

Country Programme Plan The Western Balkans

I. ANALYSIS

1.0 Context Analysis

1.1 Brief overview – The Sub-region

The Western Balkans, a sub-region of 24 million people living in the six countries; Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)¹, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Serbia, Montenegro, as well as the UN-administered Province of Kosovo, can be characterized as a cluster of medium-developed countries / territories which have been marked by more than a decade of transition and conflicts. As described in the regional introduction, this has resulted in major deficits in participation, equity, and protection, which are shared by most of the countries, and which constitute general trends in the region.

However, each country also faces specific challenges as described below.

NCA is presently working together with partners and with own operational projects in Albania, FYROM, Croatia, Serbia and the Province of Kosovo. The Norwegian Government – as well as NCA through own funds - is in the process of reducing its financial support through NGOs to the Balkans. Due to the progress with the Euro-Atlantic integration, it is possible that the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) will cease to fund international agencies operating in Croatia, and FYROM may soon follow suit.

The political situation allowing, NCA will in the course of 2008 speed up the process of phasing out the NCA Representation in the Balkans, aiming at a full closure of the office in the first half of 2009.

For the period 2008 – 2009 NCA will give priority to Kosovo, Serbia and Albania and, if funds are found, to Macedonia. Croatia may be included in regional peace-building programmes, and possibilities for including BiH in such programmes will be considered. In 2006 Montenegro became an independent country and is as of 2007 no longer a country for NCA activities, and as for BiH, there are possibilities that the country will be included in a regional partners' programme for peace-building. (In the following, more detailed country overviews, Montenegro and BiH are not included.)

Thematically the main focus for NCA in the Balkans will be on peace and conflict resolution and on trafficking / gender-based violence. Building civil society has over the first years of the planning period become more a cross cutting issue than a thematic area in its own right, this principle will be continued into the latter part of the period. NCA in the Balkans has chosen 'Education' as a thematic area, with a particular view to the Roma.

HIV has been a thematic priority in the course of the 2005 – 2006. However, as the prevalence of HIV and Aids has continued being low in the Balkans, this thematic area is no longer a priority with the Norwegian MFA. Moreover the NCA TV campaign funds are depleted. For these reasons NCA will phase out HIV programmes in the course of 2007 / 2008. Likewise MFA has signaled that funds for infrastructure will be down-sized as from 2007, with the effect that funds for building constructions and water projects will no longer be allocated, other than most probably for one environmental waste-water project in Kosovo. NCA will accordingly down-size the operational Roma return programme in

¹ Abbreviations see Page 42

Kosovo, however, with a continued focus on various other aspects of a sustainable return than construction.

In relation to target groups, the Roma as the most marginalized group in Europe will have a particular focus, and attention will continue to be given to refugees and IDPs - in particular in Serbia and Kosovo. In all NCA rights-based programming gender will continue to have a high profile, however, in particular with the view to peace-building, the role of women will be given a widened focus.

Albania – Brief Overview

When the Germans withdrew from Albania in 1944, Albania became a Communist one-party state up until 1990 when the regime had to accept a multi-party system. Through the years of Communism both the relations to the Soviet Union and later the Chinese Republic were broken, resulting in total isolation and financial ruin. In 1997 widespread riots broke out after the IMF forced the state to liberalize its banking system. Many Albanians left their traditional ways of income and put their total savings into pyramid schemes. In a short while, \$2 billion (80% of the country's GDP) had been moved into the hands of just a few pyramid scheme owners, causing severe economic troubles and civic unrest to the extent of anarchy. Political stability was hard to regain after the unrest and power feuds have raged inside the governing Socialist Party leading to a series of short-lived Socialist governments.

The country was flooded with refugees from neighboring Kosovo in 1998 and 1999. Albania has 3.8 mill inhabitants (July 2007 estimate). Despite political and economic unrest, the country has made significant progress and has achieved high growth while containing inflation and made advances in the establishment of democratic institutions. Nevertheless, the country faces considerable challenges. The conclusion of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU in 2006 shows Albania's willingness to make progress in the EU integration process. Widespread corruption illustrated in the 2007 local elections and which failed to meet international democratic standards, indicates that democratization and transparency should still be high on the political agenda during the coming years.

Serbia – Brief Overview

Serbia, excluding the Province of Kosovo, has a population of 7,5 mill (including Kosovo around 10 mill.), out of which 83 % are Serbs. The end of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2006 marked the closing chapter in the history of the separation of the six republics of the old Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia which was proclaimed in 1945 and comprised Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. At the present day Serbia is facing the situation of possibly losing the province of Kosovo. This together with the adverse effects of economic transition, increasing poverty and widespread unemployment (around 30%) have left the country in a very difficult situation. Support for nationalist parties remains high, even resulting in the radical party coming out as the largest party in the parliamentary elections in early 2007. Attempts to form a Government after elections in January 2007 almost failed, showing the tense political situation. The European Union has put much effort in trying to support the democratic forces. However, the failure of the Government to comply with ICTY demands for extraditing war crimes suspects resulted in suspension of talks between EU and Serbia on the Stabilization and Association Agreement in 2006 - until June 2007, when Serbia was invited to resume talks. Serbian officials have expressed hope that Serbia will become a candidate country in 2008. However, such a timetable appears optimistic in view of the Kosovo status and the ICTY conditionality.

Serbia has a huge refugee and IDP population, the largest in Europe, among these 200-250.000 come from Kosovo; and again among these it is estimated that up to 50.000 are Roma.

Kosovo – Brief Overview

Kosovo has currently around 2 million inhabitants, predominantly ethnic Albanians with smaller populations of Serbs, Turks, Bosniaks and other ethnic groups. Since 1999 Kosovo has been governed by the United Nations Missions in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the local Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG). Additional security is provided by the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR).

At present the security and the political situation remains volatile and there is fear that delay in deciding Kosovo's Future Status will again spark unrest. The number of displaced persons is difficult to estimate; the figure varies between 250.000 and 400.000, depending on the source. Amnesty International reports concerns for the rights of ethnic minorities in the area, and notes the obstacles for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons posed by the serious security situation.

The main issue continues to be the Province's unresolved status. The timing of a UN resolution (to replace UN Resolution 1244) on the Kosovo status is subject to great uncertainty, given the strength of Russian opposition to the UN negotiator Martti Ahtisaari's plan presented to the UN Security Council in February 2007. In early July the US and the EU prepared a revised draft UN resolution together with a suggestion for another round of talks with Serbia. However, a hiatus lasting months is likely before the issue comes before the Security Council.

Former Republic of Macedonia – Brief Overview

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has a population of 2.1 million, including 64.2% Macedonian, 25.2% Albanian, 3.9 %Turks, 2.7% Roma, 1.8 % Serbs and other 2.2%. Macedonia is currently entering a process of consolidation after a period of transition towards democracy.

After 6 years of implementing the Ohrid Framework Agreement striking a peace deal after the Albanian uprising in 1991, the country received EU candidate status in December 2005 and awaits the start of accession negotiations. In addition to EU membership, Macedonia is also working towards NATO membership. However, large differences between Macedonian and Albanian aspirations and between government and opposition ideologies continue to determine a fractured political landscape. The country still faces major challenges in implementation and effectively enforcing legislation, and in fighting corruption and organised crime. The undetermined status of neighboring Kosovo and a weak economy continue to be challenges for Macedonia.

Croatia – Brief Overview

Croatia has 4,5 mill inhabitants, out of which approximately 90 % are Croats. The country is far the wealthiest country in the sub-region, with a GDP per capita of 13.400 \$ and a growth in GDP of 4.6 %². However, economic problems still remain: unemployment (17.2% in 2006) and slow progress of economic reforms. Of particular concern is the heavily backlogged judiciary system, corruption and the inefficient public administration, especially issues of land ownership.

EU leaders granted Croatia official candidate status in June 2004. In February 2006, when the negotiations for accession in the EU started, governmental representatives expressed hope to finish the negotiations within 3 years.

² <http://store.eiu.com> - Economist Intelligence Unit

1.2 Participation

Civil society in **Albania** is weak, however with exceptions. Poverty clearly affects deficits in participation in particular when it comes to people living in remote areas, and vulnerable groups like women and the Roma, the largest minority in Albania. Freedom of religion is protected by law, and there is little tension between the faith communities (mainly the Orthodox, Catholics and Muslims). However, religion is often, as during Communism, considered to be a non topic in public life, and accordingly, it is experienced that there is a lack of involvement by the authorities in issues related to religion.

The public broadcaster, Albanian Radio and TV, operates national radio and TV networks. It faces competition from private stations, however, political parties, religious groups and state bodies are not allowed to own private TV and radio stations. Albania is a heavily male-dominated society, and women's participation in decision making is weak in all layers in society. Albania currently ranks 56 on the gender-related GDI index; compared to the other countries in the region, it has a higher birth rate (with the exception of Kosovo) and the lowest percentage of female representation in Parliament in the sub-region (less than 10%).

Albania *de facto* denied the existence of ethnic minorities within its borders until 1989. During the communist regime, Roma in Albania experienced economic and educational integration into the society as a side-effect of the general policies of the state to introduce full employment and obligatory primary education. After the collapse of communism, the situation of the Roma significantly deteriorated. Roma were the first to become unemployed. At present, they live in segregated neighbourhoods, and drop-outs of school at an early age are common. The Roma are not represented in the legislature nor are they officially recognized as a distinct minority. For the Roma leaders it is very difficult to express themselves in legal terms and to prove that the Roma are victims of discrimination³

Serbia's most serious problem is related to its huge refugee and IDP-population, the largest in Europe⁴. It is among the IDPs and the Roma that poverty is more apparent compared to the population at large, and poverty is related to social exclusion, which again is followed by lack of participation in decision-making. The women in particular come out negatively, and again the Roma women are exposed to twofold discrimination, both as members of Roma community and as women. Although no official figures exist, researches estimate that the Roma are between 400,000 and 450,000⁵, making them the most numerous national minority in Serbia. The biggest population of Roma IDPs are in Vojvodina. Another disadvantaged area in Serbia is Southern Serbia⁶, including Sandzak, which characterized by weak civil society, mistrust between ethnic groups and little interaction with State and municipal authorities, provides a particularly fertile ground for criminal activity. Comparatively few of the refugees and IDPs manage to return home, while at the same time the number of people leaving Kosovo due to security or economical reasons is growing. The actual reduction in number of refugees is to a great extent due to local integration in Serbia.

CSO organizations play an important part in Serbia through their roles as watch-dogs and representing a voice for the poor. A well developed media experienced a set-back in 1998 during the Milosovic regime with the notorious Public Information Act, but has since come

³ Kovacs, 1996:16.

⁴ UNHCR, 2006 annual report: 98.500 refugees and 227.600 IDPs

⁵ UNDP The situation of Roma in S&M compared to Roma in CCE, 2002

⁶ UN Common Country Assessment for Serbia & Montenegro, October 2003, p. 79

back on the scene in a society to a large extent allowing for open and free discussions and information-sharing.

Kosovo finds itself, until the status is clarified, in a state of limbo, politically, economically and security-wise. The Provisional government structures are weak, and UNMIK is steadily losing confidence among the public. The society is segregated to a serious extent with the Serb minorities living in enclaves surrounded by an Albanian majority. There are also groups, although few, of Albanians living in a minority situation in Serb majority communities in the northern part of the province. Freedom of movement is not possible in practice, though granted by law. The most marginalized group are the Roma who to a large extent live in displacement in various settlements in Kosovo.

A law on religion was passed in 2006, accepting as legal faith communities, Islam, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Protestant community (the latter was included after heavy lobbying by the Protestant church and representatives of the international community.) The religious communities, maybe with the exception of the Protestant Church, are politicized and identify with each their own ethnic group. Both the Orthodox, the Catholic and the Muslim communities are governed by males, and female participation in leadership and decision-making is almost non-existent. The society suffers from a high level of corruption not in the least caused by clandestine mafia-like activities. The judiciary is lacking in performance and it is often seen that perpetrators for various reasons are not brought to justice. Social services are not equally distributed, and the corrupt system opens for private payments for public services, like for instance in hospitals. There are also signs that Kosovo is behind the other countries in the region in gender equality, infant mortality and gross school enrolment. Female representation in Parliament remains very low, at 8,6% despite secured gender-quotas. In general, civil society is not strongly engaged in advocacy in Kosovo, and religious communities, although publicly committing to promoting peace and tolerance, need to be encouraged to demonstrate this commitment in practice. Even at the municipal level, in relation to service provision, there is little involvement of civil society.

After the war in 1999, a Temporary Media Commission, set up by the UN, prepared a code of conduct for journalists. The Commission aims to prevent incitement to hatred in the media.

FYR of Macedonia is after Croatia the country that has achieved most when it comes to the Euro-Atlantic integration process. However, the country suffers from high unemployment rates, the decentralisation process is hampered by frequent shifts in leadership due to power-play between political parties, and the country is alternatively with Albania ranking highest when it comes to corruption.

Civil society is increasingly playing an important role and media is an arena for open and free discussions. Macedonia enjoys freedom of religion, however, there are 5 religious communities that are officially recognized (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Jewish community, the Evangelical Methodist Church and Islam). Other religions are characterized as *groups* and have to register in order to be allowed to perform various activities. The law prohibits the registration of more than one group for each religious confession, in which cases the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Bektashi (Muslim) can not register. In urban communities the women are increasingly playing an equal part, however, in rural and more traditional communities, there is still a long way to go before women are accepted in decision making bodies. In ethnically mixed areas the situation between Albanians and Macedonians is tense, although under the Ohrid agreement equitable representation of minorities in the public administration and employment has been secured.

1.3 Equity

Albania is currently of middle-income country (MIC) *status* despite being one of the poorest countries in Europe. It is estimated that 40% of the population have no access to basic services such as education, water, sanitation and heating. The country made progress on economic reform in the 1990s and a PRSP was introduced with a participatory approach in 1991. The pyramid saving scheme scandal and the influx and maintenance of Kosovo refugees, has slowed social and economic development returning Albania temporarily to low income country status. Albania now faces a range of challenges. Unemployment in Albania is among the highest in the region, and most studies conclude that income-poverty in Albania is also very high, which explains why massive waves of migrants pour into the neighbouring countries and the EU every year. The situation is particularly difficult for women, who are often left in sole charge of the household and extended family while the male members of the family are working abroad. Public confidence and trust in the Government's ability to deliver public services needs to be established. Corruption remains a major barrier to prosperity. Public finance and effective taxation systems are in relatively early stages of development, and social assistance and social welfare systems are in need of fundamental reform.⁷ Ownership to land has been a legal issue since the fall of Communism, and it is often seen that private ownership is either contested or can not be proven. Of all the countries in The Balkans, culture and tradition may be seen as most challenging in Albania when it comes to development of democracy. The Kanuni, a several hundred years set of laws ruling the highlands of northern Albania, is still a living document. The most famous rule is the rule on blood revenge which may cause male representatives of the families in fear of their lives to stay inside their homes for years on end, with the effect that grown males may not be able to earn income and boys can not attend school.

Gender-based violence represents a threat to equity in Albania. Poverty and lack of employment opportunities are the root-causes of *trafficking*. More trafficked women come from Albania than any other country in South-Eastern Europe. Among those who are trafficked, almost 60 per cent are tricked into prostitution, and 35 per cent are abducted. Albania ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, but the law has not been implemented. The legal framework also contains gaps, including the absence of a domestic violence law.⁸ Poverty and lack of employment opportunities are the root-causes of the problem, but the traditional patriarchal family structures and the lack of gender equality also play an important role.

The literacy rate in Albania for the total population, age 15 or older, is 98,7%. Although the official figures for HIV prevalence are low (less than (0,2%) the country is also at risk when it comes to the spread of HIV. A National strategy of prevention and control of HIV & AIDS has been adopted (2004-2007). However, there is a lack of competence of all stakeholders to adequately address the issue of STDs and HIV, not in the least when it comes to stigma. Likewise the issue of how the spread of the virus impacts women in particular is an issue for further consideration and awareness-raising.

Serbia: The PRSP for Serbia was adopted in 2003. The strategy was adopted after poverty increased to a considerable degree in the 1990s. More and more people are becoming poor as a consequence of social exclusion, the lack of access to public (communal) services and markets, the lack of equal opportunities for everyone, etc. Poverty increased mostly due to the drop of GDP during the previous decade, again

⁷ DIFID country profile 2005

⁸ IFAD 2007

partly due to the collapse of various industrial enterprises - the largest drop in GDP in Central and Southeast Europe. This situation has had negative consequences on all the aspects of life in Serbia. The situation of the large IDP and refugee population adds to the seriousness of poverty. Although the National Strategy for resolution of the problems with refugees and IDPs gives the refugees and IDPs the possibility to choose the most favourable durable solution, either return or integration, both options in reality pose a serious set of challenges, in particular related to legal aid/property documentation and access to permanent housing, employment/other sustainable livelihood, and public services. Rural mountainous areas with subsistence farming and lack of infrastructure and access to public services are depopulated, which in its turn lead to urbanization with increase in criminality, drug abuse and unemployment. The IDPs remain dependent on humanitarian assistance. Local resources to support refugees and displaced persons are extremely limited because Serbia has one of the weakest economies, and its citizens presently experience a continuous deterioration of living standards.

Human trafficking occurs in Mid / South Serbia, although it is not clear whether the area is used mainly for transit, or whether it is also a place of origin and destination. Comparing the three groups, domicile non-Roma, Roma and IDPs groups in relation to employment, education and health services, it is shown that the Roma are the least fortunate by far, followed by the IDPs⁹. Whole communities of Roma continue facing racial discrimination on a daily basis. Roma in Serbia are mainly without formal education and rarely have permanent jobs. Roma often live in extreme poverty in illegal substandard settlements. The main characteristics of the socio-economic position of the Roma are: High rate of unemployment, high rate of illiteracy, only 10% of girls finish primary school, and 30% of Roma children never attend primary school. Poverty and very poor living conditions can be found in isolated settlements, early marriages are common and many lack personal identity documents, etc. The deepening poverty and greater socio-economic marginalization of the Roma is inter-linked with increasing antipathy and violence from the side of the majority population.¹⁰

Kosovo: The ESI (European Stability Initiative) report 2007 states that the Kosovo economy, following the end of the post-war building boom, finds itself in a disastrous state. Together with the wide-spread corruption, this threatens future social stability, undermines the institution building, and has become the major threat to stability in this part of Europe. The Province has the highest rates of unemployment in South Eastern Europe, approximately 50% (2005, CIA world fact-book) and is generally higher among youth and women in the countryside. In addition more than 30 % of the population lives just above the poverty line and many could easily drop into severe poverty. Kosovo's economic development depends largely on donor-financed external aid and transfers from the Kosovo Diaspora. Many observers see a problem of donor retreat and there is a lack of external investment due to the corruption level.

Gender inequality is manifested through violence against women, which is widespread, both domestic violence and violence related to forced prostitution and trafficking. Kosovo has the highest number of minors involved in trafficking, and women trafficked into Kosovo come from some of the poorest countries in Eastern Europe and from Albania. 30 to 40% if these women are Kosovo Albanians, a majority of them are from rural areas.¹¹ More often than not they only have primary education.

Although school attendance for women is slightly lower than for men, the main problem seems to be linked to the overall school enrolment, which is particularly important in a

⁹ UNDP "At Risk: The Social Vulnerability of Roma, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Serbia, 2006"

¹⁰ Information received from NCA partner, Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization.

¹¹ Amnesty International Canada, Resource Centre Report 2004

province where more than 50% of the population is under the age of 25, and where the birth rate is one of the highest in Europe¹². A large number of the women's NGOs in Kosovo, who represent 10% of all registered NGOs, are involved in education of girls and women's health education, but there is a need to link their efforts to overall advocacy and awareness-raising.

Freedom of movement is protected by law but not enforced due to the situation of the segregated society, i.e. segregation between Serbs and Albanians. (Ref. to 1.2) Another group of particular concern is the Roma/Ashkali/ Egyptian (RAE) minority. Among 50,000 RAE remain in the province, a majority in displacement inside Kosovo, and another 100,000 were displaced from Kosovo (40 - 50,000 to other). These IDPs belong to one of the most vulnerable groups in society, in particular due to their difficulty in obtaining legal documents, which negatively affects their access to education, employment, social services and housing. Many of the Roma in Kosovo lived in so-called informal settlements¹³, and this renders the process of return and reconstruction particularly complicated.

Like in the other countries in the region, the HIV prevalence in Kosovo is low, but due to factors like high level of migration, trafficking and lack of knowledge¹⁴, there is a risk of an increase.

FYR of Macedonia: The economic situation in the country is difficult with high inflation rate and an unemployment rate at an average of 37 % (September 2006 est.). The GDP per capita is \$ 8,300, and the growth-rate is only 3,2% in 2006¹⁵. There is also a deep ethnic variance, e.g. among the disadvantaged minority of Roma with an unemployment rate of 75% according to an MDG report.¹⁶ In general 30% of the population lives below the poverty line.

An interim PRSP was developed in 2001. The country has come a long way in its transition from a centrally-planned to a market economy, though reform efforts are frequently interrupted. The process of decentralization, in addition to bringing the government closer to the people, aims at improving the delivery of public services. The Roma come out as less fortunate in all aspects of public services, not in the least when it comes to education. In relation to HIV and AIDS services, there is still a need for private initiatives in order to develop knowledge and initiatives in prevention, care and anti-retroviral treatment. Public services for water and sanitation is often lacking or of poor quality, in particular in the poorer rural areas, and waste treatment is a serious threat to environment.

Croatia with its candidate status for EU is graded as an upper middle-income country with a full-fledged market economy and hopes to join the EU. Its main development objective is to reach 75 percent of the EU's average per capita income by 2013. To meet this objective Croatia needs to implement reforms that will improve the investment climate, boost private sector activity, increase economic competitiveness, both in the EU market and globally and - not in the least - judiciary reforms. The return of Serb refugees has not been completed, and there is a rationale for continuing to work with return and re-integration of returnees, in particular as refugees still face obstacles related to property rights and slow property re-possession procedures; inadequate progress in rebuilding of houses (by the Croatian government); lack of employment

¹² In 2002, 20,1 births per thousand inhabitants, according to UNMIK "Women and Men in Kosovo", p.38

¹³ According to the OSCE, informal settlements are human settlements that do not enable inhabitants to enjoy their right to an adequate standard of living, particularly to adequate housing.

¹⁴ According to one survey of high school students, 60% of the girls did not think that condoms protect against HIV. Cited in UNMIK "Women and Men in Kosovo", p.42

¹⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mk.html#Intro>.

¹⁶ One World / UK 2007

opportunities and fear of discrimination. 12 years after the war, fear and hostility remain between ethnic groups, a fact that calls for dialogue and peace-building efforts.

1.4 Protection

Sub-regional commonality – Areas of Conflict

All the former Yugoslav countries are areas in a post-conflict situation through 8 to 16 years; here are areas of ethnic conflicts, countries or areas that have experienced ethnic cleansing in one way or another and areas that have seen the worst of war-crimes and crimes against humanity. The wounds are deep, the hatred and wish for revenge is apparent, peace is fragile and the security situation is volatile, in many places, in particular in Kosovo, causing outbursts of hostilities. The conflicts follow ethnic lines, but religion is part of it as ethnicity and religious affiliation often follow the same divisions. Political solutions, like for instance in BiH and possibly in Kosovo, fall in line with ethnicity, which by many is considered as non-sustainable solutions. The legacies of the fall of Communism and the wars both before and after have left the countries with weak democracies, corruption, high numbers of refugees and IDPs and economical migration. Even though not having been directly involved in wars and conflicts tearing former Yugoslavia apart, also *Albania* suffers from serious and violent crises after the fall of Communism, the collapse of the financial pyramid scheme and the spill-over effect from the war in Kosovo.

The protection of rights for minorities, weak or corrupt judiciary and non-compliance with ICTY (presently in Serbia) are serious issues of concern. The faith communities' involvement in the conflicts by more or less active siding with their own group against the enemy, and the governments lack of willingness towards a truthful settlement with the past, call for civil society to take on responsibility for community based dealing with the past through documentation of atrocities, witness programmes, psychosocial interventions etc. The faith communities may play an important role in this respect, but may also neither be willing to nor able to because there is 'blood on their hands', or they identify with their own ethnic group to such an extent that an objective search for truth and forgiveness is not possible.

Rape and violence towards women have in several cases, to the most serious degree in BiH, been used as a weapon of war. Another tool of war causing humiliation of the adversary is shown in violation of religious sites – churches, mosques and graveyards.

Children very often inherit their parents' hatred for the enemy or the perpetrators, and there is a need for various forms of peace-education for children and their parents

The legacies of wars and conflicts both bearing resemblances in the various countries and even being closely interlinked, could call for a regional approach to peace-building. Top-down initiatives, like public commissions for truth and reconciliation have failed (BiH, Serbia). There are initiatives for more community based or NGO initiated peace-building efforts in all countries, human rights organizations strive to document atrocities, and media in some parts come out openly in describing human rights violations and telling of stories of victims and perpetrators. However, there is a great need for consolidation of various initiatives, in relation to for instance community based dealing with the past, for witness programmes, dialogue, documentation through media, peace-education and other.

Faith communities could by virtue of their core identity be agents for peace. In spite of such communities some times being politicized, non-objective and even having, if not actively supported, then turned the blind eye when human rights were violated, should be engaged in peace-building through dialogue and diapraxis and through becoming role

models in their communities with the view to taking initiatives for reconciliation through truth and forgiveness.

Gender-based Violence (GBV) (ref. to 1.3.)

The prevalence of domestic violence and trafficking is known to be high in the Balkans, here should in particular be mentioned **Albania** and **Kosovo**. Trafficking is both an in-country occurrence and taking place cross the borders between Albania and Greece and between Albania and Kosovo. In south and mid-Albania and in Kosovo the Roma is a group in particular need of attention when it comes to GBV in general and to trafficking in particular.

IDPs and refugees

Ref. to 1.3 on Serbia and Kosovo.

The rights of IDPs and refugees in Serbia for access to social services is an issue of concern. With the slow return of minorities from Serbia partly to Croatia and even more to Kosovo, the situation over the years is aggravating, even if legislation covers these vulnerable groups of people. Collective centers established in 1999 in Serbia still exist, some offering deplorable housing conditions. Minority return to Kosovo is closely facilitated for and monitored by UNHCR through their lead agencies (NCA included), both when it comes to rights to public services, income generation, integration and protection in a wide sense. The work is complicated due to the situation in Kosovo with the segregated societies of Albanians and Serbs.

Protection of the Environment

For several of the countries in the Balkans (Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo should be mentioned in particular), protection of the environment poses a huge challenge to public administration, among other wastewater treatment and garbage disposal.

The Role of Women

Through various ways and means it should be ensured that women play an active role at all levels when working for human rights and in conflict resolution and peace. GBV has to be closely monitored in relation to minority return programmes in Kosovo, and for this to happen, it is essential that capacity is built both among NCA own staff and among local authorities with the view to sustainability and to localization of NCA programmes and projects. In all NCA partners' programming, there is need for both awareness-raising and capacity building to enhance the understanding of the important role that women play in prevention and resolution of conflicts and to the importance of dealing with violence against women in spite of the topic being sensitive, acknowledged to a low degree, and non-touchable to a high degree.

1.5 Role of Civil Society and NCA Partners

In general civil society is weak in The Balkans, but there are exceptions, and civil society is gradually taking on responsibility with advocacy and lobbying for human rights, access to social services and with playing important roles in filling in gaps where the authorities either do not have the means or the knowledge to serve the local communities. However, in most countries there is a need to build civil society in order for it to represent players in society for developing democracy and defending human rights

1.5.1 Role of Civil Society

Albania

Immediately after the collapse of Communism, civil society began to develop, but the pyramid scheme in 1996 represented a serious set-back. A number of the organizations engage in advocacy, among these may be mentioned the Albanian Coalition Against Corruption and the MJAFT! (ENOUGH!) movement organized to focus on various issues,

i.a. corruption and women's rights. It is estimated that the number of civil society organizations in Albania range from 400 to 800, with perhaps 200 being active.¹⁷ Many of the organizations are donor driven as domestic funding sources are almost non-existent, and there are no clear policies that encourage support of the sector. According to the Civil Society Index (USAID), NGOs lack organizational capacity, including lack of transparency in management. Interest groups like religious organizations, labour unions and farmers organizations are generally not recognized as actors in civil society – although there are exceptions.

Serbia

The CSI analysis reveals that civil society in Serbia is weak in terms of active participation, infrastructure, cohesion and resources. In spite of significant amounts of international aid since the early 90s, civil society's structure appears to have lost some of its strength since 2000, and the level of participation in non-partisan political actions has fallen significantly. Volunteerism is not common in Serbia, and charitable giving in a systematic manner is not exercised. Networks and coalitions at national and regional level are very rare, and the geographical distribution of CSOs shows their urban character. A major concern is the limited financial sources. Many of the CSOs are dependent on international donors, which are now in the process of phasing out. Moreover the best qualified personnel move to financially more stable sectors.

Kosovo

Civil society in Kosovo is still rather weak but has, compared to its geographical neighbours, distinct advantages. CSO had the opportunity of a 'clean' start from scratch. They have found the new UN structure open to civil society, and NGOs are held in comparatively high regard in Kosovo and enjoy relatively good media relations. As foreign funding is dwindling in Kosovo as well, some are able to initiate plans to move to sustainability. Problems phased by CSO are linked to the UNMIK being accountable only to New York and not taking civil society seriously on the political arena. Parallel Serbian municipal structures add to the difficulty through their non-compliance with PISG local authorities and relating to Belgrade rather than Pristina. Ethnic tensions remain, hampering multi-ethnic initiatives. In addition comes weak Kosovo state structures (PISG) with representatives having little understanding in drawing on civil society. Kosovo civil society has gained valuable experience since 1999, and although some 2000 CSOs are registered, around 500 are said to be active. Networks have been established (f.i. for peace-building, women and advocacy), and public response to violence has been initiated.

Macedonia

Macedonian civil society is quite unique, in comparison to civil societies in neighbouring countries. The two most important reasons for this are its progressive political orientation as compared to civil society in neighbouring countries where civil society groups are more conservative anti-communist. Secondly comes the legal definition of civil society as a "values-driven" sector with a normative approach, with the strong values of non-violence and women's equity. However, due to an ineffective state and lack of public trust, civil society may be characterized moderate in size and imbalanced in composition.¹⁸ Civil Society in Macedonia has a focus on communication, coordination and cooperation. However, only a few of the citizens participate in civil society activities, most of them in urban areas; with little or no representation from rural areas. Though value-driven, the weakest value is in relation to transparency. On the positive side civil society when rooted within social groups (women, disability, youth) play an important role. Like in

¹⁷ Freedom House, Nations in Transit 2004, Albania.

¹⁸ Civicus, Country Report for Macedonia.

other areas in the Balkans, CSOs are dependent on foreign financial support, and will most likely be faced with crisis with the foreseen withdrawal of foreign donors.

1.5.2 Role of NCA partners in Civil Society

NCA has got three partners in **Albania** Vatra Psychosocial Centre (from 2004) and Intellectual Women of Shkodra / Human Dimensions (from 2007) with cooperation on trafficking programmes, and Diaconia Agapes (DA) (from 2004) with cooperation on an HIV programme. The three organizations are selected with the view to NCA thematic priorities, working for and among excluded people and in poor communities. However, as HIV is being down-sized as thematic priority, discussions are to be initiated as regards kind of cooperation with DA in 2008 and 2009, one option being empowerment of women in rural areas through a widened focus on an existing women's health programme in rural areas. All three organizations have chosen a strategy for challenging the state and local authorities in addressing the serious problem of trafficking and HIV and are important actors in civil society on various levels. All organizations are active in networking, including with state and local authorities, and has their activities both in urban and in the rural areas.

The one church organization has been an important instrument in developing the understanding of the church as an important actor in civil society in relation to diaconia.

In **Serbia** there are three NCA partners; Philanthropy (PHY) with cooperation on HIV prevention and care for PLHIV, a project for building local capacities for economic independence mainly among IDPs and refugees, and an education project in relation to children without parental care; Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) on a HIV awareness raising and support to PLHIV project, and a Roma programme; and Hungarian Inter-church Aid with the local partner Merhamet also working on local capacities for economic independence - including training for work in urban areas and with agricultural initiatives in distant, rural areas. All partners work with and among vulnerable groups in society both in urban and in rural areas, and all partners are active players in the society, working to build capacities for authorities and NGOs. Two of the partners are church partners working for their churches to be active players in the Serbian civil society. Within the Serbian Orthodox Church PHY is the only professional diaconal institution. HIA is an international church partner working with a local partner with a Muslim background. The idea has been to build the capacity of the local partner with the view to local ownership and take-over.

NCA has got three partners in **Kosovo**, Kosovan Nansen Dialogue (KND) with cooperation on inter-ethnic dialogue and diapraxis, Hope and Homes for Children on a semi-independent living unit for victims of trafficking and domestic violence, and Kosovo Population Foundation (KOPF) on an HIV awareness raising and behaviour change programme. All three organizations have been selected with the view to NCA thematic priorities. However, during the course of 2007, NCA will in agreement with the Nansen Dialogue Network Norway most probably finalize the cooperation with KND, and also with Hope and Homes the allocation reaching into 2007 will be the last for MFA funding; instead NCA will look into other means and ways in order to shift and expand the focus on trafficking in Kosovo through another organization. When it comes to KOPF, the organization is a well recognized player in Kosovo society, working with international partners as well as with authorities. In relation to trafficking, KOPF could serve as a resource partner.

NCA being heavily involved in operational projects in Kosovo, will in the process of phasing out, eventually have to look for new partners for take-over of part of the project portfolio.

In **Macedonia** NCA has got two partners, Health Education and Research Association (HERA) (from 2005) with cooperation on HIV prevention and care for PLHIV, and Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC) with cooperation on inter-

religious dialogue and water supply in rural communities. Both partners' programmes have been chosen with the view to NCA thematic priorities. However, as 2007 (going into 2008) will be the last project year for the HIV programme, NCA will seek opportunities for working with the organization in relation to the Roma in Skopje. HERA works closely with state and municipal authorities, and is actively working in due course to transfer activities formally belonging to Macedonian authorities. MCIC is one of the most important actors in civil society in the country working actively for capacity building in the Western Balkans through the APRODEV, and inside Macedonia to build capacity in local communities in relation to public services and among faith communities in relation to institutionalizing sustainable inter-faith cooperation. The Director of MCIC is engaged on high levels in relation to the Euro-Atlantic integration and in anti-corruption initiatives.

In **Croatia** NCA has got two partners, Philanthropy (PHY) (same as for Serbia) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Both organizations work in projects for return of minorities. Both programmes target the most vulnerable and marginalized, mainly in far away rural areas. Croatia being the more wealthy country in the region and well positioned in relation to Euro-Atlantic integration, will, when it comes to support from the Norwegian Government, be phased out. As from mid-2007 the LWF agricultural project will be concluded, however, the PHY project will have support until spring 2008. LWF is, a partner with which NCA would like to continue cooperation on peace-building, provided that funds can be found.

2.0 NCA's Added Value

NCA has been present in the Balkans since 1994, when an office was set up in Tuzla, BiH, to assist the refugees/IDPs and local inhabitants in the Bosnia crisis. Another office was opened in Pristina in 1996 and a series of reconstruction and peace-building were implemented between 1996 and 1998, mostly in co-operation with local partners.

With the widespread fighting in Kosovo in February 98 additional reconstruction projects were taken on. However, in March 1999 NCA was forced to evacuate the office and thus suspend all until a peace-deal was signed in June 1999. A joint ACT/NCA office was established and a school rehabilitation program was re-launched in July 1999 under the ACT-umbrella, when NCA became one of six implementing members in the ACT Kosovo-consortium.

Included in the ACT programme was also a well-cleaning programme conducted in cooperation with UNHCR. The ACT programme in Kosovo continued until November 2001. Since 2003 NCA has been one of the UNHCR Lead Agencies in Kosovo implementing a programme in communities for return. In 2006 this programme started its way to being localized, a process to be finalized in the course of 2008.

Parallel with the operational programmes in Kosovo, NCA established and developed cooperation with partners in the Province of Kosovo and 4 countries in the region, Macedonia, Albania, Croatia and Serbia. Due to an understanding with the Norwegian MFA of sharing of responsibilities between the Norwegian INGOs in the Balkans receiving funds from MFA, it was agreed that BiH should no longer be part of the NCA programme portfolio.

In addition to multi-sectored refugee and IDP programmes, NCA Balkans developed partner cooperation in relation to the 5 NCA thematic focus areas, and added another, education.

The NCA Area Representation office in Pristina comprises a small staff with regional responsibilities – including over-all responsibility for 4 operational programmes in Kosovo. In addition come programme staff for the individual operational programmes - three in Mitrovica, The Roma Mahala Return Programme, RAE Camp Management, UNHCR / NCA Lead Agency programme, and one Kosovo-wide programme with office in Pristina, the Inter-religious / Inter-ethnic Dialogue Programme. If the solution to Kosovo status comes out satisfactorily and peace prevails throughout the region, it is envisaged

that the NCA Representation in its present form will gradually be scaled down and eventually closed in the first half of 2009.

13 years of presence in the region, the transition from emergency to development assistance and advocacy, and the present medium-term commitment, enable NCA and partners to work on ensuring local sustainability and local ownership. The medium-term commitment represents a clear added value in a situation where many agencies, also in the ecumenical network, are withdrawing from the region.

The existence of a well-developed network of ecumenical agencies and partners in the region and NCA's place in it represents one of the core added values of NCA. It enables NCA to develop and streamline our funding- and policy-priorities and requirements with those of other partner/funding agencies as well as those of the implementing partner. Though having been scaled down half-way in the planning period, the Round Table/Consortium structure involving NCA sister organizations has proved to be an effective way of sharing core costs and thereby increasing local partner's sustainability and ability to work on organisational development. An important factor in relation to partners' capacity building has been the involvement in the APRODEV capacity building programme for NGOs in the region with a particular view to fundraising and European integration. This programme was in 2006 outsourced to one of the NCA core partners.

NCA's two-track approach in working with religious communities, targeting both the churches and other faith-based communities as well as their social-diaconal organizations, represents an opportunity for creating synergies and mutually reinforcing positive developments. Given that the deficit in protection represents a main challenge in the region, NCA believes in the potential of the church, religious communities and their leaders as prime stakeholders in promoting peace and tolerance in post-conflict countries, and on advocating on behalf of the marginalized and vulnerable such as victims of trafficking, IDPs and refugees and the Roma.

NCA's long-standing experience in post-conflict reconstruction, including water and sanitation, has provided NCA with hands-on experience and an increased understanding of a) how peace-building can be mainstreamed into all forms of activities, including physical reconstruction, and b) how development of infrastructure and facilities can best be matched with institutional capacity building and creation of mechanisms for maintenance and long-term sustainability.

NCA and other ecumenical partners' focus on HIV in the region and globally resulted in the development of new projects, in the field of prevention, care and advocacy, among partners in all countries within the last planning-period. With the downsizing of HIV interventions in the region, NCA has seen that the partners' capacities have been built in a way that they are in the process of identifying new funding sources and in transferring knowledge and responsibilities to relevant local and state authorities.

Since 2000 NCA has been involved in inter-religious dialogue both as an NCA own programme and in cooperation with one partner, part of the time through World Council for Religion and Peace. The programmes have gained international recognition and represent valuable experience when as from 2006 NCA and partners are looking into possibilities of developing a regional peace-building programme with a consolidated and community-based approach possibly with a strong component of 'dealing with the past – looking to the future'.

II. NCA INTERVENTION STRATEGY

3.0 Thematic Analysis and Priorities

With reference to the analysis in Chapter 1 in relation to participation, equity and protection, we have seen that a number of rights violations have emerged. In the first part of the planning period all the 5 global thematic priorities were covered under the NCA programme in the Western Balkans sub-region, however with still another thematic area added, namely Education. During 2007 a review was implemented taking both availability of funds, partners' and NCA's capacity and various aspects of development and political shifts in the region into consideration. This review has resulted in a comprehensive scaling down and even concluding cooperation on HIV programmes, as well as recognizing that post-conflict construction projects will no longer be funded after 2008 (including water and sanitation), and likewise recognizing that Good Governance has proven to be more a cross-cutting focus linked to other thematic areas, than a thematic area in its own right. Accordingly, for the years 2008 – 2009, the thematic areas for the Balkans have been narrowed down and become more focused.

3.1 Specific rights to be addressed by the program

Religions for Conflict Transformation and Peace

Deficits:

The countries/ areas in the sub-region are characterized by wars and conflict over decades, often based on ethnic diversities with lack of sharing of power and resources benefiting one ethnic group at the expense of others. The results have been serious war crimes, violence against humanity, ethnic cleansing, even to the degree of genocide (Srebrenica, BiH), rape as means of war, thousands of missing people, hundreds of thousands still living as IDPs or refugees with fear of moving back to places of origin, and not to forget, enormous physical damages. As in every war, the civilians are the most affected, particularly women and children. The situation in the region is still politically and security-wise volatile and communities are divided along ethnic as well as religious lines as ethnicity and religion are intertwined. The wounds are deep and distrust and hate keep the areas prone to conflict.

All the countries in the sub-region have signed / ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). In addition to the Declaration, in which several articles are relevant in relation to this thematic area, the following and main rights-claims stemming from the situation in the region would be

- Right to life (CCPR, Article 6)
- Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (CCPR, Articles 18, 27; UN resolution 1904 on Racial discrimination; CESCR, Article 15, CEDAW)
- Freedom of movement (CCPR, Article 12)
- Freedom of expression (CCPR, Article 19)
- Rights and protection of women and girls and rights and role of women to participation in decision-making (UN Resolution 1325 with various references to Human Rights Conventions as mentioned under art. 9.; CEDAW art. 7 and 8)

Men and Women address Gender-based Violence (GBV)

Deficits

The prevalence of domestic violence and trafficking is known to be high in the Balkans, representing gross violence of human rights. The reasons for trafficking in particular are poverty on the one hand and exploitation of women and girls for economic purposes on the other. It is certified that trafficked women, in addition to being poor, often have little

education, few possibilities for employment without being exploited, and quite often, as in Kosovo, victims of trafficking are under age.

In addition to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the countries in the region have signed, and the Stability Pact Task Force for South-Eastern Europe (pages 5 and 6), the following

main rights-claims would be:

- Right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (CCPR, Article 7, CRC, Articles 3, 5, 9 and 11, 19, 34, 35,)
- Right to education (CRC, Article 28; CEDAW, Article 10,
- Right to work (CESCR, Article 15; CEDAW, Articles 11,14)
- Right for women to be treated equally with men (CCPR, Article 3)

Education

Deficits:

The general gross school enrolment in the region is fairly high, however, it is low for Roma and among victims of trafficking. It is also a fact that the percentage of girls' drop-out of school is higher among girls than boys, in particular among the Roma. Moreover there is a need for provision of skills-training and employment opportunities to the unemployed to secure their livelihood, especially for minorities and women and men in displacement.

The main rights-claims would be:

- Right to education (CRC, Articles 28, 29; CEDAW, Article 10; CESCR, Article 13)
- Right to work (CESCR, Article 15; CEDAW, Articles 11, 14)
- Right as member of a minority to be treated equal with the majority of the population (CPN, Article 1, 3, 15)

3.2 Thematic focus

With reference to the introduction to this chapter (3.0.), NCA Balkans will have the following two thematic areas as mentioned in the NCA GSP:

- Religions for Conflict Transformation and Peace-building
- Men and Women address Gender-based Violence

In addition NCA Balkans has chosen the following thematic focus:

- Education

The theme Civil Society for Accountable Governance will included as a cross-cutting theme in relation to the above themes and as an integrated part of Roma programmes. Water and sanitation may be part of the construction component under the operational Roma Return Programme in Kosovo, as well as under IDP / Refugee return projects in Serbia and Croatia (only part of 2008), as well as in relation to improvement of infrastructure in Roma settlements.

HIV-programmes will continue into 2008, in Macedonia and probably in Albania if funds can be secured.

HIV and Water and Sanitation will in this revised plan not be listed under thematic priorities.

3.2.1 Religions for Conflict Transformation and Peace-building

The threat to human security represents the biggest challenge in the coming five year's period. Given the close linkage between ethnicity and religious affiliation in the Western Balkans, in particular for the Orthodox, it is important to challenge churches and religious communities directly to mobilize their constituencies at leadership and grass-root level to work for peace and respect for human rights, through dialogue and diapraxis. At the same time, the social diaconal organizations will be particularly challenged to streamline peace-building in to their programme activities.

Considering the added value of NCA in the sub-region and the fact that all NCA countries of operation, apart from Albania, are the wore-thorn countries of ex-Yugoslavia, NCA sees the need for considering a widened regional portfolio in relation to peace-building. One aspect could be to work towards a 'settlement with the past' through community based initiatives focusing on truth and forgiveness. There are various options for such a programme. One could think of individual and separate country projects under the 'umbrella' of a regional peace-building strategy, or a regional programme with a strategy which has its field of operations in individual countries. It is recognized that MFA funding for the Western Balkans is being scaled down. At the same time MFA has supported the view of NCA that peace-building should be given priority. NCA will seek funding from other donors, and among other explore the possibilities of funds from international church partners in Europe (Scandinavian). It is a necessity that a regional / country peace-building programme is partner-owned, and accordingly has to be developed in close cooperation with the partners, even by the partners themselves.

Likewise NCA, after an internal assessment of the Kosovo inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue programme, will seek to find additional ways and means of conducting dialogue and identifying diapraxis projects. Women as a target group per se will be included, as well as other faith-related institutions and individual resource persons. In addition NCA will seek to raise the awareness among and challenge the faith communities in relation to the role of women in decision making and in relation to traditional practices which may impact women's lives negatively, including GBV.

3.2.2 Men and Women address Gender-based Violence (GBV)

The most visible form of gender-based violence in the Western Balkans can be found in trafficking and forced prostitution, which mainly affects women and girls. There has been an increasing focus on trafficking in the past years, and although the general public in many aspects does not seem to have grasped the scale and seriousness of the problem, all countries of the region have developed national plans of action to combat trafficking in human beings. With the exception of Croatia, all countries also have special shelter facilities for victims of trafficking. However, the countries in the region have failed to adequately address the programme of trafficking in children and victim/witness protection, according to the Stability Pact Task Force for South-Eastern Europe¹⁹. One of the main focuses for NCA and core partners will be to raise awareness about these issues. Challenging the perceptions of the general public and of the faith-communities and social-diaconal organisations about the scale and the seriousness of the problem will be a step towards developing a holistic approach to GBV. The approach will encompass prevention, protection, re-integration and advocacy. In prevention, linkages to programmes empowering and promoting rights for girls and for women (MDG 3) through education, employment and awareness-raising, in particular among risk-groups, will be encouraged. In advocacy partners will approach local and state authorities in order to implement what is legally approved as government policies.

In addition to trafficking, NCA has recognized the need for intensifying awareness-raising in relation to the role of women in society in general and with the view to representation of women in decision-making in particular. Likewise there is a need to widen the focus on GBV in relation to protection, rights and particular needs of women in relevant programming both in NCA operational projects in Kosovo and in partners' programmes throughout the sub-region. It is further recognized that the role of men and *addressing men* as well as women in relation to these aspects should be highlighted. Even if gender continually is an issue for NCA and partners, challenging traditional roles of men and

¹⁹ Assessment of governmental anti-trafficking structures and policies in South-eastern European countries, Stability Pact Summary report July 2003, p.5 and 6

women (expanding the role of women) and sensitive issues like domestic violence, are aspects that need to be highlighted to an increased degree, for instance in Roma communities, and not in the least due to these societies being male dominated and struggling with the legacies of war and conflict. Addressing these issues, NCA sees the need for further capacity building both of own staff and those of partners.

3.2.3 Education

Education is the way forward to ensure access to resources and services, and to strengthen women's role in society. NCA and partners will work on securing that the number of boys and girls, also those belonging to marginalised ethnic groups such as the Roma, who enrol in and complete primary school increases substantially by 2009 (MDG 2). One of the main factors contributing to the disadvantageous position of Roma is their low level of education and professional training, and although the general gross school enrolment in the region is fairly high, it is low for Roma. Provision of skills-training and employment opportunities to the unemployed, especially minorities and women and men in displacement to secure their livelihood (MDG 1) is another part of the thematic focus. NCA and partners foresee working on several approaches; mobilising communities to access education; working with the educational institutions to ease access; strengthening the existing institutions to improve the quality of the teaching and facilitating for supplementary tuition in particular for Roma children.

NCA, through partners involved in education projects, should advocate towards governments and educational systems for gender in general and the role of women in particular to be addressed by pedagogues in various educational institutions. As some of these partners work with representatives of faith communities as educators, the faith communities themselves should be challenged as to their perceptions of the traditional role of women.

4.0 Strategies for Rights Holders and Duty bearers

In NCA's rights-based approach, we seek to engage with poor and marginalized men and women as citizens – people who are entitled to human dignity and basic human rights by virtue of being human. NCA's rights-based approach entails a two-pronged strategy. A vital component of our strategy is to resource poor and excluded groups as **rights holders**. By claiming abstract rights as tangible entitlements, poor and marginalized people improve their lives. At the same time, we recognize that social relations and institutions (both formal and informal) within society can pose serious barriers to poor and marginalized men and women who try to claim their rights. NCA's Rights-based Approach will also entail the identification of key **duty bearers** and strategies to engage them to transform these institutional barriers and mechanisms of exclusion. A particular role for NCA and partners will be to facilitate linkages between prioritized rights holders and the most relevant duty bearers.

To define the poor and marginalized as rights holders is crucial as we approach our work with a human dignity perspective. To be able to act as a rights holder an individual or a group has to be empowered. It is, however, important to recognize that people and organizations may shift from being a rights holder in one situation to become a duty bearer in another. This also has to do with empowerment and accepting responsibility in family and society.

In the following rights holders and duty bearers will be described under the above mentioned thematic priorities. Gitt at HIV ikke er en tematisk prioritering finner jeg det mest naturlig å kutte det ut under dette kappitelet – Elie er konsultert. Dette forhindrer ikke at vi har noe på HIV i det sub-regionale programmet.

Religions for Conflict Resolution and Peace

4.1 Rights holders:

- Those most directly affected by conflict and unrest, such as IDPs and refugees
- Social-diaconal organizations involved in peace-building and conflict-prevention
- Individuals and groups who are members of and/or active in religious communities, in particular youth and women at the grass-root level
- Priests and imams who are active in conflict-resolution and peace-building in their own community

4.2 Duty bearers:

- Senior religious leaders in the region and abroad
- Regional and global networks representing senior religious leaders and religious communities
- Social-diaconal organizations from the region and/or working in the region
- Religious communities and local congregations, in particular those faced with conflict in their local community

Men and Women address Gender-based Violence

4.1 Rights holders:

- Victims of trafficking (VoT)
- At-risk groups such as minors and girls/women with low education and/or with few employment opportunities
- Other vulnerable, potential at-risk groups such as Roma or refugees/IDPs.
- Civil society organizations and networks representing and/or working directly with VoT

4.2 Duty bearers:

- National governments, both in countries of origin, transit and destination (including governments in Western Europe)
- International structures and national bodies for law-enforcement, in particular police and judiciary
- Religious communities and social-diaconal organizations
- General public, including civil society organizations and networks
- Families and relatives of at-risk individuals and victims of trafficking

Education

4.1 Rights holders:

- Girls and boys of primary school age, in particular those who face obstacles to access or completion of their education
- Vulnerable and marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, in particular Roma; girls and women from conservative/traditional communities; and female and male IDPs who are unemployed and have low levels of education
- Civil society organizations and networks representing the vulnerable groups referred to above

4.2 Duty bearers:

- National governments, in particular Ministries of Education, and other governing structures (UNMIK/PISG)
- Local municipalities
- Directors of education institutions/school masters, teachers and parents/teachers' councils
- Local community leaders, families and parents in communities with low level of gross school enrolment in primary school (including high drop-out rates)

5.0 Geographic focus

NCA Balkans will in the period of 2008 and 2009 mainly concentrate activities in Albania, Serbia and the Province of Kosovo. Macedonia will be included with activities into 2008 in dialogue and HIV programmes, and possibly for the rest of the planning period with a Roma project. Moreover ideas will be explored for having one partner in Macedonia as a resource partner for regional peace-building. In Croatia one return project will run into 2008, and NCA and partners will seek and may be included in a regional peace-building programme, along with BiH and Montenegro.

In this section Croatia, BiH and Montenegro are not otherwise described.

Albania: It is envisaged that the geographical operational area for the partner Diaconia Agapes will continue to be the capital Tirana, the town of Durres and rural areas in mid-Albania. With the possible shift from HIV programme cooperation to women's empowerment programme cooperation, the main geographical focus will be remote, rural areas where the organization is involved in women's health programmes. The Vatra women's shelter is situated in Vlore. However, the women are referred from institutions and police stations throughout the country. The new partner of NCA, Intellectual Women of Shkodra / Human Dimensions operates from the town of Shkodra and extends their activities into remote and mountainous rural areas. The rural and remote areas in Albania are poor areas where women often are left alone to take care of the family and the farms while the men migrate to find work. These areas are also areas from where victims of trafficking are recruited.

In **Serbia** NCA through partners will maintain a strong focus on the province of Vojvodina and its capital Novi Sad, as well as wider Belgrade and towns and rural areas in central and southern Serbia, around the towns of Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Nis, Vranje. The focus on the province of Sandzak will continue. Vojvodina is an area where quite a few Roma settlements are found. Vojvodina is also an area with a fairly large influx of IDPs and refugees, as is also areas mentioned above in Mid- and South Serbia. Partners in Serbia have very good knowledge of their operational areas, including political and socio-economic aspects. The priority areas mentioned are all parts of Serbia with high unemployment and lack of social services.

The NCA Representation will continue to be located in **Kosovo** – according to plan, until mid 2009. NCA will be operational towards the end of the planning period, albeit with a stronger focus on building partnerships with local resource organizations. For the Roma programmes and the IDP/refugee return programmes, the northern region of Mitrovica, with its six municipalities, three majority K/Albanian and three majority K/Serb, will continue to be a focus area. This is the UNHCR area of responsibility where NCA has been active since 2003, and where knowledge and experience has been acquired, working with IDPs, Roma included, and an area which is considered to be the most volatile, politically complicated and having the most diverse community in Kosovo. In relation to the peace-building programme, the focus on the Pristina-region, and minority enclaves and multi-ethnic towns and municipalities will grow. Geographical areas in relation to an expanded focus on trafficking will have to be identified in cooperation with an eventual new partner.

Though reduced, NCA will maintain a focus on the **FYR Macedonia** during the planning period. No particular region is on the side of NCA considered to be more important than others, although multi-ethnic and poorer villages, towns and municipalities will be accorded special attention, and areas where Roma are settled.

The Balkans - Sub-Regional

According to plan a sub-regional peace-building programme will be developed in the course of 2007. Countries / geographical areas will have to be identified in more detail.

III. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

6.0 Program objectives per thematic focus area

6.1 Religions for Conflict Resolution and Peace

Overall goal: NCA in Kosovo and the social-diaconal or leading national civil society organisations in each country have contributed to securing human rights and improved access to basic services for vulnerable and marginalised groups, and advocate effectively on their behalf.

1 . Specific Objective	Indicators:	Sources of Verification
Local religious leaders in the target areas are perceived as tolerant and open.	Joint statements and joint public appearances	- Annual reports. - Track records
1.1 Expected result Local religious leaders have been supported to engage in dialogue to promote peace and tolerance	- Number and kind of meetings and workshops - Number of participants divided by religious affiliations - Common statements after meetings	- Annual reports - Project reports
1.2 Expected result NCA has facilitated for local religious leaders to implement practical projects aimed at bringing communities together across ethnic and religious divides	- Number and kind of projects facilitated for, divided by geographical specification	- Annual reports - Project reports - Written communication with partners.
2. Specific Objective	Indicators:	Sources of Verification
Senior and religious leaders publicly support intra- and inter-religious dialogue and diapraxis	- Public statements by senior religious leaders supporting intra- and inter-religious dialogue and diapraxis	- Public statements
2.1 Expected result Senior religious leaders have been introduced to programmes, projects and initiatives promoting peace, tolerance and multi-ethnic co-existence	- Plans have been developed and introduced. - Religious leaders act upon suggested plans	- Annual reports - Written programme and project plans - Documented communication with religious leaders - Project documentation
2.2 Expected result Senior religious leaders are encouraged to participate in joint national multi-religious advocacy platforms to promote peace, tolerance and multi-ethnic co-existence	- Number and kind of suggested platforms - Appearance of religious leaders in advocacy platforms	- Documented communication with religious leaders - Track record on senior religious leaders participation in various forums
2.3 Expected results Senior religious leaders have been encouraged to participate actively in national, regional and global networks aimed at promoting peace and tolerance.	- Senior religious leaders involved in networking	- Documented communication with religious leaders. - Track record on senior religious leaders involvement in networking.

<p>3. Specific objective Together with partners NCA has expanded the focus on peace-building in the region, has mainstreamed peace-building in NCA own programming and has encouraged and built capacity for partners to do the same</p>	<p>Indicators A regional peace-building programme developed and NCA and partners programming show elements of peace-building in plans and implementation</p>	<p>Sources of Verification - Programme / project plans - Programme / project reports - Internal or external assessments</p>
<p>3.1 Expected result Training on how to mainstream peace-building aspects in activities have been conducted</p>	<p>- Number of training and % of NCA / partner staff having received training</p>	<p>- Annual reports - Agenda / reports from trainings</p>
<p>3.1 Expected result NCA has initiated exchange of best practices between NCA and partners in the region</p>	<p>- Examples are provided - Travels and exchanges have taken place</p>	<p>- Reports from events - Partners' reports - Annual reports</p>
<p>3.3 Expected Results NCA and partners have developed a regional peace-building programme to be presented to donors</p>	<p>An over-all programme with individual country sub-projects is prepared and presented to donors</p>	<p>- Project document, - Application to MFA and other donors</p>
<p>4. Specific Objective Faith communities recognize the role of women within faith communities and in society at large.</p>	<p>Indicators - Number and type of activities including women - Statements from religious leaders - Women's participation in various forums</p>	<p>Indicators - Project reports - Ad hoc reports from religious communities -</p>
<p>4.1 Expected results NCA has raised the awareness and has encouraged religious leaders and partners to have an increased focus on the role of women in society and in peace-building</p>	<p>Indicators - Communication with partners / faith-communities include the role of women - Women's representation and involvement in peace-building activities have increased</p>	<p>Sources of Verification - Project plans and reports - Documented communication with faith-communities partners</p>

Assumptions

Religious actors can play an important role in advocacy and awareness-raising, and they have the potential to influence decision makers on all levels

NCA has the potential to challenge religious actors to be "connectors" rather than "dividers" in societies.

Religious communities are willing to include more women in decision-making bodies and in various activities.

Political situation is conducive to dialogue and peace-building activities.

Funds are found for peace-building programmes for 2008.

Funds for regional peace-building programme development are found in 2007; partners participate actively and have the capacity and will to implement mapping and project proposals as basis for and part of programme proposal.

Risks

Religious leaders do not want to engage in peace-building due to various internal and external pressures, including from their own communities

Outbreak of hostilities / conflicts detrimental to peace-building

6.2 Men and Women address Gender-based Violence

Overall Goal:

Civil society, social-diaconal organisations and faith communities have contributed towards raising the awareness about gender-based violence in general and trafficking in particular and have established appropriate prevention and reintegration services

<p>1. Specific Objective NCA staff, social-diaconal organisations and faith-communities have been sensitised about and are actively involved in dealing with the scale and seriousness of human trafficking</p>	<p>Indicators - Civil society, social-diaconal organisations and faith-communities' commitment to address and combat trafficking in women and children</p>	<p>Sources of verification - Various reports: UNDP, UNIFEM, Stabilisation Pact, UNICEF/ODHIR</p>
<p>1.1 Expected Results Plans for awareness raising and prevention-campaigns targeting particular risk-groups are included in NCA partners' plans</p>	<p>- Awareness-raising and prevention campaigns conducted targeting particular risk-groups</p>	<p>- Reliable studies identifying risk-groups in each country/project area - Track record of and documentation related to campaigns</p>
<p>1.2 Expected Results Plans for increased access to education and employment for boys and girls and women at risk and those living outside shelters who are victims of trafficking, Roma communities included, have been covered in NCA partners' project plans</p>	<p>- Types of initiatives included in plans and implemented</p>	<p>- Project plans - Project reports - Travel reports</p>
<p>1.3 Expected Results Religious communities social-diaconal and other relevant NGOs have received capacity building in order to advocate and address gender-based violence and trafficking</p>	<p>- Examples of religious communities and social-diaconal and other NGOs' advocacy efforts</p>	<p>- Annual reports</p>
<p>2. Specific Objective Victims of trafficking have received protection and support</p>	<p>Indicators - Victims have benefited from relevant and culturally sensitive assistance.</p>	<p>Sources of verification - Partners' annual reports - National reports</p>
<p>2.1 Expected Results Partners programmes include provision of safe shelters for temporary accommodation, psychosocial rehabilitation and interventions for reintegration</p>	<p>- Number of safe shelters operating in the region in specific countries - Number of shelters providing psychosocial rehabilitation and interventions for reintegration</p>	<p>- National statistics - Partners project plans and reports</p>
<p>2.2 Expected Results NCA partners' programmes for shelters include legal aid and information about witness protection programmes</p>	<p>- Number of victims receiving legal aid and information about witness protection programmes divided by country and partners - Number of victims announcing their perpetrators specified by country</p>	<p>- Partners project plans and reports - National statistics</p>

3. Specific Objective Issues related to domestic violence and SGV have been addressed in Roma communities	Indicators Roma communities have been targeted with the view to domestic violence and SGV	Sources of verification - NCA and partners project plans and reports - National statistics
3.1 Expected Results NCA and partners programme plans include components on domestic violence and SGV	- Interventions targeting domestic violence and SGV among Roma have taken place	- NCA and partners project plans and reports - Project monitoring reports
4. Specific objective NCA staff respect the NCA Code of Conduct	Indicators Track record of NCA's NCA staff's compliance with Code of Conduct.	Sources of verification - Signed Code of Conduct as attachment to staff contracts
4.1 Expected Results NCA staff have received information and have committed themselves to follow the NCA Code of Conduct	- NCA staff have signed the NCA Code of conduct as part of their contract with NCA - NCA staff show commitment in practice in respecting the code of Conduct.	Signed contracts and signed code of conduct as attachment to the contract

Assumption

Faith communities and civil society can play a potentially important role in challenging gender-based violence, hereunder trafficking, from a moral and ethical perspective

Risks

Ignorance among church leaders, faith-communities and national governments in recognizing and addressing the problem of human trafficking
Mafia networks and traffickers in human beings are threatening partners and civil society organisations involved in work to combat trafficking

6.3 Education

Overall Goal: The overall educational level and access to employment among vulnerable groups such as women, internally displaced and Roma has increased visibly across the region

1. Specific Objective Enrolment and completion of primary school among boys and girls belonging to marginalized groups (i.e. Roma) has increased in the project areas	Indicators % increase in enrolment and completion divided by gender	Sources of verification Comparison of baseline studies from 2005 and 2009
1.1 Expected Results Extra educational support and help with homework has been provided by NCA and included in NCA partners' programmes	- Number of children benefiting from extra educational support divided by gender	- Project reports / Annual reports, - Statistics from the Ministry of Education - Statistics from partners and NCA operational projects
1.2 Expected Results Information campaigns among Roma parents, establishment of Teacher-Parents Associations (TPA)	- Number of information campaigns conducted among Roma parents - Number of TPA whereby Roma parents are represented Involvement of Roma NGOs	- Annual reports, track records - Statistics from the Ministry of Education - Statistics from NCA operational projects

<p>Objective 2 Marginalized women and men living in displacement have been empowered through increased access to skills-training and employment</p>	<p>Indicators - Improved food security / income among marginalised groups - Number of marginalised men and women involved in small businesses/trading after skills-training in target area</p>	<p>Sources of verification - Annual reports, national statistics, - UNDP reports - Project / Annual reports</p>
<p>2.1 Expected Results Various types of skills-training conducted in NCA programming and included in partners' plans</p>	<p>- Number of courses divided by type and number of participants divided by gender - Number of participants in training who have been employed</p>	<p>- Project / Annual reports - Reports from trainings - Statistics from follow-up after training</p>
<p>2.2 Expected Results Access to apprenticeship facilitated for in NCA programming and included in partners' plans</p>	<p>- Number of apprenticeships divided by gender - Number of apprenticeships which have led to regular employment</p>	<p>- Project / Annual reports</p>

Assumption

Education is the way forward to ensure access to resources and services, and to strengthen the role and position of women in society
One of the main factors contributing to the disadvantageous position of Roma is their low level of education and employment

Risks

The struggle for daily survival hampers the possibilities for marginalised women, children and men to prioritise education
General high level of unemployment across the region, also among the better educated middle class

Links between Partners and Program Objectives:

Core Partners	Type of Organisation	Geographic Focus	Intervention
Diaconia Agapes	Church partner	Albania	HIV; SGV / women's empowerment; peace-building
Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation	Secular partner	Macedonia / Rub-region	Peace-building;
Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization	Church partner	Serbia / Vojvodina	Peace-building, Education, Roma
Philanthropy	Church partner	Serbia / Croatia	Multi-sectoral programmes IDPs / refugees a.o.; education, peace-building
Lutheran World Federation / Balkans	Church partner	Sub-region	Peace-building

Resource Organisations			
Vatra	Secular partner	Albania / Vlore	SGV / trafficking
Intellectual Women of Shkodra / Human Dimensions	Secular partner	Nord-Albania	SGV / trafficking
Health Education Research Organization	Secular partner	Macedonia / Skopje	Roma – health / empowerment / education
Hungarian Inter-church Aid in partnership with local organization - Merhamet	Church partner	Serbia / Novi Pazar	Multisectoral programme IDPs / refugees / Roma / farmers in remote areas
Ecumenical Women Solidarity Fund	Church partner	Sub-region	Peace-building
Strategic Alliances			
World Conference on Religion and Peace	Church partner	Sub-region	Peace-building

7.0 Rationale for Choice of Partners, Resource Organisations, and Strategic Alliances

Partners in The Balkans are selected with the view to thematic focus, specific vulnerable and marginalized groups and according to geographical priorities. The majority of the partners in the Balkans are church partners. In addition come resource partners chosen in relation to specific themes like HIV and trafficking – and multi-sector programmes for IDPs and in remote rural areas

7.1 Capacity of NCA Partners

General

The NCA core and resource partners have developed into becoming active actors in society, be it in building civil society in general, in developing important knowledge and experience in relation to thematic focus, or in lobbying and advocacy towards local and state authorities. To an increasing degree, networking exists among NCA partners, in particular the core church partners, and also between core partners and resource partners. Based on commonalities in former Yugoslavian countries – and Albania – this networking represents an important factor in endeavours to build a sub-regional peace-building strategy, in relation to combating the spread of HIV and when it comes to organizational capacity building.

Strategic alliances in The Balkans are in 2007 only represented by World Council for Religion and Peace (WCRP). Through WCRP, Inter-religious Councils have been established in some of the countries, most lately in Albania. Possibilities for cooperation with WCRP and the IRCs, albeit the latter are weak and partly not functioning, should be explored in relation to peace-building.

Some of the partners are or have been members of ACT International (MCIC, EHO, PY), and have worked in close cooperation with ACT partners in emergencies (MCIC). In 2007 PY became a member of ACT Development. ACT Forum(s) for the Balkans should be encouraged not in the least with the view to strategies for peace-building.

Core partners:

In the following, core partners are listed with more detailed descriptions.

Diaconia Agapes (DA)

DA currently operates four field offices covering large parts of central Albania, with particular strongholds in rural areas. Under the auspices of the Archbishop Anastasios and with the assistance of a consortium of international partners the organisation has experienced a steady growth over the last years. DA is focusing on assistance to rural communities, in particular in the field of health and education (including STD/HIV) and agricultural development. DA was involved during the 1999 Kosovo crisis, partly funded by NCA, and from 2003 NCA and DA have cooperated on an STD / HIV programme for awareness-raising and behaviour-change. During this period, DA has acquired considerable knowledge of HIV and has also been involved in national networking and advocacy towards local and central governments. In 2006/2007 DA is developing their organizational strategy based on an organizational evaluation conducted in 2004. The organization has developed its administrative capacity with support from international donors, among them NCA, but is still in need of improving the organizational capacity, in particular in terms of finance management. The possibility of cooperating with DA in peace-building activities is being considered. Moreover ideas of cooperation on women's empowerment linked to the already existing women's programme in rural areas will be explored.

The Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) is today the biggest humanitarian organisation in the province of Novi Sad. Since its start-up, it has been member of the WCC/ACT-network, and since 1999, EHO has co-operated closely with LWF, and later HEKS, to increase its own capacity to meet the challenges posed by the Kosovo crisis, and is today working in cooperation with several international church organizations. EHO's activity is to a large extent based on their network of voluntary and diaconal groups; the element of volunteerism is still strong and adds to the increasing professionalism of the core staff. The activities can be divided in three categories: social development, ecumenical co-operation and diaconal work and emergency preparedness. EHO targets vulnerable and marginalised groups like refugees and IDPs, People Living with PLHIV, youth, Roma, women and disabled. In several of the areas of social service delivery, EHO co-operates closely with the provincial authorities, who have among other participated as implementing partner and as monitors in EHO's projects. EHO has a strong network of ecumenical donor agencies that have helped and encouraged the development of more comprehensive plans and strategies for the organization. The first medium-term plan was presented to donors in 2003, and in 2004 EHO implemented a full organisational evaluation. Based on the evaluation an organizational strategic plan was developed in 2005/2006. Developing a new fundraising strategy remains a priority for EHO in the coming years.

Philanthropy is the official humanitarian organization of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). Since 1999, Philanthropy has been co-operating closely with a series of ecumenical partners, including NCA, to develop their own capacity in the field of emergency preparedness and long-term development assistance, with a particular focus on social service delivery to the poor and marginalized. PY receives support from several international church organizations. As of 2007 PY is a member of ACT Development, and is represented in the Steering Group for 2007. Philanthropy has six field offices all over Serbia and Montenegro, one office in BiH and one in Croatia, and the programmes are implemented in close co-operation with local and national authorities, local priests, dioceses/congregations and other Orthodox organisations such as the Youth of St. Sava and Serbian Sisters. The target groups are vulnerable and marginalized such as people living with PLHIV, elderly, disabled, refugees and internally displaced, unemployed and youth. As the humanitarian organization of the SOC, Philanthropy has a large potential to

challenge duty-bearers in the State, market and civil society in Serbia. Organizational strengthening including fundraising, combined with a stronger focus on advocacy, is a priority for PY, and in 2006 an organizational strategy was finalized.

Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC)

MCIC is the leading local civic society organization in the FYR of Macedonia. It operates in the domain of sustainable development, awareness building and social-humanitarian (basic) assistance. The strategic goals of MCIC are promotion of peace, further development of civil society and help to needy groups. MCIC is active in water supply and sanitation; health and education; rural development; employment and revenue generation; civic society and democratization and emergency aid. MCIC is a multi-ethnic organisation with dedicated and highly professional staff, which among other has specific expertise in training and capacity building. MCIC co-operates closely with national as well as local authorities, and is also one of the main initiators behind the creation of a national Civic Platform and the annual Macedonian NGO Forum. MCIC is a member of ECOSOC, CIVICUS, Balkan Network for Civil Society and the Civic Platform of Macedonia. MCIC already receives funding from a variety of sources, including the EU, and being a member of ACT International and with the support of numerous agencies of the World Council of Churches, the organisation is set to be one of the leading forces of development of civil society in the region in the coming years. The possibility of engaging MCIC as a resource partner on a regional level will be considered, in particular in relation to peace-building.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

LWF (Department for World Service) has been active in The Balkans since 1991, starting with emergency assistance during and after war and conflict. In 2003 the emergency response was transformed to country programmes in BiH, Croatia, and in Serbia in the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo. With the close down of the LWF representation in Croatia in August 2007, LWF continues with long-term programmes in BiH and Kosovo. Targeting areas of poverty, the programmes include reconstruction and agricultural and social development with emphasis on civil society and local capacity-building in the form of empowerment of local NGOs. The capacity-building programme has resulted in the establishment of three local NGOs with whom LWF is partnering for implementation of agricultural projects. Democratic process will in the case of Kosovo also include inter-ethnic and inter-religious peace and reconciliation.

NCA and LWF Balkans consider developing cooperation on a regional peace-building programme in which Croatia could possibly be included.

7.2 Partnership Strategy

A challenge for NCA in relation to partner cooperation in 2008-2009 will be that the NCA Balkans Representation is to be phased out by early 2009. Exit strategies will have to be developed and coordinated with partners. The cooperation with the partners will after that period be handled from NCA Head Office in Norway. In 2007 an assessment of partners has taken place on the basis of funding possibilities, thematic focus, partners' capacity and geographical focus. The overviews and presentations of partners presented in this plan represents the choice of partners as foreseen for 2008 and 2009.

There is a need to strengthen the capacities of a selection of partners through organizational capacity building, in particular when it comes to finance management. When it comes to cross-cutting issues related to programming, training should be further developed on Rights-based Approach, Do no Harm and Gender-based Violence. Moreover it is important that gender and in particular women in peace and conflict receives more focus in training.

The added value of NCA partners' networking should be further explored.

7.3 Overview of Partners

Core Partners

Name of partner	Diaconia Agapes
Year of Foundation	1992
Mission	To represent the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania (AOC) as a social, development and emergency organization with the vision "Love that makes a difference"
Constituency	Young adults, women, farmers and AOC youth groups / students
Geographic Focus	Albania: Tirana, Durres and Mid-Albanian rural areas around El Basan
Thematic Focus	HIV / health / SGV (to be developed?) / education / women's empowerment / agriculture
Strategies	In the process of being developed
Role in Civil Society	Works as a diaconal organization of the Albanian Orthodox Church; advocate on behalf of the poor and marginalized; work in close cooperation with local and state authorities
Particular Achievements	Spearheaded and implemented an HIV awareness raising programme; implement projects among members of society who do not easily benefit from public services; assist in re-establishing farming in poor, rural areas.
Relationship with NCA	Cooperation on HIV programme; NCA has in addition supported various capacity building of the organization.
Start of Cooperation	NCA provided support through DA during the 1999 Kosovo crisis. The programmatic cooperation was re-launched in 2003, when NCA provided support to a pilot-project on STD/HIV education in secondary schools in rural areas.
NCA's rationale for relationship	Diaconal / church organization; importance of supporting the diaconal initiatives of an Orthodox Church; DA's knowledge of / involvement in local communities / good cooperation with authorities / potential for expanding on advocacy role on behalf of poor and marginalized members of communities.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Cooperation in relation to other thematic areas to be developed – domestic violence / SGV / women's education and empowerment, and peace-building. HIV programme to be phased out
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref to above point and to Ch. 7.1. Archbishop Anastasios of the AOC could serve as a bridge-builder in relation to inter-religious dialogue in the Balkans, and in this respect DA could serve as a facilitator.
Partners, other than NCA	ICCO, EED, Diakonisches Werks, HEKS

Name of partner	Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC)
Year of Foundation	1993
Mission	MCIC is a civil society organization which believes in peace, harmony and prosperity of Macedonia and the Balkans, based on the universal principles of a civil society and participation democracy, good governance, even social and economical development, interdependency and cultural diversity.
Constituency	Citizens within communities, civil society, religious communities
Geographic Focus	Macedonia wide
Thematic Focus	Local development of communities, among other with water supply including building local capacities for water management; employment and income generation; inter-religious dialogue; building civil society and democracy; advocacy for civil rights.
Strategies	Long term goals: An even and sustainable economic development leading to a social cohesion and to a decrease of poverty through rural and regional development, employment, entrepreneurship, education and access to public services; A diversified and deep-rooted civil society promoting the inclusion of

	a number of interest groups that affect the main streams of social life; A righteous and democratic society based on the principles of good governance, decentralized system of management and high degree of trust; An accepted cultural diversity, interdependence and dialogue, reflected in every segment of public life; Established partnerships for the development and a strengthened social capital.
Role in Civil Society	Ref. to the above and to 7.1
Particular Achievements	Ref. to 7.1
Relationship with NCA	One of the core partners. Ref. to 7.1
Start of Cooperation	2002
NCA's rationale for relationship	MCIC is one of the most prominent civil society organization in Macedonia, and is set to be one of the leading forces in developing civil society in the region. MCIC is working with peace-building and is a genuine multi-ethnic organization with a professional staff, and has capacity in training and capacity building. There is a mutual institutional knowledge between the two organizations. Member of ACT International.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Possibilities for various peace-building activities in Macedonia and in the region are being explored. Phase-out of water programme in 2007.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Potential for becoming resource partner in the sub-region. Develop cooperation on regional peace-building
Partners, other than NCA	Members of the former Macedonian Consortium, World Council of Churches, Europe Desk, ICCO, Dan Church Aid, Christian Aid United Kingdom, EED Germany, and APRODEV)

Name of partner	Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO)
Year of Foundation	1993
Mission	EHO is Christian organization that supports the building of a cohesive civil society in Serbia through the alleviation of poverty, the development of ecumenical collaboration and the promotion of human rights.
Constituency	Vulnerable/marginalized groups, whose human rights are violated and/or vulnerable/marginalized groups against whom there is any form of discrimination. Members of society deprived due to poverty: children, the elderly, the handicapped, refugees and internally displaced persons, Roma and the uneducated, the rural poor population and the unemployed.
Geographic Focus	In the past 1993-2005 EHO focused its operations almost exclusively on the geographical area of the northern province of the Republic of Serbia – Vojvodina. In the future (2006-2010) EHO will expand its activities to central and southern Serbia.
Thematic Focus	Multi-sector assistance to IDPs and the Roma; emergency interventions; health, education, HIV, peace-building, building civil society.
Strategies	Strategy developed for 2006 – 2010: To contribute to social development through advocacy and the promotion of Human Rights. To improve ecumenical cooperation between churches and faith community via improved communications, networking and the establishment of inter-faith dialogue and joint initiatives for building of peace and reconciliation. To react more effectively to crisis situations (both natural and political) in the region.
Role in Civil Society	Ref to the above and to 7.1
Particular Achievements	Ref. to the above and to 7.1
Relationship with NCA	Ref. to 7.1
Start of Cooperation	January 2001 (Under ACT/LWF/EHO appeal)
NCA's rationale for	Cooperation developed through several years; mutual institutional

relationship	knowledge and experience. Activities correlate with NCA thematic focus. Member of ACT International
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Increase in cooperation on peace-building activities in Serbia and the sub-region, possibly also on Roma-programmes. HIV project phased out in 2007.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	EHO has wide experience in working with Roma, is involved in peace-building, has experience from emergency operations; advocates for human rights and is an active player in civil society. EHO has the potential to work with other churches and church organizations on peace-building, PY is one of them.
Partners, other than NCA	WCC/ACT, LWF, CAID, HEKS and ICCO

Name of partner	Philanthropy (PY), the Charitable Fund of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC)
Year of Foundation	1991
Mission	Philanthropy, responds to the spiritual and existential needs of individuals and communities by endeavouring to alleviate suffering and extending faith, hope and charity to the neighbours.
Constituency	Vulnerable and marginalized groups such as poor, elderly, ill, children without parental care, unemployed, persons with disabilities, refugees, IDPs, PLHIV
Geographic Focus	Belgrade, Vranje, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Knin (Croatia), Novi Sad, Nis (Serbia), Cetinje (Montenegro), Banja Luka (BiH)
Thematic Focus	Humanitarian assistance and relief support; health and social care; agriculture, education, economic empowerment
Strategies	Strategy developed for 2006 – 2010: Promotion of diaconal work within the Serbian Orthodox Church Openness towards beneficiaries and people in need Collaboration with relevant institutions and organizations including international partners.
Role in Civil Society	Ref. to the above and to 7.1
Particular Achievements	Ref. to the above and to 7.1
Relationship with NCA	Ref. to 7.1
Start of Cooperation	1999
NCA's rationale for relationship	Cooperation developed through several years; mutual institutional knowledge and experience. Activities correlate with NCA thematic focus; member of ACT Development,
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Increase in cooperation on peace-building. HIV programme phased out by the end of 2007.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to 7.1. PY is the diaconal wing of the SOC and as such an important inlet when it comes to advocating for the church's responsibilities as an actor in society. PY's work falls inside the NCA priorities when it comes to education in a wide sense, and has a potential and willingness to engage in peace-building activities, hopefully through the Church and in cooperation with other churches and church organizations, like EHO.
Partners, other than NCA	ACT Development / WCC, ACIDI VOCA (USAID) BPRM, CARITAS Vienna, CRS, CEC, Diakonisches Werk, Finish Church Aid and Ort Aid, INTERSOS, IOCC, UMCOR and WCC.

Name of partner	Lutheran World Federation / Department for World Service (LWF / DWS)
Year of Foundation	1947 in Lund Sweden; in the Balkans from 1992
Mission	The LWF Balkans as a faith-based organisation, is committed to render assistance to vulnerable and war-affected people, to work with local partners and communities towards a sustainable future and to promote democracy, human rights and the development of civil society.

Constituency	Minority returnees and the receiving communities in BiH, Croatia and Kosovo
Geographic Focus	BiH (North-east / Tuzla, North-west / Sanski Most; Croatia (Lika); Kosovo
Thematic Focus	Economic revitalizing through agriculture; housing; subsistence support for extremely needy families; peace-building, building of civil society.
Strategies	Strengthen civil society through increasing the capacity of local organizations, institutions, partners and individuals; Facilitate sustainable return and reintegration of refugees and displaced people through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - housing and improved infrastructure - creating greater economic independence through agricultural business development and - providing social support and services, paying particular attention to gender and youth issues
Role in Civil Society	Ref. to the above and 7.1.
Particular Achievements	Ref to the above and 7.1.
Relationship with NCA	NCA and LWF have cooperated on a returnee programme in Lika in Croatia up until 2007. Discussions are initiated with the view to cooperation on a regional peace-building programme
Start of Cooperation	1992
NCA's rationale for relationship	NCA as an organization is a member of LWF and ACT (of which LWF is a founding member.)
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Regional peace-building programme Cooperation on return-programme in Croatia finalized in 2007.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to 'Relationship with NCA'. LWF has operated in the sub-region since 1992, is well established here and has got wide knowledge of the areas in which NCA has been or still is engaged. Possibilities should be explored to identify options for ways of cooperation if and when NCA winds down operational programmes in Kosovo and sets out to close the Balkans Representation.
Partners, other than NCA	EED, DanChurchAid, FinnChurchAid, Church of Sweden, European Agency for Reconstruction, Swedish International Development Agency, UNHCR

Resource Organizations

Name of partner	VATRA
Year of Foundation	Founded in 1997. The VATRA psycho-social shelter was established in 2001.
Mission	-
Constituency	Girls and women involved in trafficking in human beings
Geographic Focus	VLORE town; Albania – country-wide
Thematic Focus	Gender-based violence / trafficking
Strategies	Combating gender-based violence / trafficking in human beings through a two-pronged approach: Prevention against trafficking and reintegration of women and girls already trafficked.
Role in Civil Society	Ref. to the above, next par. and to 7.1; Vatra has chosen a strategy for challenging the state and local authorities in addressing the serious problem of trafficking in Albania and is in this respect an important actor in civil society.
Particular Achievements	Ref. to the above. Establishing and running a professional shelter for victims of trafficking; awareness-raising and prevention in wider communities with particular focus on Roma.
Relationship with NCA	Cooperation on the shelter in Vlore, and on prevention programme in Roma communities. NCA has supported organizational capacity building for VATRA.
Start of Cooperation	2004

NCA's rationale for relationship	Ref. to the above. Vatra's many years of experience in fighting human trafficking has made the Centre a well known institution on both the national and the international arena. In relation to GBV, Vatra is an important actor in society.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Continued cooperation with Vatra will depend on funding.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to the above.
Partners, other than NCA	Cooperation in the way of funding and by way of networking and advocacy etc.: Kvinna til Kvinna, USAID, IOM, OSCE, The Embassy of the United States of America, Antislavery International, Amnesty International, Sigrid Rousing Trust, Norwegian Embassy, British Embassy, Peace Corps Volunteers, Terre Des Homme, World Vision, Open Gate – La Strada – Macedonia.

Name of partner	Human Dimensions (HD) / Intellectual Women of Shkodra (IWS) (two organizations, but working jointly in partnership with NCA)
Year of Foundation	HD –established in 2001; IWS – established in 1998
Mission	Human Dimensions: To observe, monitor, develop policies and encourage the three target groups, youth, women and elderly in development and improvement of their social, economic and health status. Intellectual Women of Shkodra: To engage women in building civil society, fight for women's rights and against drug abuse and human trafficking. The two organizations have established cooperation on various activities, particularly in the field of trafficking.
Constituency	Boys, girls, women and communities in the targeted area
Geographic Focus	Shkodra, rural areas in North Albania
Thematic Focus	Gender-based violence / Trafficking
Strategies	Work for reduction of trafficking in human beings and domestic violence in selected areas in North Albania through awareness raising, training for income, psychosocial activities and reintegration of trafficked women
Role in Civil Society	Work in close cooperation with local and state authorities through awareness-raising and advocacy for women's and children's rights.
Particular Achievements	This is a new partner for NCA as from 2007. A programme is being implemented in 2007 including: - Awareness raising among boys, girls and women through activities in secondary schools, health centres, women's groups - Reintegration into society of women already trafficked, or who have run away from home - Income generation and education for poor women and their families
Relationship with NCA	Ref. to the above
Start of Cooperation	2007
NCA's rationale for relationship	The partner operates in poor communities in North Albania from where girls and women are trafficked. HD/IWS are organizations who have knowledge about the area and about trafficking, and were recommended to NCA by the Norwegian Embassy in Tirana.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	2007 is first year of cooperation and therefore a year of mutual getting to know each-other. Possible expansion could be to try to establish links between this partner and an eventual new partner in Kosovo for cooperation on girls / women trafficked into Kosovo.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to the above
Partners, other than NCA	Until recently or present: UNOPS, SOROS Foundation, Norwegian Embassy in Tirana, British Embassy, Canadian Embassy, Embassy of United States of America, Embassy of Netherlands,

Name of partner	Health Education Research Association (HERA)
Year of Foundation	2000
Mission	-
Constituency	Youth and at risk-groups and people living with HIV (PLHIV)
Geographic Focus	Skopje, Macedonia
Thematic Focus	HIV
Strategies	Provides services and support for PLHIV, both in medical and non-medical settings, as well as organizing and implementing outreach work through - Awareness-raising and information in relation to HIV through counseling services and campaigns - Improve health and social care of PLHIV through provision of palliative care, complementary therapy and outreach work Long-term strategy is to stream-line its activities into the existing state health institutions
Role in Civil Society	HERA's activities are implemented in close cooperation with health authorities with the view to transferring all activities to state institutions in the course of 2008. HERA is also a member of the Multi-sector Committee on HIV established by the Ministry of Health, and participated in the writing of the application to the Global Fund which was approved in 2003.
Particular Achievements	Ref. to the above. HERA is involved in preventive work, awareness raising and general counselling, and provides anti-retroviral therapy. The service has served over 5000 clients over 5 years
Relationship with NCA	Ref. to the above. NCA is presently the only donor to HERA
Start of Cooperation	2002
NCA's rationale for relationship	HERA is a highly professional organization and covers an NCA thematic focus which has been a priority in the Balkans up until 2007. With the shift to focus on Roma, HERA's strategic priority correlates with that of NCA.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	The MFA allocation in 2007/2008 will be the last in relation to HIV, both due to HIV being down-prioritized in the region, but also because HERA has a clear exit strategy. In 2007 cooperation is initiated with the view to Roma, and as from 2008 NCA and HERA plan to shift from HIV to a multi-sector programme among Roma.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to the above on Roma.
Partners, other than NCA	Clinic for infective diseases and febrile conditions-Skopje, NGO HOPS; UNICEF, State Health Institutions. A member of the Multi Sector Committee on HIV established by the Ministry of Health. Up until recently funded by USAID.

Name of partner	Hungarian Inter church Aid/Merhamet
Year of Foundation	HIA in 1991, working in Balkans since 1995; Merhamet in 1991
Mission	-
Constituency	Rural communities in Sandzak; Novi Pazar population with threatened employment, including refugees, IDPs and Roma; school-age Novi Pazar population exposed to drug addiction.
Geographic Focus	Sandzak area in Serbia / Novi Pazar)
Thematic Focus	Education, food security through agricultural development and vocational training, health, shelter, water and sanitation, drug prevention, environment.
Strategies	Building sustainable communities in Sandzak region through agricultural development, vocational training, drug prevention, poverty reduction in rural communities, agro-environmental program.
Role in Civil Society	HIA is one of the four leading Hungarian NGOs. HIA works in close cooperation with Merhamet, a local organization with a large network of volunteers committed to providing assistance to vulnerable

	members of the society. Merhamet is a well respected organization in the community and plays an important role in serving vulnerable members of the community. The organizational foundation being weak, part of the programme component is organizational capacity building of Merhamet
Particular Achievements	Humanitarian aid among IDPs during and after the war in Kosovo. Agricultural reconstruction / development; re-establishment of co-operatives; vocational training with computer and English classes, various activities among Roma communities.
Relationship with NCA	Ref. to the above; NCA has supported the HIA programme Sandzak programme in relation to humanitarian aid, agricultural development, income generation, drug prevention, and multi-sector work among Roma.
Start of Cooperation	2003
NCA's rationale for relationship	HIA/Merhamet has played an important role in working for and among IDPs, and is as of 2007 active in Roma communities living under deplorable conditions; the agricultural programme is an important initiative in reducing the move to towns which results in increased unemployment.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Further cooperation with HIA will depend on exit strategies with the view to transferring responsibilities to the local partner Merhamet.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to the above.
Partners, other than NCA	HEKS, ACT, FinnChurchAid

Name of partner	Ecumenical Women Solidarity Fund
Year of Foundation	1993
Mission	The World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Women's Solidarity Fund (EWSF) is a project fund used by women for women in the countries of former Yugoslavia. It seeks to restore hope, promote reconciliation and human dignity, and enable people, regardless of their ethnicity, religion or origin, to rebuild their lives and communities affected by wars and conflict.
Constituency	Marginalized groups, Roma, women
Geographic Focus	Western Balkans
Thematic Focus	Peace and reconciliation, psychosocial support, education, health, women's empowerment.
Strategies	EWSF seeks to support local initiatives which contribute to the building of a just and peaceful society in which diversity is a strength and source of creativity, in which women have a dignified place and role in private and public life in harmony with their competence and personal choice, and in which religion promotes and supports the achievement of full equality between women and men.
Role in Civil Society	Having been part of the WCC programme for Western Balkans, EWSF in 2007 after an evaluation, is in the process of becoming an independent non governmental organization. EWSF is a regional organization based in Croatia, supporting, stimulating and transforming initiatives that support women as actors and instigators of change in religious communities and society in general.
Particular Achievements	Through the Small Projects Fund EWSF has supported approx. 80 initiatives over the period 2004 - 2006. It has proven to be a prime mechanism of support and one which will continue to be expanded in the future. Previously support was given to small groups and NGOs that were unable to secure funding from other sources – this approach will continue.
Relationship with NCA	NCA supported EWSF in the years 2001-2003. For 2007 NCA received a project proposal for a regional programme for women in peace-building. Our application to the MFA was put on hold by the Ministry. NCA will continue the endeavours to find funds for the programme.

Start of Cooperation	2001 (continued in 2002 and 2003)
NCA's rationale for relationship	EWSF belongs to the WCC family; is active in projects for women's empowerment; works regionally and is an organization with potential for cooperation on a regional peace-building programme.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Ref. to 'Relationship with NCA'
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to the above
Partners, other than NCA	EWSF has received funds from various ecumenical partners in Europe.

Strategic Alliances

Name of partner	World Conference on Religion and Peace
Year of Foundation	1970
Mission	Respecting religious differences while celebrating the common humanity, <i>Religions for Peace</i> is active on every continent and in some of the most troubled areas of the world, creating multi-religious partnerships to confront the most dire issues: stopping war, ending poverty, and protecting the earth.
Constituency	Senior religious leaders representing various religious communities
Geographic Focus	World-wide
Thematic Focus	In Europe: Peace building, dialogue and reconciliation
Strategies	In Europe: Developing strategy for engagement at the regional level through European Council of Religious Leaders (ECRL), headed by Bishop Emeritus of Oslo, Gunnar Stålsett
Role in Civil Society	Ref. to next par.
Particular Achievements	Since 1996, <i>Religions for Peace</i> has worked with senior religious leaders and officials in South East Europe's main religious communities - Islamic, Serbian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Jewish - to facilitate and support their efforts at cooperation and peace building. During the Bosnian conflict, <i>Religions for Peace</i> representatives made several visits to the region to meet religious leaders and assist in joint dialogues. Once the war in Kosovo ended, <i>Religions for Peace</i> helped religious leaders from Islamic, Orthodox and Catholic communities in Kosovo resume their discussions and commence work to build a more civil society. <i>Religions for Peace</i> has expanded its work to include Macedonia, Albania and Serbia and Montenegro, where initial steps to form inter-religious councils have taken place or have been established (Albania)
Relationship with NCA	With the support of NCA, WCRP has been working in BiH since 1996 and in Kosovo since 1999. In 2006 the Moderator of The European Council of Religious Leaders (ECRL), Bishop Emeritus Gunnar Stålsett, was one of the moderators at the Inter-faith Conference in Peja/Pec.
Start of Cooperation	In Bosnia and Hercegovina in 1996 and in Kosovo since 1999
NCA's rationale for relationship	Given its wide network of contacts in the region and globally, WCRP remains a strategic alliance partner for NCA in the Balkans, in particular through the ECRL. Even if the co- implementing partnership in Kosovo program was phased out in the beginning of 2004, it is expected that the co-operation with NCA will continue on an ad hoc basis, not in the least through Bishop Stålsett. The Archbishop of the AOC is an honorary president of WCRP (Ref. to above on Albania)
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Ref. to the above
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Ref. to the above
Partners, other than NCA	USAID, Mott Foundation, Rockfellers Foundation and King Badouin Foundation.

NCA's operational role

(Ref. to 8.0)

Since 1996 NCA has been implementing operational projects in Kosovo. In 2007 these are:

- Inter-religious / inter-ethnic dialogue – Kosovo-wide
- Roma return programme, Roma Mahala – Mitrovica
- RAE camp management – Mitrovica Area of Responsibility
- UNHCR / NCA Lead Agency Programme (LAP) – Mitrovica Area of Responsibility

All these programmes have received funding with an allocation period lasting into 2008.

The NCA involvement has been in relation to minorities, namely the Roma, and sustainable return of minorities in a majority surrounding, mostly Serbs, but also Albanians. Sustainable return is a prerequisite for peace-building. The dialogue programme has a long history in the region.

NCA has found it important from a strategic point of view to be present in Kosovo – also in a period when the international community is pulling out. Through the operational programmes NCA has acquired valuable knowledge in the field of peace-building and working with Roma. With the plans for phasing out for various reasons merging as a necessity, it is of great importance that NCA safeguards that the experience is channelled into continued commitment in the region.

8.0 NCA Contributions

The NCA contribution in relation to the partners will be as follows:

- Facilitate meetings and reflection space for different partners working on similar issues
- Organize annual meetings for all partners with varying agenda covering training, sharing of experiences and knowledge on topics relevant for the work in the sub-region.
- Facilitate for development of sub-regional strategies and plans, in particular in relation to peace-building and the Roma communities
- Support or carry out capacity building in NCA competence areas, e.g. RBA, gender, Do No Harm, project documentation, finance management a.o.
- Facilitate links to NCA regional programmes and related networks
- Facilitate links to Norwegian and / or regional resource organizations which can help build competencies for NCA core partners – particularly in relation to thematic priorities.

NCA operational:

If the solution to Kosovo status comes out satisfactorily and peace prevails throughout the region, it is envisaged that the NCA in her present form with physical presence in the Balkans and an office in Kosovo will gradually be scaled down and eventually closed in the first half of 2009.

The UNHCR / NCA Lead Agency Programme is, according to instructions from UNHCR, already in 2007 on its way to being localized. A local Programme Manager is engaged, capacities of local authorities and institutions are being built, and initiatives are taken for establishing / identifying a local organization for take over by mid 2008.

Discussions have likewise started with UNMIK in relation to the Camp Management Programme with the idea of gradually transferring responsibilities to local authorities.

In relation to the Roma Mahala return programme, extensive construction activities will seize in 2008 and there will be a need to consider continuation of other issues related to sustainable return.

During the period of 2007 and 2008 various alternatives will be considered as to how operational programmes (in Kosovo) will be phased out or continued under another kind of administrative solution. Alternatives for consideration may be individual Programme Management for specific operational projects in Kosovo (for instance Roma programme and Dialogue / Peace-building Programme), or linking up with a resource partner with the idea of sharing office premises and administration, or secondment to a partner.

Included in the initiatives when planning for a new set-up for NCA in the Balkans, will be a partners' assessment with the view to a selection in relation to a continued partner portfolio directly linked to the NCA Head Office.

Security issues

Given the volatile political and security situation in the region, in particular in Kosovo, NCA will continue to follow closely the situation and its impact on security. A NCA security and evacuation plan for Kosovo will be kept updated at any given time, and the regulations laid down in the NCA Routines and Guidelines will be followed, including incident reporting.

Code of conduct

NCA staff in Kosovo will continue the practice of requiring the staff to sign the NCA Code of Conduct, including regulations against sex exploitation and abuse. Adhering to NCA Routines and Guidelines, NCA will raise awareness on and commitment to issues related to the Code of Conduct. Included here is a commitment to reporting incidents.

Monitoring and incident reporting is a vital part of the NCA risk management and a prerequisite for minimizing damage by making it possible to work proactively. This is particularly important on indications or suspicion of misappropriation of funds and on complaints related to personnel conduct.

9.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of NCA's added value and relevance to partners have been established as of 2006.

Planned regional thematic programmes in the field of peace-building and human trafficking should be evaluated after 3-4 years of existence. Evaluation of the trafficking project in Vlore, Albania is accordingly due in 2008, and NCA will encourage this to take place if funds can be found through support from MFA. The NCA regional dialogue programme was evaluated in 2004, and an internal review of the Kosovo Inter-religious / Inter-ethnic Dialogue Programme was conducted in the autumn of 2006. It should be considered whether the dialogue programme in Kosovo be evaluated in the course of 2008, not in the least with the view to the phasing out of the NCA Representation in 2009. Included in this evaluation could be MCIC's Bridging Religions programme. When it comes to PY's Building Local Capacities, discussions are initiated in 2007 as to whether funds should be sought for an evaluation in 2008 as a basis for an exit strategy. Likewise discussions should be initiated with UNHCR in relation to an evaluation of the NCA Lead Agency Programme.

The annual Round Table/Consortium/Partner meetings, which normally contain at least one day of field visits, has been one of NCA's instruments for regular monitoring of implementing partners and their programmes. As of 2007 only DA continues this practice. However, NCA will encourage other core partners, EHO and PY, with several international donors develop similar structures.

The majority of NCA's Core Partners undertook organisational evaluations in 2004, and either have prepared or are in the process of preparing organizational strategies. NCA will actively encourage and support such evaluations as far as they provide guidance on

sustainability, gender/peace mainstreaming and necessary changes in the policy- or programmatic level.

As NCA will aim at mainstreaming gender-awareness and peace-building into relevant programmatic activities in the region, programme/project descriptions, reports and evaluations will be assessed as to what extent these aspects are mainstreamed into the overall programme activities. The partners will also be encouraged to perform internal assessments and monitoring through the use of instruments such as the Gender Empowerment Assessment (GEA) manual. Similar tools, based on the Do No Harm-approach will be developed to ensure a more consistent monitoring and evaluation of peace-building activities and peace mainstreaming. Rights-based Approach will be introduced in all NCA and partners programming.

In addition to annual multilateral meetings, bilateral field visits to NCA-supported projects will take place at least every 12 months. The bilateral visits will normally take the form of formal monitoring visits, resulting in the drafting of reports with recommendations.

NCA will continue developing, improving and quality-checking the project documentation according to the NCA Log-frame Approach and the Rights-based Approach.

10.0 Assessments

10.1 Assessment of relevance of program in relation to national plans and priorities

The following national plans and priorities seem particularly important for NCA and our partners work, given our thematic focus areas:

National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

National Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans were completed in several of the countries in question, including Serbia and Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia in 2003. In Serbia NCA's core partners EHO and Philanthropy participated in a large conference in June 2003 on the PRSP to discuss the contents of the plan, provide feed-back and consider how the plan would impact on current programme activities – or how current programme activities could be adjusted to better fit the goals and objectives of the plan. The inclusion of IDPs and refugees in the Serbia and Montenegro PRSP processes represented a step forward in providing directions for NCA and partners on how to align our activities related to integration of IDPs and refugees to overall PRSP policies. In Macedonia, the National (Governmental) Poverty Reduction Strategy was developed in 2001-2002, and NCA's core partner MCIC participated in its development; among other, the organisation was invited by the Government on two workshops during preparation of the document.

National Plans to combat trafficking in human beings

Vatra, NCA's resource partner in the field of trafficking participated in the drafting and implementation of the national plan to combat trafficking in human beings in Albania, and is also a member of the Stability Pact's working group to combat trafficking in the region. In Kosovo, there has been broad NGO participation in the drafting of a new national strategy with an action plan, which was published in the spring of 2005. All new partners and projects will be assessed against existing plans as well as gaps in assistance as identified by the Stability Pact and by national co-ordinators.

National Plans for Gender Equality or similar

Gender-mainstreaming, which is a key element of most national plans for promotion of gender equality, will be introduced in all NCA-supported programmes. In addition, all partners will be assessed against existing provisions in national plans for gender equality.

National or UNHCR's plans for refugees and IDPs

In Kosovo, Serbia and to some extent in Croatia, NCA and partners all co-operate closely with UNHCR when formulating their strategies and activities for cross-border and internal return of refugees and IDPs. NCA as lead agency for UNHCR in the Mitrovica-region in Kosovo supports UNHCR's policies and strategies for care and assistance to IDPs and returnees. In addition, NCA's programme activities in Kosovo are designed to, either directly or through the support to PISG and municipalities, to promote the rights enshrined in the **Standards for Kosovo** (December 2003), including articles concerning the functioning democratic institutions, and hereunder, availability of basic public services, sustainable rights and the rights of communities and their members (which includes implementation of programmes in line with the **2002 Strategy for Sustainable Return, Kosovo, 2002**)²⁰; property rights, and hereunder, support to legalization of informal settlements of vulnerable minority groups; and preservation of cultural heritage, and hereunder support to communities to restore sites important to their cultural, historical and religious heritage.

10.2 Assessment of relevance in relation to Norwegian development objectives

NCA is in close dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the relevant Embassies about the thematic and geographical focus areas.

With the focus on human rights through a **Rights-based Approach**, NCA is in line with the Norwegian development policy.

Peace-building is high up on the international agenda for the Norwegian Government and NCA has a commitment to continue and even widen the focus on peace-building in the years to come. With reference to the post-conflict situation in the Western Balkans, both UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, as well as the related Norwegian MFA Action Plan from 2006 are considered as important policy documents. NCA and its partners will seek to increase women's participation in decision making related to peace-building, i.e. peace-building as a program in its own right and as mainstreamed in other relevant post conflict programming.

In line with the The Norwegian Government's Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking [2006–2009], "Stop Trafficking", NCA will have **trafficking** as one of the three main thematic focus areas in 2008 and 2009. Moreover, in accordance with the Norwegian MFA Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (2007-2009), NCA staff and partners will have to demonstrate that they apply **gender-sensitive approaches** in all activities and by the end of the planning period, that gender has been mainstreamed at both organizational and programme levels.

Education will be particularly emphasized in the planning period in Roma programs, in addition to being at the core of many of the activities in relation to trafficking, capacity building of partners as civil society organizations and support to IDPs/refugees. The focus on improving access to education strengthens the relevance of NCA's and partners' activities in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and the Norwegian development assistance goals.

²⁰ Reference is also given to the UNHCR annual Country Operations Plan for Serbia - Kosovo included.

The Norwegian Government has over the last 4 years allocated considerable funds for Roma programmes in Kosovo and in Serbia and has signalled that **the Roma** are still a focus as a minority group in the Balkans, even if funds for expensive construction projects will be reduced drastically. NCA plans to follow up the commitment towards this marginalized group in the years 2008 and 2009.

In relation to other development policy objectives such as **environment**, funds provided a project on ecological sanitation, starting in 2007, will according to plan be finalized in 2008.

10.3 Assessment of Risks

See chapter 6, for Assumptions and Risks.

10.4 Assessment of Sustainability

The financial sustainability of the programme will depend largely on whether the Norwegian government will continue to provide support to the region of the Western Balkans, and to Norwegian Church Aid and its partners and programmes. A substantial reduction in allocations took place in 2007, and it is expected that there will be additional cuts in 2008 and 2009. Parts of the Norwegian funding should be replaced by EU-funding, as EU is expected to be the biggest donors to the region in the years to come. However, the extent to which NCA's partners will be able to target such funding will depend on the success of the current capacity-building programmes and of the planned initiatives to strengthen their internal and external fundraising and their strategy for communication and information.

The technical/administrative sustainability will depend on the ability of NCA and partners to attract and continue to develop organisations and institutions, with skilled personnel with experience from the specific programme areas.

Programmatic sustainability of partners' programmes in terms of thematic know-how and experience has been proven to a remarkable degree in the sub-region.

11. Budget estimates for 2007-2009

Year	2007	2008 (estimates)	2009 (estimates)
Amount (NOK)	30 million	30 million	20 million

ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Action by Churches Together
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CCPR	UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights
CEC	Conference of European Churches
CEDAW	IM Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPN	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRS	Catholic Relieve Service
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Rights of Refugees
DA	Diaconia Agapes
ECRL	European Council for Religious Leaders
EED	Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GBV	Gender-based violence
HERA	Health Education Research Association
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IDP	Internally displaced person
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOCC	International Orthodox Christian Charities
LWF	The Lutheran World Federation
MCIC	Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation
PLHIV	People living with HIV
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government
PY	Philanthropy
RBA	Rights-based Approach
SGV	Sexual and Gender-based violence
UMCOR	United Methodist Committee on Relief
UNHCR	United Nations Human Rights Commission for Refugees
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCRP	World Conference on Religion and Peace