



Group 484 Annual Report 2003/04



**“The best town for living is one in which a foreigner feels at home...”
Italo Calvino**

Group 484 is a non-profit, nongovernmental organisation which empowers “forced migrants” (refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers) to actively participate in the realisation of their rights and encourages the local population, especially young people to accept and respect diversity.

We want to create a world in which people can live freely wherever they wish and where all their rights and diversities are respected.

Group 484 is dedicated to civil society values and promotes equal opportunities and tolerance. We believe that people of diverse origins and aspirations living together enrich the life of community.

Together with local communities, organisations and individuals, and especially with the youth, we work on empowering people to take initiative and fully participate in creating a democratic society where all human rights are respected.

A strong civil society is one of the main factors contributing to the respect of the rights of refugees and IDPs, and in the broadest sense, preventing situations from developing which cause new migration flows.



DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTORY WORD

Vesna Golić



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By publishing the results of the research on poverty in Serbia, on the need for the elaboration of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the government representative said, half-joking, that it is difficult to ascertain the poverty rate in Serbia, because people do not want to admit that they are poor.

During the research on poverty in refuge and displacement that we conducted, in order to assure the government of the necessity to include these particularly vulnerable people into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, we established that many causes of material poverty lie in administrative and political obstacles which prevent these people from realising some of their basic rights. If you are an internally displaced person from Kosovo and you live in Subotica, and you require a personal document, you have to travel to your Registration Office which has been relocated from Kosovo to a municipality in southern Serbia. For even basic documents it is necessary to go back and forth many times, requiring internally displaced persons to spend a few days travelling, and various fees. All this is if you are lucky enough that someone directed you into the procedure in the first place. If you live in a collective centre that is not recognised by the government you will have serious problems registering your residence, and that will create more problems when enrolling your children in school and when using health and social services...

By working in collective centres where people who, fleeing from the war, found "temporary" shelter (this temporary situation has lasted over 10 years for many people), we were amazed by their power not to give in to the poverty. We are always welcomed with coffee and something sweet, and with warm smiles. Our entire work is dedicated to supporting this spiritual wealth and strength of common people hit by a tragedy, to not accept poverty.

Along with them, with great support from the youth throughout Serbia, and with the cooperation of many NGOs, we conducted a great action of lobbying to define poverty in Serbia as a problem in realising human rights – and we succeeded. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper comprehends vulnerable groups and their rights. The right to have a home, the right to the freedom of movement, the right to access to services, the right to education, the right to return, the right to stay, my rights and the rights of people around me, the right to be different, the right to dignity and the right to development.

And the right of all of us not to agree to the poverty of common people as an inevitable consequence of transition, but rather to fight together for justice and solidarity.

With the intention to support refugees and IDPs “to take their lives in their own hands” we informed and helped them in realising their individual rights. Furthermore, we provided psychosocial support to the most vulnerable among them: children and youth (including those with disabilities) women, the unemployed primarily those living in collective centres.

Legal and Informative Support

“We have the same rights, it is just more difficult to realise them”
(internally displaced person from Kosovo and Metohija, Niš)

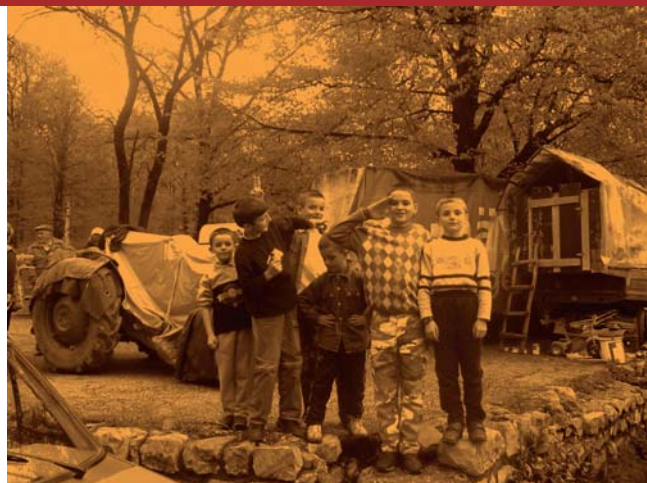
Through individual informative-legal counselling, visits to collective centres, panel discussions and radio broadcasts, we succeeded in supporting approximately 4,000 direct beneficiaries mainly from Serbia but with a smaller number from Montenegro as well in 2003, and the same number in 2004.

Key events that we informed our beneficiaries about in 2003 were the following:

During 2003:

- **Bilateral agreement between Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina on return of refugees.** According to UNHCR data, a total of 65.000 refugees from Serbia and Montenegro returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 50.000 to Croatia;
- **Signed agreement on removing the visa regime between Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Croatia;**
- **Implementation of the Agreement on social insurance between the Republic of Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro;**
- **Based on the changes to the Law on the Areas of Special State Concern in the Republic of Croatia, formal legal repossession of private property was achieved in a manner that allowed most legal owners to obtain a Decision on Property Repossession.** However, during 2003 the practice showed that a small number of private objects had been repossessed;
- **The Regulation on Criteria and Standards for Providing Temporary Accommodation in residential units** was passed for persons with refugee status originating from the territory of the former SFRY (Official Gazette of the RS No. 121/2003);
- **The Coordination Centre for Kosovo and Metohija, adopted the Return Strategy of internally displaced person in April 2002, and UNHCR and UNMIK adopted the joint Programme for Rapid Reaction for supporting returnees in June 2003.** The number of returnees is, however, a symbolic one and according to the UNHCR data, only 7,819 members of minority groups (Serbs, Roma, and other non-Albanians) have returned to Kosovo to date with 2,025 of that number coming in the first eight months of 2003;
- **According to the changes of Vital Records Act of 2003, town administrations of Niš and Kragujevac and municipal administrations of Kraljevo, Kruševac, Jagodina, Vranje and Leskovac took over keeping the vital records for all the municipalities from Kosovo and Metohija;**
- **The Government of Serbia adopted the National Strategy for resolving the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons, which also anticipates the closure of collective centres (during this 2003, 240 collective centres were closed).**

DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS



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“...We here pay for everything and I think it is not fair because I was forced to come here, not because I like it. I was thrown out from my job with guns. I receive no salary. I have lost four years of employment; I am left without my two houses and the whole property. I can somehow come to terms about the houses, but the fact that we are without anything and that we pay for everything here, I just think it is not right. I had to pay 36.000 dinars for cemetery fee, when my sister died. Not a single refugee had to pay it in Uroševac. We pay for the birth certificates, and we pay it double, part of the amount goes to the Kosovo registration service, plus they have added 60 dinars more for the town assembly. This is my only complaint for the last three years in Niš... “.

(internally displaced person from Kosovo and Metohija, Niš)

During 2004:

- In order to enhance sustainable returns and close the refugee chapter in former SFRY countries by 2006, **UNHCR, OSCE and the European Commission missions to Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and BiH launched a regional initiative called “3 x 3”, also known as Road Map;**
- During 2004, a variety of different programmes were launched aimed at implementing some of these measures including a housing programme for refugees and a programme for the closure of collective centres;

- As part of continuing efforts to accurately understand the refugee situation in **Serbia respecting total numbers and basic benchmarks related to their status, a registration of refugees was conducted from December 27, 2004 to January 25, 2005. 139,483 refugees responded to the census;**
- During 2004, **a total of 2,312 housing units were returned to refugees from Croatia following the eviction of temporary tenants.** However, following the expiration of the deadline for the return of property (the end of 2004) which had been set by the Croatian Government, 1,197 housing units remained occupied by temporary tenants;
- With the intention of enhancing the process of permanent integration of refugees, the Government of the Republic of Serbia established a **Committee for Coordinating the Process of Permanent Integration of Refugees, on September 30, 2004;**
- The Serbian Parliament adopted the new **Law on Citizenship** at the end of 2004 (December 24 2004). This law begins being implemented 60 days following its adoption, and according to the clauses of the law, the possibilities for acquiring Serbian citizenship (and consequently SaM citizenship) have been expanded greatly;
- Conditions for **return still remain difficult for internally displaced persons from Kosovo**, especially following ethnic violence which occurred against the Serbian minority in March, 2004. This led to a new displacement of people from Kosovo. As of the end of 2004, 2,000 people remained displaced;
- On the State Union level, **the National Strategy for Integration and Improvement of the Status of the Roma** has been adopted, which is relevant to the solution of the problems of IDPs owing to the high share of Roma in this population;
- The UN Committee on Human Rights, at its 81st Session from 5 to 30 July 2004, discussed the condition of human rights in Serbia and Montenegro. **The Committee pointed out that displaced persons should be granted full and effective access to social services, educational institutions, unemployment benefits, adequate accommodation and identification papers, in accordance with the principles on prohibiting discrimination.**

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Our beneficiaries faced many difficulties in the realisation of many of their rights, both in their places of origin and in their places of residence including: freedom of movement, adequate accommodation, personal documents, employment, legal protection, and disposition of personal movable and immovable property, access to social help and health protection, education and information.

A. Refugees

Country of Origin	Serbia	Montenegro	Total
1. Bosnia and Herzegovina	89,975	9,786	99,761
2. Croatia	185,859	3,613	189,472
3. Macedonia	10	-	10
4. Slovenia	437	-	437
Total	276,281	13,399	289,680

B. Internally Displaced Persons

Area of Origin	Serbia	Montenegro	Total
Kosovo and Metohija	206,789	18,044	224,833

UNHCR, Annual Statistical Report, December 2004.

“The situation in displacement has a negative effect not only to physical, but also to the psychological well being of internally displaced persons. The experiences of workers in the collective centres, as well as various recent surveys, show increased physical and mental problems (including alcoholic problems) amongst internally displaced persons. The survey conducted by Institute of Public Health revealed that 64% of respondents had psychological stress and up to 57% of internally displaced persons in collective centres have emotional problems. According to studies on internally displaced persons from Kosovo their living conditions and mental health, there is a tendency of deteriorating mental health condition among internally displaced persons (as compared with the situation before exile). As a consequence of a large number of extremely stressful life events, there is a high level of post-traumatic stress and internally displaced person children should be a target of special consideration, as many of them suffer not only from physical illnesses, due to bad living conditions, malnutrition, etc, but also from deep psychological problems, manifesting themselves through isolation, anguish, etc.”

Elina Multanen, Group 484

Psychosocial Support

***“I have two children, and when we first came here my child asked me: Mum, why aren't there any burnt houses here? So the child is traumatised, when we moved from place to place he cried for his friends, the same happened when changing schools”
(internally displaced person from Kosovo and Metohija, Paraćin)***

We realised psychosocial support through psychological counselling and directing families that showed symptoms of dysfunction regarding displacement to adequate institutions, but also through wider education of our beneficiaries on psychosocial consequences of refuge and displacement, with a special emphasis on the prevention of family violence. We also organised socialisation and inclusive activities for people of all ages through workshops, visits to cultural and sport events, and also vocational retraining.

The beneficiaries of these activities were 310 displaced families accommodated in 8 collective centres in the vicinity of Belgrade, as well as the local communities where the centres were situated. Our beneficiaries included 75 refugee, IDP and domicile children with developmental difficulties.

The evaluation showed that these types of activities increase the capacities of our beneficiaries to face their problems and to actively seek assistance from the local community, as well as to give their contribution to the development of the local community.



EMPOWERING FORCED MIGRANTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

By helping to resolve concrete problems of refugees and internally displaced persons we realised that many of them were not familiar with their rights or the institutions and organisations responsible for the protection of their rights. The same situation was present in the local population. As they did not know about the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons, they felt threatened by them. Therefore, we began to empower both

groups by informing them about human rights, migration issues and the possibilities of joint work on the improvement of their communities.



"A hindering fact among a large number of internally displaced persons is the fact they are not acquainted with their own rights, namely with the mechanisms through which they could realise these rights. Most internally displaced persons are not acquainted with the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. There is a very small number of individuals that showed effort to find out and learn more about their rights, by participating in seminars or in some other way.

Those few displaced persons acquainted with their rights and insisting on their realisation most often face a lack of understanding among the representatives of local authorities, who invoke decisions of higher state authorities, undefined status of internally displaced persons, and the fact that there are neither instructions nor authorisation of the competent state institutions"

Empowering internally displaced persons for advocacy for their rights and Implementation of UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Zdenka Milivojević, for Group 484

Empowering Forced Migrants for Active Participation in the Realisation of Their Rights

Committed to empower internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija to actively seek solutions for their status with the support of the local community, we took the following steps in 2003:

- We provided **consultative support and the cooperation of all the main actors in the international community** dealing with this issue by forming a Reference group consisting of: UNHCR, UNHCHR, UN OCHA, DRC and NRC;
- We created **working teams in 5 regions in Serbia** (Belgrade and Braničevo region, Vojvodina, central, south-east and south-west Serbia) consisting of representatives of internally displaced persons, local authorities, institutions and organisations;
- The working teams were **educated on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and advocacy skills** for the implementation of these principles;
- The working teams **implemented what they had learnt** by organising the following events for the displaced, representatives of the local community, international organisations and the media in their region:
 - **Seminars** on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and advocacy skills for the implementation of these principles
 - **Field research** about the realisation of internally displaced persons rights through two focus groups
 - **Round table** on identified problems that internally displaced persons face
- Creating **Municipality Coordination Groups in all 5 regions** consisting of all the interested parties from the local community, whose task was to continuously work on identifying and resolving the problems of IDPs at the local level;
- Empowering internally displaced persons for advocacy for their rights and Implementation of UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement-**written study** based on the participative research in 5 regions in Serbia:

The total number of direct beneficiaries of this project was 350. Considering that along with the displaced, the beneficiaries were also representatives of collective centres, internally displaced person organisations, along with governmental and international organisations, this project reached a considerably higher number of beneficiaries.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONFERENCES ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF IDPs:

- Specialised UN agencies, other international organisations, state authorities and local self-governments, nongovernmental organisations and internally displaced person associations **should join their efforts in promoting rights of internally displaced persons** as described in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement;
- **The responsible Ministries should build capacities** for undertaking their responsibilities towards internally displaced persons within the competence as soon as possible. In the absence of a national strategy for issues relating to internal displacement and a state organ which would gather all the issues of internal displacement, the Ministries dealing with the problems of internal displacement should **harmonise their activities mutually**. The Ministries should **regularly inform internally displaced persons and the public** about their activities in the field of internal displacement;
- The Ministries should include internally displaced persons themselves in the process of creating regulations and measures related to internally displaced persons through their associations, as well as representatives of local self-government and nongovernmental organisations dealing with internally displaced persons;
- **Organs of the local self-government should undertake**, within their competence, **more responsibility for solving the problems of internal displacement**. It is particularly important to realise cooperation of the organs of local self-government with displaced persons and their associations, as well as with local nongovernmental organisations. Establishing operational, informal municipal coordination bodies is suggested, where representatives of municipalities, associations of internally displaced persons, trustees of the Commissariat for Refugees, the local media and nongovernmental organisations would be represented. The task of these coordination bodies would be: to create consent amongst representatives of the local community to the key problems of internally displaced persons in the municipality; to prepare a joint action plan of all the mentioned actors aimed at solving these problems; to enable faster and more efficient reactions; and to provide the public with an insight into the activities of the local self-government. These informal municipal coordination bodies should act together before state organs and in that way influence the process of decision-making;
- **Donor organisations should enable support to quality projects** for the promotion of internally displaced person rights. They should also consider the possibility of providing support to building capacities within the Ministries responsible for internally displaced persons.

In 2004 the municipality coordination groups continued their activities of providing help to internally displaced persons encompassing 3,640 beneficiaries.

The evaluation was being done on all levels of the project's realisation. The results confirmed well chosen methods and quality of realisation, benefits for the participants in terms of their informativeness, empowering and connecting with important actors in the local community and raising awareness in the local community on IDP rights. According to our knowledge, (confirmed by Belgrade offices of UN OCHA and UNHCR) this project was seen as regionally important and could become a model to be used outside of Serbia.

Empowering Youth for Active Participation in Civil Society Development

"I have totally changed, particularly after I realised and saw with my own eyes that it is possible to do something that we planned ourselves, without being told what to do by the adults. Our activities triggered a lot of attention in our town and many people reacted positively to what we have done. I am proud of my role in these activities." (high school student)

Committed to influence the development of a tolerant and multiethnic society as a prerequisite for the prevention and resolution of the problems of refuge and displacement, we made a great effort empowering youth, the future bearers of social changes.

Through quizzes, workshops, debates, panel discussions, campaigns, local actions and various artistic forms such as photography, film, art, drama and literature approximately 18,000 young people in 25 towns in Serbia adopted and applied the basic values of civil society, becoming more open for something new and different. Furthermore, the youth had an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with their peers from Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia.

In 2003 The project Club for Promotion of Civil Society, as in previous years (since 1998), enabled understanding critical consideration of civil society values.

Comments of the participants of the panel discussion on democracy "I have never imagined that it can be so interesting."

"This is the first time I thought about the concept that we all 'wave with' in each situation" (the concept of democracy)

"Who could say that somebody would speak about democracy without phrases we mostly hear about this topic."



Project "Don't get angry - The Richness of Diversities" - In 2003 activated the youth in 23 towns in Serbia to socially engage in their local communities.

After the participation in the project, 81% of participants became socially engaged through forming independent local NGO's or engaging with the existing NGO's.



Project "The Healing Cinema" – developed sensitivity and understanding amongst the youth and the entire local community about the needs of their fellow citizens with mental and physical disabilities during 2003 and 2004. The project was implemented in 10 towns in Serbia.

The creative team of the youth from Group 484 was awarded a special award for the calendar in the category of non-profit campaigns at the Media Fair in Novi Sad.

The calendar is a result of the project "The Healing Cinema" and consists of 6 posters and messages promoting human rights of disabled people. The jury made this decision not only on the basis of humanitarian messages in the campaign, but because it met high professional standards



On International Mental Health Day, held on October 8 2004, in cooperation with Caritas (Italy and SaM) and the Ministry of Health (The National Mental Health Committee) we organised the campaign for destigmatisation of mentally challenged persons called “*Nobody is Normal at Close Look*” in 25 towns in Serbia. A total of 6,000 posters, 500 calendars and 6,000 leaflets were distributed.



The final ceremony of the project was opened by Mr Tomica Milosavljević, Health Minister in the Serbian Government at the Sava Centre where over 500 youth and around 100 mentally challenged children participated.



“**A Found Friend**” – a cooperation with four NGOs in Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia on the promotion of a peaceful and tolerant co-life which was started in 2002 and continued to be realised successfully within this project.

Evaluation of the project through a sample of 264 high school students, by external evaluator has shown that project participants, when compared to their peers who did not participate in the project, have a greater level of knowledge about basic democratic principles and processes, a more positive attitude to social activism and less social distance to other ethnicities.



“**This is Me, Who Are You?**” – This project realised in 2003 enabled youth to get acquainted with different cultures of their peers using photography as a medium. In five towns they organised exhibitions of their photographs called “About ourselves and others” giving an opportunity for their fellow citizens to see the multiethnic and multicultural nature of their surroundings.

Project participants see the merit of this project in meeting cultures that they knew little about (96.5% of replies). Statements confirming this are: “We could learn something about them - directly, and not via television”, “I made friends in towns that I thought I would never visit, and now I think that some doors there are open to me, as if they were mine.”



In 2004 we also developed five new projects:

“Luncheon in Belgrade” - Students of nine Belgrade high schools were familiarised with different cultural models of living through the research of the customs related to food and gained insight into various migrations and their positive impacts.

“I find this project exciting because I could watch history going on in my kitchen, my backyard, my street and thus comprehend ‘the role of my family in the world revolution’”, a project participant in the fourth grade at the Third Belgrade High School



“Equation with Two Knowns” - Researching the cultural heritage in their surroundings, youth in Belgrade, Vranje, Leskovac, Bela Crkva and Subotica learned a great deal about their fellow citizens of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

“At the beginning I was really surprised. I did not expect that we would visit so many different places. I thought that the thing I was doing was against my religion and I thought how I should quit. However, as the time went by, I realised that all of that was good and that I will gain more knowledge. I am very happy now for visiting the mosque and that I found out more about other religions and ethnicities.”, a project participant from Belgrade.



“Good People in Bad Times” - With this project, we connected displaced and domicile youth from Kosovo and participated in the research on the youth's attitudes related to returning to Kosovo.

“Youth and Poverty” - With this project we enhanced the participation of the youth in the process of realising the PRSP in Serbia and BiH

“Poverty is a result of an unwillingness to face problems and solve them”, a girl from Kikinda

“Material poverty is related to the poverty in education - people cannot buy books nor can educational institutions obtain them”, a boy from Užice



“School for migrations” - The preparation was realised over the course of the year. We gathered groups of experts of different profiles, philosophers, anthropologists, historians, lawyers, sociologists, demographers and psychologists. We created two publications on migrations - *Studies on Refuge* and *A Multidisciplinary Approach to Migrations*. The authors of the essays presented their work at seven panel discussions and a seminar on migrations and established cooperation with the Faculty of Political Sciences.

90% of the youth that participated in the seminar on migrations expressed their interest for the issue of migrations to be included in the regular school curriculum, and 95% of them expressed a willingness to inform their colleagues at the faculty on the issue of migrants and migrations.



As a systematic approach is necessary for the long-term solution of the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons, cooperation and influence of decision makers and the public was the third essential element (along with direct assistance and empowering the capacities of our beneficiaries) of our work.

INFLUENCING POLICIES AND PUBLIC OPINION

Poverty reduction of refugees and internally displaced persons

"I live from breakfast to lunch, from lunch to dinner, at night I do not sleep thinking about whether I will have breakfast, I look like a man but I am smaller than a grain, but even I once had my own armchair... I only look for human understanding so that I can live better from one day to another instead of from breakfast to lunch. But I do not even have the right to say this because I am an internally displaced person."
(internally displaced person in Kragujevac)

In 2003, through advocacy we managed to adequately present poverty issues among refugees and internally displaced persons and to include the recommendations for its reduction into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Funds proposed for alleviation of poverty through the targeting of poor refugees and internally displaced persons in the second version of PRSP are significant, more than 138 million euros for the three year period.

ADVOCACY PROCESS:

- We realised that in the **Interim PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper)** refugees and internally displaced persons and their specific vulnerabilities had not been sufficiently addressed. The Interim PRSP refers to the National Strategy for resolving the problems of refugees and therefore internally displaced persons. Unfortunately the implementation programme of the National Strategy did not take into account internally displaced persons at all and very limited funds were secured for implementation;
- We collected all available data and information on poverty among refugees and internally displaced persons and compiled it in a **Study on poverty among refugees and internally displaced persons** based on a multidimensional and human rights based approach;
- We organised **focus group discussions** with representatives of internally displaced persons, refugees and local NGOs working closely with refugees and internally displaced persons. The discussions provided important information on the nature and scope of poverty among refugees and IDPs as well as some important policy suggestions and recommendations;
- All these served as important material for the formulation of the **policy paper** on the inclusion of refugees and internally displaced persons into the PRSP;
- Along with a continuous cooperation with refugees and internally displaced persons we established excellent cooperation with governmental bodies, international organisations and local NGOs dealing with problems of poverty of refugees and internally displaced persons;
- We organised **Panel discussions** with representatives from local NGOs, international organisations and agencies, the PRSP Management Unit and Expert group members and representatives of the Commissariat for refugees and other relevant institutions and organisations. All the participants gave **their comments** on the section of the PRSP covering refugees and provided recommendations for the improvement of the document. All these minutes and the policy paper of Group 484 could be found on the Serbia Free of Poverty website. (www.srbijabezsiromastva.org.yu);
- Finally we created publications on the inclusion of refugees and internally displaced persons into the PRSP presenting lessons learnt from this process.

Group 484 would like to thank Elina Multanen for her exquisite contribution in creating Policy/Advocacy Unit at Group 484, as well as Jale Sultanli for her contribution in Advocacy capacity building of Group 484.



want, etc. You should not be dissatisfied with what you have accomplished"
S. Cvejić, PRSP expert to participants in panel discussion **Involving refugees and internally displaced persons into the PRSP.**



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"Believe me, as I have seen so far, a rare lobby, so to say, could achieve within its topic, what you achieved together with us on this project. Refugees are approximately 18% of the total number of poor people according to all estimations and receive 20% of funds from the budget. It is simply a result of all these round tables, consultation process, pressure, if you

SOME OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF REFUGEES AND IDPs IN THE PRSP

- **Special research** is necessary to obtain information about the level and characteristics of poverty among internally displaced persons and refugees. This can be done by **including them in the next Population Life Standard Poll**, by conducting special research and collecting data from existing research;
- It is necessary to include refugees and internally displaced persons in **national, bilateral/regional, and international development programmes on an equal basis**;
- Economically, the biggest problem faced by refugees and internally displaced persons stems from **their inability to secure regular income** as well as from **housing problems**. Therefore, the problem of **unemployment** should be solved by helping refugees and internally displaced persons to acquire **better qualifications** (through carefully planned professional and educational training and skills developing programmes), as well as through **better and longer-term micro financing and benefit programmes**. It is also necessary to provide **accommodation within social housing programmes** to those who do not own their apartments, whose property has been destroyed and those who fall below the poverty line;
- **The procedure of realising their rights to obtain documents** should be made easier to refugees and internally displaced persons, considering that without personal documents, individuals are not recognised before the law;
- State organs should work on **removing legal obstacles and discriminatory practices, provide help and promote the integration, independence and self-empowerment** of refugees and internally displaced persons;
- They should be enabled to realise **their rights to freedom of movement and freedom to choose their place of residence**;
- They should be enabled to realise **their rights to basic social services** such as: health care, social aid, education, financial help, possibility of placing elderly in social institutions and health;
- **Discrimination** of refugees and internally displaced persons should be eliminated.

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Unfortunately, in 2004 the new Government did not begin the realisation of the Strategy. Instead of the planned monitoring of the PRSP implementation in regards to refugees and internally displaced persons, we **advocated for realisation of the measures from the Strategy in current activities of the Government**. We worked with the **beneficiaries themselves to raise awareness of the existence of the Strategy and the need for joint advocacy for realisation of the Strategy**, through focus groups and panel discussions. We also created **two documents**, *Indicators for Monitoring Measures from the Poverty Reduction Strategy from the Human Rights Perspective* and *Economic Policy of the Government of the Republic of Serbia*.

The Government created the **Team for the Support of the Strategy Realisation**, and we ensured **our participation in the creation of the Government Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy**, that the team will start in 2005.

Participation in the creation of the Draft Proposal of the Asylum Law

In 2003, we started to gather information on asylum-seekers and look at the experience of organisations and institutions dealing with the issue around the world. Although in SaM the number of asylum seekers is still not large (around 150), changes are expected in the near future. This can be seen through the priorities of UNHCR Protection Unit, a new regional programme through The Stability Pact MARRI (Migration, Asylum, Return, Regional Initiative), as well as through engagements of the European Union, OSCE, The Council of Europe and the Government of Serbia.

In 2004, Group 484 participated in the creation of the Draft proposal and the round table for the new Asylum Law.

Participation in the discussion on the Draft proposal of the Law on NGOs

We participated in the discussion on the Draft Proposal on the Law on Associations, organised by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self Government and OSCE. The discussion was attended by about twenty NGOs and Group 484 was the only one dealing with the issues of migrations and forced migrations.

The Conference “Protection of Women and Children in Refuge and Displacement from Sexual and Gender Based Violence”

Around 113 representatives of local and international NGOs, UN agencies (UNHCR and UNDP), state institutions and the media participated in the conference. The goal of the conference was to raise awareness and sensitise people working with refugee and IDP population to recognise violence and to react adequately and in time.



10,000 copies of informative materials on SGBV were distributed to refugees and IDPs as well as to persons helping refugees and IDPs within institutional and non-institutional systems.

Civil education for life in civil society

This objective was realised through a two-year long participation in the Working group for creating the curriculum for civil education for the third and forth grade of high schools.

We also created three collections of essays “*Critical Dictionary of Civil Society*”.

The expert public felt that the collections are some of the most significant books in Serbia dealing with the topic of civil society. Professors at the Faculty of Philosophy and Faculty of Political Sciences believe that their future generations of students will learn from these books.



In these three issues, following topics are elaborated: civil society, democracy, human rights, public, enlightenment, modernisation, social movements, citizen, civil disobedience, responsibility, tolerance, solidarity, the policy of difference, culture, identity, ethics, right, justice and religion.



Policy Papers/Studies:

- **Report on Rights of Refugees, internally displaced persons and Asylum seekers** Included into Annual Report on Human Rights in Serbia and Montenegro of the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights 2003, Danilo Rakić, 2003.
- **Study on Poverty of Refugees and internally displaced persons**, Elina Multanen, 2003.
- **Policy Recommendation for Inclusion of internally displaced persons and Refugees into Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper**, Elina Multanen, 2003.
- **Country report for 2002 for ECRE**, Elina Multanen, 2003.
- **Case Study about Inclusion of Refugees and internally displaced persons into PRSP**, Danilo Vuković, 2003.
- **Harmonisation of EU Asylum System - Relevance and impact of EU developments in South Eastern and Central and Eastern Europe**, Tatjana Pavlović – Križanić, 2004.
- **In the Defense of "Fortress Europe"**, Danilo Rakić, 2004.
- **ECRE Country Report for Serbia and Montenegro for 2003**, Danilo Rakić, 2004.
- **Analysis of the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons from Kosovo in Serbia and Montenegro: Law and Practice**, Internally displaced person Interagency Working Group, 2004.
- **Human Rights Indicators for the Monitoring of Poverty Reduction among Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in the Republic of Serbia**, Maja Lazić, 2004.
- **Advocacy for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons during Displacement in the Republic of Serbia**, Maja Lazić based on Zdenka Milivojević report and Group 484 research, 2004.
- **Policy Recommendations on the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons during Displacement in the Republic of Serbia**, Group 484, 2004.
- **Economic policies of the Government of Serbia and PRSP**, Janko Guzijan, 2004.
- **Recommendations for the Improvement of the measures for Refugees and internally displaced persons within the PRSP Implementation**, Group 484, 2004.

Key Conferences Attended in 2003 by representatives of Group 484:

- **ECRE, Biannual General Meeting**, An Enlargement: Impact on EU, Accession and new EU border states, March 20-22, Bucharest, Romania
- **ACNUR, Refugees and Post Conflict Reconciliation**, March 26 - April 06, Madrid, Spain
- **Seminar for youth and play workers: Let's Play for our Rights - Human Rights Education in Intercultural Community Work**, June 29 - July 9, Hamburg, Germany
- **ECRE Policy Meeting on the Concept of Effective Protection**, July 25, London, UK
- **ECRE, Expert Meeting on the Creation of an Effective and Efficient Asylum System in Europe**, September 11, London, UK
- **OHCHR, Regional Seminar of Experts for Eastern Europe: Implementation of the Programme of Action Adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance**, September 24-26, Prague, the Czech Republic
- **ECRE Biannual General Meeting**, September 25-29, Geneva, Switzerland
- **UNHCR Pre Excom Consultation**, September 24-26, Geneva, Switzerland
- **ELENA Course on the Relevance of the European Convention on Human Rights for Asylum Law**, October 23 – 26, Strasbourg
- **Ministry of Education: Education for Democracy and Civil Society within Joint Programmes of the Council of Europe**, October 24-25, Belgrade

Key Conferences Attended in 2004 by representatives of Group 484:

- CRINGO New Educational Methods, February 26 and 27, Armenia
- ECRE, Biannual General Meeting, Shaping a vision for refugee protection, March 25 to 29, Soesterberg, The Netherlands
- KIP (Kosovo Initiative Programme) Conference, April 28-30, Ulcinj, Montenegro
- Human Rights School for Future Decision Makers, May 2-16, Dubrovnik, Croatia
- Regional Workshop on Policing Minorities, Human Rights and Conflict Management, May 7 and 8, Bucharest, Romania
- IOCC(International Orthodox Christian Charities) Seminar, May 18, Belgrade
- Conference on International Accounting Standards, May 27 and 28, Belgrade
- Ministry of education and Council of Europe, Seminar Education for Democracy and Civil Society, May 27 and 28, Belgrade
- Forum Barcelona 2004, International Dialogue, Conflicts: Prevention, Resolution, Reconciliation, June 15-20, Spain
- Seminar Cognitive Management: Individual Human Potential Analysis, June 24 and 25, Belgrade
- The Conference on the occasion of the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, June 25, Media Centre, Belgrade
- The National Conference on Conflict Prevention and Peace Building, July 6, 7 and 8, Belgrade
- ELENA/International Introductory Course on Refugee and Asylum Law, September 2-5, Warsaw, Poland
- Forum Barcelona 2004– World Congress Human Movements and Migration: A Challenge for 21st Century, September 2 to 5, Spain
- The first CDNP Network Meeting for the SEE Region, September 6 and 7, Zagreb, Croatia
- Seminar Curricula Development and University Integration for Refugee-specific Social Programmes: *best practice and new challenges*, September 23 and 24, Budapest, Hungary
- The Conference of the World Bank dedicated to CAS(Country Assistance Strategy), September, 28, Belgrade
- Ninth International Metropolis Conference, Cooperative Migration Management, International, National and Local Answers, September 27 – October 1, Geneva, Switzerland
- Conference Experience of the local peace activists from the region of the former Yugoslavia, November 4-7, Jahorina, Republic of Srpska, BiH
- ECRE, Biannual General Meeting, October 2-3 2004, Geneva, Switzerland

Influencing public opinion

Each project of Group 484 contained the component of promoting the project objectives to the public, but specific activities with the goal of raising awareness about the issues of migrants and human rights were also organised, particularly about the right to diversities and tolerance.

Project: A Documentary on Returnees to Croatia

After seven years of exile, the refugee family Borota is coming back to their home in Croatia. The return is also a reunion of a family separated by the war. This is an intimate story told through details of a personal drama with discrete echoes of the great tragedy of more than 250,000 Serbs who left their homes in Croatia during the war operations in 1995. Their destiny is a story of the universal human need for a home. After they had lost their home, they created a new one, longing for the old one. And finally they return, again with the feeling of displacement and insecurity.

Authors: Svetlana and Zoran Popović and Snežana Anđelković

Produced by: KVADRAT

Directed by: Zoran and Svetlana Popović

The film was shown at the Documentary film festival in Belgrade, at the international festival FEST, TV B92, and 10 local TV stations in Serbia, thus reaching wider public.

Celebration of World Refugee Day and Human Rights Day

Each year, Group 484 marks these two events (June 20 and December 10) reminding the public that refugees and IDPs are still among us, that they have the same rights as we do and that they need our support in realisation of their rights.

In 2003, with the support of beneficiaries and associates Group 484 organised celebration of Human Rights Day on December 10 that was attended by high representatives of United Nations Commissariat for Human Rights in Serbia, European Commission for Serbia and Montenegro, OSCE, UN Development Programme, artists and NGO representatives.



In 2004, this day was marked by a symbolic decoration of the so-called Tree of Life. Citizens of Belgrade put notes containing the human rights they would like to realise on that tree. The activity generated great interest of passers-by, and among many other messages put on the tree there were the following: "I claim the right to Liv Tyler" and "Too much freedom is not a solution".

The Stamp with drawings by disabled children

Drawings by disabled children were printed on a postage stamp in this country for the first time. Those selected ones belong to disabled children, participants of Group 484's project "Noble growing up". The series of stamps and envelopes with drawings were printed on the occasion of the international event "Joy of Europe" held in Belgrade every year.



The Jelena Šantić Peace Park

On March 22, 2004, the Jelena Šantić Peace Park was opened in Berlin, Germany, upon the initiative of our associate Hans Spoelstra and our sister organisation Group 485. The opening of the park coincided with the USA military intervention in Iraq which served to symbolically point out the purpose of the park for those devoted to the cause of peace and antiwar gatherings. Dr Uwe Klet, the Mayor of Marzahn Hellersdorf Municipality in Berlin (East Berlin), Dr Milovan Božinović, our ambassador in Berlin, Professor Dr Heinrich Fink, long-time director of the Humboldt University, Dr Irina Subotic and Vesna Golić, Group 484 representatives, spoke at the opening. A diverse art programme was organised with the participation of the youth from the Siemens Gymnasium in Marzahn Hellersdorf.



Organisational Development

Group 484 is strongly committed to organisational development and learning. The organisation invests a considerable amount of time and resources into education, training and planning and has made significant progress in many areas of its work. The organisational development is one of the four major strategic objectives Group 484. In order to work according to organisational development Group 484:

- Makes education/training and learning an integral part of each staff's work in the organisation;
- Ensures that all staff develop core competencies;
- Continues fostering innovation and creativity as an important "ingredient" in the work of all staff and associates.

We insist on learning in order to react in an adequate and timely fashion to the changes and challenges in our surroundings.

The processes of analysing surroundings and planning processes (strategic, operational, and action) is with the participation of all staff.

We systematically monitor the work of our staff and evaluate the work we have realised. We use the information gathered as a basis for providing support to the professional development of people in the organisation and improving the quality of our work.

As an important result of the efforts we put into organisational development, we recognise a better integration within Group 484 and a harmonisation of our different programmes. We think that this is the result of better positioning of the organisation in local and international surroundings.

In 2004 Oxfam Novib enabled an external evaluation of our previous four years of cooperation, work and organisational development at Group 484. Evaluators Marina Škorić Prodanović and Dragan Marković, passed on the following feedback of our stakeholders:

"Group 484 is largely perceived to be one of the most prominent and well-positioned national NGOs in Serbia today. It also has high recognition regionally and up to a point, internationally. External stakeholders described the organisation as "innovative", "significant" and open to both new challenges and new trends. Some actors on the local civil society scene, particularly those outside Belgrade perceive Group 484 as a potential leader in representing civil society organisations committed to working with vulnerable groups in Serbia."

"Group 484 has a clear division of tasks within the organisation and one that is well understood within the organisation by all staff who were interviewed. In this respect, Group 484 is a noteworthy rarity within the NGO sector in Serbia."

"Most external stakeholders, particularly donors, were impressed by the internal organisational structure of Group 484 and felt that it had reached a level of professionalism not often met in the non-profit sector. One external stakeholder said 'They seem like people who have plans and know where they want to go.' Another mentioned 'Unlike in many other similar organisations, in Group 484, I am always clear on who needs to be contacted for what. And if I am not clear who I should be talking to, anyone in the group knows who to direct me to.' "

Acknowledgments:

Group 484 would like to thank its consultants Vesna Cipruš, Slobodanka Torbica and Tatjana Pavlović Križanić for sharing their knowledge and experience and giving motivation to go further.

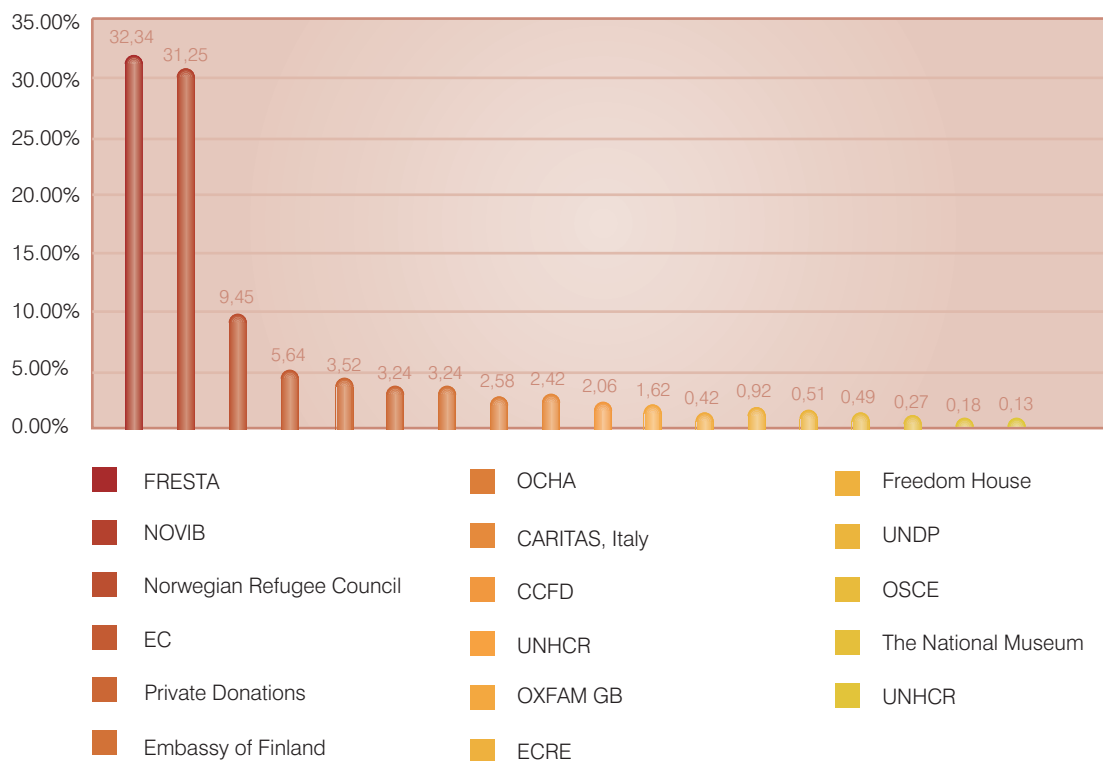


Income

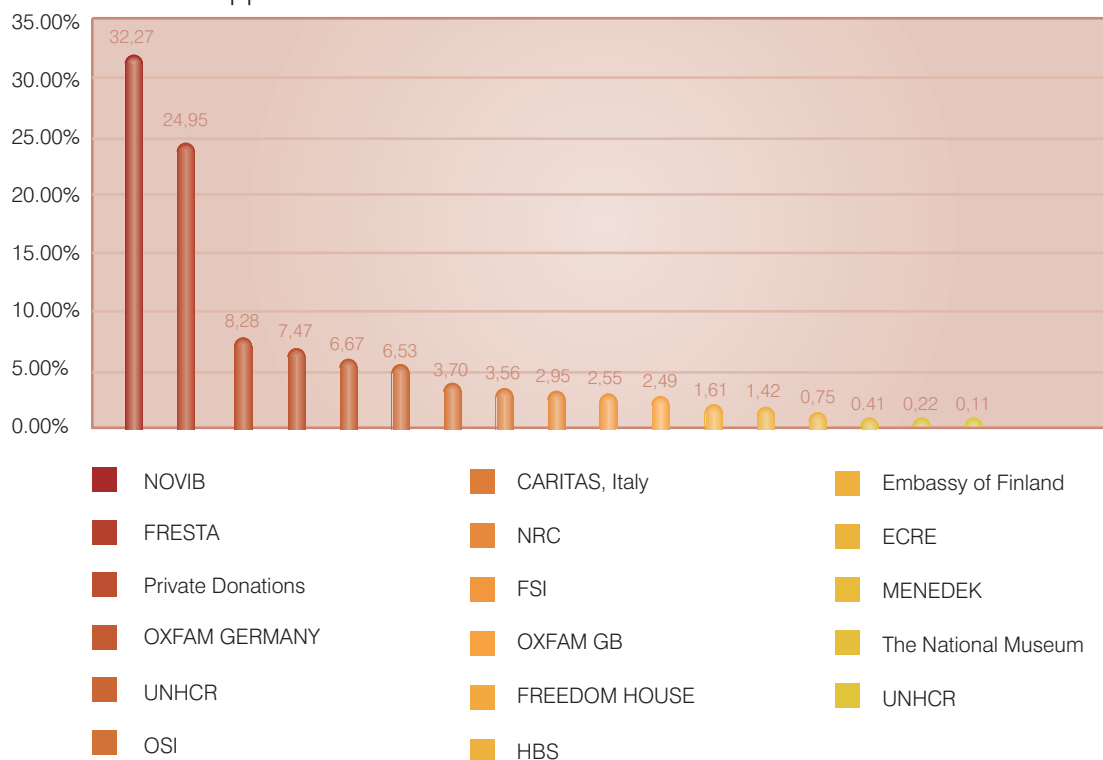
Donors	%	income EURO 2003.	%	income EURO 2004.
CARITAS, Italy	2,58	15,943.26	3,56	23,642.35
CCFD	2,42	14,977.50		
Embassy of Finland	3,24	20,000.00	0,75	5,000.00
EC	5,64	34,816.39		
ECRE	0,42	2,577.99	0,41	2,721.18
Freedom House	0,92	5,680.02	2,35	15,610.05
FRESTA/DRC	32,34	199,812.69	24,95	165,679.11
HBS			1,42	9,426.50
MENEDEK			0,22	1,463.00
Norwegian Refugee Council	9,45	58,407.52	2,95	19,566.31
OSI			3,7	24,569.14
OSCE	0,49	3,000.00		
OXFAM GB	1,62	10,026.03	2,49	16,538.00
OXFAM GERMANY			7,47	49,586.00
OXFAM NOVIB	31,25	193,065.31	32,27	214,340.55
Private Donations	3,52	13 271.06	8,28	55 002.76
Social Innovative Fund			2,55	16,917.97
The National Museum	0,18	1,098.54	0,11	720,88
UN OCHA	3,24	20,000.00		
UNHCRH	2,06	12,723.18		
UNHCR	0,13	781,75	6,53	43,389.37
UNDP	0,51	3,160.17		
Volunteer Contribution	3,25	11,575.00	6,67	44,287.00
TOTAL Income	100%	617,847.75	100%	664,173.27

Financial operations of Group 484 were verified by the auditing company Pricewaterhouse Coopers - Belgrade

Donor's support 2003



Donor's support 2004



STAFF

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Irina Subotić - professor at the Art Academy, Novi Sad

Sonja Licht – director of the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence

Vojin Dimitrijević - Professor at Belgrade University Law School, Executive Director of Belgrade Centre for Human Rights

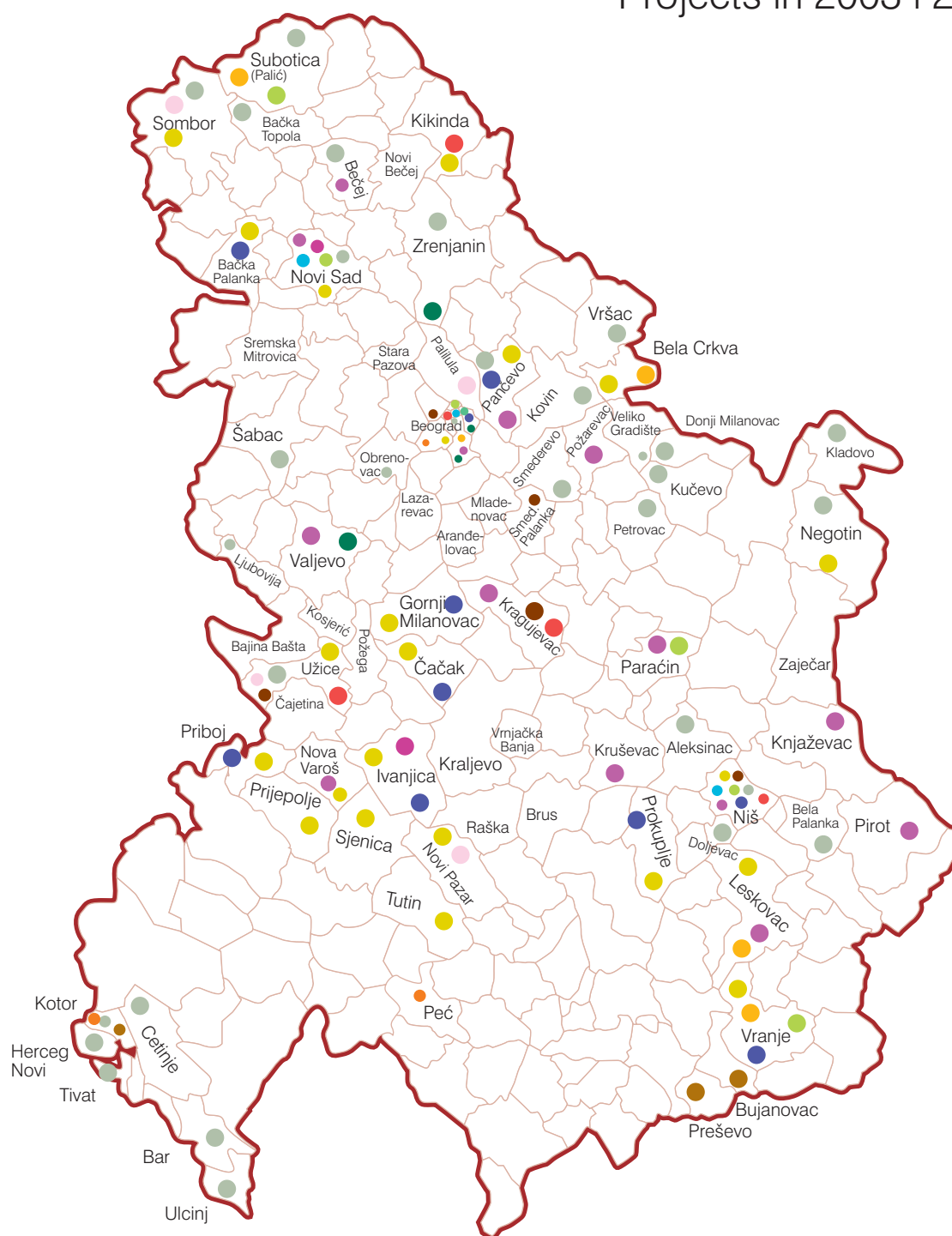
Vesna Cipruš – Consultant in UNDP

Nataša Rašić – Legal adviser/ Deputy Chief of party USAID/CCASA

Vera Kovačević - recent Head of PRSP Management Unit, Ministry of social affairs of the Republic of Serbia

Zoran Hamović - Owner and Director of publishing firm CLIO

Projects in 2003 i 2004



- Providing services of informative and legal assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons
- Empowering internally displaced persons for Advocacy for their Rights and Implementation of UN Guiding Principles on Internal displacement
- Campaign for Protection of Women and Children in Refuge and Displacement from Sexual and Gender based Violence
- Inclusion of Refugees and IDPs into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
- Education about Realisation of Forced Migrants' Rights – School on Migrations
- Youth Participation in Policy Dialogue Related to Poverty Reduction Strategy – Youth and Poverty
- Support to Peace and Stability in SEE Region through Youth Participation in Multiethnic Dialogue:
 - Don't Get Angry – Richness of Diversity
 - A Found Friend
 - This is me, and who are you?
 - Equation with Two Knowns
 - Luncheon in Belgrade
 - Good People in Bad Times
- Social integration of children and youth with learning disability
 - The Healing Cinema
 - Noble Growing Up



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