500 EUR to which the beneficiaries were entitled, as well as reliable and timely payment by the IOM in the time of general lack of cash flows, has positively contributed to the financial solvency of the companies visited.

The companies claimed that doing business with the NPP has helped them to secure reliable payments (in time when companies have difficulties to cash the claims) and to secure and maintain working posts, but also another, very important element which has contributed towards the development and continued existence of the small companies, is that due to increase of annual turnover, financial institutions were more willing to grant loans to the companies. Moreover, the certainty that the NPP was implemented over certain period of time, gave companies additional insurance to hope for doing business in the future with the NPP.

As regards the client's satisfaction, the great majority of beneficiaries said to be satisfied with services and goods provided by the local companies.

In the end, the local community has benefited in the sense that modern, mostly professional equipment and tools purchased by the beneficiaries have directly contributed to increased quality of the agriculture and other services provided in the local community and wider. By cooperating with the local small/medium companies, the IOM shown a great deal of flexibility adapting to the socioeconomic needs of the country and thus directly contributing to the development of the local economy. This approach will, however, most probably not remain after end of the Programme since, in the future transition activities the MoD has to respect the procurement law procedures which do not foresee such an approach.

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6Assessment “Impact of the NPP on the socio-economic development of service provided and business activities in the micro resettlement areas”, 2010-2013, p.5
In spite of these legislative constraints, the positive trend of increasing the local economy by increased business activity at the micro-level should be continued in future programmes since it boosts financial injection to local businesses during the global economical crisis.

### NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS – SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

#### PROFILE OF NATO-PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAMME BENEFICIARIES

The predominant age range of the NPP beneficiaries is 36-40, in which 80 per cent of all NPP beneficiaries fall. This means that the great majority of the NPP beneficiaries were at their prime and a capable workforce in the labour market.

Male beneficiaries also heavily dominated the breakdown, constituting 97 per cent of all released personnel and only 3 per cent accounting for female beneficiaries (*Figure 3*).

*Figure 3: Gender breakdown NPP beneficiaries*

*Source: IOM*

*Table 8 provides a breakdown of the education levels of the 2,634 beneficiaries of the overall caseload that registered and received assistance, highlighting the prominence of vocational training alongside secondary schooling. The breakdown of 2,634 discharged personnel shows that 46 per cent of discharged personnel had finished secondary school, and 49 per cent attained vocational education. The difficult socio-economic situation in BiH, which was a feature throughout the life of the Programme, encouraged a significant proportion of the NPP beneficiaries to develop projects in the agro-business sector, regardless of their educational background, in order to ensure that basic needs could be met swiftly, a consideration for those beneficiaries supporting a family. Furthermore, a significant proportion of beneficiaries owned land prior to registration and often had pre-existing experience in agricultural pursuits.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATIONAL LEVEL</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualified (vocational)</td>
<td>1,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Qualified (not finished school)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>1,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School (technical)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (undergraduate)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8: Breakdown of educational level NPP beneficiaries*

*Source: IOM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARITAL STATUS</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 9: Breakdown of marital status of NPP beneficiaries*

*Source: IOM*

The Table 9 reflects the breakdown of the marital status of the overall NPP caseload revealing that 65 per cent were married with families, on average of four people. The 21 per cent of the NPP beneficiaries are not married and are without dependants and 1 per cent are divorced.
PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAM CAPACITY BUILDING

INTRODUCTION

Building on the already established PERSPEKTIVA Program, one of the key Programme’s aims was to focus on building and enhancing the capacity of the MoD to implement the NPP, as well as future processes related to the reintegration of military personnel.

Unlike in the previous similar projects which were directly implemented by the IOM, the inclusion of the capacity building component of the MoD, including all key stakeholders involved in the implementation, has contributed towards the sustainability of the transition process as a part of the regular human resource management cycle of the MoD once the IOM operational support is completed. Given such an approach, the MoD was included in all stages of the NPP, co-managing many of the aspects together with the IOM.

In line with the project document for the implementation of the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme, the capacity building component was focusing on two main areas:

a) Strengthening the capacity of PERSPEKTIVA to deliver reintegration assistance through the learning-by-doing approach and formal training courses

b) Setting up the procedures/mechanisms and tools within PERSPEKTIVA to respond to its future needs through (a) the support of the IOM staff in the RRCs and Sarajevo, as well as (b) the exchange of experiences with MoD staff working in similar projects in the region (FYROM and Serbia), (c) limited formal training and exceptionally, (d) the provision of limited equipment

One of the aims of the NPP was to strengthen the structures and expertise within the MoD to manage the downsizing components of the ongoing defence reform and the related reintegration processes in the long run. This cooperation ensured ownership and commitment to the process by enabling further capacity building of the MoD. Permanent mechanisms were established in the MoD such as the PTSU to take over Programme follow up, staff and structures. In order to strengthen the capacity of the MoD counterparts to conduct downsizing activities in the future, a wide range of tools was developed. These tools assisted in establishing structures and mechanisms, while others built skills and expertise of the MoD staff. The capacity building of the MoD staff was carried out using a mixed approach combining formal training with learning by doing and coaching.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

In the initial phase of the NPP, the capacity building activities did not include formal training activities, but rather focused on learning by doing techniques to be implemented with the support of the IOM and/or the MoD experts from similar projects in FYROM and Serbia. This was an appropriate approach considering that in this phase the priority was given to providing direct assistance to the NPP beneficiaries, while the capacity-building needs of the MoD, PTSU, and RTC staff in reintegration activities had already been targeted by previous resettlement programmes, as well as by additional training provided by the Kingdom of Norway and the United Kingdom.

In order to define the actions to be implemented within the capacity building component, an extensive assessment was undertaken at the beginning of the Programme. The assessment included field visits to Banja Luka, Mostar, and Rajlovac, as well as meetings with representatives of different MoD departments and service providers. The Resettlement Expert provided by Norway to support the Capacity Building activities was included in all different steps of the assessment.
During the time of the assessment, the IOM was informed about the intention of the governments of the UK, the Kingdom of Norway and the USA to provide a financial contribution to the Programme to be used to finance capacity building activities. This was realised through bilateral agreements and with the financial support of the governments of UK Government, the Kingdom of Norway and the USA. Owing to these funds, the capacity building for the MoD PTSU staff will continue until end of June 2014.

NUMBER OF OFFICES

The work of the PERSPEKTIVA Program was originally organized through three Regional Transition Centres in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar (later Čapljina). However, during the Programme implementation the organizational structure of the Recruitment and Regional Transition Centres of the BiH, being separate centres has undergone changes. Namely, it was realised that it would be more beneficial if the activities related to both recruitment and transition of military personnel were merged to be implemented by a single Recruitment and Transition Centre (RTC). In line with this, the MoD amended the organisational structure of the Recruitment and Regional Transition Centres being two separate units by merging them into a single Recruitment and Transition Centre (RTC). Also, in order to ensure proper coverage of the whole territory of BiH given the high workload of existing RTCs, in addition to the three foreseen RTCs in the original Programme, additional office in Tuzla was opened. The RTC Tuzla became fully operational with the MoD and Armed Forces (AF) staff being deployed to the new RTC Tuzla following the opening ceremony on the 16th of April 2012. Also, due to merger of Recruitment Centres and Transition Centres, the Mostar RTC has been relocated to Čapljina. Each Recruitment and Transition Centre had two IOM field advisors (later also MTHS counsellors) and 3 representatives from the MoD/AF BiH involved in the transition process.

By introducing a more functional structure of the RTCs, which was absent in the PERSPEKTIVA Program document, the Programme has provided for the creation of a modern MoD field structure that contributed to more efficient implementation of future recruitment and transition process of the military personnel. The four RTCs structure geographically covering all country will remain as a permanent MoD/AF BiH field structure. It goes without saying that by creating this structure the implementation of future transition processes by the MoD will be facilitated.

IMPORTANCE OF FIELD WORK

As regards the MoD capacity development objective, the most visible and tangible results were to be identified at the level of RTCs, since all the field work was done jointly between the MoD/AF and the IOM. The introduction of fieldwork and field visits was a crucial factor in the success of the NPP. All visits to beneficiaries were performed jointly, in compliance with the NPP procedures, so no clear separation of activities between the MoD and IOM staff could be made. This is undoubtedly the most important result of the MoD/AF BiH capacity building exercise since the knowledge and expertise remains at the level of RTCs, which are the first contact point for the (future) discharged military personnel. Moreover, such an approach has also contributed towards NPP beneficiaries being less reluctant towards the MoD staff.
A variety of working methods was developed, including all types of activities with clients: information activities (office and field work), registration, counselling, and referring clients to the different types of assistance. A balanced mix of learning-by-doing, training and coaching was used to enable PERSPEKTIVA Program staff to take over and implement the jointly developed procedures and activities.

The integrated structure of the RTC with MoD/AF BiH and IOM staff working alongside each other was a key component of the capacity development of the MoD/AF BiH and allowed for on-the-job coaching and learning through the support of the IOM staff who have already been involved in previous NTF project implementation and possessed extensive experience, particularly in relation to the approach and advice and counselling given to the beneficiaries. The inclusion of the field work into the PERSPEKTIVA Program has shown the importance of field and monitoring visits in measuring the results of beneficiaries’ reintegration process and should be replicated in the PERSPEKTIVA Program implementation. Further, by means of monitoring visits during and after the end of the Programme, the PERSPEKTIVA Program will be able to collect information about the long term impact of the interventions, as well as obtain feedback on the results of the different types of reintegration support.

**TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS**

The NPP has not only supported the PERSPEKTIVA Program implementation with the counselling, financial and psychosocial assistance to the NPP beneficiaries but has also, in the frame of the capacity building activities, provided for the technical preconditions in order to offer the effective assistance and information exchange. Technical conditions for the proper functioning of the offices, including telephone, internet, VPN, PERSPEKTIVA Database and other installations, were provided through the NPP assistance. The level of technical proficiency and hardware configuration provided by the NPP was of extreme importance for the effective implementation of PERSPEKTIVA Program activities.

After the assessment of the foreign expert and after the consultations with the MoD, the NPP has defined the priority areas where the interventions of the technical nature that would contribute to the more efficient provision of the assistance, information exchange, office IT equipment and transport were identified. The areas of interventions that were prioritized were following:

- Data exchange (HQ and field offices),
- Office setup (refurbishment of existing and set up of new one),
- Office IT equipment (minimum standards including software, internet and communication),
- Transport.

**Data Exchange**

Given the fact that the RTC offices are located within a wide geographical area in BiH, and that the current system did not support secure data exchange and all confidential data was shared among the offices ‘by hand delivery’ being recorded on CDs, it was agreed to create a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to securely exchange data and to access the organization network using the Internet.

It was agreed that the KUP office would act as the VPN HQ, in which all connections would be terminated and managed. Nevertheless, it was highly recommended for a backup HQ office to also be established (possibly MoD HQ). The Virtual Private Network (VPN) offered crucial support within the RTCs, as well as in the PTSU/MoD office throughout implementation, allowing database users to exchange data in a much more efficient manner on daily basis. In a broader perspective, this tool should serve to ensure the MoD possess the requisite capacities in the future to exchange data and files related to recruitment and discharging activities in a secure and timely manner.
Office Set-Up

RTC offices are based in buildings within military barracks, although some of them had already been targeted by refurbishing activities, they still required some minor repairs and renovation. Office refurbishment took place at the locations in which the RTCs were permanently established (Sarajevo and Banja Luka).

Also, with the new RTC structure i.e. establishment of the RTC Tuzla, there was need for the adaption of two offices including the procurement of the office furniture and IT equipment.

An additional office had been assigned to the PTSU in Sarajevo. The office was located in close proximity to the existing one and was in very good condition. Very limited interventions were anticipated for that office in terms of additional equipment and refurbishment.

Further, after a decision on reallocation of RTC Mostar to Čapljina barrack, IT equipment was purchased and installed, fulfilling all requirements for daily activities in this office.

These interventions created the same working conditions among RTCs contributing toward positive working environment, creating the basis for the long term implementation of the reintegration activities which was not the case before the Programme’s implementation.

Office IT Equipment

The IT equipment available in the RTC offices at the beginning of the NPP was three to seven years old and the assessments made by the Programme advised for the replacement of all PCs as mandatory. In accordance with this, the Programme purchased mid-range network copiers/printers.

The assessment has also shown that the existing internet connection is poor and limits productivity. Some offices were not able to send e-mails efficiently during working hours, which caused delays to the entire workload. Since upgrading the existing connection would be costly and time consuming and could not be supported by the MoD directly - a separate Internet connection was installed in RTCs to allow regular activities and to increase the efficiency in a daily work.

By equipping the RTCs with the necessary technical equipment, the Programme enabled smooth and effective implementation of daily activities in RTC offices. The Programme’s impact is evident since it provided all four RTCs with the same technical equipment creating the same technical conditions for RTC offices. Also, the Main Office in the PTSU, the KUP Office, the Backup Office and the Office in Command Line were all provided with the technical/IT equipment. The level of technical proficiency and hardware configuration provided by the Programme was of extreme importance for the effective implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA Program activities at both headquarters and field level. Without these interventions the implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA Program would be less efficient and reliable.

Transport

Since the NPP included field visits to the NPP beneficiaries, it was of crucial importance for the RTC staff to have vehicle at their disposal. The RTCs did not have drivable vehicles and that situation limited the effectiveness and capacity to perform the NPPs activities. Moreover, the PTSU did not have a vehicle so to perform monitoring and evaluation.

The NPP purchased four vehicles for each RTC and one vehicle for the MoD/PTSU that after the closure of the NPP were handed over to the MoD for the future implementation of the transition process of the military staff in order to enhance the monitoring and field visits capacities in the transition process.
By equipping the MoD/PTSU with the necessary transportation i.e. vehicles, the Programme provided for the necessary precondition for performing field and monitoring activities, which is a key element in implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA Program. Had the Programme not provided the MoD/PTSU with the vehicles, the PERSPEKTIVA Program results would have been limited from its very beginning not allowing for the provision of quality services.

**PERSPEKTIVA Database and Virtual Private Network**

The Management Information System (MIS) constituted an essential tool that had been developed during previous reintegration activities to facilitate the processing of applications, as well as the collection of data that can be used to analyse the progress of the project and to adjust the activities to the real needs of the beneficiaries. Throughout implementation, the MIS was managed by the MoD with the support of the Programme staff, and data on reintegration plans progress were regularly updated in the MIS together with changes/additions to existing records. All MIS data was regularly shared with the MoD and RTCs according to well-established procedures, to allow registration/counselling activities to commence, as well as the monitoring of actions.

In accordance with the evaluation recommendations and as stated in the MoD Regulations on Transition, further development of the central database was a key component of the Programme in relation to the capacity building of the MoD and AF BiH. Further activities were required, in particular to ensure that the MoD PTSU staff was able to provide proper reporting and analysis based on the data entered in the central database, which needs to be updated with RTC inputs on a bimonthly basis.

In order to respond to that requirement and ensure that necessary IT activities related to the MIS would be realized by the MoD in a timely and proper manner, staff of the PTSU were identified and selected to attend a specific training course (See the section “Training”).

Following the above-mentioned IT training and the setup of the additional VPN system in RTC Tuzla, as well as need to improve data exchange procedures in the context of the new VPN system, data entry procedures required amending in order to accelerate the entry process. In this regards a meeting on MIS and VPN was organized by the MoD and took place in October, 2012. The staff from the RTCs offices was instructed on updated exchange procedures established by PTSU/MoD. The Data Exchange Manual was developed, and informal training was provided to RTC/PTSU staff.

Following discussions on the database and reporting improvement, the Programme also initiated the creation of backup mechanism and involvement of the new staff in the Perspektiva database maintaining process also in order to ensure proper hand over. The selection of adequate staff will take place during the period subsequent to the conclusion of the Programme, which will be followed by training and final handover. The Programme’s capacity building activities in the area of the MIS, sharing and updating of the data ensured that the MoD/PTSU staff is trained and able to provide reporting and analysis based on the data from the central database. Through these activities, the MoD did not simply take over the activities implemented within the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme but also shaped them according to its needs and future set-up/resources, as well as adapt in its structures and mechanisms according to the best practices and lessons learned from the implementation of the NPP. The provision of the trainings on the MIS enabled the MoD/PTSU staff to improve data collection and reporting mechanism systems creating conditions for the development of statistical reports and following up on daily activities in future PERSPEKTIVA Program activities.
Training

During the Programme implementation and in accordance with the Exit Strategy goals, six training events were organised for the PTSU/MoD, RTC staff and reserve staff:

- Monitoring and evaluation

By establishing a system for MONITORING AND EVALUATION within the framework of the project, the goal was to increase the monitoring and evaluation capacities of the PTSU in the context of current and future projects (reporting to donors, monitoring of resources, etc.)

- Team building for recruitment and transition offices

Principal goal was to provide basic knowledge, corporate team building training and development, as well as employee motivation, human resource management, productivity and productivity improvement in order to help PTSU/RRC staffs to build networks that would facilitate their work, and to further develop the relations with the counterparts aiming at building a collaborative team environment

- Career counselling

Provided core skills needed to offer professional career coaching and counselling to others. This training helped increase the capacities of the RTC staff to collect, analyse and provide relevant information to beneficiaries.

- Business plan development

Provided core skills needed to offer professional business plan development to beneficiaries in order to increase the capacities of the RTC staff to counsel beneficiaries in relation to business planning and the creation of systems for business plan development

- Communication techniques

This training was designed to provide participants with the opportunity to understand how communication works and how to communicate with confidence and flair, by increasing the capacities of the RTC staff to communicate with beneficiaries of the Programme in the most appropriate manner.

- IT/Database

Training was conducted in order to provide participants with an enhanced knowledge of MS Excel and MS Access.

At the end of 2012, the MoD selected reserve staff for each RTC, as well as the staff from the RTCs who would attend additional training in the upcoming period. Training events were planned to be related to the implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA Program, in line with the training provided on monitoring and evaluation, as well as with the framework results set up by the MoD.

The training on monitoring and evaluation and development of Logical Framework was organized for the MoD staff from the PTSU, and the Finance, Logistics, and Public Information Units was held in 2013. The training lasted for six days (in the course of February/March 2013) and was designed in three modules:

Module 1 consisted of two days of training during which the participants were introduced with the identification of outputs, outcomes and indicators and preparation of the working version of Logical Framework. The second module was focused on the revision of the working version of Logical Framework while the third module was focused on the development of the final version of Logical Framework and establishment of monitoring and evaluation procedures of the Programme.
The level of cooperation achieved between the IOM and the MoD/PTSU was very high and to the full satisfaction of both sides. Notwithstanding the fact that in the course of the Programme the capacity building of the MoD was an important Programme’s segment, the commitment at the highest level of the MoD is necessary to maintain the momentum and experience gained during the implementation of the NPP.

The complemented funds provided by UK, Kingdom of Norway and the US allowed the Programme to organise advanced, specifically designed training for MoD/PTSU and RTC staff related to the implementation of PERSPEKTIVA Program, which will be provided by June 2014.

The Programme provided for and organised training which encompassed different aspects of the transition process thereby enhancing the capacity of the MoD/PTSU personnel to independently carry out the PERSPEKTIVA Programme in the future. Given the initial lack of knowledge of the MoD/PTSU in implementing transition activities on their own, as well as the lack of financial means, the Programme’s contribution in capacity building of the MoD/PTSU personnel through the provision of training was very important in terms of sustainability of the Programme’s results.

After the end of external support in the implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA Program, the MoD/PERSPEKTIVA staff will be able to apply the knowledge and skills gained through different trainings in the transition processes to come. It is presumed that the MoD/PERSPEKTIVA staff has developed their skills and capacities for providing reintegration assistance to the discharged defence personnel. With enhancing the knowledge and skills of the MoD/PERSPEKTIVA staff, the Programme has provided for all preconditions for sustainability of Programme’s results.

EXIT STRATEGY

EXIT STRATEGY AS THE CONDITION FOR A SMOOTH AND EFFECTIVE HANDOVER OF THE NPP PROCEDURES TO THE PERSPEKTIVA PROGRAM

The first external independent evaluation in 2011 recommended the inclusion of some additional interventions, operational changes to some of the activities, as well as the development of a comprehensive results framework and related two- year Exit Strategy, to ensure that the experience and expertise of the project are not lost with its conclusions.

The recommendations from the independent evaluation also identified the need for continued assistance to a new group of additional 1,300 individuals that, in accordance with the official documents of the MoD, will need to be discharged subsequent to the conclusion of the Programme in September 2012.

The PSC of the NPP has decided to accept the recommendations of the external evaluation and approved the operational changes to the original project as well as the inclusion of some new actions, a comprehensive result framework was also adopted by the SC and discussions over the drafting of the Exit Strategy commenced.

At the beginning of June 2012, the MoD formally requested from NATO the continuation of the Programme beyond 2012 to address the issue of additional 1,300 people to be discharged. Building on that request and related recommendations of the external evaluation, donors have decided to give a mandate to both the MoD and the IOM to develop an Exit Strategy to be implemented after the end of the second year of activities. Because the donor countries have decided to grant a no- cost extension until March 2013 while defining the possible continuation until September 2013, the Exit Strategy document is divided into two phases, one until March 2013 and a second one to cover the period after March 2013. However, the common goal of the two phases is to capitalise on the good results achieved by the NPP during the two years of implementation, ensuring that the MoD/PERSPEKTIVA have the requisite capacities to continue implementing the NPP activities.
1. Subsequent to the conclusion of the project, as well as making sure that the new needs of the MoD in terms of assistance to the new discharged caseload are addressed.

External independent evaluations of the NPP confirmed that it was successful in meeting its objectives. Those evaluations recognized the results achieved in building the capacity of the MoD structures. In relation to the need for ensuring a smooth handover of NPP activities to the PERSPEKTIVA Program, as well as guarantee the necessary transfer of knowledge, the 2011 First External Independent Mid-Term Evaluation defined the following recommendations:

1) 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 verification and specific targets reached),

2) 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,

3) Include in the second part of the Exit Strategy the development of a Results Framework for the MoD post NPP in order to define the objectives to be attained by the MoD after the end of the NPP.

Building on these recommendations, the Exit Strategy was developed.

**AIM AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE OVERALL EXIT STRATEGY**

The general objective of the Exit Strategy was to ensure the smooth and effective handover of the NPP to the PERSPEKTIVA Program by ensuring relevant staff has the skills and capacities to effectively continue performing those activities and to ensure that donors’ investment has a long-term positive impact on the discharged personnel, as well as the MoD institutions Exit Strategy is a key document that guides the process of transferring ownership from the Programme institutions to local counterparts (primarily the MoD) so that can take over the activities, thus ensuring sustainability and long-term impact of the donor intervention. This process needs to be gradual and time-bound, with effective benchmarks complemented by agreed-upon capacity development training to ensure that the quality of Programme implementation will not be affected by the hand-over.

From an operational point of view, the standard Programme activities remain unchanged, but there is a progressive shift from the IOM to the MoD staff, this process requires a more intensive transfer of knowledge and capacities from the IOM side and an increase in the workload of the MoD. In concrete terms, this means that, during the implementation of the Exit Strategy, the activities will increase and a higher level of commitment from the national counterparts, the MoD in particular, is requested. Moreover, the diminishing resources from the IOM mean that additional resources will be required in terms of logistics (cars and fuel for travel) from the MOD, over and beyond the gradual reduction of the IOM resources. The role of the PTSU unit is also crucial; in that it needs to replace the IOM in managing the monitoring and evaluation of the process, as well as taking the necessary corrective measures to ensure cost-effectiveness of the actions whilst ensuring proper management of the different components, including the database.

It is also important to emphasize that the Exit Strategy is designed to prioritise the promotion of socioeconomic gender equality as a cross-cutting issue throughout activities implemented, as proposed in the External Evaluation. There is considerable scope for the Programme to offer female beneficiaries the opportunity to foster grassroots economic development whilst driving entrepreneurial spirit. Promoting the socioeconomic equality of women is an indispensable tool for advancing social and economic development of a country, most pertinently in regard to poverty reduction and improvement of quality of life for all citizens in BiH.

From the policy side, it is important to understand that the responsibility for implementation of the NPP activities is going to increase in line with the progressive decrease of the IOM engagement and there will be a
need for the MoD to take full ownership of the process including the necessary interactions with NATO, the different BiH institutions such as the Parliament, and the international community. On the policy side, it will also be essential that lobbying mechanisms are in place to ensure the necessary, mostly financial, support to the future of the PERSPEKTIVA Program.

In line with the above, the general objective of the Exit Strategy is to contribute to the smooth and effective hand over, to make sure MoD/PERSPEKTIVA have the skills and capacities to effectively continue performing those activities and to ensure that donors’ investment has a long-term positive impact on the discharged personnel, as well as the MoD institutions.

As indicated by the External Evaluator, the Exit Strategy for this kind of activities shall require a period of two years, however, following the decision of the Leading Nations to extend the project for one year, the NPP has developed an Exit Strategy for this period, trying to combine capacity building and assistance to a large number of new discharged, as well as to meet the goal of handing over the activities to an effective and competent BiH system.

Specific objectives of the Exit Strategy are to guarantee:

a) Reintegration Assistance (Grants and Psychosocial support) - reintegration assistance is provided until the last large group of defence personnel are discharged (948 people in 2013) as well as already registered eligible NPP beneficiaries.

b) Progressive handover of the NPP to MOD/PERSPEKTIVA - phased hand over of the NPP to MoD/PERSPEKTIVA. Building the capacity of the MoD/PERSPEKTIVA staff to implement the NPP activities and support the setting up of relevant mechanisms and tools.

c) Support to the development and implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA plans and Strategy

**KEY IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MOD/PERSONAL TRANSITION SUPPORT UNIT (PTSU) AND CAPABILITIES AFTER END OF THE NPP**

After the end of the NPP, the PTSU will continue to exist and provide its services to other categories of defence staff (not only discharged personnel). However, as foreseen during the Exit Strategy process, the PTSU should develop plans and strategy according to its own needs and resources. In that context, the knowledge and expertise gained through the implementation of the NPP would be an asset for the future implementation of the MoD staff transition.

As regards the capacity building component of the NPP, a key achievement was to make the MoD/PTSU aware that transition is not an ad hoc activity, but part of the Human Resource Management Cycle, from Recruitment to Transition. Understanding the importance of adequate and early planning in HR management is a key aspect to delivery timely and targeted assistance to the transitioning staff, particularly with a view to avoiding social unrest and problems related to inadequate planning and lack of clarity on the conditions of transition.

The MoD/PERSPEKTIVA staff has developed their skills and capacities for providing reintegration assistance to the discharged defence personnel.

At the field level in the four RTCs, the MoD staff has been working alongside with the IOM field advisors throughout the past three years combining coaching and learning by doing methodologies that are now embedded in the work of the MoD staff.

As an integral part of the Exit strategy, the NPP assisted the PTSU in developing a plan of action and strategy for its future activities after the end of the NPP.
While the MoD indicates it has the technical readiness to take over from the IOM at the end of the NPP, evidence of capacity could be appraised through an ex post evaluation that would also look at how MoD was able to ensure the continuation of the PERSPEKTIVA after the IOM has completed its work. The MoD is a heavy structure with numerous procedures that do not facilitate timely action. Other issue also relate to the level of staff turnover and the level of commitment from MoD to the transition process itself.

One of the important achievements made during the Programme’s implementation, which was included in the Exit Strategy, was the inclusion of the required budget by the MoD for the assistance to the discharged personnel after 2013. In line with this, the MoD has committed itself to make a provision in its regulations ensuring the permanent budget allocation to the PERSPEKTIVA based on the annual projections/needs and ensuring that the transition is streamlined in the HR management life cycle from recruitment to transition. In September 2013, the MoD secured 150,000 EUR required for the transition activities in 2014 during which it will ensure the implementation of the PERSPEKTIVA Program and the provision of the assistance to 76 persons planned to be discharged during the same year.

THE KEY DIFFERENCES IN THE OPERATION OF THE PERSONNEL TRANSITION SUPPORT UNIT IN 2013, AS COMPARED TO 2010

1) The Personnel Transition Support Unit is able to offer discharged personnel, through the PERSPEKTIVA Program, financial support to start own business or to expand it in the field of self employment or agriculture,
2) The MoD secured 150,000 EUR required for the transition activities in 2014
3) As a result of capacity building of the Personnel Transition Support Unit by the NPP, better work conditions were introduced, through the renovation and equipping of work space, the acquisition of certain equipment and tools, and improvement of work quality by organizing trainings and improving the information system,
4) Close cooperation was established, through regular meetings and daily contacts, between the Personnel Transition Support Unit and the RTCs. This enabled joint planning of operations and realization of future activities,
5) A weekly Joint Review Panel holds sessions and considers registration applications for support from the PERSPEKTIVA Program,
6) Data exchange which is needed for the development of the PERSPEKTIVA Program is enabled,
7) Joint work and direct cooperation between staff of the PERSPEKTIVA Program at the MoD and AF level,
8) Providing opinions on business ideas and client registration applications for fund resources based on provided data and the opinions of PERSPEKTIVA Program staff from the RTCs,
9) Performing field visits to clients in order to monitor the use of PERSPEKTIVA Program funds,
10) Activities to share information of the PERSPEKTIVA Program results,
11) Organisation of motivational workshops, aimed at informing the beneficiaries of the possibilities of accessing PERSPEKTIVA Program funds,
12) Maintaining PERSPEKTIVA Program IT system that allows automated data-processing,

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7 Source: Final External Independent Summative Evaluation of the NATO-PERSPEKTIVA Programme in BiH
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOD PERSONAL TRANSITION SUPPORT UNIT

It is of paramount importance to ensure that the capacity building efforts of the NPP are sustained. Therefore, the following is recommended for continued internal capacity building of the MoD/PTSU:

1) The MoD should show commitment to transition at the ministerial level and ensure that an annual budget line is allocated for transition for each year.
2) Commitment must be matched by operational readiness and the financial resources to guarantee that transition is embedded in the regular cycle of human resource management.
3) The MoD would benefit from continued RBM and M&E targeted training in order to facilitate cooperation among units, review procedures and adapts its structure to RBM objectives – and maximize the capacity of PERSPEKTIVA to carry on after the end of the NPP.
4) The MoD should follow up the developed results framework and monitoring plan for the period after the end of the NPP for a one year period every year.
5) The operational capacity and commitment of the MoD to be evaluated after the IOM has completed its operational support, to see if the MoD can continue the PERSPEKTIVA using its own procedures.

CONCLUSIONS

During the three-year period, the NPP was implemented in a challenging socio-political and economic environment. In spite of all unforeseeable external factors, primarily related to the disputed state Law on Military Service in the BiH Armed Forces regulating the early retirement rights of discharged military personnel, which influenced the Programme’s implementation, the NPP showed great flexibility and pro-activeness making very good progress in achieving and even exceeding its original objectives. The Programme has also showed very good sensitivity and adaptability in adjusting its activities, incorporating an additional caseload of 791 discharged military personnel in 2013, to its objectives, while ensuring that the transition process was done smoothly across the country. The NPP contributed to the overall reform objectives of BiH in defence sector maintaining social peace and stability in the country. By contributing to the overall reform objectives of BiH defence sector, the NPP has directly contributed to a principal objective of the country to joins the NATO Partnership for Peace and, ultimately, achieving full membership in the NATO and in the Euro-Atlantic security structures.

However, the Programme’s most visible and tangible result was the provision of the economical assistance into the reintegration process of 2,634 discharged military personnel out of 2,735 released military personnel from 2010 to 2013 which account to 97 per cent of all discharged military personnel.

During its implementation, the NPP cooperated with government institutions and local authorities. Cooperation was also maintained with international and non-governmental organizations, existing business incubators, employment bureaus, establishing synergies and consequently enhancing the results and cost-effectiveness of the NPP.

When comparing the results achieved with the targets defined in the Result Framework, the NPP met and exceeded all of its planned outputs and consequently produced most of the desired outcomes for all the components measured, including:

1. Socio economic reintegration of discharged defence personnel,
2. Self-sustainability of the assisted beneficiaries,
3. Beneficiaries’ satisfaction with the services provided,
4. Communities of reintegration indirectly benefit from the reintegration process by way of services provided and increased business activity at the micro-level
5. Capacity building of the MoD/PTSU

The Programme offered excellent support to existing livelihoods though it was not generally substantial enough to allow for the creation of entirely new businesses. Although the NPP interventions might not have resulted in direct generating of new businesses and employment among the NPP beneficiaries, it has however contributed towards the household economic costs and provided preconditions of generating income for the NPP beneficiaries. Many of the NPP beneficiaries have expended their small scale business mainly in the agricultural sector. The NPP assistance had impact on the development and stimulation of the entrepreneurship way of thinking among discharged military personnel, which was very important in their endeavours to integrate into civilian life. Another important achievement of the NPP assistance was that it gave the NPP beneficiaries both financial support and kept them active, moving them into the civilian world with a specific objective. This new economic and social attitude of assisted NPP beneficiaries towards creating and developing new business and life solutions is another very important Programmes’ achievement. As the data from the Assessment indicates, for the majority of the surveyed NPP beneficiaries, the joint socioeconomic impact of the NPP assistance was of the great importance in their civilian reintegration.

The NPP has fulfilled its purpose of helping beneficiaries to attain socioeconomic integration, with a particular positive impact pertaining to the social and family aspects of their lives. All related data clearly indicates that the most important social effects resulting from the NPP is in the sphere of having improved family life of the NPP beneficiaries. The NPP beneficiaries’ perception of their relationship with friends and their immediate environment being improved or maintained at the same level as before leads to a conclusion that they are on good path of successful social integration into their local surrounding. It is the combined socio-economic impact of the NPP assistance that had the most profound impact in their reintegration into civilian life. The positive impact on the social aspects of reintegration into civilian life was linked to the level of family engagement. Family support during reintegration was vital for success and increased the chances for a full reintegration. The number of people who indirectly benefited from the project was much higher of those who received support, showing the multiplier effect of the NPP. The quantifiable aspect of that support was measured through the number of disbursed assistance grants.

The added value of the Programme was its multi-level provision of both psycho-social and financial assistance related to the discharged military personnel enrolled for the Programme. What is more, a psychosocial component proved to be key element of the NPP which absence in the first year of the Programme’s implementation was identified as a critical gap of the transition process that should accompany the discharging process. The date from the stratified sample indicates that besides the financial benefits gained from the NPP, the psychological support provided to the NPP beneficiaries was of crucial importance in their well being and reintegration process. Given the positive impact and necessity of provision of psychosocial assistance there is need to continue with a provision of the psychosocial assistance and capacity building and training of the MoD staff to become capable of recognizing when psychosocial assistance is needed. The need for inclusion of the psychosocial support into the transition process of discharged military personnel and thereto related trainings of the MoD staff has been recognized by both the donors and MoD resulting into its inclusion in the capacity building activities and the Exit Strategy that will be implemented until June 2014.

The NPP has also made a significant contribution towards the development of local economy by allowing the NPP beneficiaries to purchase the assistance from the local companies. During the NPP’s lifetime, the NPP has cooperated with 381 companies in BiH, covering more than 100 municipalities where 2,634 NPP beneficiaries have purchase equipment/goods. It has directly contributed towards the BiH economy and cash flows in the country and keeping small and medium enterprises operational. The NPP contribution to BiH economy is also to be seen in the timely payments, which is of crucial importance for the companies.

In line with good practices, national commitment, building of capacity and ownership the NPP has included as
a key objective the capacity development of the MoD. Special efforts were made throughout the NPP to ensure that IOM played a fundamental support role to the MoD. The coaching and learning by doing methodologies applied, including the sharing of the offices in the RTCs, all together contributed to building the MoD capacity.

Increased capacity of the MoD PTSU in providing reintegration assistance to the discharged defence personnel and including it in the regular human resource management cycle was another very important Programme’s accomplishment. The results of capacity building activities are most visible with new advanced work methods that were introduced, following the procedures developed and implemented by the PERSPEKTIVA Program. The most tangible results of the capacity building activities were certainly at the field level where the MoD staff was working alongside the IOM staff with coaching and learning by doing methodologies that are now embedded in the work of the MoD staff. Moreover, the space environment, technical equipment/conditions, purchase of five vehicles and IT framework were significantly improved and upgraded.

As of today, the MoD has both at the headquarters and field levels the technical capacity to continue providing PERSPEKTIVA support to beneficiaries. It remains to be seen to how the PERSPEKTIVA will be implemented after the end of the NPP especially in terms of securing the funding needed to implement PERSPEKTIVA in the future. The MoD/Personnel Transition Support Unit demonstrated its built capacities as it took over the responsibilities to carry on relevant segments of the PERSPEKTIVA Program. The level of competence of the MoD/PTSU to deal with all types of assistance in reintegration processes was strengthened.

Further, the capacity building of the MoD should be incorporated in all activities aimed at the Security Sector Reform, as a form of added value to the IOM intervention. Joint IOM-MoD trainings constituted the main activities for capacity building. Developing staff capacity through coaching, mentoring, workshops, and workflow documentation is essential in ensuring Programme continuity after the departure of international and/or local partners. Initiatives should focus on upgrading and further strengthening the skills and expertise of the MoD staff, as well as consolidating the structures as regards the provision of equipment and the refurbishment of facilities.

While technical capacities have generally been given to the MoD, the operational capacity and commitment can be appraised only after the MoD has completed next transition process using its own procedures.

The general conclusion is that the NPP was a rather unique programme which besides the financial assistance to discharged military personnel also offered psychosocial assistance and capacity building of the MoD ensuring the sustainability of the results after the end of the NPP. The NPP has also made a positive contribution to the local economy and national stability through the successful implementation of its activities producing a positive impact on the social and economic well-being of the assisted beneficiaries and the society as such.

However, in order to assess the real impact of the Programme’s on the socioeconomic sustainability of the NPP beneficiaries, capacity building and other Programme components, an evaluation at least one year after Programme’s closure should be performed. Due to a lack of time during 2013, when the Programme was focused on providing the assistance to soldiers being discharged in 2013, the Programme was not able to perform planned monitoring activities of the NPP beneficiaries who have received the assistance. Also, given a rather short time frame of performing this assessment of the Programmes results (being performed only few months after the Programme’s closure) the measurement of the real impact of the Programme’s actions on the beneficiaries lives and their reintegration into civilian life should be conducted at later stage.
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IOM’S SUPPORT TO DEFENCE SECTOR REFORMS IN THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

Traditionally, the work of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been focused on emergency movement assistance, resettlement, return and reintegration of affected populations forced to move, assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and similar emergency relief operations. Since 1992, in fact, IOM has supported the design and implementation of some of the largest and the most complex Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) operations in the world, in peace-keeping and non peace-keeping contexts. During this period IOM has gained a valuable worldwide experience in the field of resettlement and reintegration of regular and irregular military and security sector personnel, where the reintegration of military personnel presents particular challenges. These have led IOM to develop a core of expertise capable of applying IOM reintegration methodologies to the unique situation of a given country. Building on this expertise, over the past 20 years IOM has been engaged in several Defence Reform and Security Sector Reform initiatives worldwide and successfully provided reintegration assistance to thousands of former defence staff. The large-scale reintegration programmes have been or being implemented in Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville, Croatia, East Timor, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia, Mali, Mozambique, the Philippines, Southern Sudan, Sri Lanka and UNSC resolution 1244-administered Kosovo. However, the IOM’s DDR/SSR related projects implemented in the Western Balkan region have made the greatest impact and attracted an extraordinary interest of international community and NATO in particular. NATO has paid special attention to Defence Reform initiatives in the Balkans and its diverse components: political, military, security and socio-economic dimensions, all of which are vital in the transition processes faced by former Yugoslav countries. This attention has continued to contribute to the development and overall recovery efforts of those states.

Nevertheless, the projects implemented in the Western Balkan region should be seen in the context of strengthening the stability of civilian society, and not only as a purely military or defence related project. The role of IOM has been highly important in ensuring that the focus of those projects has been on human security and social and economic development. Furthermore, recognising the empirical importance of host nation cooperation and leadership, IOM has always linked its operations to the host government’s strategy and priorities and tailored the programme to the needs of each country. Another comparative advantage of IOM in this area is its programme design which incorporates an Exit strategy from the inception of the programme that is jointly developed between IOM and MoD stakeholders.

One of the largest, the most comprehensive and successful DDR/SSR projects ever financed within the NATO/Partnership for Peace framework was the NATO/PfP Trust Fund Project for Assistance to Discharged Defence Personnel in the Republic of Serbia (NTF Project). The NTF Project was built considering the previous IOM experiences and lessons learned in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, but, during the time and thanks to the excellent results achieved, it managed to become a model for other similar projects in the region and worldwide.

A BRIEF HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NATO/PFP TRUST FUND PROJECT IN SERBIA, AS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS IN THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION

During the period 1 July 2006 – 31 March 2012, the IOM, in a close cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia, implemented the NATO/PfP Trust Fund Project for Assistance to Discharged Defence Sector Personnel in the Republic of Serbia (NTF Project). The NTF Project was built considering the previous IOM experiences and lessons learned in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, but, during the time and thanks to the excellent results achieved, it managed to become a model for other similar projects in the region and worldwide.
Personnel in the Republic of Serbia (NTF project), assisting the Serbian Government in carrying out the national reform programme “Programme for Resettlement in the Serbian Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces” (PRISMA). In contrast to other countries and their experiences at that time, where resettlement structures were created ad-hoc and for the temporary purpose of carrying out the downsizing activities, the Serbian Ministry of Defence aimed at creating a permanent structure which dealt with the reintegration of discharged defence personnel independently of the downsizing related to the defence reform.

Within the framework of the NTF project, the IOM performed its more traditional role of facilitating the reintegration of discharged defence personnel into civilian life through the implementation of the ICRS mechanism (Information, Counselling and Referral Services) and disbursement of reintegration assistance to eligible project beneficiaries. The ICRS, as a general IOM’s instrument, was adapted to Serbian environment and socio-economic and security conditions to adequately respond to the needs of the target group. Within the Serbian context, the ICRS mechanism was organised according to the following structure:

- Information for beneficiaries,
- Information for stakeholders,
- Counselling to support a change in mindset,
- Counselling to manage expectations, referral services and Reintegration Fund.

Furthermore, apart from the direct assistance to a numerous discharged defence personnel and their families in their reintegration into civilian life, the project supported the defence sector reform process through a wide range of capacity building activities combining formal trainings, coaching and learning-by-doing methodologies. Those activities strengthened MoD capacities to deal with future exceptional human resources management (downsizing related to the budget reduction or need to meet NATO standards) and regular discharging activities (downsizing related to the end of contract of professional defence staff). In this sense the role of IOM in the NATO/Trust Fund for Serbia represented a step forward in the agency’s involvement in DDR type of projects taking a more CIMIC oriented angle.

After the initial two-year funding phase and excellent results achieved, the project was extended with subsequent annual extensions until the end of the NTF Project in June 2011, reaching the five years of full implementation, and with a no-cost extension period until the end of March 2012.

Although the original project document was revised to include new activities as defined by donors and the MoD during the annual extension review process, this €9.3 million Project remained based on a four component approach, designed to provide reintegration services to a targeted caseload, identified within the framework of the MoD redundancy plan:

- Registration and profiling
- Information, counselling and referral services
- Reintegration Fund: the NTF Reintegration offered micro-grants for an amount up to 1,500€ and/or interest-free micro-loans (up to 3,000€). As of beginning of 2008, eligible candidates were also given the opportunity to access stimulative mechanisms, such as flexible, self-sustainability and development grants. Each of these mechanisms was designed to increase the impact of the NTF Project by supporting the self-sustainability of the assisted businesses and creating the conditions for the job placement of additional beneficiaries. Individual reintegration plans are tailored to each beneficiary’s specific circumstances through the combination of one or more of the following components:
  1) Small Business Training,
  2) Micro Business Start-Up,
  3) On-the-Job Training,
  4) Vocational Training and Agriculture Revitalisation.
- Capacity Building: the strategy used by the NTF in implementing the capacity building components included a combination of coaching as well as training courses and team building techniques. Through
Assessment of the results achieved in regard to social, economic and institutional capacity building aspects in the frame of the NATO PERSPEKTIVA Programme

During the entire period of implementation the NTF Project operated in a challenging environment, generated by fundamental political, economic and security changes in the Republic of Serbia. In spite of a wide range of unforeseeable external obstacles, the NTF Project adapted and achieved significant results in many fronts. It assisted numerous discharged defence personnel and their families in the process of their reintegration into civilian life, through a wide range of capacity building activities combining formal trainings, coaching and learning-by-doing methodologies, the project supported the defence sector reform process and strengthened the MoD capacities to deal with future resettlement activities also related to the professional Army, at the local community level, it enhanced Serbia’s socio-economic development and democratization as well as contributed to stability within the Western Balkans region.

The NTF project targeted discharged defence personnel, as well as their families and dependants, supporting their integration into civilian life. However, the target group of the project was not exclusively pre-determined. Different groups of potential project beneficiaries were successfully referred to the NTF project (officers, NCOs, civilians and finally professional soldiers) and as of the end of the fifth year the NTF project caseload totalled 10,259 individuals, all referred by the MoD since the beginning of the project. As concerns the direct project beneficiaries, a total of 6,025 individuals have received individual counselling, while 4,580 of them received financial assistance to support their reintegration into civilian life. Despite the negative influence of the global economic crisis, the NTF Project generated a number of positive economic effects for both beneficiaries and the state economy. Essentially, the project was very successful in generating new employment and countering the negative labour trends in the Serbian market for its beneficiary pool – more than 3,600 new micro and small enterprises were registered and 442 former defence staff members found employment in some of the existing companies in Serbia. These positive effects were particularly evident in the agriculture sector and among the self-employed ones, where the NTF Project-related jobs added considerably to the country level labour flows. In addition, the NTF Project assistance had a significant impact on the development and stimulation of entrepreneurship as a new economic and social attitude of assisted beneficiaries towards creating and developing new business and life solutions. Based on internal monitoring regularly conducted during the project implementation, the vast majority of the surveyed beneficiaries assessed the NTF project as a support of the great importance in the process of their reintegration into civilian life. The number of people who indirectly benefited from the project was more than twice the number of those who received support, showing the multiplier effect of the NTF Project.

In addition, the NTF built synergies with many other existing programmes supporting discharged defence personnel as well as with the national and regional institutions in order to allow more cost-effective reintegration of discharged defence personnel, but also to build the MoD capacity to interact with other counterparts.

Thanks to the NTF project, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia was able to achieve important national goals in the field of defence reform as well as to further contribute to the stabilisation of the Balkan region. Moreover, it also confirmed that a painful process like the downsizing of the Army can be conducted in a manner that does not add burden to the social welfare system, contributing instead to the further development of the state economy even in a critical moment of global economic crisis.

Including 265 beneficiaries who received interest-free micro-loans, self-sustainability, incentive or development grants
As confirmed by a range of external evaluations and assessed by the NTF donors, IOM managed to produce such project results that exceeded the initial targets, making the NTF as a possible model/example for future similar NATO/PfP activities.

“Overall the IOM has been able to undertake some very constructive work in an environment where many externalities and constraints which lie outside the scope of the project, have taken place. This shows the IOM’s capacity to adapt to changes and its reactive capabilities in order to continue its support through a phased process which has always counted with the support and endorsement of the MoD and the NTF.

Despite the negative history of NATO involvement in Serbia, the NTF has been able to develop with the IOM and the MoD a sort of model of collaboration which could be of use in other parts of the world.”

Subur Consulting S.L - The first external independent formative evaluation of the project (January 2008, page 8)

“There is no doubt that we are witnessing a unique example of civil-military cooperation mechanism in this project, and the various documents produced on the project will contribute to its visibility and extracting good practices.

Compared to other projects that support socio-economic reintegration of discharged military personnel, this project goes beyond the immediate needs and takes a comprehensive, medium-term time-frame to address the difficult and complex multi-dimensional issue of reintegration of discharged personnel. It has earned an outstanding record in terms of customer friendliness and in terms of the already known and much appreciated ICRS that IOM has used in other projects in the past and that was so successfully used in this project thanks to the high standards set and the very high staff quality.”


“The comprehensive reform of national security including the armed forces indeed is, to a very large extent, an economic and social issue and, accordingly also needs to be dealt within the context of economic reforms and social development policies. In other words, the measures to cushion the social consequences of major reductions in armed forces and military infrastructure are of utmost importance. The NATO/PfP Trust Fund project on resettlement of the redundant military personnel in Serbia, which is executed by IOM, is indeed an excellent example of successful cooperation of the international community and MoD of Serbia in this field. I appreciate very much the fact that Czech Republic takes an active role in this process” stated Mr. Jiří Kalašníkov, Minister-Counsellor at the Czech Embassy/Contact point Embassy of NATO in Belgrade (Newsletter issued by the NATO Contact Point Embassy, April 2011, page 3)

“The project was further appraised as highly relevant, highly effective, and with positive impact and likely sustainability.”