

Conclusions and lessons learned

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Between 1995 and 2005 SEK 1.2 billion has been disbursed to Sida's Integrated Area Programmes (IAPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). In accordance with the strategies of the Dayton Peace Agreement, these have aimed at establishing sustainable returns for displaced Bosnians. Through an assisted self help approach Sida and its implementing partners have contributed to the reconstruction of almost 15 000 private dwellings. Projects have also targeted the repair of schools and of local infrastructure such as electricity lines and water distribution networks. Agriculture components such as seed, fertilisers, hand tools, livestock and sometimes machinery have also been provided.¹⁵⁰

This is an evaluation of the IAPs, aimed at assessing their relevance, impact and sustainability. During the course of the evaluation we have also been able to gather substantial information about the effectiveness and efficiency of the programmes. Our findings regarding all five of these criteria are summarised in this chapter. The conclusions are based on the three different studies enclosed in this report. These are:

1. a case study analysing the reconstruction of the village Grapska, carried out by Hans Skotte, architect and researcher at the Department of Urban Design and Planning at NTNU in Trondheim, Norway.
2. an anthropological study, made by the social anthropologist Melita Čukur at the Centre for Multiethnic Research at Uppsala University, consisting of two case studies (in a village which we call Selo and in a suburb of Sarajevo).
3. a survey of 2 000 families who received support to rebuild their houses and 1 000 families in a control group. The survey is designed and analysed by the sociologist Kjell Magnusson of the Centre for Multiethnic Research at Uppsala University, and was carried out by the Croatian opinion poll institute PULS.¹⁵¹

Beside these studies data has been gathered through documents, and at two workshops and two seminars in Sarajevo with IAP stakeholders. The results

¹⁵⁰ The programme theory is elaborated in the introduction chapter to this evaluation.

¹⁵¹ The scope, purpose and methodology of the evaluation is described in the introduction chapter. For full details, please see annex 1: the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, annex 1a.

have been rigorously examined a number of times by an evaluation reference group.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is ‘the extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved’¹⁵². As regards this criterion it can be concluded that the IAPs have been successful in achieving their primary objective: i.e. the sustainable return of, primarily, internally displaced persons.

Sida has financed the reconstruction of 14 806 houses in BiH. Since the average number of persons per household is 3.3 about 50 000 persons have thus been able to return to their former homes as a direct effect of the IAPs.¹⁵³ Depending on location, between 5 and 17 percent of the houses are not inhabited but are visited frequently by their owners. Very few houses are abandoned or occupied by others. The programmes reached their primary target group. During and after the war about 71 % of the ‘beneficiaries’ were living as displaced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A rights-based approach to programming

In development cooperation today many donors apply what is called a rights-based approach to programming. Such an approach ‘translates poor people’s needs into rights, and recognises individuals as active subjects and stakeholders’¹⁵⁴. The approach also entails ‘a process of development based on principles of participation, accountability and transparency’¹⁵⁵. The IAPs have not explicitly used this terminology, but this evaluation shows that the strategic and tactical approach taken by Sida and its implementing partners bears the mark of a rights-based approach. We suggest that this approach has contributed to the successful achievement of the primary programme objectives, and has had positive side effects. In particular, there are two traits of programme implementation that can be regarded as success factors:

- *The transferral of agency to village committees.* In Grapska this transfer was substantial. The Village Committee formulated the selection criteria, selected ‘beneficiaries’ and themselves dealt with the local authorities. Skotte argues that ‘this not only brought symmetry to the relationship between donor/foreign NGO and the local population, it strengthened

¹⁵² See Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (OECD/DAC 2002).

¹⁵³ Since many of these returnees have left houses they had occupied, the programmes have also indirectly promoted substantial so-called secondary return. This means that the rightful owners of the occupied houses have also been able to return. Sometimes these people have lived in occupied houses as well, which has led to further secondary return.

¹⁵⁴ Sida, *Perspectives on Poverty* (Sida 2002), p. 34.

¹⁵⁵ Sida, *Digging Deeper* (sida 2003), p. 10.

social trust, collective powers and self-esteem among the returnees.’ At the two workshops with implementing partners the importance of transferring agency was confirmed. However, it was also pointed out that the village committees had to be closely monitored, since some of them misused their trust for personal benefit. Nonetheless all implementing organisations strived for transferring agency to village committees.

- *The assisted self-help approach.* Skotte concludes that this approach not only cut construction costs by about 40%:

But the one most significant impact of the self-help approach in Grapska was that it allowed people to infuse their new home with new meaning. It enabled them to make choices – a crucial constituent in re/building a home. And they did so in a reflexive manner. Partly to regain or recreate the symbolic content of the home they lost, partly as an act of defiance directed at their Serb neighbours.

Melita Čukur made similar observations in Selo and Sarajevo. In Sarajevo she concluded that ‘most informants preferred the self-help method for the very reason that it meant that more tenants could be helped. The individual involvement in the reconstruction was also considered very important, since people did not have to think of themselves as passive recipients of aid.’

In addition there is evidence that another significant factor has been:

- *The policy of concentration.* This means that Sida and its partners constantly and as a strategy tried to encourage the return of a sufficient number of ‘beneficiaries’ to constitute a ‘social movement of return’.

All of these factors taken together have, according to Hans Skotte, not only helped the returnees to regain *fixed and environmental capital* – housing, infrastructure and the physical environment. The programmes have also contributed to the strengthening of *human capital*, i.e. capabilities, skills, knowledge and the ability to use them, as well as to *social capital*, i.e. trust, commonly-held institutions and values, collective action – and so on.

Conceptual confusions

Another important success factor of the programmes has been their flexibility. Sida formulated the overall strategies and goals, while they trusted the NGOs to operationalise these strategies through flexible and contextualised decisions on the ground. The flexibility and trust expressed by Sida is a strength since it allows for relevant and natural adjustments in a constantly changing context. But it has also been a weakness since overall goals and strategies have not been adequately processed. One illustration of this is that the programme theory, or intervention logic, of the IAPs has never been sufficiently articulated. There are no programme documents or memos that

provide a comprehensive view of the programme theory as a whole.¹⁵⁶ Nor has the programme theory been sufficiently reformulated, stipulated and documented.

An effect of this is that the programme stakeholders have developed different perceptions and strategies over the life of the programmes. This has led to a fragmentation or 'projectification' of assistance: the 'P in the Integrated Area Programmes has thus been at least blurred. An upshot of this is that it is difficult for the implementing partners to contribute to a comprehensive development agenda; they have not been able to utilise their knowledge and resources in a co-ordinated way. In addition, it is difficult to evaluate effectiveness of interventions when the goals are amended over time; a dilemma that we have faced in this evaluation, where different stakeholders have expressed different views on the vision and mission of the programmes.

The ambiguities around the IAPs have also led to confusion for the returnees. This may be illustrated by the fact that only 30 percent of the survey respondents living in the country side admit to having received agriculture aid; they did not perceive the food security package given after they had moved in as 'agricultural aid'. This conceptual confusion may sometimes hamper the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions. Many villagers in Selo referred to the agriculture package provided by LWF as 'the best credit ever given'. One respondent explained: 'They gave anything, worth 2 000 KM. It could be eight sheep, it could be a cow, and it could be tools, fertilizer. All is dead capital. You sell it, get money and buy something for your home.'

These findings should not be taken as evidence that the agriculture components in the IAPs have failed, but should rather be seen as an illustration of possible effects of the conceptual confusions mentioned. Nor should these findings be regarded as a general criticism of LWF's work in BiH. An evaluation by Stockholm Group for Development Studies of LWF's agriculture support carried out in 2002 concludes that:

[...] the agricultural rehabilitation assistance provided through LWF-Tuzla is successful in terms of creating conditions for sustainable production and income. There is a very high degree of satisfaction amongst the beneficiaries. The vast majority of the beneficiary households are able to earn an income through their own agricultural production. 86% of the returnees are totally or partially dependent on this income.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ There are proposals from implementing partners and Sida assessment memos for these proposals. But these documents concern individual organisation's particular projects. There is no shared programme document, developed by all partners and Sida in co-operation.

¹⁵⁷ Stockholm Group for Development Studies AB, *Evaluation of Lutheran World Federation's Agricultural Rehabilitation Assistance in Northeast Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2002), p. 4.

One of the reasons that conclusions from that evaluation and our findings in Selo and Grapska seem contradictory is that the Stockholm Group for Development Studies' evaluation also includes interviews with people who had participated in LWF's *commercial* agriculture projects. These projects are not to be considered as a part of the IAPs.

Efficiency

Efficiency is 'a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time etc.) are converted to results'¹⁵⁸. As regards this criterion it has already been noted that the self help concept is about 40% cheaper than contracted house construction. Furthermore administration costs could be cut when village committees were engaged in e.g. beneficiary selection. On a macro level the programmes aimed at using locally produced building materials. This both cut costs and contributed to the local economy. According to Skotte about 85% of the building materials provided by SRSA in Grapska were domestically produced, whereas only about 20% of the materials used for the private houses and extensions were made in BiH.

Rather limited investments in agriculture may be an efficient way to secure a possible livelihood for returnees. But to maximise efficiency the agriculture potential of the area in question could be better utilised than in the IAPs, where all returnees received the same amount of support. For example, it would probably have been efficient to invest more resources into agriculture in Grapska, which has good conditions for farming.

Relevance

Relevance here means 'the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs global priorities and partners' and donors' policies'¹⁵⁹.

The return process was initiated and financed by the international community. This is clearly expressed in §7 of the Dayton agreement and the IAPs have thus been responding to 'global priorities'. Dayton obviously also meant to respond to country needs, i.e. the need to mitigate the effects of ethnical cleansing. As concerns partners' policies, communities are formally obliged to accord with Dayton. Thus the political framework of Dayton and the humanitarian catastrophe in BiH provided the boundaries for what could and should be done by outside donors and organisations to help displaced Bosnians. The IAPs were clearly relevant.

However, this evaluation has primarily assessed to what extent the programmes have responded to the needs and aspirations of the displaced Bos-

¹⁵⁸ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (OECD/DAC 2002).

¹⁵⁹ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (OECD/DAC 2002).

nians themselves. On this account we conclude that although the immediate decision to return was outside the control of those who were given help to rebuild their houses, most people claimed they would have returned anyway. A large majority of the returnees interviewed furthermore claim they would *not* prefer to live anywhere else today, and an overwhelming majority feel at home in their reconstructed houses. Generally they also feel secure. Furthermore both the survey and the anthropological case studies show that there is a general agreement among returnees that displaced persons should return to where they lived before the war.

The relevance of the reconstruction is also commented on by Hans Skotte, who emphasises the symbolic and moral dimensions of returning home. He writes:

The new housing has changed the overall environment. It carries a *new meaning*: most obviously that of *anticipation and hopes for future development* for the village people, but also an unambiguous shout of ‘*We’re back!*’ These signals are attuned to the ‘newness’ of the structures, which invariably will make the remaining ruins lose their horror as they are overtaken by weeds and trees.

As regards other parts of the IAPs the reconstruction of missing infrastructure and schools is clearly important, both symbolically and as a precondition for sustainable return. The agriculture components are also an important and highly relevant effort to provide the returnees with some tools for survival. Returnee programmes without such food security measures could indeed be criticised.

Impact

The return process in BiH can be regarded as one of the greatest and most challenging social experiments of all times. The international community has more or less demanded the repatriation of displaced Bosnians, thus forcing former enemies of war back together as neighbours. They have also been the major financier of the return process put into effect by international NGOs and international companies. Since Sweden has been one of the main contributors evaluating the impact of return, i.e. its direct and indirect, intended and unintended positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects¹⁶⁰, is of great interest. These effects can be analysed from two major perspectives: a social and an economic one.

Social impact

If we start with the social perspective it is clear that the way the IAPs were implemented had an effect on the human and social capital of the returnees.

¹⁶⁰ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (OECD/DAC 2002).

The returnees in the IAPs were generally given authority over the most important decisions – for example, who shall receive free materials. Furthermore the assisted self-help approach made the returnees the main actors in the reconstruction of their own houses. This approach was executed perfectly in Grapska, a best-practice example. ‘It would have weakened the organisation; it would have weakened the village – or the spirit, if the houses were to have been built by contractors – while the villagers stood watching’, commented the Chairman of the Village Committee, Safet Buljabasic. Instead the IAP approach, as carried out in Grapska, required interpersonal contact and entailed a certain level of social inter-dependency. All to the good for what Buljabasic called ‘*the village spirit*’. In Selo, people also talked about the village spirit that emerged during the reconstruction phase, and returnees in Sarajevo emphasised that they were treated with respect, not as recipients of charity.

All in all there is substantial evidence that the capacities, the capabilities, knowledge and skills of the people of the communities were recognised and that the programme drew benefit from them. The returnees thus became actors, rather than beneficiaries or passive recipients of aid. All of this has contributed to positive social impact, in terms of building what Skotte calls social and human capital.

The reconstruction of houses was regarded by Sida as a first, necessary phase in the process of re-integrating communities. Bringing former antagonists physically closer to each other was seen as an important beginning and precondition of coexistence. The programmes have indeed helped about 50 000 persons to move back to their homes. The question here is what happened after they returned.

Initially return was difficult in some areas. At times reconstructed houses were destroyed, and people attacked and hurt. Today people generally feel safe, and claim that those of other ethnic groups are either friendly or neutral. Hence the IAPs have contributed to coexistence in the sense that ethnic groups are living *physically* close to each other again. It is more questionable whether they have resulted in *re-integration*: there seem to be a ‘mental’ distance between people from different groups. A distance that may be illustrated by a quote made by a 70 year old Bosniak in Selo:

Coexistence is possible today. Who says it is not? It is possible. There is no more ‘we will not live together’. Besides, we have never lived together. We lived side by side. You see, there are Serbs in this village. One of them is in the village council. You see... they are here. They do not disturb us and we do not disturb them. They live and we live. Normally.

Hans Skotte makes observations that support the fact that people are not living ‘together’, but rather side by side. He writes:

The post-war relationship between the returnees and their neighbours has not been directly affected by the reconstruction. They remained firmly separated, in spite of occasional chance encounters. Although interaction is inevitable, it was not sought after. There was no social trust between the groups. The social capital within the Greater Grapska has been totally eroded because of the war. There were no signs that the housing investments, seen as replenishment of fixed capital had any rub-off effects on any of the other capital modes of Greater Grapska. Yet, as one of the members of the Village Committee mentioned in explaining these linkages, 'when *Mercator*¹⁶¹ opens in Dobož, maybe then we'll go there'.

He also notes that inter-ethnic relations in the municipality are tense:

Tension lingers on. The scarce employment opportunities available are by and large allocated to Serbs. I was told about cases where Bosniaks have been offered jobs at salaries significantly lower than Serb co-workers were getting. The individualised hassle by Dobož authorities now (2004) experienced by Grapskanians when trying to realize livelihood initiatives is, along the local practice of allocating public land to Serb IDP settlers, indicative of the still ongoing erosion of inter-ethno-religious trust. This is further supported by the fact that external linkages from Grapska, be they social and economic, lead to the Federation side, not to the local Serb dominated area.

In the survey Kjell Magnusson concludes:

If the programme was supposed to lead to more interaction across ethnic lines, that it would further cooperation between the beneficiaries, or that they would participate in various leisure-time activities, the results are rather modest. There are, indeed, no significant differences in these cases between those who were beneficiaries of Sida-aid and others.

We can conclude that neither the returnees, nor people who stayed in the areas during the war, are interacting much across ethnic lines. Judging from both the survey and the Sarajevo case study, this is the case both in rural areas and in towns. Since interaction is so rare one could hardly speak of social reintegration, and certainly not of reconciliation¹⁶². This may be illustrated by an encounter between two men in Selo, described by Čukur in her anthropological study:

¹⁶¹ A Slovenian owned chain of large shopping centres with outlets throughout the Balkans.

¹⁶² We do not refer to reconciliation as forgetting, forgiving or loving one another. Instead we apply the definition provided by the peace and conflict researcher Karen Brounéus in *Reconciliation – Theory and Practice for Development Cooperation* (Sida 2003). Thus 'Reconciliation is a societal process that involves mutual acknowledgement of past suffering and the changing of destructive attitudes and behaviour into constructive relationships towards sustainable peace. In other words, reconciliation mainly focuses on remembering, changing, and continuing life in peace.' (p. 20).

I was having a conversation with two persons, belonging to different ethnic groups. The first one mentioned his son, tragically killed in the war. The other added the story of his brother, who became paralysed during the war. Each told their stories to me. They did not turn to address one another, and neither commented the other's story. This is partly understandable: a response would demand a sort of reaction – either blaming or forgiving – for which neither was ready. Any comment might undoubtedly complicate, if not spoil relations. The scene can be understood as a personification of the reconciliation process. Although very much aware of belonging to different ethnic groups and of the painful and personal consequences of the war – the two, nevertheless, were sitting at the same table and telling their stories in the presence of the other.

Or, as a woman in Selo said:

We never talk about the war. Never, no one ever mentions it. Since it hurts, it hurts her and it hurts me. And you may say something inappropriate, you may spill the beans. Someone can be offended by something you say. We must leave it at that, it is the best thing to do. You just do not talk about it. You never know what someone else thinks about it – it is better not to get into that kind of talk.

The nature of interaction and communication between the ethnic groups indicates that the programmes have not, at least so far, 'contributed substantially to reconciliation at local level', as defined in the Swedish country strategy for development cooperation in BiH. Nor does the evaluation support the postulation that 'specific programmes in which former neighbours are dependent on one another for mutual help are highly effective at bringing about reconciliation', as is also claimed in the strategy. On the contrary, Hans Skotte notes that 'reconciliation is definitely beyond housing alone' and concludes that the findings of this evaluation, together with findings from other studies in other parts of the world, 'defies the popular assumption that spatial proximity causally leads to interaction and subsequent integration'. This is an important conclusion of this evaluation but it should be noted that return at least provides the opportunity for future interaction, and possibly even reconciliation. It is at least a first and crucial step in a long and challenging journey.

Economic impact

Moving on to assessing the economic impact of the programmes it is obvious that by financing the reconstruction of houses and infrastructure the IAP's replenished a significant portion of fixed capital. By mainly using locally produced materials they have contributed to the BiH economy. But even if

the programmes evidently have had an important economic impact in this sense, they have not, as it is claimed in the country strategy, had any significant long term effects regarding the economy in these areas. In Selo a 55-year old unemployed villager illustrates the positive and negative economic impacts of the programmes:

They do this and then leave, usually it is like that. It is true, Šefko returns, but in order to check who has come back, and who not. I understand – they are preoccupied in other places. Still, now you have come to ask us how we are, how we live – this is the first time anybody asks me how I live, how I am getting on. We did get the houses, we really did, they should be thanked for that, but there are other things necessary for life, those basic things needed for life should exist, infrastructure, water, those basic things. They gave what they considered was needed and do not ask how we are. I am not ungrateful, I very well know all the things we were given; we would never have been able to build the houses on our own, never! It is good that you have come; they should know how we live, what happened to us after we returned. And look how we live; nobody is working, we are hardly able to make ends meet. I no longer know to whom I should turn; this state does not give a penny for us. [---] but...this village has been rebuilt. That's a fact. However difficult it is now, it would be more difficult if we did not have the houses, a shelter. But, as I said, they should see how we live, what happened to us...

Clearly it is very difficult for many returnees to survive in their former homes, particularly in isolated rural areas. This poses a question on whether donors should assist people to go back to such areas at all, or if they should instead direct their support to areas with a 'development potential'. It also poses the question on when it is appropriate to end humanitarian aid, and refocus towards community or institutional development. A recently published large international joint evaluation of support to internally displaced persons concludes:

There appears to be a widely held belief that assistance is only required during the period of actual displacement despite widespread evidence that many returning households may require a lengthy period of assistance before they are able to re-establish their livelihoods [...].¹⁶³

It can be stated as a fact that many of the IAP returnees have not been able to re-establish appropriate livelihoods – to do so they would have needed additional support. On the other hand, the survey shows that other people in the target areas are neither better nor worse off than the returnees. Hence it

¹⁶³ John Borton, Margie Buchanan-Smith, Ralf Otto, Support to *Internally Displaced Persons – Learning from Evaluations*. Synthesis Report of a Joint Evaluation Programme. (Sida 2005), p. 141.

seems appropriate to direct support to everyone in the regions, rather than just to returnees. This is exactly what Sida has done through micro credit and agriculture projects. It is also in line with the recommendation of the IDP evaluation that ‘donors should only halt the use of humanitarian funds to IDPs once objective assessments have demonstrated that their vulnerability is no greater than that of the average population’¹⁶⁴.

Sustainability

Sustainability is ‘the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed’¹⁶⁵. Conclusions can be drawn from analysis of the relevance and the impact of the programmes. The evaluation shows that the IAPs have promoted the return of almost 15 000 families – about 50 000 people. The survey concludes that most really wanted to move back and wanted to stay on. Judging from the anthropological study an exception to this general rule is young people. Melita Čukur notes that most young people are extremely resigned and do not see any other solution to their situation than leaving, which is impossible. A 22-year old man said:

This is how most young people think, they hope they will go somewhere else, here there is no, what should I say, there is no work; no one should have to think only about how to leave. But the situation is terrible; I do not think it will change in the near future, now you are hardly able to live. It could change in 50 years, when I am an old man. If the borders would be open for six months, so that people could go to work in Europe or elsewhere, how many, do you think would stay? Only some 8 percent of the inhabitants. But that will never happen. People would leave, not because they do not love Bosnia or their birthplace, but simply out of interest, because of money, because of life, so you could change your life. This is deadening. Wherever you would like to go, you cannot, you don’t have money. You may think of something, you want to do something, start something – you cannot. Hope died long ago. When I came here, and had spent two months, when I saw how people were living, I said to myself – nothing will come of this. To rotten here...that’s all.

Most girls Čukur talked to had a clear picture of the future: to get married, take care of children and work in the fields. A 20-year old girl commented: ‘My future? Children, house, shovel and field.’

So, even if the IAPs have assisted 50 000 people to regain their homes and property, and the implementation strategy used has contributed to building

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 142.

¹⁶⁵ Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (OECD/DAC 2002).

social and human capital in their communities, there are major challenges to overcome if the returnees, and in particular the children, shall stay and prosper in these homes. Lack of work and job opportunities, lack of trust in other people, in politicians and the international community, all of this has led to a feeling of hopelessness and even despair. Whether or not the communities supported by Sida and its partners will prove sustainable is a question beyond the powers of the Integrated Area Programmes alone.

Lessons learned

One of the purposes of this evaluation has been to gather lessons learned from the ten years of work with IAPs. Workshops and seminars during the process have been a means to this end. Questioning the values the programmes represent should not stop at this point. Rather, stakeholders of the programmes and others interested will continue to mull over just what has been achieved.

However, as evaluators we put forward some reflections to serve as a starting point:

- The IAPs have been successful in promoting sustainable return mainly because of the way the programmes were implemented – assisted self help with transfer of agency to village committees. This implementing strategy, which in many ways bears the characteristics of a rights-based approach, strengthened social trust, collective confidence and self-esteem among the returnees. It involved them as actors, rather than passive recipients of aid.
- Another important success factor of the programmes has been their flexibility. Sida formulated the overall strategies and goals, while they trusted the NGOs to operationalise these strategies through flexible and contextualised decisions on the ground. What has happened is that stakeholders have developed different perceptions and strategies over the life of the programmes. These developments are obviously relevant and natural adjustments to take account of a constantly changing context, but a problem has been that they have not been adequately processed. An effect of this has been a fragmentation or ‘projectification’ of assistance: the ‘I’ in the Integrated Area Programmes has thus been at least blurred. In addition, it is difficult to evaluate effectiveness of interventions when the goals are amended over time. A lesson to learn is that programmes need to allow flexibility, but at the same time this requires that overall goals and strategies of the programmes are constantly reformulated, stipulated and documented in participatory stakeholder processes.
- The reconstruction of Bosnia and the assistance rendered to the displaced has in many ways been a game. Donors were exclusively focusing on programmes of reconstruction for return, but there were not sufficient

funds for all destroyed houses to be rebuilt. Some areas were selected ahead of others. Even in the communities selected, only some of the destroyed houses could be funded for reconstruction. Lacking any overall strategy, the international housing interventions were implemented according to presumptions, contextual perceptions and/or professional capacity (or lack thereof) on the part of the field staff of donors or INGOs. In this respect Sida stands out¹⁶⁶. Their field perspectives were drawn up by professional planners. And this shows¹⁶⁷.

- To increase effectiveness and sustainability, all stakeholders should be involved in decision-making. NGOs and donors need to be better at listening to their clients, the people they are there for. More importantly, they have to learn how to facilitate these clients in their own development efforts rather than imagine that they themselves are there to deliver the product. Good communication requires symmetric relations between donors and organisations and between organisations and communities. It also requires that trust be built up over long term relationships. The IAPs were often successful in these respects, and produced good results and positive side effects. But whenever stakeholders were excluded from decision making then problems such as misunderstandings and lack of co-operation arose.
- Implementing organisations have maintained that IAPs have been effective when based on credits or demanding work in return for financial inputs. Grants or 'gifts' have not been as effective. Credits or work based development challenges people to be partners rather than passive beneficiaries.
- Re-establishing people in their former homes does not mean that reconciliation will follow. This evaluation confirms findings from studies in other parts of the world: the popular assumption that living as neighbours leads inevitably to interaction and subsequent integration is false.

¹⁶⁶ Although planner-architects were employed by some of the other agencies in BiH – GTZ, USAID and UNDP – Sida was unique in consistently employing architect-planners in strategic positions in BiH.

¹⁶⁷ Embedded in the profession of physical planner-architects is an acknowledgement of the bonded relationship between the physical, social and the economic dimensions of society. Understanding the interdependence between these elements and devising ways of handling – or even manipulating them, is what physical planning is about.