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ASB implements a new project to close down two collective centres in Serbia with funds from the EAR

In Serbia and Montenegro (SCG), the Office of the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) has started to implement a new project to close down two collective centres: "Stara Bolnica" in the Municipality of Ljubovija and "Hotel Karadjordje" in the Municipality of Topola along with measures for sustainable integration of its former residents into Serbian society. The total value of this project is € 738,143.78 out of which € 700,000 will be provided by the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) and € 38,143.78 by ASB. ASB closely co-operates with the Commissariat for Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Republic of Serbia, UNHCR, municipality authorities and other local and international non-governmental organisations in implementing this project.

Following the closure of these two collective centres, ASB will provide durable housing solutions for refugees still living in those collective centres and those facing substandard living conditions in unofficial accommodation as well as for extremely vulnerable social welfare cases. In total, at least 44 families (24 in Ljubovija and 20 in Topola) will be directly assisted through the renovation of the old building of the CC "Stara Bolnica" and associated infrastructure in the Municipality of Ljubovija and with the construction of an apartment block with 20 housing units and associated infrastructure in the Municipality of Topola.

In addition, ASB will carry out adequate sustainable measures focusing mainly on income generation through the delivery of individual grants and through support to start-up and ongoing business with the aim of encouraging the sustainable integration of returnees and promote economic empowerment of both returnees and receiving residents.

The main objective of this project is to support the national strategy of the Serbian Government for resolving the problems of refugees and IDPs in facilitating the access to suitable housing and sustainable income which will contribute to the socio-economic revival and sustainable development, better quality of life and better community integration as well as to increased co-operation between the government and civil sectors.

Since 1999, in SCG (including Kosovo) ASB has implemented projects totalling € 23 million through its three offices in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Prizren with funding from the EAR, USAID, UNDP and the German Government. ASB reconstructed more than 2,016 houses and carried out numerous projects in the field of technical, social and economic infrastructure reconstruction, capacity building and humanitarian aid.

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