



20 June 2009: World Refugee Day in Kosovo

In order to mark the World Refugee Day highlighting the unmet needs of uprooted people, UNHCR Kosovo organized, in coordination with partners, donors and friends, different activities and ad hoc events.

The celebrations started on 19 June in Pristina with the official grand opening of a two days Photo Exhibition in the Youth, Culture and Sports Centre of Pristina. The Ceremony was introduced by speeches of UNHCR Chief of Mission, Mr. Herman Stuurwold, and of Advisor of the Kosovo Prime Minister, Mr. Shaip Muja, in the presence of the Minister for Communities and Return and many other invited guests.

During the event the Photo Exhibition "Real People, Real Needs" was inaugurated: a collection of pictures that visually document the lives and experiences of refugees and displaced people in Kosovo during the last 10 years, as well as a collection of photographs taken by children from various municipalities, organized by UNHCR.

The celebration included dances of Pristina's region children as well as the rewarding of four children who took the nicest pictures. In the afternoon, a WRD Football Cup tournament was held with three competing teams (one Albanian, one Serb, one UNHCR, and one UNV).

Continued on page 3

Contents

- 1 20 June 2009: World Refugee Day in Kosovo
- 1 The United Nations RSG on the Human Rights of IDPs, Walter Kaelin, visited Kosovo
- 6 The Internally Displaced Persons from Nekodim signed a tripartite agreement
- 7 Minority returnee families to Gjilan/Gnjilane
- 7 Income Generation Project for a FYROM refugee family

The United Nations RSG on the Human Rights of IDPs, Walter Kaelin, visited Kosovo

The United Nations Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Walter Kaelin, concluded a four days visit to Kosovo began on 1 July. He visited Prishtinë/Pristina, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Strpce/Shtërpce.

Mr. Walter Kaelin, during the meet-



ings with Kosovo senior officials was accompanied by UNHCR Kosovo Chief of Mission, Mr. Herman Stuurwold. He was received by Kosovo President, Mr. Fatmir Sejdiu, and Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Hajredin Kuçi. Among other, discussions included the issue of return of IDPs, property rights, closure of the Roma camps in north Mitrovica. The U.N. Representative stated that the situation of the Roma community in Mitrovica North is absolutely dramatic. He pointed out that the U.N. supports the government of Kosovo in its efforts to resolve the issue of Roma camps in the north of Kosovo.

Continued on page 2



Deputy Prime Minister Hajredin Kuçi noted that the government and Mitrovica municipality have undertaken concrete steps and that they also wish support from UNHCR and the international community to create an environment enabling a normal life for all in Kosovo.

During the course of the visit, Mr. Kaelin met with internally displaced persons and returnees, authorities, representatives of the international community and civil society. He met with Ombudsperson, Coordinator in the PM's office for relocation of Roma Communities in Northern Mitrovica, Minister of Ministry for Communities and Return, Minister of MLSW, KPA, UNHCR, UNMIK, EULEX, OHCHR, CoE and other officials.

He visited several Temporary Collective shelters in Mitrovica north,

among other Cesmin Ljug/ Ceshme Llug and Osterode camp. In addition he visited TCS "Orphanage" that hosts K/Albanian displaced families from northern Mitrovica. Another location visited was the return site Roma Mahala, where he met with returnees of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

In Obliq/c Mr. Kaelin met with four recently returnee families from Montenegro. He asked the returnees if they are going to participate during the reconstruction of the houses, and why they waited so long to return to their place of origin. A returnee answered that they were willing to return even before, but it was more difficult for them to return alone as only one family, while now also the reconstruction is promised. They showed readiness to help during reconstruction of the houses. The reconstruction in Obliq/c may be completed within two months.

Human Rights

Mr. Kaelin asked the returnees about income and livelihood opportunities. A few representatives responded that earning an income is difficult, but they hope to manage even though they are aware that there are no jobs available. Hilmi Lajci was more optimistic and said that he is going to work in trading small things as he was doing before the conflict.

The U.N. Representative also met with two Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian returnee families in Prishtina/Pristina urban. One family returned from Serbia, and another one from FYROM. Both families live in the same neighbourhood and they benefited from an Income Generation project and got a small tractor for work. Mr. Kaelin was interested to know about the general living conditions of those families: access to health facilities, access to education for their children and other issues.

Return

THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM NEKODIM SIGNED A TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT

A Tripartite agreement was signed between the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Nekodim currently living in Serbia, UNDP and the municipality. Present at the meeting were UNHCR, MRO of Ferizaj/Urosevac municipality, OSCE, DRC, KAAD and UNDP. Six families present signed the agreements for housing reconstruction.

Regarding the temporary accommodation, UNHCR informed the IDPs that Talinoc/Talinovac returnees agreed to release a house for Nekodim potential returnees. IDPs accepted the proposal and agreed that when the reconstruction of the houses will start they will return to the area and take part in the reconstruction process.





World Refugee Day

◀ Continued from page 1

A UNHCR tent, fully arranged internally with basic non food items was erected at the location of the exhibition.

Poster of the campaign were shown in the main central street of Pristina.

WRD posters in Albanian, Serb, English, and Roma languages were disseminated among local and international institutions and organizations such as all municipalities.

WRD was widely celebrated throughout Kosovo by all Field Offices with several activities, involving communities, authorities and stakeholders. OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Kosovo Force (KFOR), International Civilian Office (ICO), EULEX, and other organizations representatives were closely involved during the celebrations. Donations of food products were received from the Italian Food Company Barilla for about 400 children.

Prizren

In Prizren, UNHCR, in co-operation with OSCE, organized a two-day commemoration of the WRD. Several activities aimed at fostering inter-ethnic relations and giving a voice to refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). In an effort to raise awareness for the specific difficulties and requirements, UNHCR highlighted the rights of IDPs for return and the assistance required for their sustainable return.

A photo exhibition showing the lives of refugees and IDPs, their return and reintegration as well as the work and activities of UNHCR in Kosovo, was held in the HAMAM (Turkish bath) located in the centre of Prizren.



In addition, a painting competition of school children was organized: approximately 40 children of different ethnicities participated.

On 20 June the DJ PARTY was organized in the city center of Prizren which was attended by a large number of young people.

Gjilan/Gnjilane

The World Refugee Day events in Gjilan/Gnjilane were strongly supported and attended by OSCE, KFOR, municipal representatives, Ministry of Communities and Returns (MCR), Kosovo Police Service, local media and NGOs Kosovo

Agency for Advocacy and Development (KAAD), Mercy Corps, Red Cross, Civil Rights Program/Kosovo, and local media.

Contributions were provided for the program such as school materials, sport equipments, equipment for playground, refreshments, toys, food products etc.





In Gjilan/ Gnjilane the WRD activities started on 11 June, with the 'Pinocchio' play performed by the creative drama section of the school "Vuk Karadzic" in Lahor Collective Shelter in Shterpce/Strpce. Almost 300 Roma and Serb minority children participated in the event.

On 19 June a meeting with IDPs in Shterpce/Strpce was organized. IDPs discussed about the issues of visits to the properties, assistance needed for local integration, pending decision on IDPs court claims for properties compensation, need for regular presence of medical staff in the Collective Shelters etc.

In Kamenice/a a round table "Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons" was organized. The municipal representatives, Center for Social Welfare, Regional Employment Center, Property Directorate, OSCE participated. The main objective was to coordinate, familiarize and also to know the responsibilities of different municipal directorates, and different assistance provided to readmitted persons such as health, humanitarian

transport, education, social welfare, civil registration etc.

A drawing competition and presentation of pictures in the municipal building in Novoberde/Novo Brdo with the involvement of Kosovo Serb and Albanian children was organized. The photos will be set up in the cultural house at the return site in Kllobukar/Klobukar village.

The World Refugee Day activity in Viti/Vitina municipality was marked with two sport events (Football and Volleyball games) in the village Verbovc/Vrbovac. There were Kosovo Serb and Albanian teams while the event was attended by local community. The Municipal Mayor of Viti/Vitina attended the event and pointed out the message of wishing that next year all IDPs and refugees will return to their homes.

In Ferizaj/Uroševac a theatre play was performed in Roma language by local theatre group. The idea was to stress that Kosovo Roma could take an active role in building a viable future for integration.

On 19 June a photo exhibition with a selection of pictures presenting UNHCR activities in Kosovo during the last 10 years was organized in the front of the municipal theatre in Gjilan/ Gnjilane town.

Peja/Pec

In Peja/Pec region three events highlighted the difficult life of refugees and aimed at creating a better understanding in the host society for the plight of displaced people.



Furthermore, the celebration of WRD offered returnees to Kosovo a platform to express their opinions and feelings about their situation. UNHCR cooperated with a wide range of municipal, community and international partners while celebrating the date in the region.

A WRD event took place in the Brekoc/Brekovac Community Center in Gjakove/Djakovica on 16 June, in partnership with the Municipality, OSCE, KAAD, and Bethany Christian Services. The Community Center supports the Kosovo Roma, Egyptian, Ashkali minority community including many returnees, Kosovo IDPs and stateless persons. Children joined drawing and singing activities in the presence of the officials from the Municipality, journalists and representatives of partners, such as KFOR and Danish Refugee Council. Civil Rights Program/Kosovo disseminated information on Social Inclusion of and Access to Human Rights of RAE Communities. At the same day, Mercy Corps also started a Community Development Project - fencing the Community Center to create a safe playground for children.

Another event took place in Zallq/ Zac in Istog/k with the assistance of the Municipality, OSCE and KFOR and it was centered on the experience of refugee children. The children from the local community were sitting in a refugee tent and talked about 'life of a refugee'. Amongst others a child, who was a refugee before, strongly expressed his happiness of coming back home. About 40 children presented songs and poems to the people gathered. A music group of children from





the Xheladin Deda Special School for the Blind also joined the event and performed live music and singing.

Brestovik in Peje/Pec municipality, in partnership with Intersos, KFOR, OSCE, CRP/K and KAAD hosted a WRD event. A multi-ethnic, multi cultural NGOs Network from different municipalities of Peja/Pec region - Mosaic in cooperation with Intersos - joined and presented their activities. The local Kosovo Serb minority community (all returnees), participated as well together with a group of displaced K/Serbs, who were visiting the Peja/ Pec town as a part of a Go and See Visit organized by the Danish Refugee Council. At the end of the program the children read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Mitrovica/a

Events in coordination with partners operating in Mitrovica/a region were organized in four different locations between 18 and 20 June.

The events targeted Kosovo Albanian, Serb, and Roma, Ashkalia, Egyptian (RAE) Internally Displaced Persons, and refugees from Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina: in total, more than 250 children and youth from IDP, refugees and ethnically mixed communities, living in south Mitrovica/a, north Mitrovica/a and Zubin Potok. Municipalities participated in sports, creative and cultural events.

On 18 June, Kosovo Serb, Albanian and Bosniak children and youth residing in the multiethnic Kodra e Minatorëve/Mikronaselja in Mitrovica/a north, played together football. On 19 June, children of refugees and Kosovo Serb IDPs living in and close by Temporary Collective Shelter in Velji Breg, Zubin

Potok Municipality were engaged in similar sports activities, while over 50 K/Albanian IDP children (boys and girls) living in TCSs Orphanage, Des, Bankhouse III and Restaurant in south Mitrovica/a took part in drawing competition and sports activities.

From the drawing competition at TCS Orphanage, a joint ad-hoc committee set up on the spot of national and international organizations selected the best three drawings. On 20 June, football (boys), basketball (girls), drawing with WRD as the topic (boys and girls) and folklore performance (girls) to live Roma music events were held in Osterode camp for more than 150 Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian youth and children from Osterode and Cesmin Lug.

Refreshment, balls, drawing sets, pairs of slippers and pairs of pants (for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian folklore group) were distributed to the children and youth. The food donations were distributed to 22 vulnerable families of



refugees from Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Invited to attend these events to demonstrate the sense of solidarity and partnership in protecting and assisting the communities, and to celebrate their courage and hope despite the enduring hardship were municipal authorities, TCS Officers, KPS, OSCE, KFOR-LMTs, KAAD, CRP/K, NCA, DRC, Mercy Corps, UNDP, UNICEF, UNMIK, UNMIK-UAM, ICO, EULEX, KFOR-CIMIC, CARITAS, community representatives and community volunteers.

External contributions of OSCE and KFOR-CIMIC also enabled to procure additional items such as drawing pads/pencils, balls and refreshment for the participants. A staff member of Mitrovica/a office as his personal donation from his press printed 300 paper bags with UNHCR logo, which were used in distributing the refreshment and souvenirs to the participants and guests during the events.



Return

MINORITY RETURNEE FAMILIES TO GJILAN/GNJILANE

In Gjiilan/Gnjilane the municipal assembly, signed a Tripartite agreement on 10 June that will enable 13 minority returnee families to come back to their homes. Present during the signing ceremony were representatives of the Ministry of Communities and Return, Gjiilan/Gnjilane municipal authorities, UNHCR, European Commission Liaison Office (ECLO), and UNDP.

The President of the municipality of Gjiilan/Gnjilane, Mr. Qemajl Mustafa, addressed the present stressing that

dent of the municipality the assistance from the international community is very important for success.

Mr. Srdjan Sentic, Director of the Kosovo Prime Minister's office for Communities, said that the government is extending full support to the municipality and the Mayor aiming at strengthening the return process and reintegration. He pointed out that the return process must include all sides: government, international community, and most important the inclusion of the community. "We need to strengthen return in Gjiilan/Gnjilane town, and the Mayor will have the full support of the international community and the government".

Ms. Carole Poullaouec, Representative of the ECLO, considered the signing of the Tripartite agreement as an important step towards return of those displaced families to their homes.

"This is part of an extensive program supporting return of communities to

Kosovo" pointed out Ms. Poullaouec. She also said that empowerment of municipal authorities to take further steps toward sustainable return and rights of communities' remain as priority.

Mr. Maurice Dewulf, Director of UNDP Kosovo, said that he is happy that returnee families are present, and that he would like to welcome them. He said that there is no better symbol than this hall where all communities are together in attendance.

Mr. Adan Ilmi, UNHCR Senior Field Coordinator, praised the engagement of the Mayor and also of the authorities in the municipality towards returns process. He said that the Gjiilan/Gnjilane municipal authority is one of the most active institutions supporting return of minorities. "UNHCR will continue assisting the authorities in their work in the creation of conditions conducive for those IDPs willing to return", stated Mr. Ilmi.



municipal authorities are engaged fully on the issue of return of minorities to their homes. According to the Presi-

INCOME GENERATION PROJECT FOR A FYROM REFUGEE FAMILY

On 02 June the hand over of the cows to a returnee family took place in the village Letnice/a (Viti/Vitina municipality) by Mercy Corps. This is part of the Income Generating project "Dairy Cows" for the FYRoM refugee family that returned in Letnice/a. UNHCR proposed and supported the assistance provided to the family. During the delivery of the cows UNHCR, Kosovo Agency for Advocacy and Development, and Municipal Return Officer were present.

The family of Qazim Jakupi of 8 family members received two dairy cows and two calves. The family highly appreciated the assistance that will enable him to generate income and reduce the poverty in the family through the selling of fresh milk and other milk products in the village.

