



# **PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Compilation of the information available in the Global IDP  
Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council

(as of 20 February, 2003)

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## PROFILE SUMMARY

Displaced Chechens face mounting pressure to return to their homeland, despite widespread insecurity in the war-torn republic and Russian government promises not to force people back. Some 5,000 people have returned to Chechnya already this year under a new campaign by Chechen, Ingush and Moscow authorities to return all Chechens by the end of 2002. Several tent camps for displaced people have been closed down.

About 300,000 displaced Chechens, meanwhile, are going through a fourth winter of displacement in a generally vulnerable conditions, facing 'serious' health risks from malnutrition, poor living conditions, mental stress and spreading diseases. While most displaced Chechens survive on international aid, this is often disrupted by insecurity, kidnapping of aid workers and bureaucratic obstructions. The UN Special Representative on IDPs, Dr. Francis Deng, still has not been able to visit the region.

Chechnya remains insecure for many civilians, as Russian security operations continue against rebels in the republic. Thousands of allegations of theft, property destruction, disappearances, rape and murder have yet to be answered. In addition to the persons displaced by the current conflict in Chechnya, another 80,000 persons have been forced to flee their homes because of the first Chechen conflict and other local ethnic disputes in the Northern Caucasus.

### *Humanitarian concerns*

The vast majority of displaced persons in Northern Caucasus depend on food aid to sustain their livelihoods. Food distributions undertaken by the authorities are largely insufficient to meet daily nutritional needs: this is particularly the case in Ingushetia where authorities have removed IDPs from the distribution lists, or have disrupted food in order to push the displaced populations back to Chechnya. According to economic surveys undertaken by the ICRC in 2002, the most vulnerable households in Chechnya and the neighbouring republics are often unable to access to existing food aid ICRC July 2002, Chechnya). Bureaucratic obstacles regarding documentation requirements hampers access to state benefits, such as elderly or invalid pensions, for the most destitute households. In Ingushetia and Dagestan, IDPs can only collect most state benefits in Chechnya itself, which forces them to renounce to them as a result of security concerns and high transportation costs (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan).

Despite a significant international humanitarian presence, health indicators among the displaced population in Chechnya and Ingushetia remain at worrisome level. According to the UN, international humanitarian relief operations in north Caucasus helped stabilise the health situation among the displaced population in Ingushetia, while 'emergency conditions' continued to prevail in Chechnya (UNOCHA November 2002). However, humanitarian organisations report serious health risks in both republics, linked to malnutrition, poor hygiene and shelter conditions, as well as high levels of psychological stress. Alarming rates of tuberculosis, Hepatitis A, HIV cases, mental disorders and injuries caused by landmines and unexploded ordnance are among the most serious problems on the ground (UN OCHA February 2002). In the fall of 2002, respiratory diseases and anaemia increased to a concerning level in IDP collective settlements in Ingushetia and Chechnya (UNICEF 9 September 2002 & 5 October 2002). Paediatric immunization coverage is only 24 percent of the total displaced children population in Ingushetia. Prohibitive costs of medical consultations and supplies leave the poorest displaced households without access to healthcare (ICRC July 2002, Chechnya)

Shelter remains a major cause of vulnerability for the displaced. In both Chechnya and Ingushetia, the majority of the displaced have been accommodated with the local population, but a increasing portion of them in Ingushetia live in collective shelters or settlements. As the capacity of the host population in Ingushetia is overstretched, internally displaced persons face a constant risk of being evicted from their private shelters. Despite UNHCR's efforts to mediate with local host families, the share of IDPs living

camps or spontaneous settlements went up from 19 percent to 44 percent during 2001-2002 (WFP 2002). Conditions in collective shelters and camps do not offer adequate living conditions as authorities are reluctant to allow international agencies to upgrade tents in Ingushetia. There is a lack of space in collective accommodation centres for returning IDPs in Chechnya, while available buildings often have no heating, electricity, and water, or are too damaged to be inhabitable (HRW January 2003). ICRC reports that collective centres in Dagestan are in desperate conditions and require immediate rehabilitation (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan).

### ***Freedom of movement***

Chechen IDPs elsewhere in the Russian Federation are denied any legal status, the lack of which deprives them of access to essential services and rights. One main problem faced by the Chechen IDPs who escaped Chechnya or Ingushetia hoping to find more favorable conditions elsewhere in other regions is the inability to register as residents. Although the system of residence permits inherited from the Soviet period (so called propiska) has been legally abolished, de facto limitations to the free choice of residence remain in place in numerous regions, including major urban centres such as Moscow or St. Petersburg. Furthermore, displaced from the current conflict in Chechnya have not been able to gain the "forced migrant" status, which federal authorities refuse to grant to persons exposed to the war violence perpetrated by federal forces (UNHCR January 2002). Deprived of any legal status, most Chechen displaced in urban centres have been unable to access essential services and social benefits and exposed to harassment from police forces or local authorities. Anti-Chechen feelings among authorities and the population has also victimised other ethnic minority groups. Ethnic minorities in the region of Krasnodar, such as Roma and Meskhetian Turks, remain subjected to evictions from the region, or threat thereof, by local authorities (U.S. DOS 4 March 2002, UNHCR 5 April 2002, HRW 2002).

### ***A premature return policy***

As a result of continuous pressure from the authorities, IDPs have been forced to return prematurely to Chechnya. At the beginning of the current conflict, Ingushetia offered a safe haven for the vast majority of the Chechen IDPs, but it soon became clear that Russian authorities were keen to reverse this situation and contain the displacement crisis to the Chechen territory (see chronology below). Beside the hasty creation of "safe areas" in Chechnya as early as in 2000, various practices, including the chronic disruption of federal food aid in camps, opposition to provision of new tents, the suspension of registration of new arrived Chechen IDPs, and the arbitrary removal from the state's distribution lists have been denounced by international organisations as exerting undue pressure on displaced persons in Ingushetia to return to Chechnya (Gahushkina 2002). Security operations in IDP settlements and the stationing of military forces in the vicinity of IDP camps have also spread anxiety among the displaced population. Forced closure of tent camps has been also implemented in a limited number of cases. Since June 2002, return movements from Ingushetia to Chechnya seem to outnumber new arrivals from Chechnya (UN November 2002).

Forced return: Chronology

Winter 1999-2000: Russian authorities removed several hundred internally displaced people from railway wagons at Ingushetia's makeshift Severny settlement and transferred the empty carriages to Grozny. The occupants have to find alternative shelter.

17 December 1999: Federal Migration Service instructs its branch offices in Northern Caucasus to suspend the registration of newly arrived IDPs from Chechnya into Ingushetia.

April 2001: The Ingush branch of the Federal Migration Service definitely ceases to register newly arrived IDPs from Chechnya.

28 April 2002: Kremlin's favorite candidate, General Murat Zyazikov, is elected president of Ingushetia.

29 May 2002: Federal, Chechen and Ingush authorities sign a 20-point Action Plan for the return of IDPs to Chechnya "by October 2002".

July 2002: Two tent camps in Znamenskoe (northern Chechnya) are forcefully closed down. About 2,000 IDPs are relocated to temporary accommodation centres in Grozny.

December 2002: The Iman tent camp in Aki Yurt (Ingushetia), which housed some 1,700 displaced Chechens, is forcefully closed down. Some 400 persons have gone back to Chechnya, while the rest of the camp population has moved to private accommodations or has resettled in other temporary shelters.

However, the humanitarian community has voiced its concern that return movements may be made prematurely to unsafe areas. Civilians continue to leave Chechnya to Ingushetia because of violence, some soon after their return from Ingushetia. Indeed, national and international human rights observers consider security conditions in Chechnya to be inadequate for large-scale return, and that the efforts by the federal government to create return-conducive conditions in the republic are largely insufficient. In 2002, the federal government adopted a programme for the socio-economic reconstruction of Chechnya, allocating up to US\$142 million from the federal budget. However, the government acknowledges that the transfer of funds to Chechnya was too slow while the federal audit chamber reported misuse and diversion of federal funds in Chechnya (UNOCHA November 2002, RFE/RL 3 December 2002).

In the area of human rights, measures taken so far by the authorities have failed to curb the violence against the civilian population. The President of the Russian Federation appointed a Special Representative for Human Rights in Chechnya in February 2000. The Special Representative's office has no power to investigate or prosecute alleged offenses and must refer them to military or civil prosecutors (U.S. DOS 4 March 2002). From the thousands of complaints regarding cases of theft, property destruction, disappearances, rape and murder received by the Special Representatives, only 46 in three years have led to indictments (Council of Europe 28 January 2003). Despite decrees issued by the Procurator General of the Russian Federation (July 2001) and the military authorities in northern Caucasus (March 2002), human rights observers confirm that human rights still continue to be seriously violated during security sweep operations (HRW April 2002, Memorial 6 June 2002). Both Russian forces and Chechen rebels are involved in cases of forced disappearances and extrajudicial executions (HRW January 2003). For most observers, the referendum planned on 23 March 2003 for the adoption of a new constitution for Chechnya is premature and could exacerbate the situation (IASC-WG 10 September 2002).

#### ***Displacement from the Prigorodny district***

In October 2002, the presidents of North Ossetia and Ingushetia signed a cooperation agreement that includes a commitment from both sides to accelerate the repatriation of the ethnic Ingush displaced to North Ossetia (RFE/RL 15 October 2002). In 1992, the Republic of Ingushetia faced an influx of several thousands displaced persons from neighbouring North Ossetia: between 34,000 and 64,000 ethnic Ingush were displaced by communal violence in the district of Prigorodny, an area in North Ossetia disputed between Ingush and Ossetians. Most ethnic Ossetians displaced by the conflict – about 9,000 persons – returned to their homes after the conflict. However, only 20,000 ethnic Ingush displaced persons were able to return as of October 2002 (UNHCR 18 October 2002). Another 12,000 persons are still waiting in Ingushetia to return to North Ossetia while several thousands are likely to settle in Ingushetia permanently (UNHCR 7 March 2001 & 1 April 2002).

#### ***Humanitarian access***

Insecurity in northern Caucasus has seriously hampered the delivery of assistance and protection to the displaced. International humanitarian workers are exposed to major threats, as of result of kidnapping,

landmines and other security incidents. Humanitarian workers are exposed to a serious risk of abduction, as illustrated by the unsolved case of the MSF head of mission who has been missing since August 2002. However, insecurity can explain only partially the persisting reluctance of the authorities to allow humanitarian access to Chechnya. In contradiction to their asserted will to restore conditions for early return, civilian and military authorities have consistently obstructed the work of international NGOs in Chechnya through numerous bureaucratic impediments (IASC 10 September 2002). Except for the special UN Representative on children and armed conflicts who visited North Caucasus in June 2002, other UN rapporteurs, including the UN Representative on Internally Displaced Persons, Dr. Francis Deng, have not been able so far to visit Chechnya, as recommended by the UN Commission of Human Rights in 2000 and 2001 (ICVA 25 September 2002). The OSCE mission in Chechnya was forced to close down in December 2002 after the Russian authorities refused to extend its human rights mandate (HRW 1 January 2003)

Assistance provided by the international community has proved essential in meeting the basic needs of the displaced in North Caucasus, as national authorities have failed to provide adequate humanitarian and reconstruction aid. UN agencies have progressively been able to provide more assistance to the civilian population within Chechnya itself, with 60 percent of food aid currently provided in Chechnya (UN OCHA 15 August 2002). However, UN agencies have refused to support the return policy pursued by the federal authorities, and have asserted that UN assistance "will follow return and not the reverse" (UNHCR 21 June 2002). Protection is also an area where several organisations, such as UNHCR and the Council of Europe have actively been involved, through the support given to governmental and non-governmental human rights institutions (UN CHR 26 February 2002).

### *A decade of displacement*

After three years of conflict, civilians in Chechnya continue to be exposed to a high level of violence, which deters most displaced in neighbouring Ingushetia from returning. Armed clashes between federal forces and Chechen rebels, usually followed by sweep operations carried out by federal troops, continued to be reported by human rights organisations throughout 2001 and 2002 and belie the return to normalcy in Chechnya reported by authorities (U.S. DOS 4 March 2002). Civilians in the Chechen republic are still exposed to indiscriminate military actions, extortion, disappearances, and random violence by Russian soldiers and Chechen rebels. Furthermore, armed hostilities have occasionally spread to Ingushetia, where it caused some displacement too (WFP 27 September 2002). The main military campaign of the second conflict in Chechnya, which started in August/September 1999 was declared over in April 2000. At this time, federal sources reported that Chechen fighters had been forced to withdraw from the lowlands to the mountains but that low-level warfare persisted.

The resumption of armed hostilities between federal military forces and the Chechen separatists in 1999 plunged North Caucasus into a new humanitarian disaster, and a large-scale displacement crisis. As during the first conflict, both sides have conducted armed operations in total disregard of humanitarian principles. Disproportionate use of force, indiscriminate attacks, arbitrary arrest, torture and inhuman treatment, which human rights organisations mainly attributed to the federal forces, compelled up to 600,000 persons from their homes as of end of 1999. The majority remained displaced within Chechnya but a significant number of them (up to 200,000 persons) fled to the neighbouring republic of Ingushetia during winter 1999-2000, the only escape route left open by the federal authorities (USCR 2001).

The first armed conflict between federal forces and secessionist armed groups in Chechnya (1994-1996) took the lives of 30,000 civilians and displaced as many as 600,000 persons. Most ethnic Russians and other non-ethnic Chechen groups left Chechnya and other North Caucasian republics during this period and resettled durably elsewhere in the Russian Federation. Federal authorities granted them the status of "forced migrants", which entitles beneficiaries to social assistance in support of their resettlement, according to law adopted in 1993 and 1995. About 65,000 displaced persons from Chechnya continue to benefit the status as of June 2002. However, the majority of the displaced from the first conflict in Chechnya were ethnic Chechens and were not recognised as "forced migrants" because they allegedly returned to Chechnya following the agreements between the warring parties in August 1996 and May 1997. Many of them were

still displaced in neighbouring republics as conflict in Chechnya broke out again in September 1999 (ICRC February 2002).

(updated February 2003)

## CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

### The conflicts in Chechnya

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#### Background to the conflict: Chechnya recent history (1922-1998)

- Russian expansion in the Caucasus meets fierce Chechen resistance throughout the nineteenth century
- Forced collectivization and attempts at "Russification" by the Bolsheviks led to renewed unrest and rebellion in Chechnya, culminating with brutal repression during the Stalinist 1930s
- Chechens and Ingush deported en masse to Soviet Central Asia and other far reaches between 1944-1957
- In 1957, Khrushchev decreed their return
- With Ingushetia opting to remain within Russia, Chechen leader Djohar Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force General, proclaimed Chechen sovereignty on November 2, 1991
- As a result of the declaration of independence, some 100,000 Russians left Chechnya
- December 1994-August 1996: Russian troops undertake a military intervention in the republic; up to 400,000 people flee to other areas of Chechnya and the Russian Federation
- 1997-1999: Chechnya remains unstable; insecurity and hostage-taking oblige to a reduction of international humanitarian aid; Sharia law introduced by the President of the Chechen republic

"Chechnya experienced 21 months of warfare between December 1994, when some 40,000 Russian troops entered the rebellious republic, and August 1996 when a cease-fire took hold. An estimated 50,000 people, mostly civilians, were killed. Indiscriminate bombing and artillery attacks destroyed large areas of the Chechen capital Grozny in the first two months of the war, forcing up to 400,000 people to flee to other areas of Chechnya and to the frontier regions of Ingushetia, Daghestan, North Ossetia, and southern Russia. As the war continued into the surrounding countryside and southern mountain areas, entire villages were destroyed, resulting in further displacement.

The war was the most recent manifestation of the historical inability of Chechnya and Russia to find a workable modus vivendi. Chechnya's history over the past 200 years has been defined largely by Russian and Soviet attempts to subdue the Caucasus. In Czarist times, an uncontrolled northern Caucasus was considered to be Russia's Achilles' heel against incursions from the Persian and Ottoman Empires. From the second decade of the nineteenth century, Russian armies began their push into the mountains meeting fierce, well-organized, and Islamicized Chechen resistance. During a 25 -year campaign of resistance led by the Imam Shamil between 1834-1859, Russian forces opted for a scorched earth strategy, destroying the lands and villages that gave the Chechen fighters sustenance and forcing the population to flee to the relative safety of the mountains. Russian armies won a titular military victory in 1859 with Shamil's capture, but resistance continued for the remainder of the century and well into the next. In modern times Shamil, who was an ethnic Avar from Daghestan, remains a venerated folk hero in both Chechnya and Daghestan.

Upon the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, Bolsheviks promised independence, cultural autonomy, and religious freedom to Chechens and others in the northern Caucasus. However, the Soviet Red Army consolidated its power in the Caucasus soon afterward. Forced collectivization and attempts at Russification led to renewed unrest and rebellion in Chechnya, culminating during the Stalinist 1930s with

brutal repression, forced famine, mass arrests, exiles, and killings. Chechnya was united with Ingushetia as an ASSR in 1934. The Ingush and Chechens, who together comprise the Vainakh people, are ethnically related, speak a similar language, and often share kinship ties.

With the advent of World War II, as German forces advanced into the Caucasus, small numbers of anti-Soviet guerrillas mounted attacks against Soviet forces. This provided Stalin with a pretext to punish the 'unreliable' ethnic groups of the northern Caucasus. With great loss of life, Chechens and Ingush were deported en masse to Soviet Central Asia and other far reaches, and their lands were divided up among Russians, the Laks of Dagestan, and North Ossetians. The Chechens and Ingush remained in exile until 1957, when it was decreed by Khrushchev that they could return to their homes. The return was badly managed, however, and recurring clashes between the returnees and settlers continued for many years.

Perestroika in the late 1980s allowed for the resurgence and open expression of national identities in the Caucasus, leading in Chechnya as elsewhere to a declaration of independence from Russia. With Ingushetia opting to remain within Russia, Chechen leader Djohar Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force General, proclaimed Chechen sovereignty on November 2, 1991, shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Relations between the struggling democracy in Moscow and the Chechen capital Grozny were difficult from the outset. Moscow refused to recognize Chechnya's secessionist aspirations and mounted both covert and overt operations to weaken Dudayev's position and replace him with a more tractable regime.

In Chechnya, the pervasive socioeconomic ills brought about by the collapse of the Soviet system and Dudayev's own increasingly autocratic style of leadership sent the territory into a spiral of fragmentation and instability. These conditions were exacerbated by the emptying of jails, the proliferation of small arms, and burgeoning criminal activity. Like his successor Aslan Maskhadov, Dudayev's challenge was to impose a hierarchical state system atop a society more closely organized along lateral, clan-based relations. Amid a worsening breakdown of law and order, some 100,000 Russians, many of them holding highly skilled, essential jobs in Chechnya's infrastructure and industry, departed for more hospitable surroundings. Russian military leaders promised Yeltsin that Chechnya could be quickly subdued. Amid protests from Ingushetia and liberal circles in Moscow, a Russian invasion force was mustered in the northern Caucasus and entered Chechnya on December 11, 1994.

[...]

Although an OSCE mission with fewer than 10 diplomats and military observers was dispatched to Grozny in June of 1996, the mission's political marginalization by OSCE member states and its size meant that it could achieve little tangible result over the course of the war. Russia was given largely free reign by the international community in its prosecution of the war, in deference to Russian sovereignty and its key roles in other pressing international foreign policy issues. Fighting eventually ended in August 1996, following an all-out attack in Grozny on Russian forces, who were forced out in a humiliating defeat by a much smaller separatist force. Russian President Yeltsin's national security advisor at the time, former Soviet general Alexander Lebed, concluded a cease-fire agreement with the separatist leadership. The terms of the cease-fire stipulated the withdrawal of Russian forces and a five-year hiatus for discussions on Chechnya's future political relationship with Russia.

From the cease-fire to [June 1998], Chechnya has remained unstable. Despite presidential and parliamentary elections and repeated accommodations of radicals and militants by the elected leadership, the warlords and factions rather than politicians have continued to control events. Criminality has deepened in Chechnya following the cease-fire, partly a consequence of large numbers of unemployed former fighters and the destroyed economy. Specifically, humanitarian actors have been increasingly targeted for attack, the most tragic instance of which was the assassination, with possible political motives, of six expatriate ICRC employees and the serious wounding of a seventh in an ICRC hospital compound south of Grozny on December 17, 1996, just prior to elections. Although the aid community drastically scaled back its presence in response, a rash of hostage takings targeting expatriate aid agency staff continued in and around Chechnya to February 1998, when the kidnapping of the UNHCR head of office in Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia, led to a further reduction of humanitarian action in the northern Caucasus. Since the scaling down of international aid operations, the Russian Federation has responded with emergency assistance to

several ecological disasters in Chechnya. Insecurity has precluded any comprehensive assessment of post-war need." (Hansen 1998, pp. 20-22)

"In February 1999 [January 1997 elected President] Maskhadov introduced Islamic law into the republic by presidential decree. He also stripped the parliament of its legislative powers and abolished the post of vice-president. Maskhadov ordered the drafting of a new constitution based on the Koran and created a *Shura* (State Council), as an advisory body which the opposition was invited to join. The opposition had created an alternative *Majlis Shura* (Supreme State Council), to which they elected themselves and in which they allocated a seat to Maskhadov, but on condition that he resigned as president, claiming that presidency is incompatible with *Sharia* law. The parliament, once the base of support for Maskhadov, refused to recognize the presidential initiatives as legitimate and continued to function as before. This created a triarchy, although no one possesses ultimate political authority over the entire republic." (Matveeva 1999, pp. 94-95)

### **The military operations in Dagestan and Chechnya (September 1999 - March 2000)**

- Russian military intervention in Chechnya follows bomb explosions in Moscow attributed to Chechen terrorists and a Chechen incursion into the neighbouring republic of Dagestan (August-September 1999)
- After advancing quickly through northern Chechnya, Russian forces encountered fierce resistance as they approached the Chechen capital Grozny (November-December 1999)
- Chechen rebel forces abandon Grozny; military operations continue in Southern Chechnya; Chechen leader calls for a guerrilla war against the Russian forces (February-March 2000)

"On September 5 [1999], Russian military forces began a month-long air assault on Russia's self-ruled, separatist republic of Chechnya, displacing more than 80,000 civilians by month's end. What began as a campaign to defeat Chechen-based armed Islamic 'Wahhabi' guerrillas who seized several villages in Chechnya's neighboring republic, Dagestan, in August and early September, quickly turned into an offensive resembling the 1994-1996 Russian-Chechen war [...].

Throughout September, Russian forces widened the bombing campaign from sites along Chechnya's eastern border with Dagestan to targets throughout the republic. They reportedly targeted the Wahhabi guerrillas, who they claimed bombed several apartment buildings in Moscow, Dagestan, and other areas of the Russian Federation. On September 28, after several failed attempts to engage Russia and stop the escalating war, President Maskhadov condemned 'the Russian aggression' and enlisted Shamil Basayev--former Chechen commander and leader of the Wahhabi guerrillas--to lead Chechnya's new war against the Russian Federation. (Unlike the 1994-1996 war in which many ethnic Chechens fought for independence, most Chechens reportedly oppose the fundamentalist ideology of the Wahhabi guerrillas and their attempts to infiltrate Dagestan.)

By the end of September, villages surrounding Chechnya's capital, Grozny, lay in ruins, hundreds of civilians had been killed by wayward bombs, and more than 80,000 displaced Chechens sought shelter in neighboring Ingushetia, Dagestan, and North Ossetia." (USCR October 1999)

"After advancing quickly through northern Chechnya, taking several towns without a fight, including Chechnya's second largest city of Gudermes, Russian forces encountered fierce resistance as they approached the Chechen capital Grozny. In November, Russian troops fought hard to encircle the city and cut off supply lines from the south, with towns and villages to the south of Grozny the scene of very heavy fighting. By early December, Russian forces had more or less encircled Grozny.

Russian commanders initially ruled out a ground offensive into Grozny, in an apparent attempt to avoid repeating the mistakes of December 1994 and January 1995, when hundreds of Russian soldiers entering



the city in columns of tanks proved to be easy targets for the Chechen rebels. Russian forces began a relentless bombing and shelling campaign on the city in late November 1999. On December 6, the Russian military announced an ultimatum to all civilians in Grozny to leave the city by December 11 or face 'elimination.' Leaflets dropped from Russian planes instructed civilians: 'Those who remain will be viewed as terrorists and bandits and will be destroyed.... Everyone who does not leave the city will be destroyed.' The ultimatum was eventually retracted, apparently under pressure from the international community.

Countless civilians fell victim to the continuing bombing and shelling campaign. On various occasions the Russian government and military announced safe exit routes for civilians wishing to flee from the city but continued to target those very routes. An estimated ten to fifty thousand civilians, often the elderly, poor, and infirm, remained trapped in Grozny's basements.

In mid-December, Russian forces started the ground offensive on Grozny. In Grozny, Russian soldiers met fierce resistance from Chechen rebel fighters intimately familiar with the city. During the offensive, the number of casualties among Russian soldiers rose very quickly. In one episode reminiscent of the 1994-1995 offensive on Grozny, Associated Press and Reuters correspondents reported that, on December 16, a column of tanks trying to enter the center of the city was surprised, and Russian troops were slaughtered by Chechen fighters. Maria Eismont of Reuters and Ruslan Musayev of the Associated Press said they had counted the bodies of more than one hundred Russian soldiers. The report was vehemently denied by the Russian government. In interviews with foreign and Russian journalists, however, numerous Russian soldiers who had fought in Grozny admitted that many soldiers from their units had died. Several soldiers described how each step on the streets of Grozny posed a threat as Chechen snipers were hiding all over the city and claimed the lives of many Russian soldiers. In mid-January, Chechen snipers killed General Malofeyev, one of the commanders of the invasion of Grozny, in a major setback for the Russian army. Russian troops were unable to recover his body until five days later.

The Russian government initially denied reports in the Russian and international media that claimed that the casualty rate among soldiers had soared. In mid-January, officials reported that 700 soldiers had died since the beginning of the fighting in Dagestan in August. On January 25, the Russian government said that in fact 1,173 soldiers had died. Many independent observers, however, believe even these numbers severely understate the real casualty figures, and some have estimated that as many as 3,000 Russian soldiers may have died in the Chechnya campaign so far.

In early February, Chechen rebel forces abandoned Grozny. One group apparently tried to bribe Russian officers for a safe passage but walked into a mine field which left many rebels dead and many more wounded. On February 7, Russian Acting President Vladimir Putin claimed that his troops had taken control of all of Grozny. In an interview with a Spanish daily, Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov said that 'for the time being we have given up [Grozny].'" (HRW February 2000)

"Civilians continue to flee villages in southern Chechnya amid reports of widespread destruction of property and a continuing military push by Russian troops. Newcomers report that virtually all homes in the Komsomolskoe village in Southern Chechnya have been destroyed. The number of people fleeing Chechnya has remained steady at about 1,000 people a week." (UNHCR 28 March 2000)

"The Russian authorities at present claim to have control over the vast majority of the territory of Chechnya: however, military operations continue in the mountains in the south of the Republic. The media have put the number of Chechen combatants at approximately 3 000. The Russian forces have captured a leader of the Chechen fighters, Mr S. Raduyev, who has been taken to Moscow for trial.

This fighting still causes significant loss of life among civilians and military personnel alike. There is no evidence that the belligerents have changed their way of conducting the military operations. Mr Maskhadov has called for a guerrilla war against the Russian forces, and attacks on Russian military targets are increasing in the territories formally controlled by the Russians." (COE Parliamentary Assembly 4 April 2000, paras. 20-21)

*For a detailed chronology of events in Chechnya from August 1999 to January 2000, see Annex IV of the report on the conflict in Chechnya presented to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (25 January 2000) [Internet]*

### **Violations of humanitarian law by the Federal Forces has led directly to the displacement of the civilian population (1999-2000)**

- The indiscriminate use of force (air power and artillery) by the federal forces resulted in the displacement of up to 200,000 persons and widespread civilian casualties
- Reports of summary executions, arbitrary detention, torture and rape by the federal forces
- Early December 1999, ultimatum by the Federal forces requests civilian population to leave Grozny despite absence of safe corridors

"The indiscriminate use of force by government forces in the conflict with separatist elements in Chechnya resulted in widespread civilian casualties and the displacement of up to 200,000 persons, the vast majority of whom sought refuge in Ingushetiya.

Estimates vary of the total number of civilian casualties caused by bombs and artillery used by government forces. The number of civilian casualties cannot be verified, and figures vary widely from several hundred to several thousand. Government officials argue that they are employing 'high precision' tactics against separatist and terrorist targets in Chechnya. However, a wide range of reporting indicates that government forces are relying mainly on unguided rockets and other low precision weapons.

In September and early October, government forces launched air and artillery attacks against numerous Chechen villages along the republic's eastern border with Dagestan in the territory controlled by Chechen field commander Shamil Basayev. Basayev led attacks in Dagestan in July and August and was believed to have retreated to this region in Chechnya. Villagers living in the region under attack claimed that they were not supporters of Basayev.

Attempts by government forces to gain control over Chechnya's capital, Grozny, were characterized by indiscriminate use of air power and artillery, which destroyed numerous residential and civilian buildings. Up to 140,000 Russian military and security personnel in the Northern Caucasus region were involved in the current conflict in Chechnya, far more than during the 1994-96 conflict in Chechnya. On September 24, government aircraft reportedly bombed a bus with refugees near Samashki, resulting in the deaths of eight persons. Human Rights Watch confirmed that on September 27, Russian aircraft allegedly bombed a school and residential areas in Staraya Sunzha, a suburb of Grozny, killing 7 civilians and wounding another 20, including schoolchildren. Human Rights Watch confirmed an attack by Russian airplanes on Urus-Martan, 15 miles south of Grozny, on October 3, which resulted in the deaths of 27 civilians. On October 5, a government tank fired on a bus near Chervlyonnaya, reportedly killing some 28 civilians. According to NGO reports, on October 7, government troops attacked the village of Elistanzhi, killing some 48 civilians. On October 21, explosions killed scores of civilians in Grozny's downtown market and a local hospital. Western press organizations reported at least 60 civilian deaths and 200 persons injured, although Chechen government officials claimed that at least 118 persons died and more than 400 were injured. Russian officials offered contradictory explanations for the explosions; some denied any government complicity and blamed Chechen separatists. However, Ministry of Defense officials claimed on October 22 that special forces units had attacked a weapons market, but without using artillery or air power. The ICRC reported that two-thirds of Grozny's 150,000 residents fled the city as a result of the military campaign. On October 27, government forces subjected Grozny to the heaviest attacks up to that point as government aircraft bombed the city and killed dozens of Chechens. Chechen defense officials claimed that 116 persons were killed in the attacks that day. Also on October 27, government forces shelled the village of Samashki,

killing at least 5 persons and injuring dozens. On November 1, government troops that had taken positions in a psychiatric hospital near Samashki overnight opened fire on the doctors and other medical staff who reported to work that morning, resulting in injuries to three staff members. Troops prevented hospital staff from returning to care for their patients for several days, and the condition of the hospital's patients remains unknown. On November 16, government troops surrounded and shelled two large towns near Grozny, Achkhoy-Martan, and Argun. The attacks prompted criticism from international human rights organizations for indiscriminate attacks against civilian settlements.

According to human rights NGO's, government troops raped civilian women in Chechnya in December in the village of Alkhan-Yurt and in other villages.

Early in December, government forces airdropped a series of leaflets over Grozny that warned civilian residents and rebel fighters to leave the city. In one leaflet directed at Chechen fighters, the command of the Combined Group of Federal Forces in the Northern Caucasus warned that any persons remaining in Grozny after December 12 would be destroyed by air and artillery strikes. Amid international criticism of the leaflets, government officials later qualified the leaflets' language and denied that they had imposed an ultimatum on the city's inhabitants." (U.S. DOS 25 February 2000, sec. 1g)

### **Insecurity and violence hamper government's plans of normalization in Chechnya (2000-2002)**

- Russian troops regain nominal control over most of Chechnya by the spring of 2000, allowing the cessation of large-scale hostilities
- Security operations against the Chechen guerilla continued however to target civilians and hamper any large-scale return of the displaced in 2000 and 2001
- In 2002, casualties among the federal troops has reverted to the levels known at the early stage of the conflict
- A political resolution to the conflict is unlikely to take place in the near future
- The adoption of a new constitution and presidential elections in Chechnya in 2003 could exacerbate the situation
- Two terrorist attacks perpetrated by Chechen rebels in Moscow and Grozny (October-December 2002) demonstrate that the conflict has not ended

#### ***Overview***

"By the spring of 2000, Russian troops had established nominal control over most of Chechnya and large-scale hostilities ceased. As Russian troops moved further into Chechen territory, they conducted numerous so-called sweep operations to seek out rebel fighters and ammunition depots in villages and towns, often arbitrarily detaining large numbers of Chechen civilians along with captured fighters, and beating and torturing them in detention. Subsequent months marked the gradual transition from a conventional military operation into a classical 'dirty war,' where the targeting of civilians and not the taking or defense of territory are the hallmarks.

As Russian troops pursued their 'dirty war' in Chechnya, Nikolai Koshman, a deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation and the temporary civilian leader of Chechnya, started setting up new administrative and law enforcement structures, and tried to revamp the defunct educational system. The Russian government appointed loyal Chechens to head local administrations and, in June 2000, appointed Akhmad Kadyrov, a Chechen religious leader, as the head of the administration for all of Chechnya. In January 2001, Kadyrov appointed a former head of the Stavropol region in southern Russia, Stanislav Iliasov, as prime minister of Chechnya and asked him to form a new Chechen government.

Eager to convince an increasingly skeptical domestic public and a critical international community that the war was over, Russian government agencies sought to implement measures traditionally associated with the end of armed conflict in the first half of 2001. They announced a new military strategy that involved small-scale operations against specific rebel leaders, a significant cutback in troops, and the return of the Chechen government to Chechnya's capital, Grozny. They also actively sought the return of internally displaced persons from neighboring Ingushetia to Chechnya. However, the republic's harsh realities—with a continuing 'dirty war' against civilians by Russian troops, increasingly bold and abusive rebel tactics, and a complete lack of trust in Russian government agencies among civilians—quickly proved these measures premature.

In January 2001, President Vladimir Putin told his government in a televised meeting that the armed forces had 'completed their main tasks' in Chechnya. Announcing the partial withdrawal of troops, he handed control in Chechnya to the Federal Security Service (FSB), which has to continue the operation 'with the use of different means and forces and with a different emphasis.' A spokesman clarified that the FSB had been tasked to conduct 'special operations to search for and neutralize the ringleaders of the bandit formations and their adherents.'

In February, Russian and Chechen government officials announced that they sought the return of all internally displaced persons (IDPs) to Chechnya before the end of the year. They said conditions were being created for Chechens to return, including temporary settlements for the displaced in various towns and villages in Chechnya. A few months later, in April 2001, the pro-Russian government of Chechnya announced that it would move its seat from Chechnya's second city Gudermes back to the capital Grozny, calling this a 'symbolic event' that was to promote 'stabilization.'

Most of the announced changes, however, appeared to be dictated by the need for a new public relations offensive and took little account of Chechen realities. As Chechen rebel attacks on Russian positions and assassinations of Chechen administrators continued unabated, the scheduled withdrawal of Russian troops ceased before it truly started. Federal forces, meanwhile, continued to conduct large-scale sweep operations that were no less abusive than those in earlier months. In such circumstances, most internally displaced persons—aware of the continuing abuses and guerrilla warfare—decided to await an improved security situation before returning home. Daily security incidents in Grozny forced the Chechen government to move its seat back to Gudermes after only two weeks in the capital." (HRW February 2002, pp. 4-5)

"In 2001, abuses by Russian forces continued to be an integral part of the daily life of civilians in Chechnya. In villages and towns throughout Chechnya federal forces conducted dozens of sweep operations. Ostensibly designed to seek out rebel fighters and their supporters and ammunition depots, sweeps are usually reactive, following Chechen military actions such as ambushes on Russian military columns or attacks on Russian checkpoints. They are routinely the occasion for abuse, particularly arbitrary detention and subsequent torture, ill-treatment, and 'disappearances'. Soldiers also killed numerous civilians, both during and beyond the context of sweep operations, in indiscriminate shootings. Masked soldiers conducted numerous nightly raids, detaining men who subsequently 'disappeared'." (HRW 18 March 2002, p. 3)

***For more details on security operations conducted by the Russian forces and security threats for the civilian population, see "[Civilian population in Chechnya continuously exposed to major threats to their physical and personal security \(2001-2002\)](#)" [Internal link]***

***See also FEWER, "[Policy Brief: Chechnya - Low Intensity Conflict persists](#)", 20 December 2001 [Internet]***

### ***Developments in 2002***

"Hostilities in Chechnya have intensified considerably over the past two months, particularly in the mountainous southern areas close to the border with Georgia. Casualties, especially amongst the Russian

federal troops, have reverted to the levels seen in Spring 2000. Hit-and-run acts of violence, most likely perpetrated by militants, continue unabated throughout the republic. There are very few signs that a political resolution or accommodation is likely in the next 12-18 months. Nevertheless, Moscow and the Chechen administration have proceeded to draft a new constitution (on which a referendum is to be held in October), while presidential elections are planned for 'some time next year'. These two measures, if implemented before a political accommodation has been reached, could well exacerbate the already critical situation in Chechnya. Crime - often associated with the kidnapping of officials or with groups enriching themselves illegally by taking advantage of the republic's oil reserves - is rife." (IASC-WG 10 September 2002)

"Two incidents in late 2002 that caused enormous loss of civilian life demonstrate vividly that the armed conflict in Chechnya has not ended. On October 23, about fifty Chechens took hundreds of civilians hostage in a Moscow theatre, an act that, as already noted, resulted in the deaths of 129, mostly due to the effects of a debilitating gas that Russian special forces used in their rescue operation. On December 27, Chechen forces blew up the main government building in Grozny, killing at least seventy-two civilians and wounding 210. Chechen forces also are believed to be responsible for continuing pattern of assassinations of village administrators and other civil servants working for the pro-Moscow government in Chechnya. At the same time, abuses of Russian forces in Chechnya – forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, looting, and arbitrary detention – have continued unabated." (HRW January 2003, p. 2)

"Russian officials have set 23 March as the date for the breakaway republic of Chechnya to vote in a referendum on a constitution that strengthens ties with Moscow. The vote is a forerunner to eventual elections of a Chechen president and parliament. The Kremlin announced that presidential elections are likely to be held in Chechnya in November or December [2003]." (RFE/RL 15 January 2003)

*For more information on the prospects for peace, see:*

*"A useful war", by Pavel Baev, in [Russia and Eurasia Review](#), Volume 1, Issue 14, 17 December 2002, Jamestown Foundation [Internet]*

*Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, ["Is Russia hell-bent on war 'to the last Chechen'?"](#), 29 September 2002 [Internet]*

*See also: Government of the Russian Federation, ["There are no plans to reinforce the military in Chechnya in response to the worsening situation in the North Caucasus"](#), 3 October 2002 [Internet]*

### **Civilian population in Chechnya also exposed to violence from the Chechen rebel groups (2000-2002)**

- Rebel armed groups fail to differentiate between civilians and combatants
- Chechen guerilla target Chechens who cooperate with the Russian government
- According to unconfirmed reports, rebels killed civilians who would not assist them, used civilians as human shields, and prevented displaced from fleeing Chechnya

"After their withdrawal from Chechnya's lowlands into the mountains, Chechen rebel fighters reverted to guerilla warfare tactics, failing to differentiate between civilians and combatants. As a result, civilians have died or sustained injuries." (HRW 22 January 2001)

"Throughout 2001, Chechen fighters and their sympathizers assassinated, attacked, or threatened Chechen civil servants, seeking to intimidate Chechens who might cooperate with the Russian government. From September 2000 to September 2001, there were at least forty-one apparent assassinations, including eleven village mayors, four deputy village mayors, four deputy district chiefs, three religious officials (and two of their relatives), eight policemen, and two educators. There were also at least thirteen attempted

assassinations including of four village mayors, three district chiefs, three deputy district chiefs, one judge, and the head of the Chechen administration, Akhmad Kadyrov.

[...]

In a letter to Human Rights Watch, Aslan Mackhadov, the leader of the Chechen rebels and president of the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, denied claims that his forces had issued an order to assassinate Chechens who voluntarily cooperate with the Russian government.

He stated, however, that he considered such Chechens to be guilty of treason and did not rule out that some of his fighters may have committed some 'isolated abuses against them, 'perhaps in the heat of the battle or from the desire to seek vengeance that stems from rage and loss'. Despite these denials of involvement in the killings of civilian administrators, it is widely believed that rebel forces have been behind many of the killings." (HRW 18 March 2002, pp. 9-11)

"Chechen fighters also committed abuses; however, as with the many reported violations by federal troops--there were difficulties in verifying or investigating them. According to unconfirmed reports, rebels killed civilians who would not assist them, used civilians as human shields, forced civilians to build fortifications, and prevented refugees from fleeing Chechnya. In several cases, elderly Russian civilians were killed for no apparent reason other than their ethnicity.

On September 3, a bomb exploded in the main Russian administration building in Grozny, killing one woman. Mufti Alkhamad Kadyrov, the pro-Moscow head of the Chechen Administration, had been conducting a meeting on the third floor when the bomb was detonated.

According to Chechen sources, rebel factions also used violence to eliminate their economic rivals in illegal activities or settle personal accounts. Many Chechens believed that Arbi Barayev (killed at the end of May), Shamil Basayev, and their groups in particular used such violence.

Chechen fighters planted landmines that killed or injured federal forces and often provoked federal counterattacks on civilian areas. In other incidents, the rebels took up positions in populated areas and fired on federal forces, thereby exposing the civilians to federal counterattacks. When villagers protested, they sometimes were beaten or fired upon by the rebels.

Chechen fighters also reportedly abused, tortured, and killed captured soldiers from federal forces. In the summer, rebels began a concerted campaign to kill civilian officials of the government-supported Chechen administration.

Individual rebel field commanders reportedly were responsible for funding their units, and some allegedly resorted to drug smuggling and kidnaping to raise funds. As a result, it often was difficult, if not impossible, to make a distinction between rebel units and criminal gangs." (U.S. DOS 4 March 2002, sect. 1g)

### **Review of population movements between Chechnya and Ingushetia (September 1999-December 2000)**

- Most of the displaced arrived in Ingushetia in September 1999, mainly from Grozny and other major cities affected by the conflict
- Significant return movements were reported following the fall of Grozny in February 2000
- The intensification of military operations from July 2000 triggered new flows of displaced into Ingushetia

"At the start of the last quarter of 1999, about 100,000 refugees were registered in Ingushetia. In two months that population almost doubled to reach 186,000 in December 1999, according to the HCR. That result, far below the level put forth by the Ingushetian migrations department, which put out a figure of 275,000 refugees, is probably closer to reality in view of the host country's desire to obtain an additional volume of aid. However, until February 2000 the fighting intensified constantly, and on that date it was estimated that almost 260,000 Chechens were refugees in Ingushetia.

During this period, the majority of the refugees came from Grozny and its surroundings, but also from a few other large cities (Ourous-Martan) which were still the only ones affected by war.

Generally speaking all of these refugees, exhausted, waited for hours at the border stations. On several occasions, the border was closed for several days. Even evacuation of the injured was then impossible, and the refugees remained in the rain and the mud, sleeping in trenches, without food.

- The return of the refugees to Chechnya following the fall of Grozny in February 2000

It was not until after the fall of Grozny (between 31 January 1999 and 2 February 2000) that the refugees began to return to Chechnya, leaving their precarious camps or housing, short of money for the tenants, in the hope of a normalisation of the situation.

That return movement was not on a large scale, little by little the number of refugees in Ingushetia declining to reach a population of less than 200,000 in May 2000 (175,000 according to the authorities).

Numerous refugees are multiplying their reconnaissance trips, and there are many of them (particularly the Grozny inhabitants) who found that they had no home left to which to return.

Others make business trips (mainly women coming to get supplies at the market in Nazran, the capital of Ingushetia, to resell them on a retail basis in the stalls in Chechnya), and the majority travel because the families have become separated and it is first of all necessary to try to reconstruct.

- New flow of refugees into Ingushetia in June / July 2000

Since the beginning of July, the intensification of military operations, repression and Russian exactions related to the multiplication of military actions carried out by the Chechen fighters on their territory have brought a population shift back toward Ingushetia. Thus on 13 July 2000, the HCR recorded the passage of 400 families at the Kavkaz border station, as against fewer than 50 in the other direction. The next day the queue of refugees stretched out for more than two kilometres.

The majority of the new arrivals are still registered with the Ingushetian authorities, who have since received an order not to register anybody else.

Mid-July: according the manager of the Migrations department, 152,000 persons are officially registered compared with 210,000 in January. 35,000 of them are not Chechens (the majority being Ingushetians), and, benefiting from specific aid, they will not return to Chechnya. 67,000 Chechens are said to have left, by way of personal networks, for the other regions in the Russian Federation, and 100,000 others are "parked" in two provisional housing centres.

- A delicate situation since the summer of 2000

At present, the population movements seem to be stabilising, since about 150,000 officially registered persons are refugees in Ingushetia. 2,000 of them make very frequent round trips between Ingushetia and Chechnya to check on the possibility of re-settlement or to care for old people who are unable to travel. On the other hand, few definitive departures are registered. That is because of the present refusal on the part of the Migrations department to register the new arrivals or to re-register persons who have left Ingushetia a

first time. The refugees' reluctance to leave that host republic is also explained by their fear of losing their place in a tent or in a carriage, this applying both to the official camps and to the informal ones.

To the 150,000 persons officially registered by the HCR, one should add an indefinite number of "clandestines". The fact is that the last few months the Russian military has laid siege to the mountains and to new villages, a fact that risks giving rise to a new flow of Chechens toward Ingushetia. The arrival of winter will probably increase the number of refugees.

A reign of terror is largely maintained by the Russian military which since summer has been multiplying bombardments of forests and fields, but also of homes using heavy artillery, exactions, sacks and installation of anti-personnel mines. In addition, a very large number of young men considered potential fighters have been arrested in the last few months. Last summer, some 'cleansing' operations also took place in the Ingushetian camps: Russian soldiers, supported by the Ingushetian militia, surrounded several camps and arrested all young men, particularly the ones who had spoken in the filtration camps.

The multiplication of such acts and their widespread distribution among the population of the camps maintain this climate of terror for the purpose of dissuading the Chechens from returning to their country. In addition there is the deterioration of the situation between the Chechens and the Ingushetians, the latter finding it ever more difficult to tolerate the presence of the refugees on their territory." (MDM December 2000)

### **Violence and insecurity continue to trigger displacement in Chechnya and Ingushetia (2001-2002)**

- Sweep operations conducted by the federal forces push terrorized civilians to flee temporarily to neighbouring Ingushetia
- Civilians in rural areas move to the capital Gorzny in search of physical and material safety during the winter 2001-2002

#### ***Displacement from the Urus-Martan district (August 2002)***

"A large number of Chechen refugees arrived today in Ingushetia. Almost all of them live in villages in the Urus-Martan district where Chechen fighters came this morning. Commanders of the Chechen armed groups told the civilians that in line with their order they have to stay in the villages for three days.

In order to avoid civilian casualties, Chechen fighters asked the villagers to leave their homes. In the early morning, resident of Martan-chu, Roshni-chu, Gekhi-chu and Shalazhi started hastily leaving their villages. Witnesses said that the refugees were carrying everything they could to save it from fighting." (Prague Watchdog 16 August 2002)

"The situation in the Urus-Martan district remains unstable. Since September 1 the Komsomolskoye village has been surrounded by Russian servicemen and armoured vehicles. The goal and the reasons for the unexpected concentration of military resources near the village are not clear. The local administration head has not been informed as well.

The inhabitants of Komsomolskoye, who have the experience of March 2000 when fierce fighting between the Russian military and Chechen fighters led by field commander Ruslan Gelayev completely destroyed the village and caused death to civilians, are silently leaving Chechnya. Several families, especially males and young people, have arrived in Ingushetia already." (Prague Watchdog 4 September 2002)

#### ***Displacement in Ingushetia (September 2002)***

"On 26 September military operations began in the Galashki village of Ingushetia, bordering with Chechnya and Georgia (about 30 km distance). One military helicopter was shot down and casualties



among the soldiers were reported. Most of the village's 6,000 inhabitants fled to other areas of Ingushetia. The IDP camps in Sleptoskaya and UN offices in Nazran are about 20km away from the Galashki village. This is the first time in three years that such fighting erupted in the Republic of Ingushetia." (WFP 27 September 2002)

*See also Radio Free Europe: 'Chechnya: Armed foray in Ingushetia adds fuel to Russian-Georgian dispute', 27 September 2002 [Internet]*

***Displacement following sweep operations: the example of Sernovodsk and Assinovskaya (July 2001)***

"In July [2001] following an explosion that killed five federal soldiers riding in a jeep, a particularly severe cleansing action took place in the villages of Sernovodsk and Assinovskaya. Males between 14 and 60 were lined up in the courtyards of houses in which they had been found. Some were able to buy their way out by paying an immediate levy, depending on the validity of their identification documents; cleansings also are a means for military and police personnel operating in Chechnya to supplement their incomes. Federal forces interrogated several hundred others who were unwilling or unable to pay the levies. During these interrogations federal forces beat and tortured the detainees by administering electric shocks. Private and public buildings were looted and destroyed. Federal forces took approximately 100 persons to filtration camps, but eventually released them with the exception of 4 or 5 persons who disappeared. The cleansing caused a temporary outflow of several thousand persons from the villages to refugee camps in neighboring Ingushetiya." (U.S. DOS 4 March 2002, sect. 1 g)

***Rural-urban movements in Chechnya (winter 2001-2002)***

"DRC reported that many people have left rural areas to go to Grozny before the upcoming winter. The Chechen Administration confirmed that the population of Grozny has increased by several thousands and expects numbers to continue to increase." (WFP 16 November 2001)

"In Chechnya, DRC reported that a large number of people have moved from rural areas to Grozny city due to security problems and looking for a better living condition. As a result, the number of WFP beneficiaries, has increased from 44,000 to 55 in Grozny alone." (WFP 22 February 2002)

"The situation in the region has not changed significantly. Occasional attacks by the Chechen armed formations are usually followed by the so-called mopping-up operations conducted by the Russian army. These operations are however officially referred to as 'sting operations' or 'addressed operations'. Nevertheless, no major changes in the attitude of the Russian soldiers to civilians during these operations was noted, whatever their name.

With warmer days in February and March more people appeared in the streets of Grozny although no outflow of IDPs from Ingushetia was reported. According to unofficial data from the Committee for Forced Migrants (with the Government of the Chechen Republic), which so far could not be verified, IDPs have actually returned mainly from two camps (Yuzhny and Severny) near Znamenskoye because the government had prepared temporary accommodation for them in Staropromyslovski district of Grozny.

Appearance of more Grozny dwellers is reflected in the DRC registration database which has been "swelling" every month with new beneficiaries. The growing number is most likely due to the fact that the internal IDPs in Chechnya are trying to resettle to and register in Grozny because of easier access to humanitarian aid there." (PNIF 10 April 2002)

## **Other causes of displacement**

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## **Ethnic Russian population leave North Caucasian republics in a context of ethnic antagonisms**

"Immigration into the North Caucasus grew from 1989 (when there was anti Caucasian violence in Central Asia) and reached its peak in 1995 when a massive displacement occurred within the region as a result of fighting in Chechnya. From 1996 emigration overtook immigration and at present the migration balance is negative. Those who are leaving are the local intelligentsia and Russians, a rapidly shrinking minority.

In the nationalist conflicts among the indigenous groups, concessions to accommodate new demands were made at the expense of the local Russians. There is no official pressure on Russians to leave; in fact, measures are taken to encourage them to stay. In reality, however, all the important economic and socially prestigious positions, as well as viable political appointments, are being monopolized by indigenous groups. Only token Russians remain in formal positions, while the real power lies firmly with representatives of the titular groups. Moreover, many Russians used to work in the numerous defence enterprises in the region. They were left unemployed in changing economic circumstances when heavy industries collapsed and economic activities started to concentrate mainly around the trade and service sectors. Their ability to adapt to the new situation has also been hampered by the absence of extended family networks and lack of free capital. Moreover, Russians more readily consider emigration as few have roots in the North Caucasian republics and some have places to go back in the rest of Russia.

The Russian community in Chechnya is a special case. According to various estimates, between 30,000 to 50,000 still [June 1999] live in the republic, mostly in Naruski and Shelkovskii raions. They are subject to widespread abuse, pressure to give up their houses, robbery and murder, while the Chechen law enforcement structures are unable to offer effective protection. The Russian community has petitioned the federal authorities to organize an urgent evacuation of Chechnya for resettlement assistance, but their appeals have fallen on deaf ears. It is hypocritically assumed that Chechnya is a part of the Russian Federation and therefore Russians cannot face any specific problems." (Matveeva 1999, p. 58)

*See also movements of Ethnic Russians leaving Chechnya prior to the first conflict in Chechnya in "[Background to the conflict: Chechnya recent history \(1922-1998\)](#)" [Internal link]*

## **Displacement resulting from the inter-communal conflict in the Prigorodny district (1992-1998)**

- Administrative and practical obstacles prevented the return of deported Ingush to the Prigorodny district in North-Ossetia after 1956
- Between 30,000 and 60,000 Ingush and 9,000 Ossetians forced to leave the Prigorodny district as a result of violent conflict in 1992
- Only the Ossetians have been able to return since

"The conflict area of Prigorodnyi Raion extends from the suburbs of Vladikavkaz in North Ossetia east to the present Ingush border, less than 20 minutes from Chechnya. Like the Chechens, the Ingush were forcibly deported under Stalin in 1944. When Khrushchev signed a decree rehabilitating the deported peoples in 1956, the lands presently comprising Prigorodnyi Raion, which had been ceded to North Ossetia, were not returned to the newly reconstituted Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) despite their 90 percent Ingush makeup prior to the deportations. Administrative and practical obstacles, many of them engineered by Ossetian authorities, prevented many Ingush from again taking up residence on their former lands.

Tensions between the Ingush and Ossetians rose and fell through the 1970s and 1980s but exploded into the open with perestroika. Mass demonstrations and growing unrest led the Ossetian authorities to declare a

state of emergency in Prigorodnyi in April 1991. Intercommunal violence rose steadily in the area of Prigorodnyi east of the Terek river, despite the introduction of 1,500 Soviet interior troops to the area. On April 26, 1991, in the last months of the Soviet Union, the Russian Supreme Soviet passed the Law on the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples that pledged a return to predeportation boundaries. Fearful of losing Moscow's support for a return of Prigorodnyi, Ingushetia opted to remain in Russia when Chechnya claimed independence. By this time, some 16,000 refugees from the conflict in South Ossetia, but who had primarily lived in other parts of Georgia, had fled north and took shelter in Prigorodnyi, significantly adding to the prevailing tensions. Ingush-Ossetian violence worsened and both sides began arming in earnest. According to human rights investigators, many of the worst incidents of intimidation and forced eviction of Ingush occurred at the hands of South Ossetian refugees. In some cases, North Ossetian locals protected Ingush from those refugees.

Open warfare broke out in October 1992. Approximately 500 people died in a week of concentrated violence during which many homes, primarily belonging to ethnic Ingush, were destroyed or taken over. Russian interior forces actively participated in the fighting and sometimes led Ossetian fighters into battle. Estimates of displacement from Prigorodnyi vary widely, but between 34,500-64,000 Ingush were forced to flee to Ingushetia and 9,000 Ossetians to North Ossetia. Most Ossetians had returned as of 1998, but only a handful of Ingush had done so. IDPs from Prigorodnyi who found refuge in Ingushetia would later compete for space and aid with massive influxes of Chechen IDPs.

The conflict in Prigorodnyi Raion remains frozen amid low-level, back-and-forth violence against police officers and civilians, widespread hostage taking, and deepening animosities. New hope for peace and resettlement was kindled in 1997 with Russian-brokered agreements that set out plans for return and resettlement. However, at the time of this writing, IDP returns have been stalled by continued violence and have been further undermined by the curtailment of UNHCR's presence due to untenable security conditions." (Hansen 1998, pp. 19-20)

*For more details on the conflict, see also Human Rights Watch/Helsinki Report "The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict in the Prigorodnyi Region" (May 1996) [Internet]*

### **Minorities under pressure to leave the Krasnodar and other regions in north Caucasus (2001-2002)**

- Krasnodar governor announced a campaign against ethnic minorities to force them to leave (2002)
- 100 Roma families were evicted from the Krasnodar region (October 2001)
- Authorities in Krasnodar and in Kabardino-Balkaria deny Meskhetian Turks to right to register

"In Krasnodar, governor Alexander Tkachev announced a campaign against ethnic minorities and said he would create such an intolerable atmosphere for them that they would leave of their own initiative. The Center for Development of Democracy and Human Rights and Memorial reported that regional officials repeatedly threatened to deport ethnic minorities, and actively sought to strip them of income and access to medical care and education." (HRW 2002, Russian Federation)

"In October [2001] according the Glasnost northern Caucasus publication, authorities forcibly expelled more than 100 Roma from the Krasnodar region to Voronezh, their officially registered place of residence. Authorities claimed that the Roma were involved in drug trafficking, although the police brought no formal charges against them." (U.S. DOS 4 March 2002, sect. 1f)

"The Moscow Helsinki Group's (MHG) third human rights report, released during the year, detailed restrictions placed by the authorities on Meskhetian Turks. During 1989-90 some 90,000 Meskhetians were forced by ethnic conflicts to leave the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan. An estimated 60,000 Meskhetians

remained in the Russian Federation. More than 13,000 of them settled in Krasnodar Kray, and approximately 700 settled in the Kabardino-Balkariya Republic. Authorities in Krasnodar Kray and the Kabardino-Balkariya Republic continued to deny the Meskhetians the right to register, which deprives them of all rights of citizenship, despite provisions of the Constitution that require that all Meskhetians who were residing in the Soviet Union at the time of its collapse were entitled to citizenship. Meskhetian Turks living in Krasnodar, like other ethnic minorities are subject to special registration restrictions; for example, they have to register as a 'guest' every 45 days. Krasnodar human rights groups continued to state that the situation in Krasnodar has not improved and that such restrictions remained in place." (U.S. DOS 4 March 2001, sect. 2d)

*See also:*

*"Stop ethnic cleansing", a statement of the Human Rights Centre Memorial concerning persecutions of the Meskhetian Turks and other ethnic minorities in the Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation, 9 April 2002 [Internet]*

*"Ethnic minorities could face deportation from Russia under new decree", UNHCR, 5 April 2002 [Internet]*

## **Definitions**

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### **Internal displacement in the CIS region: A wide range of categories**

- Internally displaced persons have been officially recognised by governments of the CIS and international agencies as part of the scope of the June 1996 CIS Conference
- The Russian Federation does not collect statistics based on the IDP definition but the category of "forced migrant", a status created to provide protection to ethnic Russians and others, coming from former Soviet republics (or "involuntary relocated persons", according to the terminology adopted by the CIS Conference), and internally displaced persons
- It is possible to distinguish IDPs in statistics for forced migrants on the basis of the place of origin
- Other categories defined in the context of the CIS Conference may also encompass internally displaced persons, such as the "formerly deported persons" or "ecological migrants"; those categories are not documented in this profile

### **Categories of population movements identified by the CIS Conference which can include internal displacement (CIS Conference 11 June 1996)**

**"Internally displaced persons (4)** are persons or groups of persons who have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence suddenly or unexpectedly as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.

Note (4) Working definition used by the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons (Document No. E/CN.4/1995/50 of 2 February 1995.)"

**"Involuntarily relocating persons (7)** are persons who are forced to relocate to the country of their citizenship as a result of circumstances endangering their lives, such as armed conflict, internal disorder, inter-ethnic conflict or systematic violations of human rights and who are in need of assistance to resettle in their countries of citizenship.

Note (7) In the Russian Federation, such persons are included in the category “forced migrants”, which may also include ‘internally displaced persons’.

*[Ed. Note: UNHCR continues to refer to IRPs in its programme documents for the Russian Federation. UNHCR planning figures for 2000 includes a total of 965,000 IRPs, which include some 170,000 persons who left Chechnya during the 1994-1996 conflict. The figure of 965,000 corresponds to the caseload of forced migrants, as defined in the Russian law (see below). (UNHCR December 1999, p. 193)]*

**"Formerly deported peoples** are peoples who were deported from their historic homeland during the Soviet period. Some of the persons belonging to this category may be stateless. "

[Ed.Note: The current country profile covers only internal displacement within the Russian Federation. Displacement from former Soviet Republics whose independence has been internationally recognized since then is not covered in the profile. This is the case of the Crimeans Tatars and the Meskhetians]

**"Ecological migrants** are persons who are obliged to leave their place of permanent residence and who move within their country, or across its borders, due to severe environmental degradation or ecological disasters."

[Ed. Note: Internal displacement as a result of human-made or natural disasters is not documented in this profile.]

**Definition of a forced migrant. Law 20 December 1995 On The Introduction Of Amendments And Additions To The Law Of The Russian Federation "on Forced Migrants"**

"A forced migrant shall be a citizen of the Russian Federation who was forced to leave his/her place of permanent residence due to violence committed against him/her or members of his/her family or persecution in other forms, or due to a real danger of being subjected to persecution for reasons of race, nationality, religion, language or membership of some particular social group or political opinion following hostile campaigns with regard to individual persons or groups of persons, mass violations of public order."

[Ed. Note: This category has been applied by the authorities of the Russian Federation to provide protection to ethnic Russians, Tatars, and others, coming from former Soviet republics, and persons displaced within the Russian Federation, mainly as a result of the Osset-Ingush and the Chechen conflicts. Official statistics for forced migrants indicate the place of origin of the displaced, which makes possible to distinguish IDPs. (IOM 1998, pp.10-14)]

*For more information on the CIS Conference, see "[The CIS Conference: A regional process to address the problems of displacement \(May 1996\)](#)" [Internal link]*

## POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

### Population figures: displacement as a result of the second conflict in Chechnya (since August 1999)

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#### Displaced persons in Ingushetia: 94,000 persons according to the Danish Refugee Council (as of January 2003)

- About 54 percent of the IDPs have found shelter with host families, while the rest live in camps or spontaneous settlements
- There is a female predominance for the age group of 17 to 60 as males do not live with their families, or for security reasons do not wish to be registered
- According to Ingush authorities, there are only 65,000 IDPs as of January 2003
- The continued decrease of the IDP population since 2001 is due to the constant verification of registered IDPs and the removal of double registrations
- Statistics are also difficult to establish because of constant population movements between Chechnya and Ingushetia

#### Situation as of January 2003

#### *Data compiled by the Danish Refugee Council (end of January 2003):*

Chechen IDPs in Ingushetia breakdown by gender and age

Sex	>1998	<=1998 - >1986	<=1986 - >1943	<=1943	Total	%
Female	3,002	15,561	28,943	4,054	51,560	54.3%
Male	3,036	15,266	22,681	2,418	43,401	45.7%
Total	6,038	30,827	51,624	6,472	94,961	100.0%
%	6.4%	32.5%	54.4%	6.8%	100.0%	

(DRC 30 January 2003)

16,257 persons in camps (17 %)

26,606 persons in spontaneous settlements (28 %)

52,098 persons in host families (54 %)

Total: 94,961 persons

(DRC 30 January 2003)

“Over 75 percent of the IDP population is of urban origin, mostly from Grozny City. The gender composition is 55 percent female and 45 percent male. There is a substantial gender gap for the age group of 17 to 60 (59 percent female vs. 41 percent male). Males in this age group do not live with their families, or for security reasons do not wish to be registered.” (WFP 2002, para. 18)

*For detailed data for the geographical distribution of IDPs in Ingushetia, see [DRC statistical table](#) [Internal link]*

*Figures from Ingush Authorities:*

“According to the official data released by the Ingush President’s Administration on 19 January, there are 64,295 internally displaced persons living in Ingushetia. Out of that, 26,045 people reside with host families, 21,179 people find refuge in the spontaneous settlements, and 17,071 people are accommodated in the tented camps. It is an evident discrepancy from the Danish Refugee Council’s December figures used by the UN and very close to the ICRC’s ones (host families: 55,570; spontaneous settlements: 27,889; camps: 19,374)” (UNICEF 26 January 2003)

See also “[Ingush Migration authorities artificially reduce number of Chechen refugees in Ingushetia](#)”, *Prague Watchdog*, 4 February 2003 [Internet]

***UN working figures for 2003***

Residents in Ingushetia	350,000
IDPs in Ingushetia	110,000

(UN November 2002, p. 6)

***Evolution in 2001-2002***

***Danish Refugee Council***

31 December 2001	139,670	DRC 31 December 2001
30 June 2002	116,578	DRC 30 June 2002
14 August 2002	114,500	WFP 16 August 2002
12 October 2002	110,728	DRC 12 October 2002

***UN working figures for 2002***

Residents in Ingushetia	350,000
IDPs in Ingushetia	150,000

(UN November 2002)

***Reasons for the decreasing figures***

"The IDP population in Ingushetia has reduced over the last month for about 8,000 persons, as a result of de-registration of those, who were either double-registered in both Chechnya and Ingushetia or do not reside in Ingushetia. The decrease of the beneficiaries concerned mainly the IDPs living in the tent camps (over 3,000 persons) and with the host families (about 3,500)." (WFP 31 January 2002)

"The number of registered IDPs in Ingushetia decreased from 153,000 in January 2001 to 116,000 in August 2002. This was mainly due to continued verification of registered IDPs and the linking of the two distribution databases of Ingushetia and Chechnya to reduce cases of double registration." (WFP 2002, para. 19)

***The decrease in the IDP figure in the course of 2002 is mainly a result of the removal from DRC’s distribution list of the people commuting from Chechnya for food assistance in Ingushetia. According to DRC; these people were mainly originating from districts in Chechnya neighbouring with Ingushetia (Aschkoy-Martan, Urus Martan, Groznensky district and also Grozny city). (DRC 21 October 2002)***

***Ethnic background***

IDPs from Chechnya, total (1999-2000)	153,000 (UNHCR/DRC registration)
Ethnicity - ethnic Chechens	92 %
- ethnic Ingush	7,1 %

(UNHCR 1 March 2001)

***Registration problems***

"UNHCR monitors reported that during the second half of May, the number of IDPs crossing the Chechen-Ingush border increased to up to 1,000 people travelling in each direction daily." (WFP 7 June 2002)

"Ingushetia has the largest concentration of IDPs, estimated between 140,000-160,000. Roughly 25% have at least one family member commuting regularly into Chechnya. This is one of the facts making it difficult to assess the needs and numbers of IDPs with precisions." (ICRC 14 December 2001)

"Registrations have been officially suspended since February-March 2001. New arrivals are therefore 'invisible', since they do not appear on the lists. Women at MSF's clinics speak of authorities refusing to register children born on Ingush territory.

The absence of official registration of displaced persons obviously makes the number of daily arrivals difficult to assess the seriously handicaps any humanitarian assistance program. Indeed, without a complete census of this population, the existence of some 20,000 to 50,000 people is being ignored. Official registrations counted 150,000 displaced persons, while the passport and propiska services counted 170,000 and the Ingush authorities estimate they have 200,000 IDPs." (MSF January 2002, p. 10)

*See also "Chechnya: Kremlin admits deficiencies in its migration policy in Ingushetia- Human rights defender", Prague Watchdog, 11 February 2003 [Internet]*

*For details on statistical sources, see "UN OCHA Note on IDP registration in Chechnya and Ingushetia" [Internal link]*

### **Displaced persons in Chechnya : 143,000 persons according to the Danish Refugee Council (as of January 2003)**

- According to the official census, the population of Chechnya is more than one million persons, but NGOs argue that this figure is inflated
- The increase of the IDP population in 2002 is mainly due to return movements from Ingushetia

#### **Situation as of January 2003:**

*The Danish Refugee Council estimates that 143,000 are displaced within Chechnya at the end of January 2003. However, detailed data for January 2003 will be compiled at a later stage. Most recent disaggregated figures are available as of November 2002.*

Age Group	Female		Male		Total	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
0-4	5517	50,4%	5423	49,6%	10940	7,7%
5-17	20757	49,0%	21626	51,0%	42383	29,9%
18-59	42090	54,8%	34752	45,2%	76842	54,2%
60 and >	6990	60,1%	4645	39,9%	11635	8,2%
Total	75354		66446		141800	

(DRC 2 November 2002)



*According to the Danish Refugee Council, the total population in Chechnya as of 1 January 2003, reaches 674,798 persons (DRC 31 January 2003).*

*As of August 2002, up to 182,000 persons displaced within Chechnya have obtained the Form No. 7, the registration document issued by the Federal Migration Service (FMS) to register IDPs in the North Caucasus (UN November 2002, p. 98).*

*For detailed data for the geographical distribution of IDPs in Chechnya, see DRC statistical table [Internal link]*

*UN working figures for 2003*

	Number
Residents in Chechnya	660,000
IDPs in Chechnya	140,000

(UN November 2002, p. 6)

***Debate around estimated total population in Chechnya:***

"Experts query accuracy of census results for Chechnya. The census conducted in Chechnya on 12-13 October has established that the republic's present population is 1,088,816, Chechen Premier Stanislav Ilyasov announced in Grozny on 14 October. Ilyasov acknowledged that that figure is higher than anticipated, and not much lower than the population of the then Checheno-Ingush ASSR at the time of the last Soviet census in 1989, which was 1,277,000. The permanent population of the Republic of Ingushetia as of 1 January 2001, not counting displaced persons from Chechnya, was 460,100, according to ingushetia.ru. Preliminary census data for Ingushetia are not yet available.

Russian and Chechen human rights activists have, however, expressed doubts over the accuracy and reliability of the figures that Ilyasov cited, according to chechenpress.com on 17 October. Memorial's Aleksandr Cherkasov estimated on 16 October that Chechnya's present population is no higher than 700,000. He listed three possible explanations for that discrepancy. First, he suggested that some residents of Chechnya might have moved from one village to another to avoid reprisals by Russian troops and have been counted twice. But, Cherkasov added, that alone could not account for the fact that the census data exceed his estimates by between 40,000 and 500,000 people.

More likely, Cherkasov said, are deliberate falsifications on the part of either local or Russian government officials. Both would stand to benefit from overstating the actual population figures: The local authorities could then ask for more funds from Moscow, while the central government could adduce the figure of over 1 million residents as proof that the situation in Chechnya is 'stabilizing.'

Between the Soviet censuses of 1979 and 1989, the Checheno-Ingush ASR experienced 11 percent population growth. If that rate of increase had been maintained, one could anticipate that the combined population of the two separate republics would now be in the region of 1.42 million. Subtract the current Ingush population and the figure is less than 1 million. But that end figure does not take into account either the casualty figures for the 1994-96 war (estimated at between 80,000 and 100,000) and the current war (estimated at 20,000-40,000), or the fact that most of Chechnya's Russian community has already fled to other regions of Russia.

Ilyasov told Interfax on 22 October, however: first, that Western estimates of war dead are far too high, and that no more than 10,000 people have died; and second, that one cannot estimate Chechnya's current population on the basis of the 1989 census results, as many people have left the republic, while others have come there. (Liz Fuller)." (RFE/RL 24 October 2002)

***Evolution in 2001-2002***

**Danish Refugee Council**

31 December 2001	134,4540	DRC 31 December 2001
30 June 2002	139,920	DRC 30 June 2002
14 August 2002	140,150	WFP 16 August 2002
12 October 2002	141,583	DRC 12 October 2002

**UN working figures for 2002**

Residents in Ingushetia	440,000
IDPs in Ingushetia	160,000

(UN November 2001, p. 8)

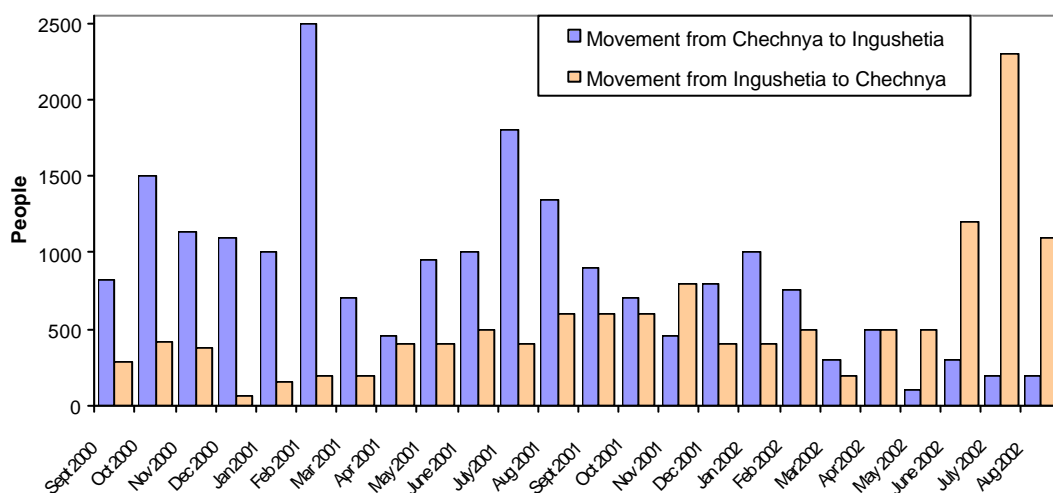
*According to the Danish Refugee Council, the increase in the IDP population in 2002 is mainly due to the return of 5,000 IDPs from Ingushetia. These IDPs have lost their homes in Chechnya and were obliged to remain internally displaced in Chechnya upon their return from Ingushetia. (DRC 21 October 2002)*

**Movements between Chechnya and Ingushetia: more return movements since June 2002 (January 2003)**

- There has been a clear pattern of return to Chechnya since June 2002, although insecurity in Chechnya continues to hamper return
- However, families continue to arrive from Chechnya to find a safe haven in Ingushetia
- Many displaced persons prefer to travel unofficially

Population movement estimates: Source UNHCR/Vesta

The figures indicate general trends of movement and are not to be regarded as exact statistics.



(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 5)

“While during the course of 2002 several thousand people returned voluntarily to Chechnya, the number of returns neither met the expectations of the political leadership nor did they significantly diminish the IDP population in Ingushetia. Insecurity in Chechnya, and the associated difficulties in establishing a stable socio-economic environment, were the reasons most often cited by IDPs for their unwillingness to return.” (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 6)

"According to Vesta/UNHCR monitoring at the border between the two republics, 1,400 IDPs returned to Chechnya in January [2003], most of them using the transportation provided by the Government. At the same time 255 new arrivals to Ingushetia, looking for safe haven, were recorded by the monitors." (WFP 31 January 2003)

"The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued monitoring the situation in IDP camps in Ingushetia. IDPs confirmed that the authorities had recently reduced their activities with regard to IDP return to Chechnya. Some IDPs wished to return in spring, while others expressed a desire to remain in Ingushetiya. During the month of December over 290 families (1,700 IDPs) returned to Chechnya from all IDP camps in Ingushetia in an organized manner. Another 380 IDPs returned to Chechnya on their own. After the explosion at the administration's building in Grozny on 27 December 2002, 93 people arrived in Ingushetia from Chechnya on 28 and 29 December. (UNOCHA 31 December 2002)

According to the UNICEF field monitoring trip results, there are more and more empty spaces appearing on the spots of former tent locations in some tented camps in Ingushetia. According to Commandant of Bela camp, one or two families are leaving for Chechnya every week." (UNICEF 26 January 2003)

*See also "8-10 former refugee families return to Chechnya each day", Government of the Russian Federation, 14 January 2003 [Internet]*

### **No precise figure for the displaced who left Chechnya and Ingushetia to other parts of Russia (2001-2002)**

- According to 2001 estimates from federal authorities, about 45,000 persons left Chechnya and Ingushetia and moved to other regions in the Russian Federation
- ICRC estimate that there remains about 6,000 Chechen IDPs in Dagestan, as most Dahestani IDPs have been able to return home (June 2002)
- About 69,000 displaced in Ingushetia left to other parts of the Russian Federation, according to Federal authorities (November 2000)

"According to the Ministry on the Affairs of Federation, National and Migration Policy (Ministry of Federation) about 45,000 people fled to other regions of the Russian Federation, including 7,000 to Stavropol, 4,500 to Dagestan, and 2,500 to North Ossetia – Alania." (UN November 2001, p. 8)

"According to the Ingush Territorial Representative Office of the RF Ministry for Federal Affairs, Migration and National Policy (former Migration Service for Ingushetia), since the beginning of the military conflict in Chechnya in 1999, a total of 302,390 IDPs from Chechnya came to Ingushetia. Out of them, 68, 792 persons left for other parts of Russia, and 91,181 - returned to Chechnya." (DRC 10 November 2000)

*40,000 estimated IDPs from the current Chechnya conflict are located in other parts of the Russian Federation (than Ingushetia), mainly in the North-Caucasian republics and Moscow (10,000) (UNHCR 6 March 2001).*

#### ***IDPs in Dagestan:***

"In 1994 to '96 Chechnya underwent a period of hostilities, with Dagestan receiving a massive influx of Chechen IDPs fleeing the violence in Chechnya. In August 1999, a second cycle of violence erupted in the region with a military operation in Dagestan and a series of bombing attempts in Moscow and Southern Russia followed by heavy fighting in Chechnya. September 1999 marked the first intrusion of Chechen combatants into Dagestan, followed shortly thereafter, by a second wave and counter offensive in Chechnya led by Russian troops.

The humanitarian consequences of these hostilities for the civilian population were severe, with the destruction of villages bordering Chechnya and displacement of thousands of Chechen IDPs in to Daghestan and more than 40,000 Dagestani IDPs within Daghestan. As a result of this period of hostilities, relations between Daghestan and Chechnya remain strained. Today, much of the infrastructural damage has been repaired, the Dagestani IDPs have returned to their places of origin, although about 6,000 Chechen IDPs remain in Daghestan.” (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 8)

“More than half of the IDPs (57%) are located in the urban are of Khasavhyurt with the remainder living in the northern districts of Daghestan [Locations: Khasavhyurt (57%), Kyyzlar /11%), Turamov (20%) and Nogai (12 %) Districts]. [...] [A]bout 30 % of IDPs live in Collective Centres, while the remainder live in private live in private housing either with a host (13%) of independently (57%).

[...]

Of the IDPs hhs surveyed, 20% report arriving at their present location between 1994-98, 50% arrived in 1999 and 30% have arrived since then. Over three quarters of those living in the northern area arrived in 1999, while about half of the IDPs in Khasavyurt arrived during the same time. Over 60% of IDPs report having relocated at least once since arriving in Daghestan. The extent of the unstable living circumstances of the IDPs is evident, particularly in contrast to those of the [Residents affected by the hostilities], and there are few indications that these IDPs will be able to return to their places of origin in Chechnya any time soon due to the on going crisis there." (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 11)

*The Danish Refugee Council estimates that the total number of IDPs in the whole of Dagestan reaches 10,000 IDPs (DRC 31 January 2003). Only 3,748 IDPs have been granted the so-called Form No. 7, the registration document issued by the territorial branches of the Ministry of the Interior's Federal Migration Service (FMS) in Dagestan (August 2002). UN estimates give 8,000 IDPs in Dagestan (UNHCR 13 February 2002)*

**Ingushetia hosts between 120,000 and 170,000 displaced persons from Chechnya (November 2000-March 2001)**

- Estimates by local authorities give at least 170,000 internally displaced in Ingushetia but only about 150,000 displaced have been registered for humanitarian assistance
- These figures may be inflated as a result of movements of displaced in Chechnya who travel to Ingushetia to collect food
- 55% of the displaced are women and 45% are under 18
- About 70 % of the displaced are living with host families

**Population figures used by UN Agencies in 1999-2001:**

Population	Nov 1999	Mar 2000	July 2000	Nov 2000	May 2001	Oct 2001
Residents in Ingushetia	N/A	N/A	320,000	320,000	320,000	350,000
IDPs in Ingushetia	198,000	185,000	200,000	160,000	160,000	150,000

(UN November 2001, p. 9)

**UN planning figures for 2001**

The UN has considered various sources of information on population figures for the republics of Chechnya and Ingushetia. These include government figures from EMERCOM and the Ministry of Federation; Danish Refugee Council registrations; and discussion with major humanitarian organisations such as the ICRC. While there is fairly widespread agreement that there are a total of 300-350,000 IDPs living in Chechnya and Ingushetia, the views differ on the proportion of IDPs in each of the two republics. The UN has compared the various sources with data from the last official census taken in 1989, and considered the

number of people who have reportedly emigrated from the region, as well as known casualties, and morbidity and birth rates since 1989. As a consequence of this exercise the UN used the following figures as indicative for planning purposes.

Population	Number
Residents in Ingushetia	320,000
IDPs in Ingushetia	160,000

(UN November 2000, p. 8)

### **Field figures**

"According to the Ingush Branch of the Ministry for Federal Affairs, Migration and Ethnic Policies, presently there are 179,701 IDPs from Chechnya living in Ingushetia. Out of them, as many as 147,198 persons are officially registered by the local authorities and considered to be entitled to receive humanitarian assistance coming through EMERCOM and other state sources.

[...]

As of 19/02/2001, the total number of the displaced registered with DRC/ASF in Ingushetia constituted 153,683 persons." (DRC 26 February 2001)

UNHCR field figures as of 18 February 2001

122,500 IDPs in Ingushetia (of which 29,000 in camps) (IASC 28 February 2001)

### **Problems of registration**

According to an UNHCR/DRC update, 178 000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Chechnya are still staying in the neighbouring republic of Ingushetia [2] . Of this figure, 152 000 fled the recent conflict, the remainder has been displaced since the previous war. Minors make up 45% of this figure. According to the Ministry of Emergencies (EMERCOM) the IDPs in Ingushetia amount to 142 149. The discrepancy between the two figures is most likely due to the fact that UNHCR/DRC might have registered some IDPs residing on the Chechen side of the border and travelling to Ingushetia to collect food. However, to any of these figures one should add an additional few thousand IDPs who are not registered. It should be noted that the population of Ingushetia amounts to 300 000 people. (COE 23 January 2001, para. 4)

According to the Ingush authorities, currently there are 176,000 IDPs living in Ingushetia. 144,375 persons of them are officially registered. The official data also indicates that the highest number of IDPs are registered in Sunzha district. The number of displaced persons registered with DRC is 151,417. As indicated by the UNHCR monitors, the number of new arrivals from Chechnya is increasing, and during the reporting period as many as 1,700 persons arrived in Ingushetia while only 100 people left for Chechnya over the same period. The majority of new arrivals were from Argun, Grozny, and Achkhoy-Martan. The IDPs indicate the security situation and lack of inadequate living conditions as the main reasons for remaining in Ingushetia. (UN OCHA 15 February 2001)

IDPs from Chechnya, total (1999-2000)	153 000 (UNHCR/DRC registration)
Ethnicity: - ethnic Chechen	92 %
- ethnic Ingush	7,1%
Female/Male	55 % / 45%
Children (under 18)	45 %
Shelter : - in tent camps	10 %
- in train wagons	2 %
- in spontaneous settlements	18 %
- with host families	70 %
New arrivals of IDPs in Ing. 1-31 Feb.	2500 (UNHCR estimate)
Return movement to Che. 1-31 Feb.	200 (UNHCR estimate)

(UNHCR 1 March 2001)

*For more detailed statistics on the geographical distribution of the internally displaced population in Ingushetia and for breakdown figures by age group and genders, see also annex 1 to the [report of the Danish Refugee Council No. 34, 26 February 2001 \(pdf format\)](#) [Internet]*

*See also "[Movements of displaced persons between Ingushetia and Chechnya remain without effect on the total IDP caseload \(2000\)](#)" [Internal link]*

### **Estimates for the internally displaced population in Chechnya range from 138,000 to 235,000 persons (February 2001)**

- At least 70 % of the internally displaced population registered by the Danish Refugee Council are women and children
- Central districts in Chechnya hosts about 50% of the displaced population

#### ***Population figures used by UN Agencies in 1999-2001:***

Population	Nov 1999	Mar 2000	July 2000	Nov 2000	May 2001	Oct 2001
Residents in Chechnya	N/A	100,000	350,000	370,000	400,000	440,000
IDPs in Chechnya	N/A	100,000	150,000	170,000	160,000	160,000

(UN November 2001, p. 9)

#### ***UN planning figures for 2001***

"The UN has considered various sources of information on population figures for the republics of Chechnya and Ingushetia. These include government figures from EMERCOM and the Ministry of Federation; Danish Refugee Council registrations; and discussion with major humanitarian organisations such as the ICRC. While there is fairly widespread agreement that there are a total of 300-350,000 IDPs living in Chechnya and Ingushetia, the views differ on the proportion of IDPs in each of the two republics. The UN has compared the various sources with data from the last official census taken in 1989, and considered the number of people who have reportedly emigrated from the region, as well as known casualties, and morbidity and birth rates since 1989. As a consequence of this exercise the UN used the following figures as indicative for planning purposes."

Population	Number
Residents in Chechnya	370,000
IDPs in Chechnya	170,000

(UN November 2000, p. 8)

#### ***Field figures***

Danish Refugee Council/ASF registration of Chechnya IDPs in Ingushetia (as of 19 February 2001)  
(Breakdown by location)

DistrictPresent	Total	IDP
Achkhoy-Martanovskiy	75 131	17 474
Vedenskiy	21 257	1 827
Groznenskiy	86 174	13 361
Gudermesskiy	92 384	12 419
Zavodskoy	16 723	4 748
Itum-Kalinskiy	3 020	219
Kurchalovskiy	62 646	4 656

Leninskiy	26 135	9 396
Nadtorechny	45 033	7 992
Naurskiy	36 685	6 423
Nozhay-Yurtovskiy	33 785	4 092
Oktyabr'skiy	22 643	7 594
Staropromyslovskiy	27 092	6 554
Urus-Martanovskiy	91 114	14 083
Shalinskiy	108 581	23 835
Sharoyanskiy	1 352	4
Shatovskiy	8 732	1 137
Shelkovskoy	34 950	3 126
Total	793 437	138 940

DRC/ASF registration of inner IDPs in Chechnya (as of 19 February 2001) (breakdown by age & sex)

Sex / Age	0-4	5-17	18-59	60+	Grand Total
W	5 444	21 934	39 736	6 784	73 898
M	5 571	22 634	32 401	4 436	65 042
Total	11 015	44 568	72 137	11 220	138 940

(DRC 26 February 2001)

*See also survey conducted by the Danish Refugee Council about the population in Chechnya from March to July 2000 [Internet]*

*UNHCR reports 234,000 internally displaced persons in Chechnya (of which 12,000 in camps) as of 18 February 2001 (IASC 28 February 2001)*

## **Population figures: other situations of displacement**

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**Displacement as a result of the first conflict in Chechnya (1994-1996): About 65,000 persons still registered as "forced migrants" (June 2002)**

- Up to 450,000 persons have fled as a result of the 1994-1996 conflict in Chechnya, according to governmental estimates
- Available statistics suggest that up to 65,000 displaced from the first conflict in Chechnya are still registered as "forced migrants" as of June 2002

*Total number of forced migrants originating from Chechnya: 77,527 persons (as of June 2002)*

*Total number of persons originating from Chechnya who were given the "forced migrant" between January-June 2002: 572 persons (UNHCR 18 October 2002)*

"The former Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation assessed that some 450,000 persons had fled the 1994-96 conflict in Chechnya. It is further estimated that most non-Chechen IDPs did not return to Chechnya after that conflict." (UNHCR January 2002. para. 60)

"There are no separate statistics for IDPs from the first 1994-96 conflict and IDPs from the current conflict. The total number of IDPs from Chechnya officially registered as forced migrants was 87,258 as at 31

December 2001. The only way to figure-out how many of those are IDPs from the 1994-96 conflict is to deduct from this figure the number of IDPs from Chechnya who were granted the 'forced migrant' status since the beginning of the second conflict, assuming that all those who obtained FM since September 1999 are new IDPs, which is not automatically the case. Statistics from 1998 and first half of 1999 indicate that persons were still being granted the 'forced migrant' status, presumably from the previous conflict, as a result of protracted status determination procedures). So, if we deduct 12,000 IDPs who got the 'forced migrant' status from September 1999 until December 2001, to the total number of 87,258 forced migrants from Chechnya, we get approximately 75,000 IDPs from the first conflict still registered as 'forced migrants'." (UNHCR 1 April 2002)

*For more information on the "forced migrant" status, see ["An official category for IDPs and involuntary migrants from the former Soviet Union: the status of 'forced migrant'"](#) [Internal link]*

### **Ingushetia hosts at least 12,000 displaced from the Prigorodny district (North Ossetia) (June 2002)**

- Half of them are likely to resettle permanently in Ingushetia according to UNHCR
- Another 13,000 to 14,000 ethnic Ingush have resettled durably in Ingushetia

*There were 12,400 ethnic Ingush displaced from the Prigorodny district as of June 2002. All of them were holders of the forced migrant status. Another 8,700 forced migrants originating from North Ossetia are also registered in North Ossetia. (UNHCR 18 October 2002)*

"Almost the entire ethnic Ingush population (34,000 to 64,000 people) in Prigorodnyi and about 9,000 ethnic Ossetians fled as a result of the war. Although most Ossetians returned home, about 15,000 ethnic Ingush who expressed their intention to return to the Prigorodnyi Region remained displaced in Ingushetia at year's end. Another 13,000 to 14,000 ethnic Ingush have integrated into Ingushetia, and 'are likely to settle permanently in Ingushetia,' according to UNHCR." (USCR 2001, p. 253)

*According to the Federal Ministry on Federal Affairs, Nationalities and Migration Policy, 14,650 internally displaced from the Prigorodny district (North Ossetia) in Ingushetia are holders of the forced migrant status as of January 2001. (Ministry of Federal Affairs, Nationalities and Migration Policy, January 2001)*

"Another 35,000 ethnic Ingush from North Ossetia remained internally displaced in Ingushetia." (USCR 2000, p. 270)

"A total of 23,009 IDPs from the Prigorodny District (North Ossetia-Alania) and 5 IDPs from Dagestan were registered in Ingushetia during the process [of registration undertaken by the Danish Refugee Council in Ingushetia in February-March 2000]." (DRC 21 March 2000)

### **Caseload from the first conflict in Chechnya (as of 2000 and 2001)**

- 169,000 displaced from Chechnya were officially registered as forced migrants between 1992 and 1999; about 114,000 of them remain registered as of June 2000
- Up to 300,000 ethnic Russians may have fled Chechnya during that period since not all of them were registered at their new place of residence, according to the government
- The Chechen diaspora throughout Russia may reach 500,000 persons, the government estimates



"Before October 1991 (the actual date of D. Dudaev's rise to power) Chechnya's population was over 1 million persons including 744,500 Chechens (57.8%); 229,500 Russians (23.1%); 21,000 Ukrainians; 15,000 Armenians; 10,000 Nogayans; 6,000 Tartars and other nationalities.

In 1992-1994, as a result of a determined policy of forcing out the representatives of the non-title nation and the flight of the Chechen intellectuals to other entities of the Russian Federation about 250,000 persons left Chechnya. Out of this number 83,400 inhabitants (in 1992 - 21,588; 1993 - 39,823; 1994 - 22,008) were officially registered as internally displaced persons.

In 1995-1996, 53,700 more persons were registered as internally displaced (in 1995 - 33,769; 1996 - 19,922). In the consecutive years the outflow from Chechnya continued. 32,849 inhabitants were registered as internally displaced persons (in 1997 - 15,160; 1998 - 13,007; in the first half of 1999 - 4,682). The actual number of those who have fled Chechnya was much higher since not all of them were registered at their new place of residence.

The Chechen population of Chechnya as of September 1999 was about 650,000 persons but for social, economic and other reasons about 50% of the Chechen inhabitants were practically permanently residing beyond the Republic's territory i.e. under 350,000 Chechens were actually living in the Chechen Republic.

The Chechen 'diaspora' in other regions of Russia reaches today 500,000 persons, including up to 250,000 in Moscow.

According to some estimates, the Russian population in Chechnya accounts now for no more than 20,000 persons i.e. has reduced 10 times as compared to 1991. (Government of the Russian Federation 17 January 2000)

Other neighbouring regions, namely the Republic of North Ossetia-Alanya, the Republic of Dagestan and the Stavropol region accommodate in total approximately 10 000 people displaced after the recent conflict. However, certain areas have been accommodating large numbers of Chechen IDPs since 1992. According to the Russian official figures, as many as 300 000 ethnic Russians have left the Chechen Republic since 1992. For example, in the Stavropol region alone, the number amounts to 76 000 people. The delegation visited some settlements of Russian IDPs from Chechnya in the area of Budennovsk constructed with the assistance of local communities. The Orthodox Church has largely contributed to this integration. Undoubtedly, living conditions in these settlements are much better than those in IDP camps and the majority of IDPs have been successfully integrated into the local communities. Many of them have found employment. (COE 23 January 2001, para. 5)

***Internally displaced persons registered as "forced migrants":***

131,340 IDPs currently hold the forced migrant status, as of June 2001. 810 percent of them have been displaced from Chechnya, mostly as a result of the first 1994-96 Chechnya. Other have been displaced from other republics in northern Caucasus, mainly Ingushetia and North Ossetia. The IDPs ex-Chechnya are spread all over the Russian Federation, but most have settled in the North-Caucasus District; IDPs with forced migrant status from Prigorodny district of North-Ossetia are mainly in Ingushetia (14,158 persons as of June 2001). (Federal Ministry on Federal Affairs, Nationalities and Migration Policy, June 2001)

## **Statistical sources**

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### **UN OCHA note on IDP registration in Northern Caucasus (November 2002)**

- Federal authorities registered most IDPs arriving from Chechnya

- This registration of new arrivals in Ingushetia has been suspended in April 2001
- Since July 2000 the ICRC has registered IDPs according to its vulnerability criteria
- The Danish Refugee Council registers IDPs physically present in Chechnya and Ingushetia

"Governmental and international aid agencies register internally displaced persons (IDPs) for three main reasons: i) legal status; ii) statistical purposes; and iii) access to humanitarian assistance. This note highlights three ways in which displaced persons are registered.

The territorial branches of the Ministry of the Interior's Federal Migration Service (FMS) register IDPs in the North Caucasus (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Stavropol Kray). Once registered, IDPs are issued a registration document, called Form No. 7. As of 23 August 2002, 276,143 IDPs, including 182,626 people in the Republic of Chechnya, 3,748 people in the Republic of Dagestan, and 78,303 people in the Republic of Ingushetia, possessed Form No. 7. The document is not an identity document but serves for statistical purposes and grants access to governmental humanitarian assistance. In some instances local bodies of the interior register IDPs at their new place of stay, where the issuance of temporary identity documents (Form 2Ī) has been made conditional upon the possession of Form No. 7. Form 2Ī is of limited validity and requires payment for every renewal. Since April 2001, the Ingush territorial authority of the then Ministry of Federation suspended the registration (under Form No. 7) of all new IDP arrivals. Without such registration, the IDPs concerned do not have access to governmental assistance, including accommodation in government-managed camps and food distributions.

ICRC and DRC also register IDPs in the North Caucasus.

Since July 2000 the ICRC has registered IDPs according to its vulnerability criteria. One registration session was conducted in the autumn of 2000, one in the winter of 2000 – 2001, and an update in the summer of 2002. In Ingushetia, newcomers can be registered provided their presence has been checked on the spot by ICRC staff. In order to receive assistance, every IDP has to show a proper document (passport or Form 2P), which will be compared to the data stored in the ICRC database. The database is updated daily in order to take into account the IDPs who are to be excluded (those who missed two distributions in a row, duplicates, or those who receive food parcels from other NGOs) and the IDPs who are to be included (new arrivals). By the beginning of September 2002, 88,000 IDPs received assistance from the ICRC in Ingushetia.

Similar procedures are applied to the IDPs and vulnerable residents assisted by the ICRC/RRC in Dagestan and the other republics of the North Caucasus, where re-registrations take place on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Inside Chechnya, the ICRC vulnerable categories among the resident population are: the elderly (people aged over 70), invalids of the first category, large families, and orphans. As of August 2002, 47,000 vulnerable people had received assistance from the ICRC in Chechnya.

The DRC registers IDPs physically present in Chechnya and Ingushetia in order to assess needs and facilitate the distribution of humanitarian assistance. DRC, with the assistance of UNHCR and WFP, has carried out a registration of all IDPs in Chechnya and Ingushetia since January 2000. As of 30 September 2002, 141,260 IDPs in Chechnya and 110,728 in Ingushetia were registered in the DRC database. DRC's database contains basic information on IDP beneficiaries such as vulnerability indicators, place of residence, and family composition, and is constantly updated to reflect changes in place of residence. DRC has three information centres and five verification teams in Ingushetia and six information centres and verification teams in Chechnya. The information centres also register or deregister IDPs. The data collected by DRC is shared with other aid agencies and each of them can select beneficiaries according to their own criteria." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 98)

## **Populations figures of the Federal and regional Migration Services flawed by inconsistent practices**

- Statistics from the Federal Migration Service include only those IDPs who officially registered as 'forced migrants'
- Some regions overstate the number of forced migrants; Cases of multiple registered migrants
- Large number of forced migrants do not go through the registration process either because they do not see any benefit therefrom or as a result of restrictive admission policies in the regions

### *Total number of forced migrants registered from 1993 up to the end of June 2002*

*From Ingushetia: 1,923 persons (492 families)*

*From North Ossetia: 21,548 (4,754 families)*

*From Chechnya: 77,527 persons (31,094 families)*

*From other regions of the Russian Federation: 653 persons (253 families)*

*(UNHCR 18 October 2002)*

"According to official statistics, as of 1 January 1998, there were 1,191,939 'refugees' and 'forced migrants' in the Russian Federation. Such figures include only those who officially registered with the Federal Migration Service (FMS). Due to a lack of clarity in the legislation and flawed registration practices, official statistics do not always correctly reflect the magnitude of forced migration flows.

[...]

The FMS set up branch offices, which forward local statistical information on a monthly basis to the headquarters. Since 1993, the FMS has published annual statistical reports, which include data not only on the numbers but also on ethnic, social and demographic composition of the registered persons. The FMS has also established computer links with some of its regional branches. This made statistical information more regular and more reliable. The categories of published data, however, were not consistent over the years. For some years, for example, FMS bulletins contain data on the percentage of successful petitions for a given status, on rural-urban distribution of 'forced migrants', and on the regional distribution of different ethnic migrants groups, but for other years such data are not included.

[...]

[T]he categories of 'refugees' and 'forced migrants' do not correspond with internationally accepted ones, including those adopted as working definitions at the CIS Conference. The Russian categories encompass not only CIS refugees, persons in refugee-like situations, involuntary relocating persons, but also IDPs and some repatriants. While it is possible to distinguish IDPs on the basis of the place of origin, the relative share of the other categories among the total inflows of 'refugees' and 'forced migrants' is difficult to assess.

[...]

[One factor] that affected statistical evaluation relates to flawed practices. It is widely believed that some regions overstate the number of registered migrants. The local administration receives funds in relation to the number of such migrants, and so multiple registration suits both the migrants and the administrators. For example, the North Ossetian authorities in 1993 claimed a figure of about 110,000 'refugees', but the real figure was thought to be considerably lower. On the other hand, more than forty subjects of the Russian Federation limit the migrant inflows to their territories. More than twenty subjects passed restrictive legislative acts in this respect, which contradicts the 1993 Federal law on freedom of travel and choice of residence.

Some migrants register more than once in order to get benefits several times. Many 'forced migrants', however, ignore registration altogether because they perceive the process as cumbersome and the benefits very limited. This is particularly true for those who settle with relatives. In December 1992 when the Government started to grant interest-free loans to migrants, the number of persons registering rose sharply. According to the FMS, 'this immediate increase of the number of 'forced migrants' in the Russian Federation exceeds by far those 'officially registered.'

The discrepancy between registered and real inflows of 'refugees' and 'forced migrants' varies from region to region and depends considerably on the admission policy pursued by the regions. For example, as of 1 January 1994, the number of 'forced migrants' in Krasnodar region was slightly over 14,000, according to the FMS, and 120,000, according to regional authorities. Major discrepancies between officially registered and actual numbers of inflow are common to the regions with restrictive admission and residence policies towards 'refugees' and 'forced migrants'. They are Krasnodar and Stavropol districts, Moscow and St. Petersburg, Rostov, Kaliningrad, Moscow and Leningrad regions, and more recently, Belgorod, Voronezh, Volgograd, Yaroslavl, Kursk, Penza, Ulyanovsk and some other regions, Tatarstan, Bashkotostan, Northern Ossetia and some other republics. This is widely acknowledged by FMS officials themselves. The more rigid the restrictive measures are towards 'refuges' and 'forced migrants', the bigger the share of them without proper status or even *propiska*. In this case, they are not covered by statistics of forced migration or total migration inflow to the region." (IOM 1998, pp. 12-14)

## PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

### General

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#### Constant movements of IDPs between Chechnya and Ingushetia (2000)

- Registration of displaced for humanitarian distribution and larger food rations distributed in Ingushetia have been a pull factor for people in Chechnya to go to Ingushetia
- The displaced population in Ingushetia decreased in December-January 2000 but approaching winter and continuous violence continue to push people out of Chechnya

"Some movements of the population may be continuously observed. Over the last week there has been a small increase in the number of IDPs arrivals in Ingushetia. It is estimated that approximately 1 000 arrived in Ingushetia in October. This movement seems to be largely due to the ongoing UNHCR/DRC re-registration exercise to update the list of those eligible to humanitarian aid distribution in Ingushetia. Also, some IDPs are arriving in Ingushetia due to continued fighting and military screening operations, as well as lack of winterised shelters in Chechnya. New arrivals come mostly from Grozny, where living conditions are increasingly difficult with winter approaching.

As of 15 January [2001], the number of registered Chechen IDPs in Ingushetia has dropped to about 147,000 people. This is approximately 12,000 people less than at the end of the last month. However the total number of IDP could quickly rise as a result of continued violence in Chechnya." (WFP 19 January 2001)

#### *Influence of food aid on movements of the displaced population*

"WFP monitors constantly receive complaints from IDPs over the fact that Ingushetia and Chechnya the food rations are not the same. WFP representative suggested to consider a possibility of similar food rations to be used in Ingushetia and Chechnya. DRC/ASF supported the idea, in general. The fact, in the initial stage of its program of food assistance in Chechnya DRC/ASF has already proposed to unify the rations. The present discrepancy between the rations in the republics creates a pull factor for the people to come to Ingushetia for the assistance and slows down the IDP return to Chechnya from the Ingush Republic." (DRC 24 October 2000)

*See also "Movements of displaced persons between Ingushetia and Chechnya remain without effect on the total IDP caseload (2000)" [Internal link]*

#### High-risk road to safety: selected reports (November 1999)

- Routes from besieged cities effectively closed due to artillery and air bombardment; no safe corridors
- Displaced in flight exposed to extortion and arbitrary detention at check points

"Civilians fleeing the bombing have also suffered casualties. Routes to safety from besieged towns remain effectively closed due to artillery and air bombardment. Particularly dangerous is a stretch of the Baku-Rostov highway—the principal artery crossing east-west through Chechnya to the Ingush border—that passes southwest of Grozny. 'Ramazan' left Shatoi on November 16 at 3:00 a.m. in a van with 15 people. At

approximately 7:00 a.m., on the Baku-Rostov highway outside the town of Kulary, five shots rang out towards their vehicle from a Russian position on the left side of the road. One hit the vehicle, and seriously wounded 4-year-old Eliza Khabaeva. According to her father Isa, 38, she is now in the intensive care ward of Sunzhenskaia district hospital in Sleptsovsk.

Kharon Askhabov, 35, said that he was unaware of any humanitarian corridor out of Urus Martan. He left on November 15 at 7:00 a.m. in a convoy of three cars with relatives. On the Baku-Rostov highway outside of Achkoi Martan, one of the cars was hit by a shell, and the seven passengers were killed: an old man, two women, and four children. 'Ruslan' from Urus Martan related that he saw two empty cars, one of them burning, the other with holes from shrapnel on the Baku-Rostov highway close to Zakan-Iurt on November 15. The passengers had presumably fled.

Human Rights Watch notes that thousands of displaced persons flee each day on the Rostov-Baku highway. Any firing on this road, which, according to witness testimony, is frequent, runs the risk of striking civilian vehicles, endangering the lives of displaced persons. Human Rights Watch calls on the United Federal Forces to take all feasible measures to protect noncombatants fleeing for safety, including declaring periodic cease-fires.

Human Rights Watch's letter to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees urged her to seek assurances from Prime Minister Putin that Russian forces would protect fleeing civilians from attacks; that corrupt border police would be disciplined; and that humanitarian organizations would have unfettered access to Chechnya, including areas under Russian control.

Reaching the border is not the last hurdle the displaced must face before safety. Kharon Askhabov left Urus Martan on November 15. At the second control point after Assinovskii, federal soldiers demanded money from him, detaining him for forty minutes. When he answered that he had no money, they swore at him and threatened, 'If you don't give us some [money], you'll be last in this line, or you won't get across at all.' He replied that in his car there were three women and seven children. They swore at him again. He had only 60 rubles for gasoline (approximately U.S.\$2). The women in his car gathered 300 rubles so that the soldiers would let him through. Askhabov, who had left Ingushetia the day before to return to Chechnya to bring his family to safety, had already been forced to pay 400 rubles in order to enter Chechnya. Another displaced person interviewed at the Chechen-Ingush border recounted that on November 15, soldiers at the border demanded 100 rubles, ostensibly a fine for riding his motorcycle without a helmet." (HRW 18 November 1999)

"[W]omen and men are subjected to 'filtration' when their identity documents are checked against computer data, which allegedly includes information on suspected members of armed Chechen groups and their relatives. They are usually kept for some time at a detention place at the checkpoint and then taken to 'filtration camps'. Hundreds of men and teenage boys have also been reportedly detained in the towns and villages of Naursky District, Grozny and other regions under the control of the Russian forces and taken to 'filtration camps'." (AI 17 February 2000)

## PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

### Physical safety and personal liberty

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#### **Forced closure of camps in Ingushetia oblige IDPs to return to Chechnya (December 2002)**

- 1,700 residents of the Amin camp (Aki-Yurt) were forced to leave, but some of them have resettled elsewhere in Ingushetia
- Authorities continue to pressure other camp residents to return to Chechnya
- Arrest on false charges, withdrawal of food allowances, cutting of gas and electricity supplies during winter months have been among the methods used
- The promises of shelter and assistance in Chechnya intended to serve as incentives to return have proven illusory
- This policy of forced return is a clear breach of the Guiding Principles

"Since the end of 1999, Russian officials at various times have attempted to convince internally displaced people to return to their homes inside Chechnya. But in May 2002, Russian and Ingush officials for the first time announced detailed plans to close the tent camps in Ingushetia—unsightly counterevidence of Russian claims that the war had ended—and to return the displaced persons living in them to Chechnya. They began to implement the plan in May, but in the aftermath of the Moscow hostage crisis, they moved forward with unprecedented speed and aggression.

In sub-freezing temperatures, using a combination of threats and incentives, officials have attempted to force the 23,000 people who at that time remained in seven tent camps back into an active war zone. In one case they succeeded: the Aki-Yurt camp, which housed some 1,700 displaced Chechens, was forcefully closed in early December 2002 after the international community had been temporarily barred access to it.

Without exception, residents of the remaining six camps told Human Rights Watch that they did not want to return due to the unsafe conditions in Chechnya, but pressure on them was unrelenting. The pressure has been effective: according to the Federal Migration Service (FMS), between November 21 and December 24, 2002, 2,663 tent dwellers returned to Chechnya. Although Russian officials claim that returns to Chechnya are 'voluntary,' Human Rights Watch research shows that this is not the case.

Migration officials have constantly harassed displaced persons; threatened them with arrest on false charges, with withdrawal of food allowances, and with cutting of gas and electricity supplies during winter months; and at times forced the removal of displaced persons from their tents. The forcible closure of Aki-Yurt tent camp and the aggressive attempt to push displaced persons to return to the active war zone in Chechnya amounts to forcible return and is a clear violation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Russian authorities in Ingushetia told Human Rights Watch that tent dwellers have the option of remaining in Ingushetia or returning to Chechnya. Yet no displaced people interviewed by Human Rights were aware of this choice. Human Rights Watch also found shelters that allegedly will be provided to tent dwellers in Ingushetia to be uninhabitable, occupied, or simply nonexistent. Moreover, the promises of shelter and assistance in Chechnya intended to serve as incentives to return in some cases have proven illusory, due to the severe shortage of adequate shelter in Chechnya. Failing to provide shelter, or compelling displaced

persons to live in uninhabitable shelter also violates the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement." (HRW January 2003, pp. 3-4)

"The international aid community is concerned at the intention of the Russian authorities to dismantle the tent camps in Ingushetia, accommodating some 23,000 IDPs from Chechnya. It was quick to react to the plans and the consequent closure of the Iman camp in Aki-Yurt at the beginning of December, stressing that all returns to Chechnya should be voluntary questioning insecurity and the lack of shelter, basic services, and economic opportunities for the returnees. On 27 November, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr Kenzo Oshima, stated that return could only be considered voluntary if 'no risk exists to returnees' life, safety, liberty, and health.' The UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights voiced concern about the fate of IDPs in Ingushetia, calling on the Russian authorities to postpone its plans. Amnesty International and Refugees International made similar statements. Several countries, and the EU Commissioner, carried out demarches, also." (UNOCHA 15 December 2002)

"Some 400 individuals were confirmed by UNHCT to have moved to Chechnya by 11 December. Approximately 600 individuals moved to private accommodations with host families inside the village of Aki Yurt while some 150 IDPs resettled elsewhere in Ingushetia. Remaining IDPs inhabiting self-made mud houses are left without gas and electricity and are threatened with the destruction of their houses.

[...]

While registrations of IDPs willing to return is ongoing, and some intimidations were reported from camps Alina and Bela, the pace of the events seemed to have slowed down. President Putin made a statement on 10 December saying that return of IDPs to Chechnya would have to happen on a voluntary basis." (UNICEF 17 December 2002)

*The closure of the Imam Camp in Aki Yurt has been documented in detail by Human Rights Watch in its recent report 'Into Harm's Way: Forced Return of Displaced Persons to Chechnya', January 2003 [Internet]*

*See also "Resettlement of Chechen refugees and international law: a brief view", Prague Watchdog, 11 December 2002 [Internet]*

### **Authorities exert pressure on camps residents to return to Chechnya (2002)**

- Authorities visit IDP camps every day to promote return
- False promises of return assistance, especially temporary accommodation centres in Chechnya are made to returnees
- IDPs have also been threatened with arrest on false charges and cutting of electricity and gas
- Troops have been deployed in the vicinity of IDP camps
- Since April 2001, federal authorities have suspended the registration of newly displaced persons arriving from Chechnya
- According to 2001 survey, most displaced have no intention of returning to Chechnya

"Every day, about 30 officials, representing the Federal Migration Service, Ingush migration authorities, the Chechen administration, and the Federal Security Service, make rounds in camps, going from tent to tent pressing people to apply for relocation and explaining the advantages of moving to Chechnya and the disadvantages of remaining in Ingushetia. They promise returnees space in new temporary accommodation centers that are allegedly being built in Chechnya, offer 20 rubles per person per day to those who plan to relocate in Chechnya's private sector, and free transportation back to Chechnya. They threaten those



reluctant to leave with arrest on false drug and weapons possession charges, and warn them that vital gas and electricity supplies will be cut off to the camps.

Human Rights Watch received from the Federal Migration Service a list of eighteen temporary resettlement alternatives in Ingushetia with the alleged capacity to accommodate 224 families. None of the tent camp dwellers interviewed by Human Rights Watch was aware of the list, or of the possibility of relocating to a facility in Ingushetia.

Human Rights Watch researchers visited twelve temporary resettlement facilities in the Karabulak and Sunzha districts that appeared on the Federal Migration Service's list. With two exceptions all of them were either already occupied, uninhabitable, or simply did not exist. Returnees to Chechnya face similar problems. Human Rights Watch interviewed several returnees who had to go back to Ingushetia because the promised accommodation was either uninhabitable or already occupied. Denied any state assistance, they are now living off the kindness of neighbors.

Migration officials emphasize to displaced people that the camps' days are numbered, and that tent dwellers would be better off leaving now rather than awaiting a forced closure of the camps. In late October, Russian troops were deployed near the camps, their presence understood by displaced persons as a threat of force should they choose not to leave 'voluntarily.'" (HRW 26 December 2002)

"According to the latest DRC data, the tent camps Alina, Bella, Satsita, Sputnik and Bart in Ingushetia are currently accommodating 20,000 IDPs from Chechnya. The National Committee on IDP of the Chechen Government (Chairman Mr. Gidizov) delegated its representatives for the purpose of repatriation campaign to all major IDP settlements on the territory of Ingushetia. According to some superintendents of the tent camps, the Committee representatives put direct an indirect pressure on the Chechens in order to return as many of them as possible." (UNICEF 13 January 2003)

#### ***Military presence in the vicinity of camps***

"The 58th army corps from North Ossetia has been deployed in Ingushetia. Officially this corps has been deployed there to reinforce the border with Georgia. After the US military instructor came to assist Georgia with its combat against banditry and terrorism the Russian government is concerned that, if the combat is effectively launched in the Pankisi gorge, this could possibly lead to a movement of Chechen refugees including combatants, back to Ingushetia. Some of the elements of this corps are deployed in the vicinity of the IDP sites. There has already come been an instance of unfortunate interface, unnecessarily raising tension and anxiety. It took place recently when suddenly a patrol camp to an IDP camp in the middle of the night, asking for water. The IDP population was of course wondering what was going on. The night afterwards all the youths of the camp had gone. Clearly, such incidents have the intentional or unintentional effect of creating a feeling of insecurity in Ingushetia." (ACCORD/UNHCR 29 June 2002, p. 254)

"NAZRAN, Ingushetia, November 1 (UNHCR) – The UN refugee agency has said that a recent military build-up near camps for internally displaced Chechens in Ingushetia is worrying inhabitants and raising protection concerns for some who have yet to receive official registration documents.

UNHCR staff and monitors have reported that since October 25, military troops have moved to Ingushetia and established a presence close to four camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). The camps in central Ingushetia, known locally as Alina, Bella, Satitza and Sputnik, host some 17,000 Chechen IDPs.

The troops, which are reportedly there to prevent any attack from terrorist groups on the camps, have installed a few tents and trucks at the edge of the camps or, in the case of Bella camp, at the entrance. No military presence has been reported in any other camp or near temporary settlements.

A document check was put in place at the four camps as of Thursday, October 31. Soldiers have been checking all cars and persons entering or leaving, and only IDPs who have a registration document proving their official presence in the camps can move freely in and out.

UNHCR is concerned this could raise protection problems for some of the IDPs who have not received the necessary registration documents from the local authorities. The agency has urged the authorities to provide appropriate documentation to the displaced people as soon as possible.

The IDPs are also getting increasingly anxious about the presence of troops and arms so close to the camps. In at least one of the camps, the proximity of military tents to a school has caused attendance to drop by 70 percent." (UNHCR 1 November 2002)

*See also "Chechen refugees in Ingushetia protest against Russian soldiers in neighbourhood", Prague Watchdog, 5 November 2002 [Internet]*

### **Violence in Chechnya amounts to an internal armed conflict (2002)**

- The media continue to report an average twenty-five Russian soldiers killed each week
- Both Russian forces and Chechen rebels are involved in cases of forced disappearances and extrajudicial executions
- Federal troops routinely ignore decrees intended to improve transparency during operations
- Chechen rebel forces target primarily civil servants working for the pro-Moscow administration
- Russian forces have committed extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture, rape, and looting
- Main victims of arbitrary detention and torture are males of fighting age
- Often Russian forces commit abuses during sweep operations, which involve the closing off of streets or even entire villages for house-to-house searches
- They also increasingly carry out more targeted night operations, in which masked troops raid particular homes, execute targeted individuals, or take them away
- Appeals from the Duma and pro-Moscow Chechen groups to denounce this violence

"Most displaced families choose to remain in Ingushetia—preferring to tolerate the deprivations of tent camps and the prospect of eviction rather than endanger their own lives and the lives of their children by returning to Chechnya. While human rights violations by both parties to the conflict have endangered civilians since the war began, the sharp rise in the civilian death toll in late 2002 due to bombings and assassinations attributed to Chechen forces has heightened these risks. Little has changed in the dynamics of the Chechnya conflict itself, with the Russian government insisting the conflict is winding down but media reporting an average of twenty-five Russian soldiers killed each week. These deaths result primarily from ambushes, bombings, and mine explosions by Chechen forces, rather than from classic military engagement.

Nonetheless, the hostilities in Chechnya amount to an internal armed conflict under international humanitarian law, particularly article 3 common to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. In situations of armed conflict, abuses such as attacks on civilians, extrajudicial executions, rape, torture, and destruction of civilian property, are all violations of the Geneva Conventions.

In many cases of forced disappearances and extrajudicial executions, the armed men responsible take precautions to conceal their identity. They are often masked, their uniforms do not have identification marks, and the license numbers on their military vehicles are smeared with mud. Federal troops routinely ignore decrees intended to improve transparency during operations. Chechen rebels also use the confused climate of an active war zone to hide responsibility for their crimes. In many cases, though, responsibility can be determined by the circumstances of the case: when abuses happen during federal forces' security

checks, or during security raids on individual homes, or when they are perpetrated by masked men speaking unaccented Russian and who make use of armored vehicles but do not carry out other tasks associated with security checks (house searches, for example). In cases when civil servants working for the pro-Moscow administration of Chechnya are murdered, responsibility most likely lies with Chechen rebel forces.

In a small number of cases, it is impossible to say with certitude whether Russian forces or Chechen rebels were responsible for a particular 'disappearance.' For example, on the evening of December 2, at about 8:30 p.m., a group of about twelve armed and masked men in white camouflage uniforms came to the home of fifty-two-year-old Ramzan Gichikaev, the deputy head of the Russian Federal Ministry of Property in Chechnya and an author of a new pro-Moscow Chechen constitution. The men gave only short orders in unaccented Russian, telling everyone to get down on the floor and remain quiet. The men did not appear to speak or understand Chechen, according to the relatives who were in the home at the time. They allowed Gichikaev to get dressed, and then took him with them, leaving the area on foot. When the family tried to follow the abductors, they were shot at and had to abandon their effort.

It is unclear whether Russian soldiers or Chechen fighters were responsible for the disappearance of Gichikaev. Russian officials and some of his Chechen colleagues believe that Gichikaev was disappeared by Chechen fighters because of his role in the pro-Moscow administration. But some of his close relatives believe that Russian soldiers were responsible, pointing to the fact that the abductors spoke fluent Russian and did not appear to understand Chechen.

#### Abuses by Chechen Forces

As noted above, Chechen rebel forces carried out two dramatic attacks on civilians in late 2002, causing enormous loss of life. In October they took nearly 800 people hostage in a Moscow theatre, which resulted in the deaths of more than one hundred people. A December 2002 bomb attack on the government building in Grozny left seventy-two people dead and another 210 wounded. In the last months of 2002 rebel forces also intensified their campaign against civil servants working for the pro-Moscow administration of Chechnya. These forces are believed to be responsible for seven assassinations, several assassination attempts, and nine abductions of civil servants since November 15.

Chechen forces are obligated to respect the principles of humanitarian law found in Article 3 Common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, which applies during internal armed conflicts, but Chechen leaders have failed to unequivocally condemn attacks by their forces on civilians, which violate these provisions. Although Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov and people in his entourage have half-heartedly condemned the hostage-taking in Moscow and the bombing of the government building in Grozny, they have frequently suggested that abuses by Russian troops somehow excused these crimes, thus sending at best a mixed message to rebel fighters. For example, on January 2, 2003, Agence France-Presse quoted Maskhadov as saying that he did not support suicide attacks but could not control the suicide bombers, whom he said were driven to desperation by the Russian army:

The suicide bombers were unable to come to terms with the humiliation that their people were dealt by the Russian troops... They saw no other choice but to sacrifice their lives... So if anyone thinks that these people can be stopped—by Maskhadov, Putin, or anyone else—they have another think [sic] coming. They cannot be stopped... They will only be stopped when (Russian troops) stop humiliating the Chechen people.

Chechen leaders have sent similarly mixed messages about the assassinations of civil servants, on the one hand denying any involvement but on the other suggesting these civil servants were 'traitors' who deserved their fate. Chechen rebel leaders and news agencies routinely refer to any Chechens working with the Russian government as 'national traitors.'

[...]

#### Abuses by Russian Forces

For more than three years, Russian forces in Chechnya have committed extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture, rape, and looting without being held accountable for their

actions. These are violations of Russian's obligations under the Article 3 Common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, which applies during internal armed conflicts. They have become a familiar, ugly part of daily life for people in Chechnya. Simply being a male of fighting age appears sufficient for grounds for detention, and those detained are invariably beaten and abused. Often they 'disappear' or are later found executed. The November killing of Malika Umazheva, a former civil servant who spoke out fiercely against abuse, marked the clearest case to date in which Russian forces committed an extrajudicial execution for retribution.

Often Russian forces commit abuses during *zachistki*, or sweep operations, which involve the closing off of streets or even entire villages for house-to-house searches. Increasingly, Russian forces also appear to be carrying out more targeted night operations, in which masked troops raid particular homes, execute targeted individuals, or take them away, never to be seen again.

In the weeks following the Moscow hostage crisis, several sources reported a sharp rise in forced disappearances and extrajudicial executions in Chechnya. Akhmad Kadyrov, the head of the pro-Moscow administration in Chechnya, complained publicly in mid-November 2002 about the rise in forced disappearances in the month following the hostage seizure, although he was careful not to directly blame Russian forces:

In the night, unknown armed individuals take people away and they go missing. According to our information, forty-eight people went missing in the past few days... No one is personally [held] responsible for systematic incidents when people go missing. Nine people have been taken away from my native village of Tsenteroi this week. And it is impossible to find out where they are now. I can't look my fellow villagers in the eyes.

Members of Russia's parliament, the State Duma, were similarly outspoken during a special meeting on Chechnya in November 2002. Chechen representative Aslanbek Aslakhanov told the Duma session that he had 'grounds to open a criminal case for abuse on every single mopping-up operation. The problem is that we allowed them [Russian forces] to work with the 'bandits' using 'bandit' methods.' Arkadii Baskaev, a Duma representative and former general who fought in the first Chechnya campaign was similarly damning, suggesting that Russian military abuses were forcing Chechen men into the ranks of Chechen rebel groups and that Russian soldiers 'go there [to Chechnya], rob and come back...All the temporary troops must be withdrawn from there.' Taus Jabrailov, a deputy to Akhmed Kadyrov, stated that 'kidnapping has become more frequent,' citing thirty-one disappearances over the previous ten days. Even the deputy prosecutor general, Sergei Fridinsky, told the Duma that 'no one would deny that human rights are being violated' in Chechnya, although he said that only 'about fifteen' criminal investigations had been opened against Russian soldiers for abuses committed during mopping-up operations.

Around the same time, a group of pro-Moscow Chechen officials wrote to President Vladimir V. Putin to urge him to intervene personally to put an end to rising abuses by Russian forces in Chechnya, saying:

In the days following the terrorist attack in Moscow, the activities of federal units in Chechnya have resulted in a drastic deterioration of the political situation in the republic. Military units use armored vehicles on a massive scale to abduct civilians in the dead of the night. "

(HRW January 2002, pp. 12-16)

*See also "Russia: Rights groups say brutality on rise among Russian troops in Chechnya", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 21 January 2003 [Internet]*

## **Climate of impunity exacerbates insecurity in Chechnya (2002)**

- None of the most severe cases of human rights violations has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion by the Russian authorities, according to the Council of Europe
- Only a small fraction of the cases investigated by the prosecuting authorities have led to indictments, even less have resulted in convictions
- This contrasts with the thousands of complaints received by NGOs and by the Office of the Presidential Representative for Human Rights in Chechnya
- Prosecuting authorities show blatant inefficiency when the crimes in question are those committed against Chechen civilians

***Report from the Council of Europe rapporteur for the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Mr. Rudolf Binding***

"Russian forces apparently routinely harass, intimidate and beat Chechen civilians. Since journalists and international NGO workers find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to enter Chechnya proper, most of these crimes go unnoticed and unreported on the big stage of world affairs.

What is even worse, they also go unpunished. None of the high-profile cases of human rights violations that the [Council of Europe Parliamentary] Assembly has been following has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion by the Russian authorities. To the unsolved crimes of the alleged massacres of civilians in Alkhan-Yurt (1999), Staropromyslovski (2000) and Aldi (2000), can now be added the one in Mesker-Yurt (late May 2002), as well as the mass-grave containing 51 bodies near Khankala military base (found in 2001). To the unsolved disappearance of the former Speaker of the Chechen Parliament, Mr Alikhodzhiyev, can now be added that of Mr Said Mgoved Imakayev, an applicant to the European Court of Human Rights. Even the seemingly clear-cut case of Colonel Budanov, originally indicted for the rape and murder of a young Chechen girl, did not result in his conviction – although the Prosecutor's Office is currently appealing this verdict.

The Russian authorities have provided the Council of Europe with statistical data on criminal cases investigated by the different prosecuting authorities concerning crimes committed against the civilian population in the Chechen Republic (reproduced as Appendix III of the Document tabled by the Political Affairs Committee). In 2002, the military prosecutor's office dealt with 44 cases in all; since 1999, with 162. Only a small fraction of these have led to indictments (46 in over three years!), even less have resulted in convictions. The figures are not much better in the prosecutor's office of the Chechen Republic. Their number pales in relation to the thousands of complaints received by NGOs and by the Office of the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation (Mr Sultygov) – whose efficiency is also increasingly cast into doubt by NGOs.

Since, in addition, the Russian authorities have never provided an update to the detailed list of the current status of all criminal investigations by military and civilian law enforcement agencies into crimes against the civilian population by servicemen and members of all police and special forces and also into crimes committed by Chechen fighters against the civilian population, the local Chechen administration and the federal forces in the Chechen Republic (as, *inter alia*, demanded by the Assembly a year ago in Resolution No. 1270 (2002)), it is very difficult for me to judge all the efforts of the prosecuting bodies. However, I was given the same answer by the prosecutors I talked to last week on every case I mentioned, from the mass killing in Alkhan-Yurt in 1999 over the mass grave in Khankala in 2001 to the murder of Mrs Umahzeva just two months ago: 'the case is under investigation'. After a certain number of years, to be told that the case is still under investigation with no tangible results, leads me to the following conclusion: The prosecuting bodies are either unwilling or unable (or are being systematically obstructed in their efforts) to find and bring to justice the guilty parties. Personally, by now, I suspect that all three factors play a role in the ineffectiveness of the prosecution when the crimes in question are those committed against Chechen civilians.

I must thus conclude that a climate of impunity reigns in the Chechen Republic which makes normal life in the Republic impossible. This climate exacerbates the bad security situation in the Republic, where even the 80,000 law enforcement-troops stationed in the Republic (at a ratio of 1 soldier to six adult civilians), the presence of multiple barricaded checkpoints (I counted 28 on a 40 km stretch of road from Grozny to the Ingush border) and severe restrictions on the freedom of movement and assembly do not guarantee the safety of civilians in the Chechen Republic." (COE 28 January 2002, paras. 5-9)

*See also*

*International Helsinki Federation, "International Human Rights Groups Deplore the Lack of Accountability for Crimes in Chechnya", 20 December 2002 [Internet]*

*Human Rights Watch, "Into Harm's Way – Forced Return of Displaced People to Chechnya", section IV "Lack of Accountability", January 2003 [Internet]*

### **Widespread use of landmines in Chechnya (2002)**

- About 10,000 persons, including 4,000 women and children, have already been victims of mines and unexploded ordnances
- There is lack of mine clearance programmes and infrastructure for victim assistance in Chechnya

"Landmines and UXO continue to claim new victims, adding to the estimated 9,500-10,500 casualties, of whom about 4,000 are women and children. In 2002 mine/UXO accidents repeatedly occurred in different raions of Chechnya killing and maiming civilians. Grozny's hospital No. 9 reported thirty eight mine/UXO injured people in August 2002 alone.

In November 2001 and June 2002 UNICEF and its partner Voice of the Mountains (VoM) carried out two surveys in Ingushetia and in Chechnya to gauge the level of mine awareness and assess needs for survivor assistance, focusing on children. The survey showed that the mine risk reduction and mine awareness campaign and the victim assistance programme needed to be fine tuned. In the absence of mine-clearance and functioning infrastructure for victim assistance in Chechnya, UNICEF continues to search for solutions to the problem." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 57)

*For more details about landmines, consult the [Landmine Monitor Report 2002: Toward a Mine-Free World, Russian Federation](#) [Internet]*

### **Reports of IDPs being resettled by local authorities in Chechnya and Ingushetia (June - September 2002)**

- 2,000 persons living in two tent camps in Znamenskoe were transferred to temporary accommodation centres in Chechnya (June 2002)
- UN expressed doubts that the relocation can be regarded as entirely voluntary
- IDPs remain concern about safety and living conditions in Chechnya
- Authorities have also planned the closure of another tent camps in Aki Yurt (September 2002)

#### ***Closure of tent camps in Znamenskoe (July 2002)***

"A top United Nations relief official today voiced concern over the circumstances surrounding the recent closures of two camps in Chechnya, Russian Federation, and the subsequent transfer of their 2,000 residents to temporary accommodations.

Under-Secretary-General Kenzo Oshima, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, called on the Russian authorities to ensure that all actions were taken to preserve the right of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) to a voluntary return, in safety and dignity, and to comply with the assurances given to the UN in this matter.

According to the statement, the 2,000 IDPs staying at the camps in Znamenskoye were moved to temporary accommodation centres in the Chechen capital of Grozny. According to UN reports from the region, the relocation could not be regarded as entirely voluntary.

The reports also noted that some of the IDPs were very concerned about the security situation in Grozny and that living conditions in the temporary accommodation centres were not satisfactory, the statement said." (UN News Service, 23 July 2002)

*See also:*

- [Médécins Sans Frontière, 'MSF Condemns Relocation of Displaced Persons', 9 July 2002 \[Internet\]](#)
- [Médécins Du Monde, "Report on Chechnya", July 2002 \[Internet\]](#)

#### ***Relocation of IDPs in Ingushetia (September 2002)***

"In meetings with UNHCR late last week, Ingushetia authorities gave assurances that Ingushetia will remain a safe haven for people displaced from neighboring Chechnya. The assurances came during meetings with UNHCR Deputy Director for Europe Robert Robinson, who was visiting the area as part of a mission to the Russian Federation. Ingush President M. Zyazikov and other authorities all reconfirmed the government's policy that the principle of voluntary return would be respected with regard to displaced persons from Chechnya.

Mr. Robinson also met in Nazran with General I. Yunash, First Deputy Head of the Federal Migration Service, who is coordinating the government's assistance in Ingushetia for those displaced who have chosen not to return to Chechnya at this time. In addition to reconfirming the policy of voluntariness, Gen. Yunash outlined the government's plans to improve conditions for those displaced who will spend another winter in Ingushetia. In announcing the government's decision to close the tented camp at Aki Yurt, Gen. Yunash assured Mr. Robinson that the conditions at their new location in Ingushetia -- including health and education facilities as well as shelter, water, sanitation, gas and electricity -- will be better than the current ones. Aki Yurt currently houses some 400 displaced families. The United Nations will be working closely with all those concerned, including the displaced themselves, to monitor the situation." (UNHCR 17 September 2002)

*See also the [September 2002 Report of the People in Need Foundation \[Internet\]](#)*

#### **Ingush Presidential elections raises concern among Chechen displaced population (April-May 2002)**

- Kremlin candidate was elected President of Ingushetia in April 2001
- There have been reports of intimidation in IDP camps following the elections
- Displaced persons fear pressure to return to Chechnya

"Kremlin Candidate elected President in Ingushetia: Federal Security Service (FSB) General Murat Zyazikov, who is deputy presidential envoy to the South Russia Federal District, was elected president of Ingushetia in a runoff ballot on 28 April, garnering some 53 percent of the vote, ITAR-TASS reported on 30 April quoting a member of Ingushetia's Central Electoral Commission (TsIK). Russian State Duma Deputy Alikhan Amirkhanov, who placed first in the first round on 7 April with 32 percent of the vote

compared with Zyazikov's 19 percent, polled 42 percent. TsIK Chairman Kazbek Kostoev told ITAR-TASS on 28 April that 'there have been no reports of flagrant violations from polling stations.'" (RFE/RL 3 May 2002)

"Ruslan Isayev, Northern Caucasus - Chechen refugees staying in Ingushetia are concerned about their rumoured repatriation back to Chechnya. They are afraid that all refugee camps will be closed after the inauguration of the new Ingush president. They have been living in Ingushetia in torn tents, animal farms and various farm buildings in terrible conditions for almost three years due to at least minimal guarantees of safe life in Chechnya and now they are expecting the worst developments.

A day after the Ingush presidential elections, plain-clothed young men arrived at a refugee camp Bela in Ordzhonikidzevskaya, walked around the camp and shouted: 'Go home!'. Refugees believe it was a planned action which should provoke them to revenge. This happened in the daytime although Ingush Interior Ministry guards who are constantly watching after the camp did not take any measures to stop them. The unknown 'law enforcers' then easily left after a while.

This was not the first case of activities aimed at provoking Chechen refugees. Something similar happened in camps Bart (Karabulak), Altiyevo and others. Since February 2000 Russian authorities have several times tried to expel Chechen refugees from Ingushetia to the battle-zone, but thanks to the stout position of former Ingush president Ruslan Aushev these plans have not come true.

Today the situation could change extremely. Russian minister for the affairs of the Chechen Republic Vladimir Ye lagin recently stressed that he links the election of the new Ingush President with a solution to 'the issue of Chechen refugees'. Undoubtedly, he meant their 'voluntary-forced' return to their homeland." (Prague Watchdog 8 May 2002)

### **Tensions between the displaced population and local residents and officials (2000-2002)**

- Incidents between Ingush and Chechen youths have been reported in Nazran (September 2002)
- Occasionally, fighting breaks out in relation to distribution of humanitarian aid
- Reports of law enforcement officials harassing the displaced
- UNHCR discussed with its partners increased support for sports and educational activities for displaced between 15 and 20 years of age to improve the general atmosphere in the camp

"An incident between Ingush and Chechen youths, which took place on September 19 in Nazran, nearly resulted in a mass fight. More than a hundred Ingush youths equipped with metal rods, knuckle-dusters, knives and wooden sticks attacked Chechen refugees in one of their tent camps in the largest town of Ingushetia, following a recent scuffle in which several Ingush and Chechens were involved.

In another refugee camp, the Ingush youths threw stones at Chechens' cars, having broken the windows of several vehicles. For several hours, the Ingushetian youths were moving around Nazran and shouting anti-Chechen slogans, while the local police did not interfere.

One of the eyewitnesses, Rizvan, who lives in refugee camp LogoVaz, said the following: 'There are around 1500 people living in our camp. Nearly all of us are more or less from Grozny and its surroundings. During our presence here, I have never ever witnessed anything like that, at least in our camp. Lately, however, anti-Chechen sentiments have grown stronger in Ingushetia. The young people who came to our camp told us to go home [to Chechnya]. If somebody of us Chechens has committed any crime, it's the task for the police [and not for such a crowd].'



Rizvan explained the background to the situation. Earlier this week, there was a scuffle between several Chechens and Ingush in a local café. One of the Ingushetians had allegedly been injured by a knife and died later on, or, according to other sources, somebody struck him with an empty bottle on his head and the victim is now lying in a hospital. Whatever the truth is, that incident led to the riots, Rivzan explained." (Prague Watchdog 21 September 2002)

"Incidents of fights continue to occur throughout Ingushetia, involving IDPs, locals, as well as law enforcement officials. In many cases these incidents are linked to youths under the influence of alcohol. Occasionally, fighting breaks out in relation to distribution of humanitarian aid. On 23 August, UNHCR met with the Deputy Minister of Interior of Ingushetia to address this issue. The Deputy Minister agreed that these tensions represent a problem, and informed that Ingush authorities have increased the number of police to control the situation in the republic. He confirmed that some unfortunate incidents had taken place where law enforcement officials were harassing IDPs, and assured UNHCR that appropriate measures had been taken and all involved officials had been relieved from their duties. The Ingush Ministry of Interior welcomes all cooperation with UNHCR with regard to ensuring safe conditions for IDPs and locals. It was agreed to invite Ministry of Interior officials to future UNHCR training sessions in Ingushetia.

UNHCR is discussing with its partners increased support for sports and educational activities for IDPs between 15 and 20 years of age. It is expected that project implementation for this group will have a positive effect on the general atmosphere in the camps." (UNHCR 25 August 2000)

### **Displaced in Ingushetia under pressure to return to Chechnya (1999-2001)**

- Ingushetia has been the only territory opened to the civilians fleeing the war in Chechnya
- Since 1999, Federal authorities have attempted to return the displaced to Chechnya
- Methods used include the transfer of settlements and aid from Ingushetia and the creation of "safe areas" in Chechnya
- Since April 2001, Federal authorities have suspended the registration of newly displaced arriving in Ingushetia
- According to recent survey, most displaced have no intention of returning to Chechnya during 2001
- UNHCR recommends cautious approach to return to Chechnya

"We are extremely concerned that the Russian authorities are again pressing the inhabitants of the Chechen Republic to return.

Since the renewal of military activities in Chechnya in the autumn of 1999 there have been numerous attempts first not to let the peaceful population leave the territory of Chechnya and then to make them return.

Inhabitants of Chechnya, wishing to leave the fighting zone, were forbidden from travelling beyond its borders. At the end of September 1999, a telegram was sent to this effect to the interior ministry authorities for the regions and republics of the Russian Federation. It was signed by the commander of the united "West" federal military group, General Major V Shamanov.

Practically the only Russian region receiving forcibly displaced persons from Chechnya was the republic of Ingushetia. At the beginning of November 1999, its borders were opened to people fleeing the war, on the personal instruction of President of the Republic of Ingushetia, R Aushev. The federal military command opposed this decision for a long time.

As early as 12 November 1999, Deputy Primeminister of the Russian Government and representative of the Russian Government in the Chechen Republic, Nicolai Koshman, stated at a press conference that by 25 December all Chechens who had been forcibly displaced would be relocated from Ingushetia to the territory of Chechnya. Soon thereafter, an attempt was made to send railway carriages with refugees from Ingushetia into Chechnya.

Later various populated areas in Chechnya were declared 'safe zones'. It was recommended to people who had lived in these areas that they could return to them. Both inside Chechnya, and beyond its borders, inhabitants from the "safe zones" were not allowed to register using Form No. 7, essential for receiving minimum welfare benefits. By Order No. 15 of the Federal Welfare Ministry of 25 February 2000, Form No. 7 was abolished completely. However, within three weeks this order was revoked because of the worsening situation in Chechnya and the sharp increase in the flows of refugees.

Appeals and even demands to return are being continually repeated. At the same time, provision of food in the refugee camps in Ingushetia has stopped. Ingushetia is owed between 300 and 500 million roubles by the federal authorities. Meanwhile the return of inhabitants to Chechnya has been accompanied neither by the creation of even basic living conditions nor any relenting in the arbitrary behaviour of the military. Since the start of 2001, in the few temporary living centres to which refugees have been sent from Chechnya since autumn 1999 food has been stopped on a number of occasions.

[...]

Since 13 April 2001, registration of people leaving the Chechen Republic on Form No. 7 has been stopped by a decision of the territorial authority for the federal ministry for Ingushetia. The minister from the Ingushetia Republic Emergency Situations Ministry, V Kuks, has declared that registration will stop for about one month until a new form is available. However, no mention has been made of the new form in any federal documents.

[...]

At the request of the UNHCR, members of the non-governmental organisation 'Vesta' carried out a poll of 624 families of Chechens (4,370 people), living in private homes, camps and other arbitrary accommodation which has sprung up in Ingushetia. Around 24 % of families asked, said that some or all members of their family planned to return to Chechnya this year. Around 75 % of families did not plan to return this year, if the situation remained unchanged, and 9 % of families had no intention of ever returning to Chechnya. On the basis of these results it is easy to conclude that the inhabitants of Chechnya are not ready to return.

People do not wish to return home, not just because of the advice of Ruslan Aushev. The reasons are well known: no guarantees of safety, shootings, people being killed on a daily basis, illegal actions being carried out by representatives of federal forces, especially during the continual 'clean-up' operations." (Memorial 7 June 2001)

*See also Memorial, Violations of humanitarian law and human rights; situation of civilians who have fled the conflict zone 20 January 2001 [Internet] and Situation of Internally Displaced Persons in the Republic of Ingushetia, Spring 2001 [Internet]*

"The Russian authorities on many occasions assured the delegation that they do not intend to exert any pressure on IDPs to return and there are no reports of direct forced repatriation.

However, some IDPs complain that in order to collect their pensions they have to go to Chechnya even if they are registered in Ingushetia which they feel as a kind of indirect pressure." (COE 23 January 2001, paras. 45-46)

*Various organizations have denounced the pressure on IDPs in Ingushetia to return to Chechnya. See for example*

*· UNHCR, Paper on Asylum Seekers from the Russian Federation in the Context of the Situation in Chechnya, January 2002 [Internal link]*

· [Human Rights Watch, \*Russia/Chechnya, Swept Under: Torture, Forced Disappearances, and Extrajudicial Killings During Sweep Operations in Chechnya, February 2002\* \[Internet\]](#)

· [Médecins Sans Frontières, \*Chechnya/Ingushetia, Vulnerable Persons Denied Assistance, January 2002\* \[Internet\]](#)

See also "[Return policy: practices inducing IDPs to return to Chechnya \(2000-2001\)](#)" [[Internal link](#)]

See also "[UNHCR avoids stimulating false sense of security in Chechnya \(February 2001\)](#)" [[Internal link](#)]

## **Reports of security incidents in IDP camps and settlements in Ingushetia and Chechnya (2000-2002)**

- There have been reports of security operations conducted by federal forces in IDP settlements and camps in Ingushetia and Chechnya
- Firing and shelling in proximity of villages in southern Ingushetia created anxiety among locals and IDPs (2000-2002)

### ***Incidents in Ingushetia (2002)***

"[M]ilitary forces have recently been positioned in the immediate vicinity of the camps for displaced Chechens in Ingushetia (e.g., the newly installed military post of Troitstaya, which is about 5km from the Sputnik and Alina tent camps in Sleptovsakaya, eastern Ingushetia). This has coincided with an increased number of arrests of displaced people and the 'disappearance' of others from these camps. These events heighten the climate of insecurity and fear, and further pressure the displaced Chechens to leave." (MSF 30 July 2002)

"NGOs report that troops moved into the area [Ingushetia] in recent weeks are for the first time attacking refugees. Local observers say Russian authorities are telling international agencies that the deployment is related to continued disturbances in nearby Georgia, where U.S. troops are now also stationed, and that troops are merely engaged in exercises. Prague Watchdog, a Czech online news service about the North Caucasus (<http://www.watchdog.cz>), reported night raids have begun on the camps. On 28 May, at about 4 a.m., armed men wearing masks and camouflage uniforms burst into the Satsita refugee camp in the periphery of the Ordzhonikidzevskaya settlement, terrorizing residents, and arresting one young man." (RFE/RL 5 June 2002)

See [Prague Watchdog, "Russian soldiers check refugees in Ingushetia", 29 May 2002](#) [[Internet](#)]

"Large-scale military operation that took place recently between Federal forces and Chechen fighters in the Ingush town of Galashki forced displacement of the Chechen IDPs out of the town. ICRC Nazran reported an exodus of 1,600 persons, who were presumably accommodated by host families in Sleptovsakaya and Nazran." (UNICEF 5 October 2002)

"Over the past months there has been a tendency of the federal authorities to intervene more directly in Ingushetia for alleged security reasons. The federal forces have conducted a number of security related operations in IDP settlements and camps, in search of weapons and drugs, arresting a number of persons suspected to belong to Chechen rebel groups. In this respect, young males are particularly exposed." (UNHCR January 2002, para. 29)

### ***Security condition in Temporary Accommodation Centres in Grozny (2002)***

"No security guarantee has been given. Snipers have been shooting at one of the centres. The Russian army carries out frequent checks (The re-register refugees...). There have been reports of people being arrested, others disappeared. On July 19, there was a raid by the Chechen police and the Federal forces in one of the

TACs. They shot in the air, took and the released 6 men. After this 'incident', certain refugees intended to go back to Ingushetia." (MDM July 2002, p. 16)

### **A special group of concern: the children (2002)**

- Special UN representative for children highlighted impact of war on children (June 2002)
- Violence and displacement have left many children traumatized
- Chechen fighters allegedly enlist children into their ranks or use them to plant landmines

"Further to his visit to the Russian Federation, the UN Special Representative for children and armed conflict, Mr. Olara A. Otunnu, concluded that the two periods of armed conflict in Chechnya (1994 to 1996 and 1999 onwards) have clearly left a very extensive and serious impact on children. He indicated that some 50 per cent of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are children. The use and impact of landmines is grave and has been particularly damaging for children, with about 500,000 mines in Chechnya, making it one of the most mine-contaminated areas in the world. Exposure to violence and displacement has left many children traumatized. Moreover, Chechen fighters allegedly enlist children into their ranks and they also provide financial incentives for children to plant landmines and explosives (Office of the UN Special Representative for children and armed conflict, 24.6.2002).

While in the North Caucasus, Mr. Otunnu expressed his concern for the protection and well-being of all children affected by armed conflicts in the region. He pointed out that support and relief must be provided, on a humanitarian and impartial basis, to all who have suffered as a result of armed conflict, regardless of their ethnicity, political or religious affiliations (idem). In this connection, note should be taken of the regular mental health co-ordination meeting held by World Health Organisation (WHO) in Nazran on 29 May 2002, in which twelve NGOs from Ingushetia and Chechnya participated (WHO, April-May 2002)." (COE 16 July 2002, Addendum II)

*See also:*

*"U.N. envoy welcomes firm assurances concerning voluntary return of displaced Chechen populations", UN press release, 24 June 2002 [Internet]*

### **Displaced exposed to insecurity: The case of the sweep operation in Sernovodsk (western Chechnya) (July 2001)**

- On 2 July, male displaced persons, including children, were detained and taken away by the federal forces
- Testimonies collected by Human Rights Watch researchers reveals that dozens if not hundreds of detainees were subjected to torture or ill-treatment on 2 and 3 July
- During the night of 3-4 July, Russian troops conducted another operation at the railway carriages
- Many of the IDPs panicked and fled to Ingushetia

"Sernovodsk is a village in western Chechnya, approximately ten kilometers from the border with Ingushetia. After Russian troops were stationed in Sernovodsk in November 1999, the village was relatively peaceful for about eighteen months, and Human Rights Watch documented few serious abuses against civilians there.

In addition to its permanent population of approximately 7,000 people, Sernovodsk for almost two years has also served as the temporary home for thousands of displaced persons from other parts of Chechnya.

Shortly after retaking the village, Russian government officials stated that displaced Chechens could safely return to Sernovodsk and, in early December 1999, announced they would build facilities for the displaced there. In late June 2001, 2,611 IDPs were living in Sernovodsk in dozens of railway carriages, a former student home, and in private houses.

[...]

[On the morning of July 2], the soldiers, the soldiers-often in uniforms without any form of identification and, by some accounts, drunk-checked homes and detained men all over town, often without as much as checking their identity papers. They also conducted checks at the temporary residences of IDPs. One IDP living in railway carriages told Human Rights Watch that the soldiers came with big attack dogs to check passports and detained a number of men. The soldiers also came to the so-called tekhnikum, a building that once had housed students but at that time was in use as a residence for IDPs. Soldiers surrounded the building, searched it, and took the men out onto the street where they forced them to kneel on the sidewalk. One IDP estimated some fifty people were eventually taken away. Villagers said that among the detainees were children as young as fourteen or fifteen years old. For example, a local schoolteacher told Human Rights Watch she witnessed the detention of two of her students, fourteen or fifteen years old, on Lenin Street.

A full APC drove up. They [the soldiers] were all sitting on top, the whole APC was full of them. In masks. Armed. They took those children. Their mother fainted and fell... The neighbors were saying: 'Why are you taking them? They're not even fourteen or fifteen years old!' We all cried and screamed: 'Don't take them!' They said: 'We'll check their documents and release them.'

The boys were released that evening. They had apparently not been harmed.

Many villagers asserted that soldiers detained all males between fifteen and fifty-five. The village administrator's account is different, though disturbing enough. Vakha Arsamakov, the head of administration of Sernovodsk, estimated that the soldiers detained 182 IDPs and 438 inhabitants of the town on that day-a large number, but not close to being all the males between fifteen and fifty-five. Some villagers evidently avoided being detained by paying bribes to the soldiers or hiding. Several witnesses also said soldiers had simply checked their papers and not detained them.

The soldiers took most of the detainees to the temporary base that they set up just outside Sernovodsk, not far from the mosque. According to villagers, soldiers had lined up military vehicles in a field and set up a tent camp. Many of the detainees were held in the field while others were taken into an unfinished or partially destroyed building with an open basement. Many of the men on the field were forced to lie face down. Others were forced to kneel on the ground without moving or speaking or face beatings as punishment. The soldiers randomly took detainees from the field or basement to military vehicles or tents where they beat them or subjected them to electric shocks.

In the meantime, female relatives of the detainees gathered at the edge of the field to demand the release of their relatives and were held back by tanks and dogs. When twelve detainees were loaded onto a bus for transportation to a detention center in Achkhoy-Martan, some of the women threw stones at the soldiers.

At around midnight, most of the detainees-with the exception of those transported to Achkhoy-Martan-were released. According to some eyewitnesses, detainees were permitted to go home on the condition that they voluntarily returned to the close-by mosque early the next morning.

*July 3*

During the night of July 3-4, Russian troops conducted another operation at the railway carriages. Many of the IDPs panicked and fled to Ingushetia. A female IDP, who lived in one of the wagons, told Human Rights Watch that at 4:00 a.m. the soldiers came and started detaining men and searched her compartment thoroughly. They did not ask for any passports, she said, but simply took the men. She left the wagons afterwards and went to Ingushetia.

According to another woman, the word that soldiers were randomly detaining IDP men without even looking at their identity papers immediately spread along the forty-odd railway carriages. She said she and many others decided not to wait for the soldiers but to flee. A third woman, who said she was afraid that her brothers might be detained the next day, told Human Rights Watch she and her two brothers left at 3:00 a.m. and walked through the hills. These women said they were part of a large group—one estimated several hundred people—that followed trails over the hills for about 90 minutes. Human Rights Watch interviewed them just days later in Ingushetia.

#### *Torture and Other Ill-Treatment*

The testimony of former detainees, their relatives and numerous other villagers collected by Human Rights Watch researchers, as well as numerous written appeals from residents or IDPs from Sernovodsk to the local administration, reveal that dozens if not hundreds of detainees were subjected to torture or ill-treatment on July 2 and 3. Detainees suffered sustained beatings, electric shocks, and were forced to sit in painful positions for extended periods of time without moving. Several eyewitnesses said the older men were often treated worse than boys in their mid-teens.

Human Rights Watch conducted detailed interviews with four men who had been detained during the sweep in Sernovodsk and who said they had been beaten severely; three had also been subjected to electric shock. Human Rights Watch conducted further detailed interviews with the relatives of a fifth man, who was detained and ill-treated in various ways, including electric shock. Of the five detainees, two had been held at the temporary base outside Sernovodsk, two at the temporary police precinct in Achkhoy-Martan, and one in a pit not far from Assinovskaia. Two of the detainees were released the day of their detention, one a day later. The two others were held for one week.

Human Rights Watch also reviewed copies of fifty-one appeals from residents or IDPs from Sernovodsk to the local administration, concerning a total of twenty-nine detainees. With regard to twenty of these detainees, the appeals stated clearly that they had been ill-treated or tortured; one stated that the detainee had returned home in a 'state of shock.' According to the appeals, eleven of the twenty detainees were beaten for long periods; nine suffered electric shock; and five had been forced to kneel for hours with T-shirts over their eyes. One detainee was allegedly threatened with execution." (HRW February 2002, pp. 26-28)

#### **Women in Chechnya exposed to rape and sexual violence (2001)**

- Collected evidence confirms that Russian soldiers raped Chechen women and sexually assaulted both men and women in detention centers
- Acknowledgement, investigation, and prosecution of such crimes against civilians have been alarmingly few, according to Human Rights Watch

#### ***Human Rights Watch Report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (January 2002)***

"Civilians in Chechnya continue to be the victims of systematic violations of human rights and humanitarian law, facing the daily risk of torture, 'disappearance,' and summary executions at the hands of Russian federal forces. Federal soldiers and police on sweep operations arbitrarily detain men and women, and frequently loot and burn homes. Detainees are often taken to makeshift detention facilities such as pits dug into the ground, where they are routinely tortured and denied all due process rights. Human Rights Watch has conducted investigations into abuses committed in Chechnya since the recurrence of major military clashes in the region in September 1999. In the course of this research, Human Rights Watch has documented credible accounts of violence against women in the region, including sexual violence, and wishes to bring these allegations to the attention of the Committee.

Human Rights Watch is concerned that Russia has resisted a meaningful accountability process. Russian law enforcement agencies have failed to launch serious investigations into most cases of abuse, and have failed to prosecute the perpetrators. The government's failure to investigate abuses against civilians vigorously has fostered an atmosphere of impunity among Russian troops in Chechnya.

#### *Rape and Other Forms of Sexual Violence in Chechnya*

Despite cultural taboos against speaking about rape, witnesses provided evidence that Russian soldiers raped Chechen women in areas of Russian-controlled Chechnya and sexually assaulted both men and women in detention centers. In 1999 and 2000, Human Rights Watch researchers found that rapes occurred on the outskirts of villages, at checkpoints, and in detention centers. Fear of rape by Russian forces was pervasive, causing some families, particularly those with young women and girls, to flee and motivating desperate attempts to hide female family members. The cases outlined below draw from direct testimony provided to Human Rights Watch in the field.

[...]

##### *Rape at Checkpoints*

Russian military and police forces have hundreds of checkpoints within Chechnya and between Chechnya and neighboring regions of Russia. Federal servicemen are notorious for using the checkpoints to extort bribes from civilians; Human Rights Watch also found several cases of rape at checkpoints.

[...]

##### *Rape and Sexual Violence in Detention Centers*

More than half of those interviewed by Human Rights Watch about detention centers alleged that guards raped and sexually assaulted both male and female detainees. Although none of the interviewees explicitly stated that he or she was a victim of rape, several did describe abuse rising to the level of sexual assault and provided credible evidence of rape in the Chernokozovo facility, a particularly notorious detention center. Women reported that male guards forced them to strip inside the detention facility. Sexual violence in the form of forced nudity served to threaten and humiliate detainees, and added to Chernokozovo's environment of terror, intimidation, and degrading treatment. Forced nudity also served as a precursor to additional sexual violence described by both male and female detainees.

[...]

##### *Record of impunity*

Human Rights Watch and other nongovernmental organizations have called for accountability in the face of these abuses. Russian authorities have concealed and obstructed the prosecution of government forces for such violations; acknowledgement, investigation, and prosecution of such crimes against civilians have been alarmingly few, and many were conducted in bad faith. In April 2001, a joint Council of Europe-Russian Duma working group compiled a list of 358 criminal investigations into alleged abuses against civilians. But only about 20 percent of the cases were under active investigation and the authorities had suspended more than half of the total investigations. The criminal investigations did not include a single case of torture or ill-treatment and very few abuse cases ever advanced to the courts. Resolutions adopted in April 2000 and April 2001 by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights called for Russia, among other things, to establish a national commission of inquiry to investigate such crimes and to invite U.N. special rapporteurs to conduct investigations in the region. Russia rejected both resolutions and did not fulfill the resolutions' requirements.

The Russian government failed to mention the conditions of women in Chechnya in its fifth periodic report to the Committee. We hope that this omission can be remedied as the Russian government presents its report to the Committee. We ask the members of the Committee to press the Russian government to end impunity for crimes of violence and sexual violence against civilians in Chechnya. In particular:

The Russian government should investigate thoroughly all allegations of rape and ill-treatment of civilians, particularly of women. Soldiers and officers alleged to have committed atrocities and violations of human rights or humanitarian law should face investigation and, if the evidence warrants, should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

The Russian government should provide training for all Russian forces in Chechnya on the Geneva Conventions, the Convention against Torture, and the human rights of women.

Victims and witnesses of human rights and humanitarian law violations should receive witness protection if they agree to cooperate with authorities. The Russian government should ensure that witnesses against perpetrators of these crimes do not face retaliation.

The Russian government should remove all obstacles delaying the planned visit to Chechnya of the special rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences." (HRW January 2002)

*See also Amnesty International, [Russian Federation: Summary of concerns on the human rights of women and girls, 25 January 2002 \[Internet\]](#)*

## **Freedom of movement**

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### **The Propiska system remains de facto in place (2002)**

- The former 'propiska' regime empowered the police authorities to authorise (or deny) citizens to sojourn or reside in a given location
- Although federal legislation officially has abolished 'propiska' requirements, many regional authorities do apply restrictive local regulations or administrative practice
- The impact on Chechen IDPs is that they have been restricted in their possibility to reside legally outside Chechnya and beyond Ingushetia
- The Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation have denounced violations of the freedom of movement in various regions
- Displaced Chechens in Moscow have encountered serious problems regarding their legal status and residence
- In the absence of temporary registration, IDPs in Moscow have not been able to exercise basic social and civil rights
- The situation in St Petersburg is similar concerning restrictive practice in issuing sojourn registration to Chechens

"In light of the tsarist-era restrictions on movements on the subjects of the Empire, as well as the Soviet-era 'propiska regime', the Russian government found it necessary to edict a law in 1993 [Federal Law No. 5242/1 titled 'The Law of the Russian Federation on Freedom of Movement, Choice of Place of Sojourn and Residence within the Territory of the Russian Federation' of 25 June 1993]. The basic concept under this Federal law has been to establish a system of registration at the place of sojourn (so-called 'temporary registration') or at the place of residence (so-called 'permanent registration'), whereby citizens notify the local bodies of interior of their place of sojourn/residence, as opposed to the former 'propiska' regime, which empowered the police authorities to authorise (or deny) citizens to sojourn or reside in a given location.



Although federal legislation officially has abolished 'propiska' requirements, many regional authorities of the Federation do apply restrictive local regulations or administrative practice. What is relevant, in this context, is the partial failure of the State organs responsible for control of the legality of administrative acts (e.g. the Russian Federation Constitutional Court and the Commissioner on Human Rights of the Russian Federation, or Ombudsman) to effectively correct the violations of the Federal legislation on freedom of movement perpetrated by the various subjects of the Federation. In its October 2000 special report 'On the constitutional right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose place of sojourn and residence in the Russian Federation', the Russian Federation Ombudsman deplores that '(...) violations of constitutional rights to liberty of movement and freedom to choose one's place of sojourn and residence by government bodies are due not only to regulations of constituents of the Russian Federation being contrary to federal legislation regulating this constitutional right, but also to unlawful law-enforcement practices', which are, by nature, more difficult to document and thus to contest before the courts of law.

As a result of the imperfect transition from the *propiska* regime to a registration system, local authorities throughout the Russian Federation retain the possibility to determine modalities of implementation, sometimes in a restrictive manner, of freedom of movement and choice of place of sojourn or residence. This is particularly the case in regions attempting to protect local labour markets, to control internal migration movements, or to prevent the settlement of economically or politically 'undesirable' migrants. The impact of this on Chechen IDPs is that they have been and continue to be restricted in their possibility to reside legally outside Chechnya and beyond Ingushetia [...]" (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 18-20)

"The situation in the Republics of Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia is characterised by ethnic tensions and political rivalry between the two constituent nationalities (Kabards vs. Balkars and Karachais vs. Cherkess). These two republics are mainly concerned with maintaining the equilibrium between the respective constituencies. This equilibrium is particularly fragile in Karachai-Cherkessia, where a terrorist bombing occurred on 24 March 2001 in Agidehabl village. The Federal authorities accused Chechen fighters of responsibility for the incident. Kabardino-Balkaria has been regularly pointed-at by the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation, for violating the Constitution as well as federal legislation on freedom of movement and choice of place of sojourn and residence of citizens. In a 1994 resolution adopted by the Parliament of Kabardino-Balkaria (amended in 1997), a direct ban (which remains in force) is imposed on the sojourn or residence in Kabardino-Balkaria of Russian citizens from other regions of the Federation who do not have close family ties with Kabardino-Balkaria residents.

Both Stavropol and Krasnodar regions have been sanctioned several times by the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, as well as reported by the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation, for violating constitutional and federal legislative provisions related to freedom of movement and freedom to choose a place of sojourn or residence. In particular, the Russian Federation Ombudsman in the October 2000 Special Report 'On the constitutional right to freedom of movement and freedom to choose a place of sojourn and residence in the Russian Federation', notes that *'Therefore (...) the Law of Krasnodar Krai on the Registration Procedure Relating to Sojourn and Residence in Krasnodar Krai implies that a person who arrives in the territories of [this constituent] of the Russian Federation and who does not have kinship or ethnic and cultural ties [in Krasnodar Krai] will face considerable difficulties in realising his/her right to freely choose his residence in [this territory]'*" (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 32-33)

The situation is somehow different in North Ossetia-Alania. It is not so much local restrictive regulations on residence registration but rather local restrictive administrative practice that is preventing Chechen IDPs from sojourning in that republic. (UNHCR January 2002, para. 35)

According to Russian Government sources, there are hundreds of thousand ethnic Chechens staying in Moscow. Most of them are not IDPs [...]. However, those Chechens displaced because of the current conflict and who have come to Moscow have encountered serious problems regarding their legal status, residence, and sometimes faced vigorous and repeated security checks, eviction from their apartments and harassment by other groups of the local population. For example, the 21 September 1999 Resolution No.875 of the Moscow City Government, expressly referring to recent "terrorist acts that caused the death

of many civilians” instituted a re-registration procedure for all non-Muscovites staying in the capital. As a result of this regulation, thousands of persons previously registered in Moscow City could not re-register with the authorities. In practice, it became almost impossible for new arrivals, especially IDPs from Chechnya, to register in Moscow. [27]

Another decree of the Mayor of Moscow city, of 28 September 1999, stipulates that, in order to apply for forced migrant status, the concerned applicants must be in possession of a registration document issued by the competent body of the Federal Ministry of Interior valid for a term of not less than six months. In practice, however, it has been almost impossible for Chechen IDPs to obtain sojourn registration in Moscow. Hence, they find themselves in a 'vicious circle' where they need sojourn registration to apply for forced migrant status [28] and where sojourn registration is denied in practice. Local NGOs reported numerous instances where Chechen IDPs applying for forced migrant status were told by local migration officers to return to 'safe areas' in Chechnya. [29] Instances were reported where legally resident individuals in Moscow, who vouched for IDPs, guaranteeing them housing to facilitate their registration with the authorities, were themselves fined for violating regulations on registration.

The restrictive rulings of the mayor of Moscow City should be viewed in the wider context of massive internal migration to Moscow from Russia's economically and ecologically devastated regions in the east and the Far East, as well as from the Caucasus. The city authorities claim that several hundreds of thousand non-Muscovites are staying or working illegally in Moscow. Each year, the local bodies of the interior are reported to expel (by train) several thousand illegal residents outside the city boundaries. Chechen IDPs are faced with double stigma: because of the so-called 'Chechen mafia', which is said to occupy a prominent role in drug trafficking and organised crime, and because of the August 1999 apartment bombings, which resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives, and which are suspected to have been carried out by terrorists of Chechen origin.

In the absence of temporary registration, IDPs in Moscow have not been able to exercise basic social and civil rights, such as access to legal employment, medical care and education. Instances of confiscation of passports by the police, detention, and extortion of money have been reported."

Footnote [27]: "Despite being ruled un-constitutional by the RF Constitutional Court (cf. RF Constitutional Court ruling No.9-? of 4 April 1996 "On the case concerning the verification of the constitutionality of a number of normative acts of Moscow city and Moscow region, Stavropol Territory, Voronezh region and Voronezh city, regulating the procedure for registering citizens arriving permanent residence in the said regions"), the Moscow regulations on registration as well as the administrative practice have remained restrictive. Upon judicial appeals from some local human rights NGOs, a few positive court decisions on individual IDP registration cases were reached. However, enforcement of judicial decisions has remained problematic. Enforcement of judicial decisions in Russia is not a problem limited to Moscow."

Footnote [28]: "Such requirement is not envisaged in the 1995 Law on Forced Migrants."

Footnote [29]: "According to statistics from the Ministry of Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy, 153 IDPs from Chechnya (representing 69 cases or families) were granted forced migrant status between 1 October 1999 and 30 June 2001 in Moscow. (No breakdown is available concerning the number of ethnic Chechens among them, or how many are IDPs from the current conflict as opposed to IDPs from the 1994-96 conflict who obtained their status only recently)." (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 37-40)

"According to information available from local human rights groups, the situation in Russia's second largest town, St Petersburg, is similar concerning restrictive practice in issuing sojourn registration to Chechen IDPs. In the absence of sojourn registration, Chechen IDPs have no legal access to social welfare. However, the Chechen community in St Petersburg is much smaller than in Moscow and it is acknowledged by human rights groups that police harassment, fines and administrative detention of improperly registered persons is not as acute as in Moscow." (UNHCR January 2002, para. 41)

*See also*

*Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, "The propiska system applied to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Council of Europe member states: effects and remedies", 23 October 2001 [Internet]*

*Memorial, The Internally Displaced Persons from Chechnya in the Russian Federation, by S.A. Ganushkina (Moscow, 2002), section II [Internal link]*

### **Freedom of movement in Northern Caucasus (2001-2002)**

- IDPs enjoy improved freedom of movement between Chechnya and Ingushetia
- However, registration documents are only valid for specific sectors
- Memorial reports a growing level of extortion at checkpoints in Chechnya (September 2001)
- Other northern Caucasian republics have also restricted access to their territory for Chechens

"There is today more freedom of movement allowing travel in and out of Chechnya than in previous months, although check-points are operating in an inconsistent and arbitrary manner." (IHF 23 July 2002)

#### ***Illegal extortion at checkpoints***

"Freedom of movement of persons between Chechnya and Ingushetia has improved, and several thousand IDPs shuttle monthly between the two Republics to visit relatives, check on property, to trade, and for other reasons." (UNHCR January 2002, para. 5)

"The level of illegal extortion at checkpoints in Chechnya is growing  
Since the very start of the 'anti-terrorist operation', servicemen and police at many of the checkpoints on the roads of Chechnya have been subjecting the drivers of passing cars to extortion.

In recent months, apparently because of rising prices, the level of illegal demands being made at checkpoints has risen sharply.

For example, until recently, at three checkpoints on the Rostov – Baku route (the checkpoints Kavkaz-1, at the junction with the Achkhoi-Martan road and at the junction with the Urus-Martan road), each humanitarian aid lorry (sent into Chechnya from Ingushetia by foreign and international organizations) was made to pay 50 roubles.

At the end of the Summer, the amounts demanded rose. Now servicemen and police demand 300 rouble per lorry.

The same thing is happening with private cars. The amounts demanded have multiplied several times. For example, at the checkpoint between the villages of Kurchula and Mairtup, drivers of minibuses used to have to pay 10 roubles to pass through and drivers of private cars five roubles. Now, since mid-September, soldiers charge 50 roubles for a minibus and from 20 to 30 roubles for private cars." (Memorial 14 September 2001)

#### ***Document requirements hamper free movement in Chechnya***

"While the provision of registration documents is a condition for the movement of people within Grozny and for the receipt of social benefits, people entitled to them stressed the long waiting time before they are issued and their geographically limited validity. For example, one woman with whom we spoke told us that her husband was not able to join her in the housing centre because he had not been issued a registration document valid for entering her sector in Grozny because he originated from outside the Chechen Republic." (COE 22 September 2002, part II).

"Apart from the Russian military forces, the Head of Administration informed us, there are 80,000 people deployed on the ground from the Russian Ministry of the Interior and the locally recruited armed civil militia. Checkpoints are evident throughout Grozny and registration documents are constantly required. When we visited School Number Seven in Grozny we were told that within the precincts of the school itself there was no sense of immediate security risks. By contrast, at a centre for returned displaced people we were told that the building was locked at night and that after that in order to go the lavatory it was necessary to be given the permission of the guard on the door before crossing open land to the small building containing the several pit latrines (no seats) at the disposal of five hundred families." (COE 22 September 2002, part II)

*See also "Travel of motor vehicles on Chechen territory is temporarily stopped, entry to Grozny closed", Pravda.ru, 28 September 2002 [Internet]*

"Although the borders in the region are administrative ones, there are permanent police checkpoints and often the military police monitors the movement in the region. Cars with number plates from Chechnya are being stopped and people have to show their IDs (i.e. internal passports), registration and have to answer questions like: 'Why do you come here? Where do you go?' There is absolutely no guarantee that a car coming from Chechnya would be allowed to pass the administrative border. Given that all the republics of the region – North Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia – have been the area of terrorist incidents the situation is tense, regardless of what the federal law on freedom of movement guarantees." (ACCORD/UNHCR June 2002, p. 260)

## SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)

### Food

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#### IDPs and vulnerable populations remain dependent on food assistance (2002)

- The vast majority of the populations in Chechnya and Ingushetia need humanitarian assistance to sustain their livelihoods
- Government food assistance to IDPs is insufficient or non-existent
- Only 55 % of the extremely poor households in Chechnya report having access to available food distributions
- There is a need to enhance food diversification
- In Ingushetia, the basic food ration alone does not provide the necessary nutritional requirements of IDPs

"Results of the numerous surveys and assessment missions carried out in Chechnya and Ingushetia by the UN, ICRC, and NGOs clearly indicate that the vast majority of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance to sustain their livelihoods. The joint WFP and UNHCR household food economy surveys carried out by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in 2001 in Grozny city, Groznensky (Rural), Achkhoy-Martanovsky and Sunzhensky raions showed that 70% of the general population there live in poverty. The ICRC Economic Security Review in August 2002 identified 60% of the total population of the republic as vulnerable, and therefore recommended the continuation of humanitarian assistance. The household economy assessment carried out by DRC in July 2002 in Urus-Martanovsky, Shalinsky, Kurcheloisky and Nozhay-Yurtovsky raions revealed that 78% of the population in these raions fall into the categories of 'very poor' and 'poor' and are in need of humanitarian assistance. The unemployment rate among the population exceeds 90%.

Existing sources of income such as pensions and allowances are far below the requirements of households. Therefore, the provision of food aid remains of vital importance to the vulnerable groups in the region. The government plans to provide food assistance to the IDPs in Chechnya equivalent to RUR 15 (about US \$0.47) per day per person in the TACs in Chechnya, while in Ingushetia such assistance in IDP camps and settlements has been discontinued since early 2002. However, as the document goes to print, no food has yet been provided in the TACs." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 25)

#### *Chechnya*

"The perception of food insecurity is a primary concern, with food needs being one of the key priorities in a [households]. [Households] are preoccupied with the concern over fragile food supply lines – including humanitarian supplies which play an important role in many [households] – that could be interrupted, leaving them with few alternatives. If the present level of humanitarian food inputs is assured, then the anxiety concerning food relates more to the potential for, rather than an actual [household] food shortage. On average, 65% of [households] have access to bulk food distributions, suggesting that sufficient food resources exist in the environment. Nevertheless, only 55 % of the extremely poor [households] report having access to bulk food assistance. Therefore, even though the present level of food inputs in general is appropriate in relation to the needs, there is an urgent need for improved targeting of the distribution of these inputs to ensure that those most in need have access to the assistance that is available to them.

Furthermore, there is a concern that, in general, the diet within extremely poor and vulnerable [households] consists largely of flour products, oil, tea and sugar. Many of these [households] expressed the desire to purchase diversified food items, but are unable to assume the additional costs, thus the diet remains high in carbohydrates and lacks diversity. Therefore, there is a need to continue with high value food inputs in complement to the bulk food distributions, targeted especially towards poor [households] to enhance food diversification within these [households], as well as providing them with options for resale." (ICRC July 2002, Chechnya, pp. 35-36)

### ***Ingushetia***

"Regular distributions of the basic and complementary food rations as well as bread reach all registered IDPs (although it can be seen from 2001 and 2002 that whilst every registered IDP receives something they are not always receiving the full ration). Those in camps and collective centres receive additional complementary food through the Migration Service. Children in camps and collective centres may also be targeted through local school feeding in 2002.

One-off food distributions which generally are not based on needs assessments and do not appear to follow any particular pattern or planning cycle also occur. It is uncertain whether such food distributions reach the most vulnerable.

Whilst all IDPs receive food assistance, the basic food ration alone does not provide the necessary nutritional requirements per person per day. The additional food ration assists in providing these nutritional requirements." (ICRC February 2002, p. 15)

### **IDPs in Ingushetia face insecurity over food rations provided by federal authorities (2000-2001)**

- Disputes between federal authorities and Ingushetia over finances has caused the disruption of food aid to IDPs in Ingushetia
- According to Human Rights Watch, this apparent manipulation of food aid contravenes the U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- However, international humanitarian organizations ensured sufficient food rations to IDPs throughout 2000

"In May 2001, IDPs in Ingushetia faced insecurity over food rations as the Russian government attempted to make IDPs uncomfortable as a means of indirectly pressuring them to go home. [54]

Throughout 2000, the Russian federal government failed to fulfill its obligation to feed those displaced by the war in Chechnya. As a result of ongoing conflicts over finances between the federal government and the authorities in Ingushetia, government-sponsored hot meal and bread supplies to IDPs were highly unpredictable: supplies would stop when the Ingush government could no longer pay its debts to bakeries and other suppliers, and started up again when the federal Ministry of Finance transferred new funds to the authorities in Ingushetia. According to one humanitarian aid worker, however, international humanitarian organizations ensured sufficient food rations to IDPs throughout 2000.

In late April 2001, Vladimir Kuksa, the Ingush minister for emergency situations, informed international humanitarian organizations that the Russian federal government would start delivering food aid to IDPs in camps and spontaneous settlements in Ingushetia and requested them to stop their food aid programs at these locations.[56] As of May 1, 2001, international humanitarian organizations stopped providing food aid to the camps and settlements, but the Russian federal government failed to live up to its promises. On May 21, Minister Kuksa requested that the international humanitarian organizations resume their food aid programs in the camps and settlements.

Footnote [54]: The apparent manipulation of food aid to indirectly pressure IDPs to return contravenes those aspects of the U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement that guarantee humanitarian assistance. Principle 3 states: 'National authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction.' Principle 18(2) states: 'At the minimum, .. competent authorities shall provide internally displaced persons with and ensure safe access to: (a) Essential food and potable water; (b) Basic shelter and housing; (c) Appropriate clothing; (d) Essential medical services and sanitation.'

Footnote [56]: The request was based on a decision of the Government of the Russian Federation of March 3, 2001, No. 163, 'On Financing Expenditures on Meals and Life-Support of Individuals Temporarily Displaced from the Places of Residence on the Territory of the Chechn Republic and Stationed in Temporary Accommodation Facilities on the Territory of the Russian Federation: and Expenditures on the Transportation of Such Individuals and Their Belongings to the Places of Residence on the Territory of the Chechen Republic.' The decision envisages, among others, that in 2001 the federal government will pay for the acquisition and delivery of food to IDPs, for providing temporary accommodation to certain IDPs, for ensuring maintenance of temporary accommodation facilities, and for the return of IDPs, to their place of permanent residence in Chechnya. " (HRW February 2002, p. 11)

## **Shelter**

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### **Tent camps in Ingushetia need to be upgraded for the winter season (2002-2003)**

- However, authorities have been reluctant to allow international agencies to use prefabricated box tents
- Heating devices for IDPs in tent camps and spontaneous settlements in Ingushetia are insufficient for the winter cold weather (January 2003)
- Temporary settlements remain substandard

"For the winter of 2002-2003, 110,000 IDPs are expected to remain in Ingushetia. Among these, about 54% live with host families, 21 % in organised camps, and 25 % in settlements.

Since 2000 UNHCR has run a substantial shelter programme to ensure that settlements in Ingushetia provide warm, dry, habitable living conditions. Tent camps were upgraded in 2002. However, the aid provided was unable to cover all requirements. Tent camps, while cheaper to provide than housing, incur considerable maintenance and servicing costs and require regular upgrading. To develop more cost-effective and sustainable structures, UNHCR, with DRC, and Mercy Corps, started the production of box-tents, which can replace canvas tents and be used by the returnees in Chechnya. Support with shelter is crucial to maintain the ability of Ingushetia to offer temporary haven to IDPs. Need is most acute among:

- IDPs living in tents where living conditions have deteriorated significantly this year;
- IDPs living in temporary settlements, which remain sub-standard; and
- IDPs facing the risk of eviction by their host families." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 31)

"Although over 500 tents still need to be replaced in IDP tent camps in Ingushetia to complete the 'winterisation' of the camps, the process came to a halt in early November, because NGOs exhausted their stocks of tents, and the authorities did not permit UNHCR to use its stock of pre-fabricated 'box-tents. Pending the arrival of additional canvas tents, UNHCR surveys the families whose tents remain to be

replaced to determine whether they want to stay in Ingushetia for the winter or to voluntarily return to Chechnya." (UNOCHA 25 November 2002)

"By mid-January [2003], UNHCR erected 11 'box tents' in Aki-Yurt village in Ingushetia, which are all now occupied by IDPs, who had lived in the former Iman camp either in adobe huts or in tents. Two more 'box-tents' were erected on the territory of the former camp, where 11 families (65 persons) are still residing in 8 adobe huts. In addition, UNHCR was assessing the situation of 37 families from the Iman camp, residing with host families in Aki-Yurt village, who wanted to move to 'box-tents'. Gas, electricity, and water continued to be supplied to IDP settlements in Aki-Yurt, as well as to a school, a canteen, and a rehabilitation centre on the territory of the former Iman camp." (UN OCHA 15 January 2003)

"The available heating devices for IDPs in tent camps and spontaneous settlements in Ingushetia are insufficient for the uncommonly cold weather that has prevailed in the area for the past few weeks. The death of a child in the IDP camp 'Bart' (Karabulak) was considered to be a result of the cold weather." (WFP 10 January 2003)

### **Lack of alternative accommodation for IDPs leaving tent camps (2002)**

- Many of the sites listed as temporary accommodation centres by the authorities are non-existent or uninhabitable
- Some of these sites appear inferior to the tents in which IDPs live in Ingushetia
- Displaced persons have also not been informed about the possibility to move to temporary shelters in Ingushetia

"[Officials from the 'United Headquarters for Creating Conditions for Returning People from Tents in the Republic of Ingushetia', consisting of Russian, Ingush and pro-Moscow Chechen officials] have repeatedly claimed that dismantling of the tent camps is for the benefit of the displaced persons, because conditions in the camps are substandard. In response to charges that they are compelling people in tent camps to return to Chechnya, they claim that they are forcing no one to return, but rather that they give each displaced person the choice of alternative shelter in TACs in Chechnya or in Ingushetia, or subsidies to rent housing in Chechnya. [...] Human Rights Watch tested these claims through site visits. Many of the sites in Ingushetia that officials listed as TACs were non-existent or uninhabitable. In many cases, official promises of shelter and assistance in Chechnya have also proven illusory.

Human Rights Watch received from a Federal Migration Service official a list of eighteen temporary resettlement alternatives in Ingushetia, with an alleged capacity to accommodate 224 families, and visited twelve of the sites in the Karabulak and Sunzha districts.

Of those twelve, ten were non-existent, uninhabitable, or occupied. Some consisted of concrete walls without windows, roof, electricity, or gas. Another facility had a roof, but no walls. Even two of the better facilities appeared inferior to the tents in which displaced people are currently residing, and these two facilities were filled to capacity.

Moreover, United Headquarters officials do not appear to be informing camp residents about the choice, even in the remote future, of moving to TACs in Ingushetia. Human Rights Watch interviewed dozens of camp residents, asking them specifically whether they were aware of housing alternatives in Ingushetia. All replied that they had been informed only about options in Chechnya, not Ingushetia. None of the camp residents interviewed by Human Rights Watch was aware of the existence of the FMS list of resettlement alternatives within Ingushetia.



Some returnees to Chechnya have found that the promises migration officials make of compensation, shelter, and humanitarian assistance to encourage returns are unfulfilled. Since so many homes have been destroyed due to the bombing and shelling, many people rely on TACs for shelter. But an assessment of nine TACs in Chechnya done by Vesta, an Ingush nongovernmental organization subcontracted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to monitor conditions in TACs, found only two of the buildings near completion, although one still did not have gas, electricity, toilets, or a sewage system (The use of this building was also problematic because the workers who repaired the building had not been paid in months and refused to let it be occupied before they were paid). A third building was 'seriously damaged,' with the fourth and fifth stories destroyed: 'Its builders warn it is still dangerous to go into the building.' A fourth building, designated to house 2,500 persons was 'a framework of a building only.' A fifth, designated to house more than 800 people, had no heating, gas, electricity, and was completely uninhabitable: 'At the moment of monitoring, construction work had been suspended. ... The precise number of rooms is unknown due to the danger of entering the building.' A sixth was being restored, but had no water or electricity. The seventh TAC had no water supply, had not yet been repaired, and was already in use as a teacher's training institute. A eighth TAC, slated for more than 1,000 people had not yet begun to be renovated, and had no water, electricity, or gas. The ninth TAC could not be located by the NGO or the Chechen state committee on refugee affairs.

Two residents of the Satsita tent camp who were members of a delegation of displaced persons sent to Chechnya to check conditions in TACs found a severe shortage of space in them. On November 27 they went to Grozny, where they spoke to Ruslan Kaplanov, head of the Chechen Migration Service, and other officials responsible for settling returnees. The two delegation members, interviewed separately, each told Human Rights Watch that they were not shown TACs, but were instead given the addresses of several TACs that were not ready for occupation. One of the delegation members said, 'We have the list of TACs with the number of vacant rooms, which can be occupied by refugees. In the entire republic there are eighty-eight vacant rooms.' On the doors of Kaplanov's office at the Chechen Migration Service they found an announcement saying: 'Due to the lack of space in temporary accommodation centers, we are not accepting requests for TAC placement and allowances.' " (HRW January 2003, pp. 8-9)

### **ICRC survey highlights vast shelter needs in Chechnya (2002)**

- More than 75% of the assessed population in Chechnya report partial or total destruction of their houses as a result of hostilities
- Existing collective centres need structural and water sanitation assistance to meet minimum standards
- The return of IDPs from Ingushetia will require a major housing reconstruction effort in Grozny
- Hope for state compensation and instability in the republic result in people being unwilling to invest in full scale reconstruction of their home

"More than 75 % of the population report their houses being partially or completely destroyed due to hostilities, while as much as 80 % of [households] have either returned to or never left their homes. Less than 60 % of the [households] have sufficient financial flexibility to pay for the restoration of their homes independently. [...]

A total of 3 % of the assessed population report living in collective centres, which in Chechnya are state-provided collective housing units. There are over 10 of these centres located in Grozny, Shali and Gudermes, with additional centres presently being developed to house returning IDPs. Some of these longer established collective centres are urgently in need of both structural and water sanitation assistance to secure minimum living standards for those within these centres.

In more general terms, the level of physical destruction in Grozny is enormous, with more than 85 % of [households] from the city reporting partially or completely destroyed houses due to the hostilities, suggesting the potential for an extensive housing crisis, particularly if further IDPs return to the city. Considering that 10,000 IDP [households] in Chechnya, along with another 12 000 IDP [households] originating from Grozny and presently living in Ingushetia could potentially return to Grozny in the near future, 22,000 additional dwellings must be identified and repaired to provide the necessary 'liveable dry space' for the approximately 132,000 individuals concerned. Restoration of housing options for those who previously lived in now flattened apartments will be a significant undertaking for the future.

The state policy concerning provision of compensation for loss and damages incurred during the hostilities remains unclear, with less than 10% of [households] having received it. Nonetheless, the hope of potentially receiving state compensation, combined with a continuing mistrust in the stability of the context, results in people being unwilling to invest in full scale reconstruction of their homes. Instead, they prefer to concentrate on the restoration of a minimal dry living space for the [household], and therefore the type of assistance provided must reflect this. If future trends indicate a stabilizing of the environment, larger scale reconstruction may be undertaken, which would require different types of larger quantities of materials. The sector trends must be monitored and anticipated to allow for the provision of timely and appropriate humanitarian assistance." (ICRC July 2002 Chechnya, p. 36)

### **Collective centres in Dagestan require immediate rehabilitation (2002)**

- IDPs are also exposed to threats of rent increases, interruption of utilities and eviction

"There are some 15 Collective centres in Dagestan. These are collective housing units that have been made available to the IDPs at little or no charge by either the state or private owners. Many of these structures are in desperate conditions and require immediate rehabilitation. Typically, the arrangements in these centres are very vague with the IDPs reporting being frequently threatened with rent increases, interruption of utilities or eviction." (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 11)

"More immediate are the pressing and urgent needs within several collective centres of the IDPs in Khasavyurt that have critical structural problems such as plastic sheeted walls, poor roofing, flooding and dysfunctional sanitation systems. Short-term and small-scale repairs are undertaken periodically by the IDPs, causing additional stress on the [household] budget, without effectively solving the problems." (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 30)

### **Internally displaced in Ingushetia face high risk of eviction from their temporary accommodation (2001-2002)**

- The share of IDPs living in camps and spontaneous settlements increased significantly between 2001 and 2002
- Owners of spontaneous settlements want to recuperate their property
- Evictions of individual families from private accommodation were reported to take place on a daily basis (August 2001)
- UNHCR tries to help negotiate with host families or find alternative accommodation

"According to the most recent UNHCR/DRC registration data (August 2002), about 116,000 IDPs from Chechnya are sheltered in Ingushetia. The majority of them (56 percent) stay either with host families or in rented accommodation; 20 percent live in tent camps and the remainder live in spontaneous settlements. During 2001 many of the IDPs living with host families moved to camps and spontaneous settlements, as

they were no longer in a position to contribute to rent and utility charges. Consequently, during 2001 and 2002 the combined percentage of IDPs living in camps and spontaneous settlements went up from 19 percent to 44 percent (WFP 2002, p. 17)

#### Eviction of IDPs from temporary settlements

"UNHCR and its partner, the Caucasian Refugee Council, continued assisting 38 families (235 persons), who were under immediate threat of eviction from a temporary settlement in Sleptsovsakaya, to find alternative accommodation. Alternative shelter was already found for 2 IDP families, evicted from host families in Bert Yurt and Nazranovky raion." (UN OCHA 15 January 2003)

"In Ingushetia, UNHCR continued looking for alternative accommodation for 60 IDP families, evicted from spontaneous settlements by the owners. The agency identified about 1,700 beneficiary families to continue assisting with shelter materials in 2002." (UN OCHA 31 August 2002)

"[UNHCR] found alternative shelter for 6 IDP families (35 persons), evicted from a spontaneous settlement in a former factory building, when the owner decided to resume production." (UN OCHA 30 September 2002)

"The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to monitor the situation of IDP families in Ingushetia, who are threatened with eviction from their current places of accommodation, primarily in spontaneous settlements. In April [2002], UNHCR assisted about 250 IDPs evicted from a spontaneous settlement near Nazran, finding alternative accommodation for them. The agency provided IDPs with construction materials and non-food items to improve their living conditions, and is installing the necessary infrastructure." (UNOCHA 30 April 2002)

"According to UNHCR, for the first time the number of IDPs returning from Ingushetia to Chechnya is greater than that of new arrivals from Chechnya to Ingushetia. More than 700 IDPs, mostly living with host families, returned to Chechnya during November. About 600 IDPs who had been living with host families for the past two years moved to camps and spontaneous settlements because they were no longer able to pay rent to host families." (WFP 7 December 2001)

"An increasing number of IDPs living with host families and in spontaneous settlements in Ingushetia are becoming insolvent. According to EMERCOM of Ingushetia, about 1,850 IDP families requested them to move to camps since they are no longer able to pay rents to owners of the spontaneous settlements and host families. On the other hand, some host families can no longer afford to keep displaced families with them, and they should be helped so as to avoid eviction." (UNOCHA 30 November 2001)

"Another large group of displaced persons from Chechnya has been evicted from their settlement in Ingushetia. Some 80 displaced persons, including women, children and elderly people, were left without shelter last week in Malgobek, Ingushetia, when the building they had been staying in was torn down. The group had been living at the site since 1999, but the building was bought by a new owner who wanted to set up a new structure on the site. UNHCR, in coordination with local authorities, provided 17 tents for the displaced people in a nearby settlement which had already been selected by UNHCR and the Ingushetia authorities for improvement work. Eighteen families have now moved into the new tents, and currently flooring and other facilities are being provided. UNHCR expects to provide tents to a few more families in this site in the coming days. Gas, electricity and sanitation facilities will be installed with support from UNHCR before winter.

This eviction comes just a week after a similar group of 100 persons was evicted from their settlement near Nazran. UNHCR is also aware of several other group settlements under immediate threat of eviction, including one building in the Nazran area which houses more than 120 people. UNHCR is concerned that these group evictions could be a new trend, as owners of the various spontaneous settlement sites realize that the displaced people will not be returning to Chechnya before the winter, and they will therefore remain in the sites for the third winter in a row. In an effort to avoid such evictions, UNHCR has provided a

number of settlements with building materials to improve the facilities, which benefits both the displaced persons living there as well as the owner of the site.

Meanwhile, evictions of individual families from private accommodation also continue on an almost daily basis. Some evicted families are able to find other places to stay on their own. UNHCR also tries to help negotiate with host families or find alternative accommodation, particularly when vulnerable people are facing eviction. Alternative accommodation can be somewhat easier to identify for individuals than for the larger groups evicted at once." (UNHCR 28 August 2001)

*See also "Assistance scheme to host families in Ingushetia (2001-2002)" [Internal link]*

### **Urgent needs of shelter assistance to IDPs in Ingushetia (2002)**

- More than 50,000 IDPs in Ingushetia live in a variety of sites, including tented camps, animal sheds and other makeshift shelters
- Displaced living in "squats" or spontaneous settlements" ("kompaknikis"), face the most squalid conditions
- MSF survey reveals deplorable sanitary conditions in collective sites and the urgent need for upgrading of tents
- More than half the IDPs placed in the private sector have moved at least once since their arrival because they were unable to pay the rent
- Over half of the IDPs have less than 3 square metres per person
- NGOs reported an increasing presence of rats in IDP settlements in Ingushetia in 2002

"According to official sources, about 200,000 Chechens have fled to Ingushetia, Georgia and Daghestan. However, the Chechen exodus has been continuing long since the registration lists were closed in spring 2001, and thus these official figures are no longer accurate, as they include neither new arrivals nor newborns. In the course of their daily work in Ingushetia (medical consultations and rehabilitation of shelters), MSF staff have observed the appalling conditions in which the vast majority of the displaced are intentionally kept.

### **Survival conditions well below standard**

Unsanitary cellars with no light or ventilation, windowless tiny farmhouses with several families squeezed in together, excessive rents demanded by private individuals, leaky tents, etc. As they prepare to spend a third winter in Ingushetia, the IDPs are surviving in deplorable conditions that are humiliating and often damaging to their health.

There are housing options for the displaced: those Chechens who still have some money rent rooms in private homes or are taken in by families in Ingushetia; those who were unable to obtain places live in tent camps, and the least fortunate are reduced to squatting in public buildings.

**The 'squats' ('kompaknikis'), are invisible dumps where people are forced to live in the most squalid of conditions.** The kompaknikis can be all kinds of places: abandoned or working factories, active or deserted state farms, warehouses, vacant schools, cellars, hangars, etc., where more than 40,000 people are living. However there are no official figures available and assessment of these sites is neither official nor exhaustive. It is in these many kompaknikis that conditions are the hardest. Some of these locations house up to 1000 people each, despite that they are infested with rats and cockroaches, lack heating and ventilation, and are certainly unfit for human habitation. Many of the residents of such kompaknikis, even those that are regularly inspected by some Non Governmental Organisations, have not received any help

with their vital water and sanitation needs or with protection from cold and rain. For the past year, MSF has been responding to emergencies with the following priorities: getting families out of unsanitary dwellings (e.g. cellars), constructing small shelters to lodge these families, providing insulation materials to families that have built their own shelters, providing decent sanitary installations (construction of latrines and showers, installation of water distribution points, etc.). But this work is far from complete: just one month ago we found a new location where seven families were living in cellars. According to a study of the displaced population conducted by MSF, 55% of them live with leaking roofs and holes in the walls. Given the severity of winter conditions in Ingushetia, MSF believes that such conditions constitute a veritable public health emergency, as they endanger the health and lives of these displaced persons.

**In the tented camps, where around 30,000 people live, the tents are worn out and there is serious overcrowding.** The major problems are the worn-out condition of most of the tents, which do not protect people from cold and rain, and overpopulation, with military tents designed to house 20 people sometimes being used to shelter twice or even three times that number. Sanitary conditions are deplorable: there are not enough latrines, many of the existing ones are full and therefore useless, there are problems with access to potable water and there is overpopulation.

According to an MSF survey of 440 heads-of-family at 70 different sites, more than 80% of the tents are punctured or torn, letting in the rain, snow and cold air. The same survey revealed that displaced people living in collective sites – camps or kompaknikis – have their crucial shelter problems compounded by lack of access to decent sanitary facilities: more than 80% shared a latrine with more than 20 people, and of those, 20% shared a latrine with over 100 people. In some locations, there was less than one latrine for 200 persons. As for showers, more than half the displaced living in collective centres shared a shower with more than 200 people.

**The private sector.** Between 80,000 and 100,000 Chechens rent rooms from local people, often at high prices, or are staying at friends or families' homes [3]. These people are generally considered better off than the rest, as long as they can pay rent, or the goodwill of their hosts doesn't run out. An MSF study showed that more than half the IDPs placed in the private sector have moved at least once since their arrival because they were unable to pay the rent. At that point, they often become homeless and are reduced to seeking room in kompaknikis. This trend (with some cases of outright eviction) is accelerating with the arrival of winter as the Ingush inhabitants are unable to pay gas and electricity bills.

**Cramped conditions, not even good enough for prisoners.**

In addition to their other problems, over half of these IDPs have less than 3 square metres per person. We wish to point out that the international standards for refugees and prisoners stipulate an allowance of at least 3.5 to 4.5 m<sup>2</sup> per person."

Footnote [3]: 42 % of Chechens in private accommodation are taken in by families or friends and 58% rent from the inhabitants." (MSF January 2002, pp. 4-5)

"Following the reports of several NGOs and the Ingushetia SES [Sanitary Epidemiological Surveillance] on an increasing number of insects and rodents, especially rats, in IDP settlements and camps, WHP purchased and delivered supplies for rodents and insect control to the Republic SES in Nazran." (WHO July 2002)

*See also UN OCHA Information Bulletin, 17-30 June 2002 for information on the damages caused by floods in IDP camps and settlements in June 2002 [Internet].*

**Discrimination against the displaced Chechen displaced reportedly impedes their access to accommodation in Moscow (1999-2001)**

"Chechen IDP's and the Civic Assistance Committee for migrants reported that Chechens face difficulty in finding lodging in Moscow and frequently are forced to pay at least twice the usual rent for an apartment." (U.S.DOS March 2002, sect. 5)

*See also "The Propiska system remains de facto in place (2002)" [Internal link]*

"Chechen internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the Civic Assistance Committee for migrants reported that Chechens face great difficulty in finding lodging in Moscow and frequently are forced to pay at least twice the usual rent for an apartment. The St. Petersburg Times in April [1999] reported that a similar pattern of discrimination exists against person from the Caucasus in St. Petersburg, although the housing law forbids discrimination, according to human rights lawyer Yuriy Shmidt, the chances of a would-be tenant winning a lawsuit are low because there is no legal precedent." (U.S. DOS 25 February 2000)

## Health

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### Health situation in Ingushetia and Chechnya under surveillance (2002)

- The humanitarian community has succeeded in stabilizing the health situation, particularly in Ingushetia
- In Chechnya, infrastructure remain in a critical state
- Mother and child care should be a priority area for assistance
- Displaced population, particular in the camps, remains vulnerable to infectious diseases
- TB and sexually transmitted infections remain a concern
- Immunisation campaigns should be reinforced to ensure better coverage of children

"Over the past two years, the humanitarian community together with the local health authorities has managed to stabilise the health/disease situation and to improve indicators of maternal and child morbidity and mortality. However, the threat of acute infectious and chronic non-communicable conditions is real, and the state of health of the affected population leaves much to be desired. The health situation is volatile and needs special attention during the forthcoming winter when psychological stress tends to undermine the health of individuals and families. In Ingushetia, the health care system, supported by more than 20 international organisations, has lately been coping fairly well with the medical demand in primary care settings. In Chechnya, infrastructure remains in a critical state and needs to be rehabilitated to ensure access to and adequate quality of both preventive and curative care.

The area of mother and child health care, the most vulnerable population group which includes all women of childbearing age, continues to be critical despite a significant 1,5 to 2 times improvement of indicators of infant and maternal mortality in Ingushetia. In Chechnya, indicators remain very high. This area was included among priority areas for assistance.

Although 2001 was comparatively free of infectious diseases it would be a mistake to be complacent. Large population strata in both republics are spending the fourth consecutive winter in difficult living conditions. The closure of two tent camps in Chechnya and the relocation of thousands of IDPs to overcrowded TACs with very bad hygiene conditions add to the risk of possible epidemics, as do a shortage of clean drinking water and poor waste removal.

The incidence and prevalence of tuberculosis is high in both republics. For the past year, the WHO TB control strategy has been adopted by the Ingush TB-service to help curb a further spread of the disease among IDPs and the local population. Accurate data on the TB situation in Chechnya is lacking, but it is

clear that the anti-TB service is in urgent need of rehabilitation. For the past two years the ICRC has regularly provided substantial assistance to Chechnya in the form of drugs and surgical equipment to nine reference hospitals, as well as to primary health care facilities. In this way they have covered a significant portion of the needs of an estimated 220,000 persons. In addition, the escalation of HIV infection, first reflected in 2001, has been confirmed. Data shows a high sexually-transmitted infection (STI) morbidity and a worrying increase of chronic non-curable diseases. These are also affected by psychosomatic conditions and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the diagnostic and care of which represent a real problem, as most qualified professionals have left the republics. The cultural settings affecting the health needs of women and men are very different. Understanding these differences and devising strategies to tackle them remains a challenge." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 37-38)

"The Chechen Ministry of Health reported 72,074 children were provided with immunisation against tuberculosis, diphtheria, measles, polio, whooping cough, tetanus, and mumps during the period of 6 months in 2002. The data showed that immunisation campaign left a certain number of non-immunised children, particularly against tetanus and diphtheria." (UNICEF 17 November 2002)

"The Chechen MoH reported that out of 627 new-borns in the Central Maternity hospital of Grozny in the last two months, 19 babies died as result of antenatal and prenatal pathologies. Health care workers described the situation as warring.

The selective general physical examination of children in Chechnya, conducted by the Association of Women' Doctors of Chechnya, revealed that out the total number of children observed, 76% suffered from various types of diseases and disorders. The most alarming situation was reported by the examination conducted by psychiatrist and endocrinologist. Majority of children under 5 had different pathologies related to phobia developments. The other alarming factor was the large percentage of children suffering pathological iodine deficiency (more than 50%).

Medical NGOs operating in Chechnya, reported the incidence of acute respiratory diseases among children under 5 as very high, reaching in some cases peaks of 50%.

UNICEF donated basic essential drugs to cover the needs of the three months period to maternity hospitals in Shali, Urus-Martan, and Nadterechny in Chechnya." (UNICEF 17 November 2002)

"Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI)

The Ministry of Health of Ingushetia provided UNICEF with data on paediatric vaccination in Malgobek District of Ingushetia for the period of 9 months. The situation revealed that the immunisation coverage is extremely low both among residents and the displaced children. Out of total resident children planned for immunisation, the percentage of those actually immunised was 43,9%, whereas for IDPs, the figure, even lower, is 24,6%. Low indicators were observed particularly on vaccination against measles, tetanus, and diphtheria. UNICEF will further investigate in order to eventually support the local administration in a new campaign." (UNICEF 17 November 2002)

#### ***Health in Temporary Accommodation Centres (2002)***

"A medical screening recently carried out by local doctors in Grozny reveals that 70% of children resettled into TACs from camps in Znamenskoje are suffering from diseases like anaemia, chronic tonsillitis and respiratory tract infections. These findings contribute to the concern of the international community about the humanitarian situation in the TACs." (UNICEF 9 September 2002)

#### ***Health indicators in tent settlements in Ingushetia (2002)***

"Health care workers reported an increase of acute respiratory viral infections, diseases of gastrointestinal tract and urinary system among IDPs living in the tent camps in Ingushetia due to the fall of temperature. Overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions and unsuitable diet have eventually aggravated the unfavorable situation in some cases." (UNICEF 5 October 2002)

### **Prohibitive costs of healthcare affects IDPs and poorest households (2002)**

- The poorest households are forced to go without essential medical care due to high costs of health care services
- Interventions aimed at improving availability, access and/or quality of the health care services will help to remove significant stress on household budgets

"IDPs [in Dagestan] do not have access to the health insurance scheme, and the cost of health care is a more prohibitive factor, with physical access to essential services reported as irregular. In Khasavyurt only, a small number of [households] report having access to secondary services through a voucher system that has been developed and supported by MSF. Those IDPs outside the city report often going without essential services due to prohibitive costs, especially if there are associated travel costs as well. " (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 29)

"The healthcare system in Chechnya offered sophisticated and reasonable quality care in the past. As a result of the hostilities and the general collapse of systems, the quality and capacity of the healthcare system has reportedly drastically declined. Many concerns were raised by the population regarding decreased availability of services and the limited technical capacity of the remaining health personnel. This combined with the increasing costs of both consultations and supplies, has spurred especially the poor to more regularly opt for self-treatment options when faced with medical concerns. If this does not work, at least a quarter of the poorest [households] are then forced to go without essential and potentially life saving services due to prohibitive costs.

Medical concerns represent the extraordinary expense of [households] assessed. Some 58% of [households] report facing medical emergencies within the past year, with the majority of those facing an average cost of 3,000 to 7,000 rubles per incidents. Medical concerns represent a consistent and significant stress on the [household] budget and therefore, interventions aimed at improving either availability, access and/or quality of the health care services will help to limit the heaviest budgetary strain." (ICRC July 2002, Chechnya, p. 37)

### **TB has reached epidemic proportions among the IDP population in Chechnya and Ingushetia (2002)**

- It will be crucial for WHO to receive further funds to implement the most important part of TB control programme
- Lack of staff, ruined infrastructure, and short supply of TB drugs are among the main problems
- A progress has been recorded in Ingushetia during 2002
- TB indicators for Chechnya show a considerable deterioration in 2000-2001
- Of the TB patients in need of hospitalization in Chechnya, only 14,6% were hospitalized (May 2002)

"Among infectious diseases linked to poor hygiene and nutrition, tuberculosis is of major concern in both Chechnya and Ingushetia. TB has now reached epidemic proportions with an estimated morbidity rate of 278 per 100,000 IDPs in Ingushetia and 224 per 100,000 residents in Chechnya, compared to 89 per 100,000 residents in Chechnya, compared to 89 per 100,000 residents in the rest of Russia. Having received support to start a TB control programme in Ingushetia WHO provided the most essential part of its logistic component and now is striving to ensure the competence of the involved personnel and performance of



local services at large. It will be crucial for WHO to receive further funds to implement the most important part of TB control programme, designed for a minimum term." (UN OCHA February 2002, p. 8)

"Like many other health institutions in Chechnya, the republican tuberculosis (TB) service is experiencing serious hardships. Despite considerable damage to TB facilities during the latest conflict, efforts are made to even partially meet the needs of the remaining population of the republic.

According to information provided by Dr. A. Makhmoudov, the chief TB physician of the republic, during the UN mission to Grozny on 21 November 2001, the TB infrastructure is totally ruined. Out of 900 beds in former time only 165 are available, in the Shali, Gudermes and Nadterechny districts. The situation is even worse with regard to medical staff. There remain only 19 TB doctors compared to 119 prior to conflict. Of them, only nine doctors have the proper qualifications and experience. Others are former GPs and have no appropriate training. X-ray and laboratory diagnostics is unreliable due to their scarcity and equipment. The republican TB dispensary in Grozny, where a concentration of population remain high, needs major reconstruction as only three rooms can actually be used for outpatient consultation. No gas, electricity or adequate heating are available. TB drugs reportedly regularly sent by the Russian Federation Ministry of Health are always in short supply." (WHO December 2001)

**Ingushetia**

"A regular TB supervisory mission with representatives from Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation (MoH/RF) and WHO visited health facilities in Ingushetia on 15-18 July 2002 to monitor the process of the TB project implementation. A review of the elements of the TB control programme revealed notable progress according to many technical indicators, and what was particularly encouraging, assurance of the support of the programme was received from the new President of Ingushetia ." (WHO July 2002)

**Chechnya**

"In 2001 there were only 195 TB beds (in Gudermes, Shali and Hospital No. 3 in Grozny) out of 1195 previously available TB beds in Chechnya. Only 6 of 39 x-ray units are now available, although these 6 are in need of repair.

General TB indicators in recent years (per 100 000 population)

	1991	2000	2001	RF
Morbidity	56.3	178.4	270.2	76.0
Mortality	8.3	26.0	28.6	17.2
Prevalence	250	638	718	264

In 2001, 1335 new TB cases were detected, including 71 children. The total number of registered patients with active TB was 4771 (compared to 1386 in 2000); over 15 000 children and youth were listed as TB contacts. [...] Of the TB patients in need of hospitalization, 14,6% were hospitalized." (WHO May 2002)

**WHO reports growing number of HIV cases in Ingushetia (2001)**

- The number of HIV cases increased by 3-4 times among the IDPs and the local population in Ingushetia during 2001
- The major constraint is the lack of testing reagents to implement HIV screening in Ingushetia

"WHO completed collection of data on HIV registered cases in Ingushetia. The data showed that in 2001, the number of HIV cases increased by 3-4 times both among IDPs and the local population, as compared to 1999. WHO distributed educational material on HIV/AIDS prevention, and is working with the ministry of health of Ingushetia on an HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention campaign." (UN February 2002)

"AIDS: As of 1 October 2001, 216 HIV-infected persons were officially registered in Ingushetia. 36 of them are IDPs from Chechnya, and 11 are IDPs from North Ossetia. Among this number there are six women and two children." (WHO November 2001)

"HIV/AIDS update: The first cases of HIV were officially registered in Ingushetia in 1999. In 2000, their number increased considerably. In January-July 2001, 102 new cases (of them 29 IDPs) of HIV were registered, bringing the official total number of HIV-infected in the republic to 160, of them 36 (23%) were IDPs from Chechnya. According to the head doctor of the republican HIV/AIDS center, they are experiencing major difficulties while working with the IDP population, as usually two to four weeks pass from the moment when the analysis is taken to Nazran to when the confirmation is received from Rostov-upon-Don, where screening for HIV is carried out. During this period, IDPs often either move within Ingushetia or return to Chechnya, leaving no opportunity to inform them of the results of their analysis, with the danger that should they be positive, they will continue to infect other people. The major constraint is the lack of testing reagents to effect HIV screening in the republican HIV/AIDS centre in Ingushetia. Should they be available, it would be possible to decrease the diagnosis period from 2-4 weeks to 3-4 days." (WHO September 2001)

### **Number of cases of Hepatitis A among displaced children continue to grow in Ingushetia (2001)**

- 45 percent of the of Hepatitis A registered in Ingushetia in October and September 2001 were IDPs
- In response, WHO distributed educational leaflets in IDP camps, medical institutions, and education facilities in Ingushetia and Chechnya

"An increased number of cases of Hepatitis among children was reported in several IDP settlements in Ingushetia during the month of September. This number continued to increase throughout October.

According to the Ministry of Health of Ingushetia 331 cases of Hepatitis A were registered in the Republic of Ingushetia during the period of 1 September to 31 October 2001. 268 (81%) of these cases were children. 148 (45%) out of a total of 331 confirmed cases were IDPs (of them 122 (37%) children).

As of 31 October 2001 the total number of patients, hospitalized with the diagnosis Hepatitis, undergoing treatment in the infectious departments of hospitals in Ingushetia equaled 166 (91 (55%) children). 29 of these patients were IDPs (of them 24 (83%) children).

In order to organize the prevention and public awareness campaign with regard to the increased morbidity with Hepatitis A WHO prepared and organized the distribution of prevention educational leaflets in IDP camps and settlements as well as medical institutions, schools, kindergartens and the sanitary epidemiological services (SES) of Ingushetia and Chechnya." (WHO November 2001)

### **UNICEF issues reports on children health in Ingushetia (2001)**

- UNICEF conducted a survey on the health and nutritional status of children under 5 and their mothers among residents and IDPs in Ingushetia (July-August 2001)
- The survey indicated encouraging results as far as the prevalence of stunting and the immunization coverage are concerned
- There is however a widespread, although not severe micronutrient problems

- UNICEF immunization programme in Ingushetia is not attaining the necessary coverage (fall 2001)

"In July-August 2001, UNICEF, in collaboration with the National Research Institute for Food and Nutrition in Rome, conducted a survey to investigate the health and nutritional status of children under five and their mothers in Ingushetia. Below, the survey results are summarised.

The general objective of the survey was to evaluate the nutritional status of children under five and their mothers among residents and IDPs and to evaluate immunization coverage in children. The specific objectives were:

- to carry out an analysis of the health and nutritional status of the population;
- to compare nutrition and health indicators of resident and IDPs;
- to measure indicators of micronutrient deficiencies of public health relevance;
- to evaluate feeding patterns of infants and young children; and
- to identify criteria for screening vulnerable groups and vulnerable individuals.

A two-stage cluster sampling procedure was applied to select a representative sample of households in two strata (residents and IDPs).

The survey was carried out on 1 417 households and included 1 052 children under 5 (6-59 months), 1 389 children under 2 (0-24 months) and 1 464 women of reproductive age (15-45 years). The survey involved the administration of a questionnaire, the implementation of physical measurements in children under five (weight and height, or length) and their mothers (weight, height) and biochemical assessment of micronutrient status (serum haemoglobin in women and children, serum retinol in children).

The survey showed that:

- low body mass index (BMI) (<18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) was observed only in about 2% of the mothers, while more than one-third of the women aged 25 and above were overweight or obese (42%). Higher degrees of obesity were uncommon (12% with BMI 30.1-40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and 0.5% with BMI>40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>);
- anaemia was present in more than half the mothers, with a higher prevalence in IDPs (54%) than in residents (51%). Severe forms of anaemia were uncommon, with a higher prevalence in residents (1.4%) than in IDPs (0.2%);
- low height-for-age was observed in 9% of the entire sample of children (6-59 months), with a higher proportion in IDPs (14%) than in residents (8%);
- the overall prevalence of low weight-for-height was 6%, and no difference was detected between the two strata nor between gender;
- anaemia was observed in 34% of the children (6-59 months) without differences between population strata. Severe cases were detected in less than 1% of the population;
- poor night vision in children was reported by 3% of the mothers, with a higher prevalence in residents (4%) than in IDPs (1%). However, low values of serum retinol were very uncommon, with a prevalence lower than 1% and without differences between population strata;
- the vast majority of children under 2 years of age were being breastfed, at least partially (86%), with no significant differences between residents and IDPs. Nine per cent of the children under four months were exclusively breastfed. Exclusive breastfeeding dropped to 6% at the age of six months. In IDPs exclusive breastfeeding was more common (14% at four months of age and 9% at six months of age) than in residents (8% at four months of age and 5% at six months of age). The administration of other liquids in addition to breast milk increased up to the age of four months, when 50% of the resident children and 60% of the IDPs children were fed in this way. After the age of four months, predominant breastfeeding dropped progressively in both strata reaching the prevalence of 35% in residents and 47% in IDPs at the age of six months;
- one-fifth of the children were using infant formula, usually as a substitute for breast milk, with significant differences between residents (30%) and IDPs (25%). Cow's milk was used as an alternative to breast milk for infants under six months in 32% of the cases among residents and in 15% among IDPs.

Cow's milk became a major food item after the age of six months; however, even in the second year of age, 20% of the children were not consuming it. Fermented milk was not used in the first six months of life and was therefore not used as a breast milk substitute;

- the early introduction of liquids other than breast milk was a very popular habit in Ingushetia, both with residents and IDPs. Water was introduced as early as from the first week of life and by the age of three months almost all the children were given water. It is important to note that infants were often given black tea. Fruit juices were popular as well, and they were introduced at around 1-2 months of age, especially in resident children;
- solid or semi-solid complementary foods were given to the children since the second month of life. Biscuits and fruit were introduced first. Vegetables were started earlier in residents than in IDPs. Bread, pasta and rice were introduced in the second semester of life. Protein rich foods were introduced earlier in residents than in IDPs. Meat was consumed by 20% of resident children in the first semester of life and introduced after the age of six months in IDPs. Fish was introduced at five months in residents and in the second semester in IDPs. Cheese consumption was common in residents in the first semester of life, while IDPs reported consumption only in older infants. Eggs were the only protein rich food introduced before the age of six months in both group; bread was the staple food in both residents and IDPs even if the general diet was significantly different in the two groups. IDPs had a carbohydrate rich diet with almost daily consumption of bread and pasta. The consumption of protein rich foods such as meat or milk was significantly greater in residents than in IDPs. Pulses were more frequent in IDPs. Vegetables and fruit were consumed more frequently in residents than in IDPs.

On the whole, the survey indicated solid progress towards the achievement of the year 2000 goals of the World Summit for Children as far as the prevalence of stunting and the immunization coverage are concerned. There is, however, a widespread although not severe micronutrient problem, which can be dealt with by dietary modifications and improvements.

Outstanding objectives for the future in the context of this survey may be outlined as follows:

- breastfeeding promotion should be carried out in order to achieve timely initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding up to six months and continued breastfeeding after six months. The early introduction of liquids should be strongly discouraged;
- complementary feeding guidelines should be developed and promoted through the health staff, particularly regarding the introduction of meat, dairy products, fruit and vegetables from about six months;
- dietary guidelines for adults should be promoted, aimed at the control of body weight and the promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption;
- the establishment of a nutritional surveillance system by using local resources should be carried out. The data collected are to be used to develop adequate and effective nutrition policies;
- public health measures should be taken to ensure maintenance and surveillance of the immunisation programme;
- as an intervention that is part of an overall integrated strategy for preventing and controlling iron deficiency anaemia, the use of fortified foods (in particular, fortified wheat flour in the country where bread and pasta are staple foods) can be promoted." (WHO December 2001)

"The chief paediatrician of Ingushetia reports an increase in child mortality. The reasons responsible for such increases are: war traumatism, respiratory track infections (RTI), malnutrition, developmental anomalies, infectious diseases (measles, viral hepatitis, rubella) and pregnancy disorders. The high incidence of diseases is due to the environmental factors to which the Chechen population is exposed: overcrowding, inadequate quantities and qualities of water, poor sanitation, inadequate shelter and an inadequate food supply (UNICEF)." (WHO December 2001)

"Findings of an ad hoc assessment of immunization coverage among IDP children in Ingushetia carried out by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reveals that the extended programme of immunization (EPI) is not attaining the necessary coverage among IDP children who are subject to frequent immunization status of their children is identified as a key factor to consider when tackling this issue.

An increased number of cases of Hepatitis A among children were reported in several IDP settlements in Ingushetia in September. In view of this the World Health Organization (WHO) arranged the distribution of prevention awareness educational leaflets to the medical institutions, schools, kindergartens, and the Sanitary Epidemiological Services (SES) of Ingushetia and Chechnya." (WHO November 2001)

### **7,000 persons in need of prosthetic or orthopaedic help in Chechnya and Ingushetia (2000)**

- 400 amputees are among the internally displaced population (IDP) in Ingushetia

"As a result of hostilities in the Republic of Chechnya during the last decade, approximately 7,000 citizens of the republic have lost or damaged a limb and are currently in need of prosthetic and/or orthopaedic aid. In addition, approximately 400 amputees are among the internally displaced population (IDP) in Ingushetia." (WHO January 2001, p. 3)

"Unfortunately, in the near future it is unlikely that the political situation in Chechnya will improve significantly. Ambushes, acts of terror and mines/UXOs will also further contribute to an increase in the number of people in need of prosthetic and/or orthopaedic assistance." (WHO January 2001, p. 4)

### **Psychosocial needs of the displaced children and their families (2000-2002)**

- About half of the displaced population in Northern Caucasus is affected by some degree of mental disorders
- Psychological rehabilitation centres run by NGOs mostly focus on child care, rarely on women and young men (February 2002)
- Many children have witnessed the killing of relatives, have left family members behind, or have been separated from their parents
- Chechen Association of Psychiatrists and Neurologists reveals severe problems in Chechnya (2000)
- Other areas of serious concern is gender-based violence and drug abuse

"Turning to the mental health of IDPs, an estimated that about a half of the displaced population is affected by some degree of mental disorders with more serious consequences if left unattended remain valid, in particular as one enters the third year since hostilities renewed in Chechnya. To date, psychological rehabilitation centres run by NGOs mostly focused on child counseling and care, rarely involving women and young men. WHO is also supporting a children's rehabilitation centre in Grozny, where about 300 children have already received services. the parent of these children are now also getting training on how to cope with the stress related disorders. Also in the field of psychosocial support, UNICEF continues its partnership with CARE International focusing on IDP children outside the school system in Ingushetia (drop-outs) and on the mental problems of child mine victims. WHO, in cooperation with relevant NGOs, provides psychosocial and psychiatric training to medical staff from Chechnya and Ingushetia." (UN OCHA February 2002)

"In a late February report, *Medecins du Monde* (MDM), in commenting on the state of mental health among IDPs in Ingushetia, noted that virtually the entire population had fallen victim in some form or another to psychological trauma and that 25 percent were seriously affected. This analysis confirms in substance earlier data collected by UNHCR in their household survey of IDP settlements in Ingushetia. MDM emphasised that the trauma was linked to the direct effects of extreme violence affecting the civilian population, the living conditions of displaced persons outside Chechnya, as well as the revisiting of recent psychological injuries, especially for children, linked to the deadly war in 1994-1996.

In a statement still applicable to the present situation, MDM noted: For many, on top of the heavy difficulties of everyday life are piled the still uncertain prospects for the future and a fear of returning to Chechnya'. Regarding survivors of the bombing in Grozny who were exposed to devastating human and material destruction, or who were victims of violence, the report concludes that, 'The psychological trauma is deep and will probably lead to irreversible psychological consequences'." (UN July 2000, sect. 3.3.7)

*See also WHO newsletter on health action in North Caucasus, February/March 2002, special focus on psychiatric care in the Chechen Republic [Internet]*

*See also MDM report 'Chechnya - Ingushetia: Testimonies and sanitary data', 23 February 2000 [Internet]*

"Since January 2000, the Chechen Association of Psychiatrists and Neurologists has been carrying out research and rehabilitation activities in IDP camps in Chechnya and Ingushetia. They have examined 500 children and teenagers and found out that the number of stress disorders with children and teenager IDPs inside Chechnya is three times higher than with children from Ingushetia (87 percent in Chechnya compared to 26 percent in Ingushetia). The number of children suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders is 58 percent and 15 percent respectively. The Association works in IDP camps and spontaneous settlements in Pravoberezhnoe and Tolstoy-Yurt in Chechnya, and in Troitskaya, Ingushetia. 103 young patients are presently undergoing rehabilitation. 124 children with mild symptoms of stress disorders receive assistance from the teachers working at the Association. Most commonly used methods of treatment are: art therapy and acupuncture, combined with child festivals and establishing contacts with children from other countries through exchange of correspondence." (UN OCHA 30 June 2000)

"Fighting always leaves behind trauma victims of all types. Many children have witnessed the killing of relatives, have left family members behind, or have been separated from their parents. The displaced children, as well as those who are being directly exposed to acts of violence, live in fear, anxious for their own life and security. They have gone through a psychologically traumatic experience that will negatively impact their development.

There are no qualitative and quantitative data on the magnitude of the psychosocial impact of the fighting on children and their families. However, discussions with NGOs providing assistance, interviews with health personnel and teachers, as well as direct contact with the affected population, have revealed that the situation is very serious. Yet, with the exception of some programmes by NGOs, no mechanism is in place to help the affected population cope with the stress and meet their psychosocial needs.

Another area of serious concern is gender-based violence, which is being increasingly documented. An assessment of this area needs to be undertaken and support provided, as necessary." (UN March 2000, p. 16)

"Children and adults from Chechnya are prone to develop deep and serious psychological traumas due the conflict, as the traumatic events have been occurring over such a long period of time. (It is only three years since the end of the last conflict.) Although no assessment has been conducted, there can be no doubt that recent events will have a long lasting impact, not at least on the children, - some of whom have just relived their second war experience and had wounds reopened.

From the UNHCR household survey of non-camp settlements [11-13 December 1999], it is worth noticing, - although no questions pertaining to mental health were asked, that:

7 % of the IDPs had relatives who were killed or injured in Chechnya

16 % of the IDP family members remained in Chechnya, - the majority of the IDPs has no contact with their relatives inside Chechnya,

13 % of the IDPs indicated that they had witnessed harassment of women

8 % of the IDP children are separated from their parents and under the care of friends and relatives.

[...].

Drug abuse has creased in Ingushetia lately, and is said to be linked to the much wider abuse inside Chechnya. According to MoH/I data for 1999, there are 26.4 registered cases of drug abuse per 100,000 population." (WHO/UNICEF/IOM 5 February 2000)

## Water and sanitation

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### International support still needed to meet minimum standards (2002)

- Significant assistance has been provided to ensure access to clean water to all IDP settlements in Ingushetia
- The emergency garbage disposal system and the pest-vector control programme helped to maintain minimum sanitation requirements
- Pit latrines in IDP camps and settlements need to be provided and maintained
- The need for safe water and sanitation facilities is a high priority for residents, returnees and IDPs in Chechnya

#### *Ingushetia*

"The international humanitarian community has provided significant assistance in the water and sanitation sector since 1999. To prevent outbreaks of water-borne diseases and sanitation-related infections, approximately 150,000 litres of clean water are trucked daily to one hundred IDP locations. The sixty water bladders installed in 2001 were maintained in 2002, and drinking water quality was monitored. An additional seven water bladders were installed in 2002, and over 300 latrines will be constructed before the end of the year. The majority of the beneficiary population is now connected to the government-operated water supply network. Some towns operate their own networks, while in more remote areas people rely on wells and UNHCR has helped to increase the capability of groundwater extraction. Both ICRC and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) make potable water available to major concentrations of IDPs in Ingushetia, but some settlements still remain in need of water. ICRC has also improved the hygienic conditions of the IDPs by building shower installations when needed. Water bladders and washing facilities at IDP camps and settlements need to be maintained and upgraded, or turned into more permanent facilities. Water trucking to points not served by the regular water network needs to continue.

Solid waste disposal and pest-vector control are essential sanitation requirements. The government and private sector agencies which carried out these activities prior to the emergency have been unable to cope with the needs of the IDP population. In 2002 the emergency garbage disposal system and the pest-vector control programme helped to maintain minimum sanitation standards. The international community will support a further extension of the system where medium to long-term stay is possible, and will eventually hand over to the government.

Reticulated sewerage systems are only available in the central parts of the few major towns. The majority of the beneficiary population relies on latrines unconnected to these systems and IRC sewage trucks,

provided by UNHCR, are servicing these latrines. This activity needs to be strengthened. Although emergency pit latrines were installed at IDP camps and settlements, some of these do not yet comply with minimum standards and are suitable only for short-term use. Significant health hazards exist due to the inadequacy of the human waste disposal system. Latrines need to be provided, upgraded, and maintained to meet minimum humanitarian standards and adapted to more long-term use. Hand-washing facilities are needed, and latrine-emptying programmes, together with public education in hygiene practices, should be continued. UNICEF has supported initial operations in the sector with emergency water and sanitation supplies. Further, the agency, with its partners and local institutions, has specific environmental and personal hygiene products during the last two years." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 45)

### ***Chechnya***

"The need for safe water and sanitation facilities is a high priority for residents, returnees and IDPs in Chechnya. According to NGOs operating in Chechnya, as well as local officials, public health is threatened by a lack of clean water and poor sanitation. While the situation outside the capital in general is not as alarming, in Grozny all water treatment and distribution stations have been damaged or even destroyed. The public water supply (Vodokanal-Chechnya) can only provide parts of the city with treated water. UNICEF and the Polish Humanitarian Organization (PHO) started a potable water production and distribution system at the end of 2000 in Grozny. Later on, the IRC started supporting the distribution system by trucking water in Chechnya. Also, IRC and Vodokanal are working together on the rehabilitation of the primary water network in the Oktyabrsky raion in order to improve access to water for residents and returnees. IRC is planning to repair small parts of water pipelines, and is considering the rehabilitation of water pipelines in other raions of Grozny. Many hospitals and health facilities rely on trucked water and suffer from poor sanitation facilities. Garbage and sewage collecting systems are also largely destroyed, posing further threats to public health. The only working system is that developed by UNICEF and PHO, focusing mainly on health and educational facilities in Grozny, where pit-latrines and incinerators for medical wastes have been built." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 46)

### **Sanitation and water in temporary accommodation centres not satisfactory (2002)**

- UN reports absence of running water, lack of water delivery, functioning toilets and garbage collection
- Conditions increase risk of outbreaks of infectious diseases
- Residents in TACs also complain about lack of food and medical facilities
- Space available per persons is below the minimum humanitarian standard
- About 15,000 residents have moved from tent camps in Ingushetia and Northern Chechnya to these centres (September 2002)

"In early July [2002], the authorities dismantled two camps hosting 2,200 people in Znamenskoe (Chechnya) and forcibly moved the IDPs back to temporary accommodation centres (TACs) in Grozny. UN missions reported that the returnees remained extremely concerned about the persisting insecurity, and that living conditions in the TACs were inadequate. Under these circumstances, the UN decided not to provide assistance to these centres." (IASC WG 10 September 2002)

"In mid-July a UN mission visited four TACs in Chechnya. The mission confirmed that there are serious problems with living conditions in the TACs: no running water is available, regular water delivery is not organized, toilets are not properly functioning (on average there is one outside latrine per 75 people), and garbage is not collected. All of this, coupled with overcrowding and the summer heat, increases, the risk of outbreaks of infectious diseases and is fraught with the worsening of the overall epidemiological situation. The residents of TACs complain about the lack of food delivery and insufficiency of medical facilities." (WHO July 2002)



"The international humanitarian community retained its focus on the Temporary accommodation centers (TAC's) in Chechnya where IDPs from Ingushetia and northern Chechnya were resettled. According to WHO data, out of 15 000 spots at the currently opened TAC's in Grozny, 14 772 were occupied in early September, although sanitary and water condition in some TAC's remained to be alarming. The UN agencies continue to refrain from providing humanitarian assistance to the TAC's as this is the responsibility of the local authorities, although some relief agencies are actively working in the centers and covering basic needs of their inhabitants." (PINF September 2002, p. 2)

"Number of occupants on July 16 in the seven operating centres (the eighth being under repair): 4.900 persons plus two convoys from Ingushetia on July 16 and 17. (Figures provided by the Chechen Committee in Grozny)

In total, 5.300 persons including the Grozny June floods victims who lost their houses but never left Chechnya.

B) General remarks on the TACs:

- The requisitioned buildings are former dormitories or workers centres, a kindergarten, buildings which are still standing, an abandoned technical college.
- In all those buildings, the mains are out of use, water and lavatories are outside, in the yard. The TACs doors close at 10pm. Because of the curfew, so refugees have no access to the lavatories between 10pm and 6am.
- The TACs are guarded by armed Chechen militiamen. Some accept to escort people to the lavatories in case of emergency, at the guards' free will.
- Particularly precarious sanitary conditions and permanent promiscuity could rapidly increase the risk of epidemics. In all the TACs there are cases of tuberculosis, the sick are not isolated or medically treated.
- In two of the 7 TACs there is no health point, therefore, there is no free access to health care. Polyclinics ask for 30 rubbles per consultation. The other five do have a primary health point, either in the buildings themselves or close. They are supported either by the MtchS or one of the Grozny polyclinics, but supplies are totally inadequate.
- Water is distributed once a day by the "Polish Humanitarian Action": Bladders are placed in yards or in entrance halls. Two hours later, reserves are depleted.
- The Migrations Service (under the Chechen Home Affairs Ministry) distributes the equivalent of 15 rubbles of food per registered person every 10 days.
- Renovation is more cosmetic than lasting (A spattering of paint on the walls, and it is already peeling off, linoleum on the floor, doors whose locks do not work. Electricity works every now and again, there is no gas supply in every building or, where there is gas, people do not dare use it for fear of blowing everything up.

Basins and showers are unusable, as used water cannot be disposed of).

[...]

- Children born in Ingushetia or having left Chechnya at the beginning of the war are terrified by the constant night shooting. Their mothers spend nights trying to calm, reassure them and stop their shouting. Refugees in the most exposed TACs are in a terrible state of nerves.

Remarks: Sanitary conditions are deplorable. In Grozny there is a general water disposal problem. It is not a specific TACs problem." (MDM July 2002, pp. 16-17)

"The international humanitarian community has also repeatedly voiced its concerns over the living conditions in the Temporary Accommodation Centers [...], i.e. dormitories where a great part of IDPs returned to. Most of those have been built or reconstructed in Grozny and especially water and sanitation conditions where are very dissatisfactory. Space calculated per person is 3.2 m<sup>2</sup> (humanitarian Sphere standards indicate 3.5-4.5 m<sup>2</sup> as minimum), there is little or no running water, insufficient number of toilets, some of those even not dug out etc. At the moment the TAC's are already overcrowded mostly with the IDPs from Znamenskoe." (PINF July 2002)

"At the shelter sector meeting the delegation pointed out that the situation in the TAC in terms of water provision and sanitation had not improved as compared to the previous visits." (UN OCHA 30 September 2002)

## ACCESS TO EDUCATION

### Ingushetia

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#### **Satisfactory school enrolment rates for the displaced children in Ingushetia (2002)**

- School attendance rate for IDP children ranges from 80 and 90 percent
- There is a need for recreational activities to keep children away from illegal and dangerous activities
- Pre-school facilities are also needed to give parents time for income generating activities
- Humanitarian agencies have observed traumatic disorders and slow social integration in many IDP children of all ages
- Schools are considered by the camp population as the safest place for their children

"Continuous monitoring of school enrolment rates give the present number of IDP children between seven and seventeen years old (primary and secondary school age) in Ingushetia as 27,000. Approximately 9,000 of these children are attending classes in regular schools, while 10,000 are enrolled in NGO-run alternative school facilities, located in tents and wooden buildings funded and equipped mainly by UNICEF. Most of the remaining 8,000 non enrolled children, sometimes defined as 'drop-outs', are adolescents of secondary school age or children with special physical, mental, or social problems.

Non enrolled children, and others too in after school hours, have little to do, and are therefore particularly vulnerable to becoming involved in illegal and dangerous activities. After three years of life in tents or settlements this risk is even higher. UNICEF, in collaboration with its partners, has developed and maintained sports and recreational facilities throughout the republic of Ingushetia, catering for more than 3,000 IDP children and adolescents. Together with alternative schools, these recreational facilities constitute the main protective environment existing in the IDP camps. Small-scale vocational training projects, improving prospects of employment, have also started. Nonetheless, there is still an urgent need to increase the capacity of these facilities.

Approximately 13,000 children between three and six years old are part of the IDP community in Ingushetia. In a normal environment these children would probably be attending kindergarten or other pre-school facilities, thus giving their parents time for income generating activities. Unfortunately, nine existing kindergartens are still occupied by IDPs. While UNICEF has already rehabilitated five such buildings, and with its partners has developed kindergartens in several camps and settlements, these facilities only offer places for 2,000 children.

UNICEF and its partners have observed traumatic disorders and slow social integration in many IDP children of all ages. Although educational and recreational facilities provided to IDP children have contributed significantly towards overcoming these negative effects of conflict, specialised approaches which offer relief to displaced children remain scarce and more needs to be done in this direction." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 51)

"Currently UNICEF is supporting directly or partially 59 schools located in the tent camps or spontaneous settlements in Ingushetia. Number of children enrolled stays around 10,000. According to the reports of UNICEF implementing partners, the overall attendance rate for IDP school network in Ingushetia ranges from 82% to 91,4%. This be considered as satisfactory for the winter season taking into consideration the

problems with gas, electricity, seasonal increase of child illness and IDP families migration under political pressure of the official authorities.

On 14 January 2003 the winter vacations at IDP schools were over and the educational process in alternative schools resumed. It should be noted that during the holidays nearly all schools stayed open because they are still considered by the camp population as the safest place for their children. The children are encouraged by their parents to stay at school the major part of the day and to be involved in different recreational activities and hobbies." (UNICEF 26 January 2003)

"Education was suspended for two days at IDP school in camp Bart since teachers had not been paid salaries for three months. Just before her abduction, the head of NGO 'Druzhba' Nina Davidovich handed over the schools to the Chechen Ministry of Education. The MoE officials just confirmed on 30 November that salaries will be paid." (UNICEF 30 November 2002)

"Education in Chechnya and Ingushetia slowed down due to the autumn holidays, but children located in the temporary IDP camps kept attending schools for the recreational and sport activities. The situation with the military presence close to some IDP camps in Ingushetia has not changed. UNICEF through the implementing partners keeps monitoring the situation for possible decreases of enrolment rates." (UNICEF 17 November 2002)

## **Chechnya**

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### **Classroom capacity in Chechnya is still insufficient (2002)**

- Despite rehabilitation efforts, many schools remain at least partly destroyed or unusable
- The risk of children and adolescents becoming involved in dangerous and illegal activities is high
- Very few kindergartens are active in the Republic
- A lack of clothing has a direct relationship with decreased attendance in school

"According to the Chechen Ministry of Education, the current number of pupils in Chechnya is 220,000, enrolled in 420 schools. It is however difficult to obtain precise data on the magnitude of the 'drop-out' problem in Chechnya. More than fifteen school buildings were rehabilitated during 2002 with the help of the international community, coordinated by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, many schools remain at least partly destroyed or unusable, with higher percentages in the towns and villages most affected by the conflict. Assessments carried out by UNICEF and UNESCO show that classroom capacity in schools is still insufficient in relation to the high number of pupils. Alternative premises are used where schools are not suitable for proper teaching but rented houses, sheds or tents are by no means satisfactory premises for education.

The risk of children and adolescents becoming involved in dangerous and illegal activities is even higher in Chechnya than in Ingushetia. Moreover, large parts of the republic, including Grozny, are affected by the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Although UNICEF, together with its partners, has developed some recreational and sport activities in rehabilitated school buildings, efforts in this area should be expanded in order to cope with the real needs.

Regarding pre-school facilities, the situation in Chechnya is critical. No clear data are available, but in any case very few kindergartens are active in the Republic. UNICEF and one of its partners have so far reactivated seven children's centres in Grozny, providing an environment of normality in an otherwise extremely troubled city to about 350 children. These are at present the only functioning pre-school

institutions in Grozny despite the evident need for much greater capacity. The Ministry of Education has said it is ready to progressively take on the responsibility for revitalised kindergartens. Two of the seven facilities have already been handed over, thus ensuring the sustainability of the programme.” (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 51-52)

"A lack of clothing has a direct relationship with decreased attendance in school, which is of course compounded by a lack of essential school supplies. The need for clothing potentially has a significant impact on a [household], as dressing children to high standards is a show of dignity, and often enough, [households] cut back on food to purchase clothing for children in order to send them to school." (ICRC July 2002, Chechnya, p. 37)

## **Other areas**

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### **Local authorities deny access to displaced children in Russian cities (2001)**

- Children of unregistered displaced Chechens have been excluded from the education system in Moscow

"Although the Constitution of Russia guarantees everyone (specifically, everyone, and not just citizens of Russia) 'the accessibility of free availability of pre-school, general secondary and vocational secondary education in public and municipal educational institutions and enterprises', many children of migrants find themselves out of the system of education only because their parents are not registered with internal affairs bodies.

Children of forced migrants are, as a rule, not admitted to either children's homes or boarding schools, where they can stay while their parents look for temporary housing and a job.

Order of the Moscow Committee on Education No. 567 of September 9, 1999 'On strengthening safety in educational institutions', Sub-item 1.1 of which says: 'Children from outside Moscow are admitted to schools and boarding schools only if registered.' This Order was issued the next day after military actions started in Chechnya.

The ministry of education as well as the General Prosecutor's Office on many occasions have confirmed that actions of local authorities are illegal." (COE 12 October 2001, paras. 88-91)

# ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

## Self-reliance

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### Limited income sources for most households in Chechnya (2002)

- 60 percent of the working age population is unemployed
- The capacity of boost small income generating activities is very limited
- According to ICRC survey, 10 percent of the population is extremely poor and heavily dependent on external assistance
- Extremely poor households do not receive state benefits as a result of complicated administrative procedures
- Vulnerability of IDPs and returnees is aggravated by the lack of access to kitchen gardens
- Theft, bootlegging and other criminal activities are widespread in Grozny

"The last decade has seen destabilisation and economic collapse in Chechnya. As of September 2002, an estimated 180,000 Chechens remain displaced outside Chechnya in other republics of the Russian Federation, thereby weakening the work force potential of the republic. Although the government is assuming increased responsibilities and provides more funds for infrastructure rehabilitation, the levels of physical destruction of the industrial, agricultural, financial, commercial, and public infrastructure remain high and will prevent a sustained economic recovery in the foreseeable future. Inside Chechnya, it is estimated that up to 60% of the working age population is unemployed and the same proportion of the population reports being regularly unable to meet regular household expenses. Chechen households with a very low level of income (about RUR 2,200 per month or less) rely on a variety of sources of additional income. In descending order of importance they are: borrowing (27% of income); humanitarian assistance (24%); work income, state benefits, and cash donations (12% each); and in-kind donations (10%). Home-grown food also represents a significant additional resource for households living in the rural plains and in the mountains.

In a context of persistent insecurity, many individuals engage in small trade activities to generate additional income. Although local coping mechanisms such as donations, credit, and borrowing from friends and family exist, access to financial and productive capital is extremely limited. The first retail bank to offer financial services in Chechnya opened on 23 September 2002. The capacity to boost small income generating activities (i.e. petty trade, collection of empty bottles, etc.) is very limited." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 63)

### *ICRC economic security survey in Chechnya (July 2002)*

"The extent of [household] economic vulnerability is relatively comparable throughout the assessed area.

60 % of the assessed population have a monthly income of less than 3,000 rubles and are regularly unable to meet their expenses and are considered vulnerable as they have no [household] reserves and are therefore dependent on external assistance including humanitarian aid.

10 % of the population have a monthly income of less than 700 rubles (extremely poor [households] and are extremely economically vulnerable, being heavily dependent on external assistance and humanitarian aid to survive." (ICRC July 2002 Chechnya, p. 18)

#### "State benefits

Since 2000, benefits have been regularly paid by the state and, in some vulnerable [households], benefits surpass employment as the key reliable source of [household] income. Over 90% of the assessed [households] report receiving state benefits, but, once again, the extremely poor [households] are largely excluded from this source of [household] income, with the exception of child allowances. Extremely poor [households] indicate that due to the complicated application procedures and high 'administrative' costs, applying for pensions is often their reach. Nonetheless, state benefits provide an important source of [household] income within vulnerable [households] and the lack of access to state benefits is an important factor contributing to the extent of vulnerability within an extremely poor [household]." (ICRC July 2002 Chechnya, p. 20)

#### "Humanitarian assistance

About 75% of [households] assessed report receiving some form of humanitarian assistance. Bulk food is by far the most regular and significant humanitarian assistance provided, with about 65% of assessed [households] reporting receiving food, although it is notable that only 55% of the extremely poor [households] report receiving bulk food, indicating a problem in effectively accessing humanitarian assistance for the extremely poor [households] [...]" (ICRC July 2002 pp. 20-21)

#### "Household level production

About 60% of [households] report having some degree of food production capacity, decreasing to about 50% or less in the extremely poor [households]. This is a significant factor in both the rural plains and the mountains, providing as much as 30% or more of the [household] food, while Grozny reports having about two thirds the [household] production capacity of other areas. The majority of food produced is consumed in the [household], decreasing food expenses and increasing [household] dietary diversification, although about 20% is usually given to family and friends. Only negligible amounts of the product are reportedly sold. Extremely poor [households] have relatively limited production capacity because of limited access to land and required inputs with only 25% of extremely poor IDPs and 43% of extremely poor returnees reporting having kitchen gardens, which is yet another factor that contributes to the cumulative vulnerability of these [households]." (ICRC July 2002 Chechnya, p. 22)

#### "Characteristics of an extremely poor household

Poverty results from the combined effect of a number of factors contributing negatively towards the economy by either decreasing income generating capacity or increasing expense burdens within the [household]. The following outlines some of the key factors that contribute to extreme poverty in Chechnya:

- loss of house and possessions during hostilities, during [household] have no productive assets and no [household] level production capacity (e.g.: loss of home, animals, tools, land, etc.)
- exclusion of [household] from local network (no local contacts, no family support – typically due to displacement)
- [household] members frequently lack official documents or local registration often due to displacement (thus facing increased security threats and exclusion from work opportunities and entitlements)
- [households] are often single headed (particular difficulties when [household] is headed by a female)
- [households] often have unemployed or unemployable adults (disabled, elderly, unskilled, occupied within [household], etc.)
- a [household] member often suffers a serious illness (cost, burden of care, decreased income generating potential)
- [households] have many children (including orphans), disabled and/or elderly who received no state pensions

- the majority of these [households] were already vulnerable with limited [household] income prior to the crisis, while the impact of this ongoing crisis has served to enhance the [household] economic vulnerability.

[Household] vulnerability results from a complex interaction of a multitude of factors including the above which combine to prevent extremely poor [households] from exploiting positive possibilities that could be available to them." (ICRC July 2002 Chechnya, p. 31)

"A subtle improvement of living conditions is noticeable in Grozny. The local market is growing every month, offering essential food and non-food goods at affordable prices, some items even lower than in Ingushetia. An increasing number of people are arriving in the town, many of them attempting to reside here. However, security risks are still considerable for Grozny inhabitants and coming winter is also a great source of worry to many. The unemployment rate currently exceeds 90%. Pensions are distributed rather regularly, social benefits are sometimes paid to families with children. Other sources of income include trading at the local market and small businesses, such as cafes and garage rentals. Another widespread source of income is the sale of low-grade gasoline. However, majority of Grozny inhabitants are still dependent on humanitarian aid. Theft, bootlegging and other criminal activities are widespread." (PNIF October 2001, para. 1.3.3)

### **ICRC survey highlights difficult access to state assistance for IDPs in Dagestan (2002)**

- Poor households are primarily living in collective centres
- IDPs can only collect State benefits in Chechnya but half of them renounce to travel because of security risks and travel costs

"[A]s much as 12% (or 120 [households]) of the total 1,000 Chechen IDP [households] in Dagestan are facing extreme poverty, living on a [households] cash income of 600 rubles per month or less. Geographically, over 50% of these extremely poor IDP [households] are located in the collective centres in Khasavyurt." (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 15)

"State benefits are a significant source of reliable [household] income for both [residents affected by the hostilities and Chechen IDPs], with over 90% of the assessed [households] reporting some form of state benefits. State benefits are reported as the main source of income for 38% of the [residents affected by the hostilities], and 28% of the IDP [households].

Benefits are paid regularly by the state in both Dagestan and in Chechnya since 2000. Over 95% of the entitled [resident households affected by the hostilities] collect their benefits locally and on a monthly basis, while over 80% of the entitled IDP [households] receive their benefits in Chechnya [27]. Just over half of the IDP households collect their benefits monthly due to the costs and security risks related to traveling in Chechnya.

[...][W]ith the exception of access to child allowances [28], the poorest IDP [households] are largely excluded from receiving state benefits. This is primarily due to complicated and expensive application procedures, which is further enhanced by the fact that IDPs must apply and receive their benefits in Chechnya which has cost and security implications that can prove to be overwhelming. Many IDPs receiving only child allowances do not collect them because the transport cost equal the value of the allowances. Additionally, in order to reduce travel costs, about 20% of entitled IDPs try to collect their benefits on a quarterly basis, although this has many bureaucratic complications and often they are unable to obtain the full amounts due to them.

[...][The resident population affected by the hostilities] in general has better access to state benefits as compared to the IDPs, largely due to the above described limitations faced by the IDPs. Some 50% of the



[residents affected by the hostilities], with the exception of the very poor, have access to elderly pensions, while 20-30% also have access to invalid pensions. Each of these pensions represent a minimum of 600 rubles per month for the receiving [household], while child benefits, the majority of the benefits received by IDPs, have a value of 70 rubles per month."

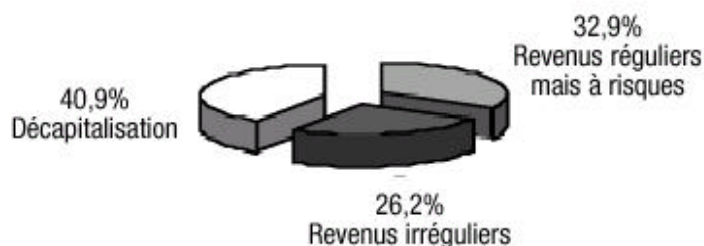
[Footnote 27: 20% of IDP households who arrived in Daghestan after the first war benefited from the forced migrant status and are therefore able to collect their benefits in Daghestan]

[Footnote 28: Child allowances are valued at 70 rubles per month per registered child, while most other benefits are significantly more substantial, generally having a starting value of about 600 rubles, and increasing from that according to previous work history and other factors outlined by the law.] (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 19)

### **Action Contre la Faim reports a degradation of the economic situation of the displaced households in Ingushetia (2002)**

- A typical displaced household generates a monthly revenue of 2,500 to 3,000 rubles
- This revenue is generated by regular incomes (pensions, subsidies), irregular income (seasonal work, petty trade, resale of humanitarian goods), and the sale of personal goods
- This covers only half of the basic needs of a six-person family
- Expenditures for healthcare, clothing and fresh food are usually postponed
- Displaced households have become extremely vulnerable to any change of circumstances: illness of the head of household, reduction of aid, increasing rent
- One third of the population currently living in collective settlements were accommodated with host families only a few months ago

"Origine des sources de revenu - Illustration par le cas typique d'une famille déplacée de six personnes vivant dans un camp [13] (en % du revenu total) :



Le graphique ci-dessus illustre la situation d'une famille typique vivant en camp. Cette famille est composée d'un chef de famille actif et de son épouse, d'une personne âgée et de trois enfants :

- **La part de revenus réguliers** mais à risques correspond aux pensions et allocations touchées à Grozny. La pension pour les personnes âgées est touchée mensuellement, tandis que les allocations pour les enfants ne sont perçues qu'un mois sur deux en moyenne.
- **La part de revenus irréguliers** correspond à l'activité saisonnière du chef de famille (3 à 4 mois de contrats en tant que manoeuvre agricole), et aux activités de petit commerce exercées par son épouse : revente d'une partie de la farine distribuée par les agences humanitaires, collecte et revente de canettes vides trouvées dans les poubelles.
- **La part décapitalisation** correspond à la vente de biens personnels (ici les bijoux de l'épouse).

Dans ce cas typique, la famille génère un revenu mensuel de 2 500 à 3 000 roubles, soit la moitié environ des dépenses nécessaires à une famille de six personnes pour couvrir ses besoins de base. C'est donc près de 50% des dépenses essentielles -notamment soins médicaux, habillement, et produits alimentaires frais- qui sont reportées.

**L'économie familiale des déplacés tchéchènes est à bout de souffle et l'extrême érosion de leur capital les rend vulnérables** au moindre choc : maladie du chef de famille, diminution de l'aide alimentaire, expulsion d'un logement collectif ou augmentation du coût du loyer pour les déplacés en secteur privé ; la survenue d'un seul de ces aléas est susceptible de précipiter les familles dans la détresse. Ainsi, dans l'incapacité de continuer à assurer le paiement du loyer, de nombreuses familles qui vivaient dans le secteur privé n'ont eu d'autre choix que de rejoindre des camps spontanés, les 'kompaktnik', habitations collectives et insalubres, symboles de la dégradation économique au sein des familles déplacées. Des familles entières sont ainsi agglutinées dans des usines délabrées, des vieux hangars, des anciens kolkhozes, des caves ou des étables. **Action Contre la Faim estime qu'environ un tiers de la population résidant aujourd'hui dans les centres collectifs vivait encore dans le secteur privé il y a quelques mois."**

[Footnote 13: Source : entretiens de groupes et entretiens individuels menés par Action Contre la Faim dans les camps et dans les centres collectifs en décembre 2001 et janvier 2002. Le graphique illustre une situation typique d'une famille de déplacés : les revenus ont été estimés annuellement puis 'écrasés' sous la forme de revenus mensuels.]

(Action Contre la Faim September 2002)

### **Influx of IDPs from Chechnya aggravates the socio-economic situation in North Caucasus (March 2000)**

- Unemployment rate in Ingushetia increased dramatically in recent months, reaching 56 percent of the economically active population
- There is a need for support to programmes of employment generation, emphasising public works and small income generation schemes for IDPs, host families, and local communities

"The influx of IDPs from Chechnya to the neighbouring republics, particularly Ingushetia, and the prospect of their longer-term settlement in these republics have seriously aggravated the socio-economic situation in the northern Caucasus. It has also put tremendous pressure on the authorities and the local population, particularly host families and the most vulnerable groups of the population, including women and youth. It is estimated that some 30,000 IDPs will remain in Ingushetia after the hostilities have ceased and these IDPs and their host families are the intended beneficiaries of UNDP's programme. Among the serious problems are the high rate of unemployment and the need to start rehabilitation of physical and social infrastructure of the region. In Ingushetia alone the unemployment rate increased dramatically in recent months, reaching 56 percent of the economically active population. The region depends fully on subsidies from the federal budget, and the existing capacities and very poorly developed social infrastructure, including those dealing with employment services, are inadequate to respond effectively to the challenges resulting from the situation. These problems have to be addressed urgently in order to avoid eruption of civil strife, further socio-economic degradation, an increase of criminal activities, and overall political instability.

Within this environment, international assistance can play a critical role in supporting the Government and local population in stabilising the increasing social tension, which is likely to continue even after many IDPs return home. As a first step, early rehabilitation measures could complement and strengthen the positive impact of ongoing emergency relief operations. Support to the federal and regional programme of employment generation, emphasising public works and small income generation schemes for IDPs, host

families, and local communities, is needed. In addition, an analysis of longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected regions needs to be undertaken." (UN March 2000, p. 21)

### **ICRC identifies coping mechanisms of IDPs in Ingushetia (October 2001)**

- IDPs living in spontaneous settlements and with host families feel that they lack support and information
- Coping mechanisms include selling of personal belongings, borrowing money, small business, selling humanitarian assistance and work of children
- All IDPs are considered to be in need of some degree of assistance, especially the newly arrived IDPs in the month following their arrival
- IDPs cannot be legally employed without resident status

"In Ingushetia, the ICRC conducted focus group discussions with beneficiaries living in camps, spontaneous settlements, and with host families in order to analyse their problems and identify their coping mechanisms.

IDPs identified the following problems: the security situation in Chechnya – while there is a genuine willingness among the IDPs to return to Chechnya the prevailing situation is the major constraint which keeps them in Ingushetia; legal status and legal documents – unlike those living in camps, the IDPs living in spontaneous settlements and with host families feel that they lack support and information on administrative and legal procedures; food, non-food, health, education assistance, unemployment; living conditions in Ingushetia; and assistance to children and orphans.

The main conclusions of the assessment include: the provision of assistance to the camps is the most complete and regular; in the spontaneous settlements the assistance has to be further improved by: better coordination among the organizations involved in order to provide for more regularity; filling in gaps in basic health care; assistance to children below the age of 5 years; habitat; and access to primary and secondary school and playrooms for children."

~~Coping mechanisms of IDPs  
Selling of personal belongings is the prime coping mechanism of the IDPs living in camps and with host families;  
Borrowing money comes right after the sale of private belongings for both IDPs in camps and spontaneous settlements, whereas taking a credit is a much less important strategy for the IDPs living with host families which confirms their better financial situation;  
Small business, the labour market, and work of children are a common sequence when all three strategies need to be combined to cover basic expenditures. Among the coping mechanisms the work of children always come before selling humanitarian assistance.~~

(UN OCHA 31 October 2001)

#### *ICRC main conclusions:*

"Whilst all registered IDPs receive humanitarian assistance in the form of food and non-food items, in general the economic security situation of these IDPs did not improve in the last year. This trend may well continue in 2002 for those IDPs who remain in Ingushetia.

It is not possible to identify those who are most in need of humanitarian assistance by viewing IDP groups by habitation sector alone as there are poor, average and better-off IDPs in every habitation sector. All IDPs are considered to be in need of a certain level of outside assistance but there are certain groups who are more in need than others. For these groups humanitarian assistance plays a vital part in their economic security. The aim should be to best identify and provide additional assistance to these most vulnerable living in all three sectors in Ingushetia.

Despite the fact that the economic security for a number of IDPs has not improved in the last twelve months it appears that they are still able to cope with extraordinary expenses be it through community solidarity (through borrowing small amounts from family and friends) but in the worst case this can lead to debt. However, some IDPs are learning to cope better with their general situation – this is particularly the case in the camps and collective centres where the solidarity factor plays a part. The study found that there is a real need to assist newly arrived IDPs with both food and hygienic kits in the month following their arrival.

Food continues to be the most useful form of humanitarian assistance provided and this will remain the case for the coming year. Beyond the nutritional element of food distribution there is an additional economic reasoning behind the provision of food assistance through sale or exchange. Food is the item which IDPs spend the most money on and will sell assets for and borrow money to buy.

After food, clothing has been identified as the most useful form of assistance, particularly during winter which is the most financially difficult time of year.

Hygiene items, which are provided on a regular basis by IR and ICRC, are rarely sold or exchanged as they are consistently used within the household.

According to the CAP there are approximately 30 humanitarian organisations active in assisting the IDP population in Ingushetia today. Whilst some form of assistance reaches all registered IDPs, there are concerns that poor co-ordination in certain sectors, particularly in the case of one-off distributions, means that some are assisted more than others and it is not necessary those who are most in need who receive the most assistance." (ICRC February 2002, p. 26)

"In Ingushetia, 73% of the population is currently unemployed and some 35,000 IDPs are expected to settle there. At present, there are very limited economic opportunities for local residents, let alone IDPs who do not have residency status and are thus not able to be legally employed." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 63)

### **Displaced face discriminatory access to the labour market in Russian cities: the example of Moscow (2001)**

- Unregistered displaced in Moscow can only be employed illegally
- However, new regulations issued by the Moscow government do not mention registration of residence as a precondition for legal employment
- Absence of registration at the place of residence deprives forced migrants of access to unemployment allowance

"Access to employment is strictly dependent on the registration. This practice is secured in Moscow and Moscow Oblast by the Rules of Registration that contain a clause that establishes high penalties for heads of enterprises, institutions and organizations of all types of ownership for employing citizens who are not registered. This clause is a direct violation of Article 16 of the Labour Code that prohibits limitation of rights of citizens to employment due to circumstances that are not connected with professional qualities of workers, including their place of residence. Still, this clause, which was included in the Rules of Registration adopted in 1995, stayed unchanged in the Rules of Registration approved in May 1999.

All this leads to a situation where refugees who find job are employed illegally, without due processing of all their documents. This means that they are deprived of all social and legal benefits linked to the job.

Absence of registration at the place of residence deprives forced migrants of the possibilities guaranteed by the Laws 'On Refugees' and 'On Involuntarily Displaced Persons' to receive unemployment allowance, to get free professional training and additional training improving their chances for employment. Employment agencies deny them in the above referring to the fact that the Law 'On Employment' provides for making decision on registration of a citizen as unemployed at the place of his residence, which is traditionally treated as registration at the place of residence. The RF Ministry of Labour and Social Development is of the same opinion. Attempts of public organisations to achieve realisation of the right of unemployed refugees and forced migrants to obtain state support give no results as yet. As a rule, courts of justice also share the opinion of administrative agencies. There is only one case known that, after a court ruling, they managed to register a forced migrant as unemployed and provide him with respective allowance.

However, in the new regulations issued by the Moscow government, the registration of residence is not mentioned as a precondition for legal employment. Thus, the problem of access to employment for asylum-seekers might be fixed in Moscow. Since the regulations are very recent, it still remains to be seen how their provisions will be implemented in practice. UNHCR office in Moscow concluded agreements with some enterprises which are ready to employ refugees. These agreements have been approved by the Moscow government. This programme is expected to begin in 2001." (COE 12 October 2001, paras. 94-97)

## **Participation**

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### **IDPs' participation to the planned constitutional referendum in Chechnya (2003)**

- The authorities have finally agreed to set up polling stations in IDP camps in Ingushetia (February 2003)
- Draft constitution will be distributed among displaced communities

"The Chechen authorities have submitted the republic's new draft constitution to [Bruno Haller, Secretary-general of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe], Russian news agencies reported on 16 January. The draft is to be put to a referendum on 23 March. Chechen Central Election Commission Chairman Abdul-Kerin Arsakhanov said on 16 January that mobile polling stations will be set up in five displaced-persons' camps in Ingushetia to enable the Chechen residents of those camps to vote in the referendum. LF" (RFE/RL 17 January 2003)

"RIA Novosti, 12.02.2003 – Chechnya administration chief akhmad Kadyrov has acknowledged the necessity of opening polling stations in camps for IDPs residing outside the republic. Kadyrov came to that conclusion during the talks in Grozny Wednesday with the visiting Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Alvaro Gil-Robles. In conformity with the federal law governing the conduct of a referendum, originally it was planned to set up polling stations in close proximity to IDP camps, but inside the territory of Chechnya. It was expected that transport would be provided to take IDPs to polling stations. But the Council of Europe Commissioner's arguments persuaded Kadyrov that opening polling stations right in the camps 'would only benefit the conduct of the referendum'.

RIA Novosti, 12.02.2003 – All IDPs from Chechnya will be able to take part in the referendum on the Constitution of the republic, which has been scheduled for March 23. Chairman of the Central Election Commission Alexander Veshnyakov told reporters on Wednesday. Veshnyakov underscored that 'the referendum for the forced migrants will be created'. The election commission, jointly with the migration service, will talk to IDPs in places of the compact living and, if they wish, will include them in the lists of the constituents. Apart from that, 'special polling stations will be set up for these persons.' Alexander Veshnyakov pointed out that the migration services had already published the text of the draft Constitution in its newspaper, which is distributed among the forced migrants from Chechnya. In addition, booklets

were published with the text of the draft fundamental law of the republic and election laws." (UNOCHA 13 February 2003)

*See also para. 8 of [Resolution 1315 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe](#), 30 January 2002. [Internet]*

### **IDPs in Ingushetia voice their concerns (2001)**

- Chechen IDPs created a congress of displaced persons (March 2001)
- Small group of displaced went on hunger strike, demanding peace negotiations be initiated (June 2001)
- Displaced persons from camp in Ingushetia organised protest march (August 2001)

"In Ingushetia, IDPs from Chechnya have set up a congress of displaced persons. The committee intends to examine issues related to the situation for Chechens in Ingushetia, as well as the situation on the territory of Chechnya. The congress will convene in Ingushetia 4-5 March." (UNHCR 1 March 2001)

"On 15 June 2001, a group of 12 internally displaced persons, six men, four women and two girls went on a hunger strike in Ingushetia, demanding that federal authorities put an end to the war in Chechnya and initiate negotiations with the Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) set up a tent between the IDP camps "Sputnik" and "Satsita" in the Sunzhensky district of Ingushetia and vowed to fast to their death for peace. In late June, the number of strikers increased to 66.

The situation was continuously monitored by the World Health Organization and information was released daily. WHO also arranged for coordinated round-the-clock medical assistance as the strikers' health gradually deteriorated, mainly due to dehydration. Islamic Relief, Hammer Forum, MDM, MSF-France and others took an active part in care provision. Upon receiving information from WHO, MoH I entrusted the Sunzha district hospital with helping to maintain the strikers' health, including their hospitalisation if deemed necessary.

Ultimately, quite a number of strikers had to stop protesting due to health problems. A total of 15 IDPs were hospitalised. By 30 July, 17 strikers remained and they planned, together with other IDPs, to start a peace march to Moscow on 1 August 2001. However, authorities refused to grant them permission to march on the republic's territory and on 30-31 July the Ingush police removed the strikers and dismantled their tents.

At present, no strikers are hospitalised and all IDPs have returned to their tents." (WHO August 2001, p. 1)

"Ingushetian police on 2 August halted a group of Chechen displaced persons who had begun a protest march from a displaced persons camp in Ingushetia to demand that the Russian leadership begin peace talks with Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov, AP reported. Two of the organizers of the protest were detained. Ingushetian President Ruslan Aushev has previously defended the interests of the displaced persons and repeatedly called on the Russian leadership to begin talks with Maskhadov. LF" (RFE/RL 3 August 2001)

## **Participation of the internally displaced population to the presidential elections (26 March 2000)**

- No arrangements were made to establish special polling stations at the camps in Ingushetia where displaced were housed
- Many of those who had registered as internally displaced persons had already been added to the voter lists of the polling stations in the regions where they had relocated
- Voter registers in Chechnya are outdated, but citizens could register on the day of election
- Polling officials would be flexible on documentation requirements
- Standard conditions for elections and pre-electoral activities did not exist in Chechnya due to the ongoing military campaign

"One of the major challenges related to compilation of voter lists. According to data on the last lists prepared for the Chechen Republic under President Maskhadov there were 380,000 voters. According to the Central Election Commission, however, the voter lists for the presidential election included closer to 460,000 voters. This number included federal forces in the military units serving in the region. A major concern expressed by critics of the move to hold elections in the Chechen Republic was that the data on the resident population was seriously outdated. In addition, much of the population had been displaced by the conflict. In practical terms, it would probably have been impossible to accurately remove those who had left the area given the stressed and time constricted situation. In addition, the CEC [Central Election Commission] decided that refugees should remain on the lists because many were 'returning every day.' Their refuge in neighboring areas was considered temporary and most voters, it was believed, had full intentions to return. Plans called for internally displaced persons to be added back on the lists as they returned.

Another concern was that many citizens of the Republic had lost their passports and other forms of identification. A joint OSCE/ODIHR and CEC assessment mission to the Chechen Republic on 20 March established that special efforts were made by the Ministry of Interior to provide passports or special certificates that indicated that persons had officially applied for replacements. The mission also established that these certificates would be acceptable as ID on election day. Polling officials would be flexible on documentation requirements, and voters would be permitted to cast ballots on the basis of almost any form of identity, including even pension books so long as the document reflected residence in the Republic.

In spite of thousands of refugees displaced in neighboring regions, no arrangements were made to establish special polling stations at the camps where they were housed. Rather, residents of the camps were given status as residents which was noted by a stamp in their passports (propiska) or their residency certificates. Displaced voters cast ballots at regular polling stations. Many of those who had registered as internally displaced persons had already been added to the voter lists of the polling stations in the regions where they had relocated. Anyone else with a stamp in their passport or certificate indicating their being domiciled in a camp located in the area served by the polling station but whose name did not appear on the voter list was added to the "additional" voters register on election day." (OSCE 19 May 2000, Chapter V)

"The CEC decided to conduct the presidential elections in 12 of Chechnya's 15 districts for the estimated 460,000 voters there. On 20 March, the [International Election Observation Mission (IEOM)] observed the challenging circumstances under which the CEC was preparing all technical requirements for elections in Chechnya. Voter registers in Chechnya are outdated, but citizens could register on the day of election. Also, special measures were in place for displaced persons to take part in the voting within Chechnya and in the neighboring regions. However, standard conditions for elections and pre-electoral activities do not exist in the territory as a whole due to the ongoing military campaign in some areas and security conditions in others. In particular, election campaign activities in the territory did not take place, although the acting President visited there. Moreover, the population in Chechnya had very limited access to electronic and

print media, had limited freedom of movement, and the potential for intimidation and fear could not be ruled out.

On election day, the IEOM did not deploy observers to Chechnya or the neighboring regions, though the CEC invited observers." (OSCE 19 May 2000, "Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions")

### **Displaced in Ingushetia were allowed to vote for the election of the Chechnya representative in the State Duma (August 2000)**

- Few displaced persons made use of this opportunity

"On 20 August elections for the State Duma were held in Chechnya. Mr. Aslanbek Aslakhanov won the position with a clear margin, however, doubts have been raised with regard to the level of participation among the Chechen population. IDPs in Ingushetia were allowed to vote on the Chechen side of the Kavkaz-1 border checkpoint, however few persons made use of this opportunity. Although it appears that Mr. Aslakhanov (generally considered pro-Russian) enjoys some support among the Chechen population, the result of the vote is not expected to have any significant immediate effect on the general situation in the republic." (UNHCR 25 August 2000)

*See also the section on the political participation of internally displaced persons in the Russian Federation in: "[Internally Displaced Persons and Political Participation: the OSCE Region](#)" published by the Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement in September 2000 [Internet]*



## DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

### Documentation needs

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#### Lack of documentations deprives IDPs from state assistance (2002)

- Sojourn registration is often denied to IDPs who are thus unable to access basic public services
- In Chechnya, bureaucratic obstacles related to documentations hampers access to state benefits
- There is a need for affordable assistance to help poor households in their relation with authorities
- In Dagestan, the lack of formal recognition and resultant lack of documentation/registration limits IDPs' access to employment, social services and housing
- The Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria has introduced temporary restrictions suspension on issuing birth certificates for non permanent residents

"The Constitutional Court has reminded once and for all that registration or absence of registration should not be linked to the enjoyment of rights. So in theory one does not have to show one's registration to be able to get medical care, but in practice it does not work this way. To enrol one's children at school one needs to have registration. An employer cannot employ someone who is not registered; eventually the registration is asked for by any potential employer. Hence, in practice most of the basic civic rights are linked to the possession of registration. If someone's place of residence registration is Grozny and he wants to register his sojourn somewhere else, but the authorities do not want to register him there, basically he is not only a second class citizen, but - using the absurd neologism - an illegal citizen. Difficult as this situation is to imagine, it is the sad reality for many IDPs." (ACCORD/UNHCR June 2002, p, 259)

"With the present Chechen environment, there is an opportunity for the officials to assume a greater role in representing the interests and promoting the protection and well being of the civilian population. Humanitarian actors could begin by encouraging officials to address a number of bureaucratic complications related to documentation. Presently, if a citizen does not hold valid and official local registration, s/he will likely face various difficulties and potential security problems. People report having little voice of protest, while the few attempts towards protest have reportedly been met with threats in response.

Limited access by the extremely poor to state compensation for damages continues to be a pending issue. Additionally, the difficulties in accessing entitled state benefits have been repeatedly highlighted. Even though the qualifying criteria for these benefits is reportedly clear, many difficult-to-attain documents are required. It is reported that these limitations can be overcome if the applicant is willing to pay the required fees which especially overwhelm the extremely poor. There is a need for affordable and legitimate facilitation particularly to assist the extremely poor [households] in accessing pensions that they rightfully qualify for." (ICRC July 2002, Chechnya, p. 38)

"Given that most IDPs reside close to their homes in Chechnya, returns take place in a phased manner, whereby some family members go ahead to review the situation in their area of origin leaving other family members in their current places of sojourn. It is important that the authorities adopt flexible registration and de-registration procedures as well as quick procedures to issue identity documents in the areas of displacement." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 8)

"The majority of Chechen IDPs have no official registration in Daghestan, while the Authorities officially report no IDP in the Republic. This lack of formal acknowledgement and resultant lack of documentation/registration results in limited access to employment, social services and housing, as well as increased risks of harassment and exploitation for the IDPs. Even though the [residents affected by the hostilities] do not face the same extent of difficulties related to registration, they do continue to face limited access to work and services due to the consequences to the impact of their poverty." (ICRC July 2002 Daghestan, p. 16)

"The Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria has introduced temporary restrictions on immigration to its territory, RTR reported on 11 January. Civil-registration offices will no longer register marriages if either of the spouses is not permanently registered in the republic. In addition, a ban has been imposed on issuing birth certificates for babies whose parents are not permanently resident in the republic, and nonresidents will also not be able to lease, buy, or sell property." (RFE/RL 13 January 2003)

### **Displaced from Chechnya face restricted access to the status of forced migrants (1999-2002)**

- Very few persons displaced as a result of the second Chechen conflict (from 1999) have been granted the forced migrant status
- Applications based on allegations of mistreatment by federal forces were rejected on account of the antiterrorist campaign
- Most of the IDPs who were granted forced migrant status reported fear of persecution from Islamic fundamentalist groups and are ethnic Russians
- US Committee for Refugee also reported that federal authorities restricted the forced migrant status to those displaced who "did not intend to return"

"Subsequent to the renewal of hostilities in September 1999, there were, at the beginning of 2000, some 240,000 persons displaced out of Chechnya. Very few of those displaced as a result of the latest round of violence have been granted forced migrant status. Although precise information is not available, government statistics indicate that, between 30 September 1999 and 30 June 2001, some 11,851 persons were granted forced migrant status. Because of protracted procedures, this number also includes IDPs from the 1994-96 conflict who were granted forced migrants status in 1999, 2000 and 2001.

According to information available to UNHCR from local NGOs and implementing partners, most of the forced migrant status applications based on allegations of mistreatment by federal forces, lost property and/or 'mass violation of public order' were rejected by the competent migration authorities on the grounds that the on-going 'anti-terrorist campaign' as waged by the Russian government, by definition, do not constitute a 'mass violation to public order', nor can the federal forces who conduct such campaign be considered as committing such violations to public order. Most of the IDPs who were granted forced migrant status reported fear of persecution from Islamic fundamentalist groups and not from the federal troops.

While the forced migrants status determination procedure is conducted by the territorial organs of the Ministry for Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy, the official policy referred to above has been clearly stated at the federal level. Human rights groups and local NGOs have highlighted the divergence in treatment accorded to IDPs from the previous conflict, who were broadly granted forced migrant status, and IDPs from the current conflict, most of whom are ethnic Chechens, who have been refused status after alleging massive destruction of civilian infrastructure and property by the federal forces as a ground for being granted forced migrant status. [9]

IDPs who were granted forced migrant status between September 1999 and June 2001 received such status in some 79 regions of the Russian Federation. While official statistics do not provide a breakdown by ethnicity, most of them, according to information available to UNHCR, are ethnic Russians. However, UNHCR is also aware of ethnic Chechens who were granted forced migrant status on the above-mentioned grounds (fear of persecution by Islamic fundamentalist or 'Wahabi' groups)."

Footnote [9]: "See Olga Plikina, local NGO 'Faith, Hope and Love': 'Overview of the legal status of internally displaced persons in the northern Caucasus', Pyatigorsk, October 2001. In Moscow, the local NGO 'Civic Assistance', which is providing legal and social counselling to IDPs and refugees, is aware of only one instance of forced migrant status being granted to an ethnic Chechen IDP family (mixed Chechen/Georgian couple), by the court of law, after being denied status by the Moscow migration authorities." (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 12-15)

"Under Point 2 of the [Article 1 of the 1995 Federal Law 'On Forced Migrants', it is further stipulated that, '(...) shall be recognised as a forced migrant (...) a citizen of the Russian Federation who was forced to leave the place of his/her permanent residence on the territory of a subject of the Russian Federation and came to the territory of another subject of the Russian Federation'. Hence, persons who were displaced within Chechnya itself (approx. 160,000) cannot, under the current law, do not qualify for forced migrant status." (UNHCR January 2002, footnote 6)

"Official statistics provided by the Ministry of Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy, indicate that 12,464 IDPs from Chechnya were granted forced migrant status in some 79 regions of the Russian Federation, between 1 October 1999 and 30 September 2001. According to information available to UNHCR, from its implementing partners as well as from local human rights NGOs, those IDPs from Chechnya who were granted forced migrant status as a result of the current conflict are almost all ethnic Russians. Such information is partly corroborated by looking at the regions where forced migrant status was granted. For the most part, these are regions where there is traditionally no Chechen resident community. At the same time, UNHCR is aware of isolated instances where Chechens displaced by the current conflict were granted forced migrant status (having claimed fear of persecution from Islamic fundamentalists).[41]"

Footnote [41]: "UNHCR is aware of one case in Pyatigorsk (Stavropol Krai) where an ethnic Chechen, Lieutenant Colonel in the Russian Federal forces, was granted migrant status on such grounds by the court of law, after being denied status by the local migration service in a first instance administration decision." (UNHCR January 2002, para. 61)

*For more information on the denial of the forced migrant status to IDPs from Chechnya, you can also consult ["The Internally Displaced Persons from Chechnya in the Russian Federation"](#), by S.A. Ganushkina, Moscow 2002, section II [Internal link]*

## **Reports of problems of access to documents for IDPs in Ingushetia (1999-2002)**

- Federal authorities suspended the registration of new IDPs from Chechnya as of April 2001
- In November 1999, the federal ministry of interior also suspended the issuance or renewal of identity documents to IDPs from Chechnya
- Upon UNHCR's intervention, federal authorities created mobile teams (June 2000) and opened offices to facilitate access to legal documentation

"The federal migration authorities, as of April 2001, halted the registration of new IDPs leaving Chechnya. This has been preventing IDPs' access to temporary shelter and government assistance. UNHCR has been addressing this matter by mediating with the authorities on a case-by-case situation. Another issue of

concern to displaced persons is the issuance of identity documents to undocumented displaced persons in Ingushetia. UNHCR is continuing to advocate on behalf of IDPs and provide support to enhance national mechanisms for the issuance of legal documentation. On 2 November, the visa and passport department of the Ministry of Interior set up an office for IDPs from Chechnya in Nazran. IDPs who lost their documents now have access to the Ministry of Interior and are no longer obliged to go to their former place of residence to obtain new documents. This is an important improvement in finding a solution to the legal status of IDPs." (UNOCHA 30 November 2001)

"A (non-public) instruction was reportedly issued by the Federal Ministry of Interior in November 1999, not to issue or renew identity documents to IDPs from Chechnya, allegedly to prevent possible Chechen militants or infiltrators from obtaining official documents. This measure limited freedom of movement for undocumented IDPs outside Chechnya, given the registration regime applicable in Russia, which requires all Russian citizens to register with the local bodies of the Ministry of Interior if they sojourn outside their place of permanent residence. Undocumented IDPs were also unable to return to, or visit, Chechnya, for fear of being detained at military checkpoints.

In June 2000, a mobile team from the Federal Ministry of Interior started issuing temporary identity documents and sojourn registration for Chechen IDPs in Ingushetia. These temporary identity documents are provided for under Russian Federation Government Regulation No. 821 of 8 July 1998 "On approval of the statute of the passport of the citizen of the Russian Federation", and are referred to as **Temporary Certificate of Citizen of the Russian Federation** (so-called Form No.2-Ĭ). Form No.2-Ĭ is issued to serve as a provisional identity document where a citizen's passport is lost or damaged. The temporary certificate is valid for a period of up to six months, during which period the citizens are expected to be issued with a new passport at their place of permanent residence.

In September 2000, the mobile team of the Federal Ministry of Interior suspended its mission in Ingushetia and handed over the task to the Ingush Ministry of Interior. Issuance of temporary identity documents in Ingushetia greatly improved the situation of many undocumented IDPs with regard to travelling to Chechnya and back. Although the total figure of temporary documents issued is not available, it has been indicated that 4,000 - 5,000 persons have been issued such documents in Ingushetia during the period June - December 2000. Also, in the first quarter of 2001, with the resumption by the local bodies of interior inside Chechnya of their administrative functions, (internal) **passports** gradually started to be issued to citizens in Chechnya. Government sources have advised that 80,000 new passports have been issued in Chechnya since then." (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 54-56)

"The Government of Ingushetia has maintained strong cooperation with the humanitarian community and is continuing to allow those displaced from Chechnya and residing in Ingushetia the same level of access to the health care and education systems that is available to their own citizens. The Chechen branch of the Passport and Visa Service (PVS) opened an office in Sleptovskaya during 2002 thus allowing those IDPs in Ingushetia not having official documentation or passports the possibility to obtain new ones. This has increased the possibility for movement for IDPs both within the region and throughout the Russian Federation." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 9)

"Given that most IDPs reside close to their homes in Chechnya, returns take place in a phased manner, whereby some family members go ahead to review the situation in their area of origin leaving other family members in their current places of sojourn. It is important that the authorities adopt flexible registration and de-registration procedures as well as quick procedures to issue identity documents in the areas of displacement." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 8)

*For more information on problems of access to documents, passports, etc, faced by IDPs from Chechnya, you can also consult 'The Internally Displaced Persons from Chechnya in the Russian Federation', by S.A. Ganushkina, Moscow, 2002, section II [Internal link]*

## **Suspension of registration of new IDPs from Chechnya into Ingushetia (2001-2002)**

- As of April 2001, federal authorities instructed Ingush migration services not to register new IDPs
- This decision violates principle 20 of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, according to Human Rights Watch
- UNHCR continues to identify newly arrived IDPs from Chechnya who were not registered by the authorities (2002)
- Displaced persons have been removed from the distribution lists by local authorities as a result of their lack of various documents (2002)
- Displaced persons are automatically deprived of allowances if they are absent during the visit of inspectors reviewing the list of beneficiaries

"**Form No.7**, entitled 'Registration of a family arriving under emergency situations', is issued by the local migration bodies for the purpose of statistics and distribution of Government's humanitarian assistance. It is being provided for under Letter of Instruction No.19 of 31 March 1997 issued by the (former) Federal Migration Service. It is not an identity document. It is meant to be used by the migration authorities during situations of mass influx and reception, on the territory of the Russian Federation, of citizens who left their place of permanent residence for reasons stipulated under Article 1 of the Russian Federation Law 'On Forced Migrants'. Form No.7 is issued to all members of a family including children above the age of 14 years. Persons who are under 14 years of age are recorded on their parents' form." (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 54-57)

Suspension of registration under Form No. 7

"As of April 2001, the Russian government instructed the Ingush migration authorities not to register any new IDPs from Chechnya. The Ministry for National and Migration Policies, however, maintained in a letter to State Duma Deputy Viacheslav Igrunov that the ministry never issued any instructions to discontinue registering new IDPs from Chechnya. The failure to register IDPs, whether the result of a policy decision or a matter of practice, violates principle 20 of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement." (HRW February 2002, pp. 11-12)

"UNHCR continued to identify newly arrived IDPs in Ingushetia, who were not registered by the authorities in the government's beneficiary database. The agency provided information on such cases to the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and ICRC, which compile their own beneficiary lists used by the humanitarian community. Since the beginning of the year, UNHCR has collected detailed information on more than 500 newly arrived IDPs from Chechnya in Ingushetia, which facilitated their access to humanitarian aid." (UNOCHA 15 March 2002)

*See "[Government return policy: the example of IDPs in Ingushetia \(1999-2001\)](#)" [internal link]*

"There is less pressure in the private sector and spontaneous camps than in camps whose dismantling is an absolute priority as they are too visible and disturbing and prove that there is no stabilisation in Chechnya. More than 10 administrative services (Russian Ingush and Chechen) declare that all camps will be dismantled by September. For about one month teams of the Ingush Home Ministry and Migrations Service which since January 2002 are under the authority of the Home Ministry of the Russian Federation have proceeded to re-register tent camps refugees and are checking all documents.

Often registration before that date is considered null and void due particularly to identification documents problems.

At the Sputnik camp, 2,000 persons could be re-registered.

Reasons for refusal to register displaced persons:

- Fourteen years old children without a passport or whose birth certificates are not recognized: Temporary birth certificates delivered in Chechnya after the first war are not valid.
- Lack of a second photograph on the passport (at the age of 25 a second photograph on the passport is compulsory).
- Lack of a birth certificate for children born during the last three years.
- When parents' documents do not carry photographs of the children, the children are not registered.
- Total lack of documents (According to the Migration Service, a driving licence is accepted as an identification document).
- According to article 5 of the repatriation plan, if displaced persons in Ingushetia, registered on humanitarian lists also receive a pension, a invalidity benefit, etc. In Chechnya, they are struck out of the lists in Ingushetia." (MDM July 2002, p. 6)

"The population of the camps has an acute problem of re-registration. If previously it was done once in a month, then now representatives of the Ministry of Interior can appear at any day and even several times a week. If during their visits some member of the family is absent, then he is automatically deprived of allowance. Refugees themselves tell that they cannot be constantly at home, as many of them are trading in the market and work at construction sites. According to the opinion of many people, such policy is pursued specially, so that by autumn as much people as possible could leave and thus the Plan of the Return, signed by A.A. Kadyrov and M.M. Zyazikov on May 29, 2002, could be implemented." (Memorial August 2002)

## ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

### Family unity

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#### **Displaced in Ingushetia gathered into "families" averaging 9 members (1999-2000)**

- It took several months for these "families" to form, as members trickled into Ingushetia throughout the winter

"The influx of displaced persons into Ingushetia peaked between mid-September and mid-October [1999]. Since then smaller peaks have been recorded, following increases in fighting, threats, and rumors.

One in Ingushetia, the displaced gathered into 'families' (defined here as a group of IDPs living together regardless of kinship) averaging 9 members. Half of the families count 5 to 9 members, while about a fourth have less than 5 members. It took several months for these 'families' to form, as members trickled into Ingushetia throughout the winter."

[MSF teams conducted a survey in June 2000 among displaced Chechens in the district of Malgobeck, located in northwestern Ingushetia. This district harbors about one fourth of the total population of IDPs (internally displaced persons), which is currently estimated at more than 150,000.]  
(MSF 15 August 2000)

#### **Reports of Chechen men separated from their families at the Chechen-Ingush border and checkpoints (January 2000)**

- Males between ten and sixty rigorously checked in detention centres in Chechnya or not allowed access back to Chechnya

"Human Rights Watch strongly condemned today a new Russian order forbidding male Chechen refugees the ages of ten and sixty from entering or leaving Chechnya. Today border police began enforcing the order at checkpoints and border crossings.

The new order gives rise to fears that the Russians may undertake mass detention in 'filtration camps,' where many Chechens were systematically tortured during the 1994-96 Chechen war.

'Chechen males are now effectively trapped in a dangerous war zone,' said Holly Cartner, Executive Director of the Europe and Central Asia division of Human Rights Watch. 'It is fundamentally unacceptable to deny civilian males, including children as young as ten, the right to flee from heavy fighting. And it's against international standards.'

Following a Chechen counteroffensive and significant Russian military setbacks in early January, General Viktor Kazantsev, Commander for the North Caucasus Group of Forces, reportedly blamed the Russian 'mistakes' on 'our soft-heartedness.' On January 11 he ordered that only children under ten, men over sixty, and girls and women would henceforth be considered refugees. Gen. Kazantsev also ordered males between ten and sixty to be rigorously checked in detention centers for guerilla affiliation.

In the first Chechen war, Russian forces operated three official detention centers in Grozny, Mozdok, and Pyatigorsk, although many smaller camps existed unofficially throughout the region. These centers were known as 'filtration camps' because fighters were supposed to be 'filtered' out from civilians; they became notorious as centers for systemic torture, beatings and ill-treatment of thousands of Chechen males.

Soldiers at the main Chechen-Ingush border crossing confirmed to Human Rights Watch that they had received orders to turn back all men between the ages of ten and sixty who tried to enter or leave Chechnya, and Chechen civilians told Human Rights Watch that their male family members were stranded as a result. Datu Isigova, a refugee from Grozny, told Human Rights Watch that she was forced to leave her eleven-year-old son, Arbi, and her husband, Suleman, inside Chechnya today due to the new restrictions. Zura Mumayedova, a mother of three from Shatoi who arrived by bus at the Chechen-Ingush border on January 11, told Human Rights Watch researchers that four men she had been traveling with were ordered off the bus by Russian border guards, citing the new restrictions on Chechen males. Held at the border overnight, Mumayedova said that 'the Russian soldiers said that no men aged between ten and sixty would be allowed through.' She stated that the border guards prevented a fifty-nine-year-old man from crossing the border. She said that two boys, aged twelve and thirteen, made it past the border guards into Ingushetia only by concealing themselves on the bus. Other refugees reported that many other men had been turned back from the border, and that mothers with young children had often decided not to cross the border because they did not want to leave their young children behind.

Chechen men on the Ingushetia side of the border have been separated from their families, unable to cross back into Chechnya. Thirty-six-year-old Vayit Zagayev told Human Rights Watch that he arrived in Ingushetia in late December to get medicine for his bed-ridden mother and to obtain supplies for his family, currently living in Katyr-Iurt. Russian border guards today refused to allow him into Chechnya. Mauli Murtadaliyev, also thirty-six, said that the border guards would not let him escort the body of a deceased female relative back to Chechnya for burial." (HRW 12 January 2000)



# PROPERTY ISSUES

## General

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### Courts reject claims for compensation for lost properties in Chechnya (2002)

- Several hundred cases have been lodged to courts
- Most claims have been rejected so far

"So far all attempts to recover compensation for material losses and moral damage through courts according to Art. 53 of the Constitution of the RF and the Code of Civil Procedure proved futile. Not infrequently courts reject such claims. Still, the Network lawyers managed, with great difficulties, to start several hundreds of such court cases. The Russian lawyers elaborated a special form of claim. The claims are legally well founded yet the courts rarely side with the claimants, they prefer to reject their claims.

In Pskov the head of the Chechen diaspora Z. Okunchaev asked the state structures to compensate for the lost housing in Grozny. He was refused and went to court. His claim was rejected, the regional court supported this decision.

Aliyevina Doronina, 60-year-old teacher of Russian from Grozny, was kidnapped, managed to escape, and reached her friends in Moscow. After a lot of trouble she got the forced migrant status yet all branches of power refused to compensate for her losses and to give her housing because she had left Chechnya after military actions. Today she is employed by the Civic Assistance Committee, draws a small salary and teaches Russian to Chechen children and children of other migrants. She is still living with friends.

There were two typical court cases of famous attorney Abdula Hamzaev and Hamidov brothers (see Appendix 13 and Appendix 14)." (Ganushkina 2002, sect. II)

### Savings Bank suspended the payments to deposits in Chechnya (1995-2002)

- In 1995, the Federal government suspended payments to deposits in the Chechen branch offices of the Savings Bank
- Only a small number of persons have been able to recuperate their deposits with the help of the judicial system
- The government decided to review the list of account holders (2002) but many were left out because they cannot register as residents

"There is another important question: **the responsibility of the Savings Bank of the RF for the deposits made to its branches in Chechnya.** The Savings Bank is a unified state structure functioning across the country, therefore it is responsible for its closed branches and deposits in them.

In 1995 the Government of the RF stopped payments on deposits. This was accompanied by repeated assurances that the Central Bank of Russia would renew payments if the banking system in Chechnya would not be restored in the nearest future. This has not happened yet.

There were several cases when people got their money back through courts with the help of Network lawyers who had to work hard to make this possible. I regret to say that the courts stopped this practice even in places where positive decisions had been passed. In Volgograd one of the judges said that he was instructed 'to leave the Savings Bank alone.'

There was an inquiry to the government; the Ministry of Federation answered that on October 25, 2001, the governmental commission for restoring the social sphere and economy of Chechnya approved a draft order compiled by the Savings Bank and coordinated with all interested structures.

On January 15, 2002, the order 'On Organizing Work to Compile Lists of Depositors of the Former Chechen Bank of the Savings Bank of Russia who Left Chechnya' was signed by Deputy Interior Minister A. Chekalin and Deputy Chairman of the Board of the Savings Bank G. Melikian and sent out to all ministers of the interior, chiefs of state departments of the interior of the subjects of the Russian Federation, chairmen of the territorial banks of the Savings Bank of Russia.

To be included into the list the citizen should present:

- a savings bank book issued by one of the departments of the former Chechen bank of the Savings Bank of Russia;
- a passport or other identity document;
- a document that confirmed that the citizen lived in Chechnya;
- registration at new place of residence or habitation.

The branches had to compile lists, authenticate them and present to the migration structures.

Conciliatory commissions that included officials of migration structures, the ministry of the interior and the Savings Bank were set up in the subjects of the Russian Federation to consider applications and resolve disagreements.

The work was expected to be finished in two months (from January 21 to March 22, 2002).

It was clear from the very beginning that the mechanism was too complicated to allow the structures involved to complete the task in two months. Our apprehensions proved to be correct. The Network was flooded with complaints: people were not included in the lists because they had no registration, no stamps in the newly issued passports about their previous addresses in Chechnya, no passport, etc. Since many people from Chechnya have no registration at place of their present residence they are deprived of any hope to recover their money. Some of them who found housing in new places, got new passports there and were registered are unable to prove that they lived in Chechnya where all archives were destroyed. Those of the migrants from Chechnya who left Russia cannot get their money back because the Savings Bank has no foreign branches.

To be included in the lists and to get money back are two different things: nobody knows when the bank will start payments.

This shows that restoration of the property rights of those who used to live in Chechnya is stalling." (Ganushkina 2002, sect. II)

### **Compensation for lost property: no scheme for the victims of the current conflict in Chechnya (2002)**

- The forced migrant status provides for the right to specific integration allowances and loans

- The federal government also established a compensation procedure for lost property to the victims of the first Chechen conflict (1994-1996)
- It is not clear whether the authorities are planning to set up a compensation programme for the victims of the current conflict (2002)
- More than three quarters of the population in Chechnya report that their houses have been partially or completely destroyed (2002)
- The level of hope for compensation remains high despite slow response from the state
- In Dagestan, 90 percent of the local residents who had their houses destroyed received substantial compensation

"Forced migrant status provides for the right to specific integration allowances and loans, irrespective of the status of the property in the place of original residence. The Government has taken complementary steps to provide for compensation for lost property to the victims of the 1994-1996 Chechnya conflict. Under Russian Federation Resolution No. 510 of 30 April 1997, the Government established a procedure to compensate to lost property those persons who left Chechnya between 12 December 1994 and 23 November 1996 with no intention to return. Access to compensation under this Resolution is based upon objective facts (proof of damage to property and proof for residence in Chechnya) and is independent from the granting of forced migrant status.

The Federal Government has announced its intention to establish a similar mechanism for the victims of the current conflict who left Chechnya permanently (cash payments), as well as a compensation system for affected persons within Chechnya itself (provision of shelter materials for self-help reconstruction). However, to date, none of these compensation schemes have been implemented. [11]"

Footnote [11]: "According to Russian Federation Government officials, this is partly due to difficulties in designing safe and reliable modalities of bank transfers from the federal budget to Chechnya and to other regions." (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 16-17)

"A seminar on 'Observance and protection of Human Rights in the Chechen Republic as a Basis of its Democratic Rebirth' organized by the Bureau of the Human Rights Commissar of the Council of Europe took place in Strasbourg on November 26-27, 2001. Among other things it discussed the problem of payments for lost housing and property and protection of the property rights of people from Chechnya.

NGOs pointed out that the country **needed a normative document that would specify compensation for lost housing and property for those who suffered in the second Chechen campaign that started in fall 1999** similar to the document issued for the victims of the war of 1994-1996.

The representative of the Department of Regional Development of the RF Government said at the seminar that a draft had been prepared and submitted to the government.

Deputy Igrunov asked the government to let him see the document so that to help improve it.

The government sent his request to the Interior Ministry: presidential decree No. 1230 of October 16, 2001, made it responsible for all migration-related issues.

**In January 2002 the ministry informed the deputy that none of the structures had been instructed to draft a similar document and that a draft Rules on Extending State Assistance to the Citizens of the RF who lost their homes and property during the anti-terrorist operations in the Chechen Republic had been drafted in the Ministry of Federation and sent to the governmental commission for restoring the social sphere and economy of Chechnya. The Ministry of Federation was instructed to complete the work; later the Ministry was liquidated and the work on the draft stopped.**

From this it follows that there is no hope for those who lost their houses and other property in Chechnya." (Ganushkina 2002, sect. II)

"Almost all the people we met begged for compensation to rebuild their damaged or destroyed homes. [It is virtually impossible to locate a building which remains undamaged or one that has not been destroyed in Grozny] We noted that the Chairman of the Government of the Chechen Republic insisted that federal legislation will be prepared by 15 October to make provision for such compensation. " (COE 22 September 2002, part II)

***ICRC economic security survey in Chechnya (July 2002)***

"Less than 10 % of households have received compensation from the state for damages or loss of their house and/or property due to the hostilities. At the same time, more than three quarter of the population report that their houses have been either partially or completely destroyed. Many say that if they were to receive reasonable compensation, they could further stabilise their circumstances independently. The level of hope of receiving compensation remains high, although the response of the state has been slow to date and in fact the policy concerning compensation remains unclear at this time." (ICRC July 2002, Chechnya, p. 22)

***ICRC economic security survey in Dagestan (July 2002)***

"State compensation for damages and loss of housing and property during the hostilities has been promised by both the Dagestani and Chechen authorities. Over 80% of the [residents affected by the hostilities] and other 90% of the IDP [households] report that their house was damaged or destroyed during the hostilities. Almost 90 % of [the residents affected by the hostilities] who had damaged houses have received substantial compensation, although only 1% of IDPs have received compensation for their damaged/destroyed houses in Chechnya.

Compensation funds received by the [residents affected by the hostilities] have been largely used to either purchase a new house, rebuild/repair the damaged house or repurchase lost possessions, enabling the majority of these [households] to regain their self-sufficiency, although some of these funds have been put into savings and play an important role in the monthly economy of these [households]. The majority of both [the residents affected by the hostilities] and IDP [households] who have not yet received their entitlements are economically vulnerable and the lack of ownership of a house, land and productive assets continues to negatively impact on these [households]." (ICRC July 2002, Dagestan, p. 21)

**Reports of widespread looting by Russian forces inside Chechnya (1999-2001)**

"Russian forces have looted homes in several of the districts under their control, Human Rights Watch said today. Internally displaced persons interviewed at the Chechen-Ingush border told of widespread looting in Sernovodsk (near the border), Ermolovskii (southwest of Grozny), and in the Naurskii district (north of the Terek river).

Dozens of people interviewed by Human Rights Watch said that their homes had been stripped of all foodstuffs and valuables -- sometimes including the floorboards -- by groups of armed soldiers, who sometimes came ready with military vehicles to carry away their loot.

'Looting was a terrible problem in the 1994-1996 war in Chechnya,' said Holly Cartner, executive director of Human Rights Watch's Europe and Central Asia division. 'It is a violation of international humanitarian law, and it must be stopped.'

Soldiers have not only looted basic food supplies stored for winter, but also taken anything of value from homes, often after their inhabitants have fled. As displaced persons have begun to filter back into Russian-

controlled areas, they have found their homes emptied. Some of those people have then returned to Ingushetia in search of food and shelter." (HRW 14 November 1999)

*For more recent occurrences of looting and pillages, see for instance: 'Swept Under: Torture, Forced Disappearances, and Extrajudicial Killings During Sweep Operations in Chechnya', Human Rights Watch, February 2002*

## **PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT**

### **Return to Chechnya**

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#### **UNHCR expresses concern upon closure of camps in Ingushetia (November 2002)**

- UNHCR questions voluntary nature of return movements to Chechnya
- Refugee agency deplores atmosphere of fear, tension and insecurity in camps
- There is no immediately available and viable alternative accommodation for those who prefer to stay in Ingushetia
- Non-registered IDP camp residents risked being overlooked by the authorities

"UNHCR is asking Russian authorities to postpone their announced closures of tent camps in Ingushetia, including one that the Russians have said would be closed this weekend. We are also requesting a joint assessment of alternative accommodation sites to determine their suitability, as had been previously agreed with the authorities before any relocation would take place.

Our most immediate concern is the Aki Yurt camp, which houses over 1,500 people, and which authorities said could be closed on Sunday. Given that lows of  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . are predicted for the area this weekend, it is imperative that real alternatives are available for the displaced people before gas and electricity are cut. Other recent statements by Russian authorities indicate that they intend to close all tent camps in Ingushetia by the end of the year.

Authorities continue to offer assurances that any return to Chechnya will be voluntary. However, UNHCR has stressed that return can only be considered voluntary if displaced persons are fully informed about conditions for return and if they have a genuine alternative available to allow them to remain in Ingushetia. We have repeatedly underlined that, regarding return to Chechnya, assistance should follow the people, not the other way around. We again raise these concerns and reiterate our desire to work with the authorities to resolve these issues and meet the humanitarian needs of the displaced. While some people have returned voluntarily, others continue to express fears about returning to Chechnya because of the security situation there.

In the camps, a number of factors are contributing to an overall atmosphere of fear, tension and insecurity. These include repeated official statements that the camps are to close imminently; active campaigns by migration authorities supported by the Chechnya administration and religious leaders promoting return to Chechnya; the increased military presence near the camps; and the harsh winter weather in the area.

For those displaced persons in Aki Yurt camp who do not want to return to Chechnya, UNHCR is concerned that there is no immediately available and viable alternative accommodation in Ingushetia. A UNHCR technical team had earlier assessed the relocation sites in Ingushetia proposed by the federal and Ingush migration authorities and found they would need significant improvements to bring them up to a standard suitable for winter use. On Wednesday, our team updated these assessments and identified three sites which could most quickly be brought up to minimum standards. But they also estimate that, even using our pre-fabricated 'box tents,' it would take at least three weeks to provide alternative winter shelter at these sites for just 300 to 400 people. There are over 1,500 people currently in Aki Yurt. Another – possibly quicker – option could be to set up the box tents in existing settlements which already have gas, water and electricity. Currently, we have a stock of some 150 box tents which could house approximately 900 people.

Another serious concern is the fate of a large number of displaced people currently living in Aki Yurt camp who are not officially registered by the migration authorities. UN statistics indicate that over 1,500 displaced people were living in the camp as of early this week, while only 716 are reported to be officially registered by the authorities. We are very concerned that viable alternatives are available to all the displaced people physically present and actually living in the camp, not only those who are registered.

UNHCR has repeatedly raised these concerns with both Ingush and federal authorities. On 22 November, when the Federal Migration Service announced that gas and electricity would be cut in Aki Yurt by 30 November, UNHCR immediately approached the federal authorities to stress that the principle of voluntary return should continue to be respected and safe haven should continue to be provided in Ingushetia for those not wanting to return at this time. In the letter, UNHCR also reminded the authorities of their previous assurances that any relocation sites for people living in Aki Yurt would offer better conditions than those currently in the camp. On 25 November, UNHCR and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) met with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to express our concerns and explain the situation on the ground according to our daily monitoring reports. We have also raised these concerns in Geneva with the mission of the Russian Federation." (UNHCR 29 November 2002)

### **No viable alternatives for IDPs forced to leave tent camps in Chechnya (2002)**

- Despite assurances from the government that the return of IDPs would be voluntary, tent camps in Znamenskoe (Chechnya) were closed in July 2002
- The relocation of tent residents to temporary accommodation centres amounts to second displacement, according to the UN

"Apart from maintaining stability and 'restoring normality' inside Chechnya, one of the authorities' stated aims this year was to enable displaced persons in Ingushetia to return to Chechnya. On 29 May, the Russian Government's minister for Chechnya, Vladimir Yelagin, the President's representative in the Southern Federal Okrug, Viktor Kazantsev, the appointed head of the Chechen administration, Akmad-Khadzhi Kadyrov, and the newly elected president of Ingushetia, Murat Zyazikov, signed an action plan to return IDPs to Chechnya. Between 16 May and 25 September 2002, the Chechen administration's IDP Committee organised the return of 3,929 IDPs from Ingushetia to Chechnya. Return within Chechnya was also on the authorities' agenda. The authorities closed two camps in Znamenskoye during the first week of July, and provided transport to move some 2,200 IDPs to temporary accommodation centres (TACs) in Grozny. Viable alternatives to moving to Grozny were not provided." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 5)

"Despite these achievements, one issue remains of serious concern: the respect for the principle of voluntary return. Despite assurances from the government that the return of IDPs would be voluntary, tent camps in Znamenskoye (Chechnya) were closed during the second week of July 2002 and 2,200 IDPs were left with no other option but to relocate to TACs in Grozny. While the idea of moving people from tents into solid structures is sound, it hinges on the conditions in and around TACs being safe and offering easy access to standard and acceptable services. Interviews conducted with people who had been moved to TACs indicated that many had not wanted to leave Znamenskoye. As for IDPs in Ingushetia, many continue to have difficulties registering as IDPs in Ingushetia and feel increasingly under pressure to return home. They state that they are reluctant to do so as the security environment and living conditions are precarious, and the level of services, in particular water and sanitation, and food support is insufficient. Until now, there has been very limited transit through the TACs: those IDPs who were relocated to the TACs still remain there, for lack of an effective compensation scheme or provision of construction materials which would allow them to move on to their own homes. Without appropriate assistance towards a more durable solution, the relocation to the TACs is merely a second displacement. That said, it is the case that many IDPs, perhaps as many as 30,000-40,000, who were moving between Ingushetia and Chechnya, have now decided to stay more permanently in Chechnya itself." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 7-8)

### **Action plan adopted by Ingush and Chechen authorities foresees return of IDPs by October 2002 (May 2002)**

- Federal, Chechen and Ingush authorities adopted measures to implement return of IDPs (29 May 2002)
- Since then, various pressures has been exerted on the IDPs, particularly those living in collective settlements.
- IDPs in two tent camps in Chechnya have been transferred to temporary centres
- UN agencies decided not to provide assistance to these centres

"There are currently about 115,000 IDPs in Ingushetia, mostly from Grozny or mountainous regions in Chechnya. Some 23,000 of them live in tented camps, 27,000 in spontaneous settlements and some 64,000 with local host families. These IDPs are extremely concerned about the security situation inside Chechnya and claim that they have very little - if any - shelter to which to return. Therefore, their preferred option is to continue to be provided with a 'safe haven' in Ingushetia. During the first half of this year the United Nations - most recently the Secretary-General, his Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and the ERC - received from the Russian authorities repeated assurances that the return of IDPs to Chechnya will be voluntary and will take place in safety and with dignity. On the other hand, on 29 May 2002 the federal, Chechen and Ingush authorities signed an Action Plan for the return of these IDPs to Chechnya 'by October 2002'. Since then, pressure of various types, including electricity cuts and withholding of government food aid, as well as misleading information about conditions in Chechnya, has been exerted on IDPs so that they return. In early July, the authorities dismantled two camps hosting 2,200 people in Znamenskoye (Chechnya) and forcibly moved the IDPs back to temporary accommodation centres (TACs) in Grozny. UN missions reported that the returnees remained extremely concerned about the persisting insecurity, and that living conditions in the TACs were inadequate. Under these circumstances, the UN decided not to provide assistance to these centres." (IASC-WG 10 September 2002)

*Plan of Activities of Federal Bodies of Executive Power, Government of the Republic of Chechnya, Government of the Republic of Ingushetia, on final measures for return of IDPs from Ingushetia to Chechnya (unofficial translation) [Internet]*

*For more information on the pressure exerted by the authorities on the IDPs to return and on the conditions in areas of return, see also:*

- *"On the return of IDP from the camps of Ingushetia to Chechnya (according to the materials of lawyers of the 'Migration and Law' Network)", Memorial, August 2002 [Internet]*
- *Report on Chechnya, Médecins du Monde, July 2002 [Internet]*
- *"Adequate security conditions do not exist in Chechnya to allow the return of displaced citizens – A pattern of increasing disappearances 'Bordering on Genocide'", International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, 23 July 2002 [Internet]*

*For UNHCR's position regarding the Action Plan, see "UNHCR Position on the May Action Plan in the context of current developments in the North Caucasus", 21 June 2002 [Internet]*

### **Return assistance of international agencies supports voluntary movements (2002)**

- Following the transfer of IDPs to temporary accommodation centres in Chechnya, UN agencies have strengthened their advocacy efforts to preserve safe have for IDPs in Ingushetia
- The UN will not provide assistance to the temporary accommodation centres



- However, a return package is provided to the displaced who return voluntarily
- The assistance provided covers the first months following return
- During this period, an assessment takes place to determine whether these beneficiaries are eligible for further assistance
- False information on the amount of help available to returnees has been disseminated in the camps

"In early July [2002], the authorities dismantled two camps hosting 2,200 people in Znamenskoe (Chechnya) and forcibly moved the IDPs back to temporary accommodation centres (TACs) in Grozny. UN missions reported that the returnees remained extremely concerned about the persisting insecurity, and that living conditions in the TACs were inadequate. Under these circumstances, the UN decided not to provide assistance to these centres.

A recent meeting with the federal minister for Chechnya suggested that the international community's advocacy efforts to uphold the principle of voluntary return might be bearing fruits. Federal authorities seem to recognize that conditions for the return of IDPs are not yet in place (albeit mostly for logistical reasons), thus no longer expecting a return 'by October'. The situation, however, needs to be watched closely, so that the 'safe haven' for IDPs in Ingushetia is preserved. Advocacy should continue to be pursued at all levels, including to encourage the Russian authorities to provide the internally displaced with the assistance they are entitled to. Our monitoring and protection presence is being strengthened, but further efforts are needed. The ongoing winterization of IDP camps should also proceed swiftly. At the same time, consideration should be given to the need to heighten preparedness measures for all possible scenarios." (IASC WG 10 September 2002)

"The IDP return from Ingushetia has led to several innovations in the approach of the humanitarian community in order to ensure that the humanitarian assistance follows the IDPs who decide to return voluntarily to their homes. UNHCR and WFP have been working closely together to prepare a return package for the first several emergency months before the returnees get fully included in the system of distribution of humanitarian assistance in their home communities. To start with, all returnees receive their food rations for the first three months after their return regardless their vulnerability, social and economic status. During this period, an assessment takes place to determine whether these beneficiaries are eligible for assistance also on the basis of the distribution criteria valid in their communities. The assistance by UNHCR has so far been done on an individual basis. PINF has e.g. transported and distributed 16 tents to returnee families in Grozny." (PINF June 2002)

UNHCR's objectives

"Ingushetia: The objectives of the UNHCR's operation in Ingushetia are to preserve a safe haven for IDPs in that republic and to safeguard the principle of voluntariness of return, in safety and dignity.

Given continued reports of insecurity in Chechnya, UNHCR is not promoting return but assists individuals who wish to return of their own accord. In broad terms, assistance will follow the people, not the reverse.

Voluntariness of decisions implies the need to maintain viable options for legal stay outside Chechnya, including the pursuit of possible integration for IDPs who do not wish to return to Chechnya.

Chechnya: the objectives of the UNHCR's operation in Chechnya are to promote the re-establishment of institutions mandated with the protection of citizens' rights, and to alleviate the human suffering of IDPs who have made the free and informed choice to return to Chechnya as well as other vulnerable IDPs groups." (UNHCR 21 June 2002)

***False promises to the displaced returning to Chechnya***

"Within the camps for displaced Chechens in Ingushetia, the Russian Federation's Ministry of Interior has been circulating leaflets containing information from Chechen Prime Minister Ilyasov on the facilities available to those wishing to repatriate to Chechnya. The leaflet claims that, for those wishing to return to Chechnya, food will be provided on a constant basis by the World Food Programme, and that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will provide non-food packages, monitor living conditions, and provide tents and construction materials where conditions are inadequate.

Neither agency has made any commitment to provide these services, nor has a public stand been taken by either the WFP or the UNHCR to refute the claims put forward." (MSF 30 July 2002)

*See also Report on Chechnya, Médecins du Monde, July 2002, section "Propaganda and indirect pressure". [Internet]*

### **Insecurity in Chechnya remains the main concern of the displaced (2002)**

- Displaced return to Grozny from nearby villages
- Most inhabitants remain dependent on humanitarian aid and live while security has shown no signs of improvement
- Only a small minority of IDPs in Ingushetia are planning the return in the near future, according to WFP (June 2002)
- Most candidates for return are women and children, while men prefer to stay in Ingushetia for security reasons
- There is no information on the movements of IDPs who have not been registered
- Some displaced go back to Ingushetia after just a few days in the Grozny

"The general climate in Grozny was however relatively optimistic with more inhabitants returning to the city, mainly from nearby villages where they had found safer environment since the conflict resumed three years ago. Many returnees indicate that moving back to Grozny is for them the only chance— they come in search of work, to start small enterprises, to file official requests to the government for compensation for their destroyed houses, etc. Small-scale reconstruction activities in the city continue, local markets are growing, offering essential food and non-food goods at reasonable prices. Pensions, social benefits and salaries are paid more or less regularly. Most Grozny inhabitants are however still dependent on humanitarian aid and no improvements in the security remain the main concern." (PINF August 2002)

"WFP Monitors carried out a rapid survey in IDP camps to find out whether IDPs were willing and prepared to return to Chechnya. Only 5 percent expressed that they were preparing to return home in the near future. Others were reluctant to return, mainly due to security concerns." (WFP 21 June 2002)

"According to the Chechen Committee for Displaced Persons from Slepsovskoie in Ingushetia. 6000 to 7000 requests for return have been received. Besides, new families, victims of brutality from the Federal forces are arriving at the camps. According to the new law enacted in April 2001, they cannot be registered and therefore are not entitled to any humanitarian assistance.

The Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) in Grozny, which the Migrations Federal Service officially planned for 5,160 persons, are full with about 5,300. The June floods have hampered return: in Grozny, 2,500 houses can no longer be used. There are 9,000 victims to be re-housed: this figure justifies the impossibility of carrying out the return plan. The Migration services reckon that 12,000 out of the 30,000 refugees living in tents in Ingushetia no longer have a house in Chechnya.

Since June 35th, 2.500 to 3.000 refugees have officially left the Ingush territory. These figures were provided by the UNHCR and Vesta and confirmed by Letter Gidizov, the president of the Chechen Committee for Displaced Persons in Grozny.

The immense majority of return candidates are women and children. Men remain in Ingushetia for security reasons. People are transferred with their belongings to Grozny by bus or truck. Then they are left at the TACs or they go back to their houses when they are still standing.

No control is possible in the private sector (non-registered refugees who are not entitled to humanitarian assistance). These persons go back and forth and do not go through the procedure proposed by the Chechen Committee.

Some refugees go back to Ingushetia after just a few days in the Grozny TACs. Insecurity is permanent in Grozny as well as in the rest of the Republic. Automatic rifle shooting, shells and rockets are frequently fired during the day and are constant during the night. Conditions in certain TACs are unacceptable. No gas, haphazard electric power, shortage of water, no distribution of beds or mattresses, waiting lines are extremely long to be assigned a room." (MDM July 2002, p. 4)

### **Return policy: practices inducing IDPs to return to Chechnya (2000-2001)**

- Since the forced transfer of train wagons from Ingushetia to Chechnya in the late 1999, there has been no instance of forced return to Chechnya, according to UNHCR
- Despite the official position of voluntary return, federal authorities outside Moscow have actively pursued a policy inducing return to Chechnya

"UNHCR and other international organizations have stressed the principle of voluntary return to Chechnya. The Russian Federation government has declared its respect for the need to preserve the voluntary nature of return of IDPs to Chechnya. Since the events which occurred in the late 1999 and early 2000, when hundreds of IDPs in Ingushetia were forcibly returned to Chechnya aboard the train wagons they were accommodated in, there has been no instance of forced return of IDPs to Chechnya.

At the same time, the Russian Federation Government has consistently maintained the official position according to which IDPs should return to Chechnya. In support of this position, the Russian Federation Government argues that federal forces control most of the Chechnya territory, that Chechen IDPs should take part in the reconstruction and administration of the Republic and that IDPs constitute a destabilizing factor for the regions that are hosting them. Hence, while officially adopting, at the Moscow level, the position of voluntariness of return, federal authorities outside Moscow have actively pursued a policy inducing IDPs to return to Chechnya. This federal policy has particularly been pursued in the Republic of Ingushetia, where the majority of the IDPs are located." (UNHCR January 2002, paras. 21-22)

### **Government return policy: the example of IDPs in Ingushetia (1999-2001)**

- In view of the overcrowded situation in Ingushetia, federal authorities made some attempts to relocate some IDPs in other regions of the Federation (1999-2000)
- The federal government remained reluctant to allow UNHCR to build no tented camps in Ingushetia, despite growing needs
- Other attempts to induce return to Chechnya include the suspension of registration of new arrivals from Chechnya (April 2001), hampering access to government assistance, and intimidation in IDP settlements

- The federal government accused Ingush President Aushev of using IDPs to reinforce his political position
- Chechen government has actively promoted return to Chechnya among IDPs in Ingushetia, with very little results

"Ingushetia and Chechnya are contiguous, and Ingushetia has generously hosted the bulk of fleeing IDPs. However, with an influx of over 240,000 IDPs in 1999-2000 for a local population of 360,000 inhabitants, the infrastructure of the Republic of Ingushetia (one of the poorest subjects of the Russian Federation) has been over-stretched. It is estimated that there are currently 150,000 IDPs in Ingushetia. Two third of these persons are staying with host families and one third are accommodated in tented camps and spontaneous settlements (collective farms, abandoned factories and other structures being used as shelter). Local social infrastructure has been overwhelmed with the influx of IDPs and the majority of IDPs have limited access, if any, to medical facilities and schools. Tuberculosis in camps and settlements is wide spread. UNHCR together with WHO have set-up a medical referral system for particularly vulnerable cases (e.g. victims of torture), under which cases are referred to medical institutions outside Ingushetia, as this Republic does not have the capacity to address such cases. Humanitarian assistance by international organisations is continuing, in order to avoid a deterioration of basic living conditions.

In view of the overcrowded situation in Ingushetia, the (former) Federal Migration Services (FMS) made some attempts, in 1999 and 2000, to relocate some IDPs to other regions of the Federation. Several hundreds families thus relocated voluntarily to existing temporary accommodation centres [15] in Tambov and Saratov regions, with the FMS covering transport costs (vouchers for train tickets were provided by the FMS). As of end of September 2001, some 975 persons (300 families) were still being accommodated in the Saratov and Tambov temporary accommodation centres (most of whom being ethnic Chechens and a minority being ethnic Russians), according to information provided by the Ministry of Federal, National and Migration Policy. While originally the FMS intended to relocate more IDPs to other regions in central Russia, this project has not been as successful as expected by the federal authorities, first, because most of the concerned regions do not have any sizeable Chechen community and were not enthusiastic with the prospect of having to provide accommodation to Chechen IDPs; and second, because of the Chechen IDPs themselves wishing to remain close to their homes in Chechnya and being reluctant to travel beyond Ingushetia to un-welcoming regions.

Over time, as tensions have developed between the IDPs and the local population, the proportion of IDPs in tented camps has increased, as a result of evictions from host family residences - often this occurs after IDP families had exhausted their financial resources - or from private spontaneous settlements. UNHCR and NGOs are daily confronted with cases of evictions from host families and from spontaneous settlements. To the extent possible, UNHCR has been identifying possible alternative shelter arrangements for evicted families in tented camps, providing them an alternative to return to Chechnya under duress.

For months, in 2000, UNHCR negotiated with the Federal Government the possibility of building an additional tented camp in Ingushetia, to accommodate newly arriving IDPs as well as those IDPs accommodated in remote, unsafe or unhealthy spontaneous settlements. The Federal Government insisted that such camp should be built inside Chechnya. It remains very reluctant to allow provision of additional tent capacity in Ingushetia, and UNHCR fears that in the near future IDP families evicted from host families and spontaneous settlements may have no realistic alternative other than return to Chechnya, remaining illegally in another region of the Federation, or seeking asylum elsewhere. [16]

There have been various attempts made by the federal authorities to induce the return of IDPs from Ingushetia to Chechnya. On 17 December 1999, under Order No.110, the Federal Migration Service instructed the Regional Migration Services of Dagestan, Stavropol, Ingushetia and North Ossetia-Alania to suspend registration under Form No.7 [17] of all new IDP arrivals and to facilitate their return to their place of origin in Chechnya or, alternatively, to safe areas in Chechnya. [18] Subsequently, on 20 January 2000, the Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergencies of the Republic of Ingushetia issued an instruction

according to which IDPs coming from regions under the control of federal authorities [19] should be *'deprived from all kind of allowances they were entitled to on the territory of their present accommodation'*.

The ban imposed by the Federal Order No.110 on registration of new arrivals was implemented with more or less zeal in Ingushetia and eventually was ignored in practice, before being re-enforced. There has been a succession of similar federal orders and instructions, immediately followed in the field by rumours and fears among the IDPs as to possible implications. [20] Such uncertainty has characterised the Federal policy regarding registration of IDPs, adding to the insecurity of their situation. [21] More recently, in April 2001, the Ingush territorial organ of the Ministry of Federal Affairs, Nationality and Migration Policy suspended registration (under Form No.7) of all new IDP arrivals. Without registration by the migration authorities, IDPs do not have access to Government assistance, including accommodation in Government managed camps and food. It is estimated by UNHCR that there are currently 10,000 to 15,000 IDPs not in possession of Form No.7.

Over the last months there has been a tendency of the federal authorities to intervene more directly in Ingushetia for alleged security reasons. The federal forces have conducted a number of security related operations in IDP settlements and camps, in search of weapons and drugs. [22] arresting a number of persons suspected to belong to Chechen rebel groups. In this respect, young males are particularly exposed. At the political level, the conflict has grown more openly between the President of Ingushetia, General Aushev, and the Federal Government, with the latter accusing the former of using the presence of IDPs and the subsequent international aid to re-enforce his political position in the Republic and in the region [23]."

Footnote [15]: "Such temporary accommodation centres were originally established, in the early and mid 90's, by the FMS to host forced migrants (mainly ethnic Russians) relocating to Russia from other former USSR republics."

Footnote [16]: "This is compounded by the financial situation of many IDPs, who have exhausted their savings and who are not in a position to move elsewhere or to seek alternative rented accommodation. "

Footnote [17]: "Form No.7 is being used by the migration authorities, in charge of accommodation of, and care to IDPs, for the purpose of statistics as well as planning and provision of humanitarian assistance. Form No.7 is not an identity document and does not replace identity documents, which are required for the purpose of sojourn or residence registration by the local bodies of the interior."

Footnote [18]: "The safe areas in Chechnya were listed in Order No.110 as follows: 'Shelkovskoi district (all towns and villages), Naurski district (all towns and villages), Nadterechni district (all towns and villages), Grozny district (Tolstoi-Yurt, Vinogradnoye, Ksen-Yurt, Goryachi Istochnik), Gudermes district (Gudermes, Engels-Yurt, Suvorov-Yurt), Shalinski district (Argun, Shali), Achkoi-Martan district (Achkoi-Martan, Sernovodsk, Assinovskaya, Samashki, Katyr-Yurt, Valerik, Chemulga).'"

Footnote [19]: "The ministerial instruction expressly referred to Naurski, Shelkovskoy and Nadterechny districts, as well as Assinovskaya and Sernovodsk, 'since places for accommodation of IDPs are prepared there'."

Footnote [20]: "See for instance Federal Migration Service Order No.15 of 25 February 2000, addressed to the regional migration services in those regions bordering Chechnya (Dagestan, Stavropol, Ingushetia and North Ossetia-Alania), to suspend, as of 1 March 2000, registration of IDPs under Form No.7 and to assist with their return to Chechnya."

Footnote [21]: "The head of the FMS has changed three times between September 1999 and May 2000 (The FMS was dissolved in May 2000 by presidential decree and its functions transferred to the newly created Ministry of Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy.)"

Footnote [22]: "The Ingush authorities are themselves concerned that the drug route (which follows the old silk route) from Afghanistan, through Central Asia, Chechnya, to Central and Western Europe, is now spreading into Ingushetia."

Footnote [23]: "Similar grievances were expressed by the (Moscow-appointed) Chechen Government who in several occasions has accused President Aushev of 'fixing' the IDPs in Ingushetia. Chechen officials regularly visit IDPs in camps and settlements, to encourage them to return to Chechnya."

(UNHCR January 2002, paras. 23-29)

### *Other practices*

"In late May, as the policy of gentle encouragement failed to produce tangible results, the Chechen government took a more aggressive line. It announced that all IDPs in Ingushetia were to return to Chechnya before the end of June or lose the right to government humanitarian aid. A spokesperson for the Chechen prime minister told the Russian daily newspaper Kommersant that 'those who do not move by the end of June will no longer get any aid in July, as they will no longer be considered as temporarily displaced people.'

### Encouraging IDPs to return

In April, officials of the Committee for Internally Displaced Persons' Affairs of the Chechen government arrived in Ingushetia to recruit IDPs for return. The leadership of the IDP camp in Karabulak told Human Rights Watch the officials spent about two weeks in the camp going from tent to tent trying to convince people to return to Chechnya. The officials found just over ninety IDPs from the Karabulak camp willing to return to Chechnya. On April 28 and 29, these IDPs left Ingushetia in buses in two installments. The majority of them were taken to a temporary IDP settlement in Argun [...]. According to Chechen officials, many more IDPs returned to Chechnya from Ingushetia in late April. RIA Novosti quoted the head of the Committee for IDP Affairs on April 24 as saying that 183 IDPs had returned to Chechnya and that 300 more were going back in the next few days.

When Human Rights Watch visited Ingushetia in June, an official of the Chechen Ministry for the Federation had replaced the officials of the Committee for IDP Affairs. The official, who asked not to be named, told Human Rights Watch his task was primarily to facilitate the return to Chechnya for those IDPs who wished to go but not to actively press for return. He said he had put up posters in various camps and settlements in Ingushetia containing information on return options for those interested. The official said that few IDPs were willing to return to Chechnya at that moment." (HRW February 2002, pp. 10-11)

### **No large-scale return movements from Ingushetia (1999-2001)**

- There has been a net outflow of population from Chechnya to Ingushetia since 1999
- There have been reports of IDPs going back to Ingushetia upon return to Chechnya, as a result of insecurity

"The Government of the Russian Federation spares no effort to encourage IDPs to return to Chechnya. According to various estimates provided by the beginning of the year, up to 30,000 people were expected to return by the end of 2001. However, there is no evidence that this forecast will come true, given that there has been a net outflow from Chechnya to Ingushetia during the past few months as indeed there has been for the whole period since hostilities started again in 1999." (UN November 2001, p. 9)

"Preliminary data shows that in the past three months the ratio of people coming to Ingushetia from Chechnya and going back has fluctuated. In November 2001, 450 persons arrived in Ingushetia while 800 left for Chechnya. Since December, the previous tendency of more people moving from Chechnya to Ingushetia has prevailed. In the first two weeks of January, 550 people arrived in Ingushetia compared to 88 leaving for Chechnya. The main reasons for IDPs' reluctance to return to Chechnya remain insecurity and lack of appropriate living conditions." (UNOCHA 16 January 2002)

"There is constant movement between Chechnya and Ingushetia. Despite the federal authorities' efforts to encourage returns, no massive movements have been observed. To the contrary, new arrivals in Ingushetia are noted. For example, according to a UN survey, between August and October 2001, as many as 3220 new IDPs moved into Ingushetia from Chechnya. At the same time 1375 persons returned from Ingushetia to Chechnya." (COE 22 January 2002, para. 3)

"According to UNHCR, for the first time the number of IDPs returning from Ingushetia to Chechnya is greater than that of new arrivals from Chechnya to Ingushetia. More than 700 IDPs mostly living with host families, returned to Chechnya during November." (WFP 7 December 2001)

#### ***Aborted return***

"As of April 1, the Russian government instructed the Ingush migration authorities not to register any new IDPs from Chechnya. The Ministry for National and Migration Policies, however, maintained in a letter to State Duma Deputy Viacheslav Igrunov that the ministry never issued any instructions to discontinue registering new IDPs from Chechnya. The failure to register IDPs, whether the result of a policy decision or a matter of practice, violates principle 20 of the U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Some of the people who returned to Chechnya in April [2001] came back to Ingushetia shortly thereafter and sought to register again as IDPs, citing dangerous conditions at home. On April 28 and 29, two groups of IDPs left the camp in Karabulak for temporary accommodation in Argun. However, according to the leadership of the camp, after about one week twelve of the IDPs were back in Ingushetia saying that it was too dangerous in Chechnya. These IDPs had to register with the migration service in Ingushetia again but were turned down due to the ban on registering new IDPs. Consequently, the camp in Karabulak was unable to provide them with living space. According to the camp leadership, the displaced returnees lingered at the camp for about a month, probably staying with relatives or acquaintances, and then simply slipped out of sight.

Human Rights Watch researchers unsuccessfully tried to track down some of these IDPs in order to get first hand accounts of the events that had prompted them to leave Chechnya again. The sister-in-law and daughter of two of the displaced told Human Rights Watch that, after unsuccessfully trying to register in Ingushetia, their relatives had seen no other option but to go back to Chechnya. Human Rights Watch was unable to verify exactly what had happened in Argun although several secondary sources that on the day one of the groups of IDPs arrived a mine had exploded near the place of temporary settlement and that Russian troops had conducted a sweep operation." (HRW February 2002, pp. 11-12)

#### **Large majority of IDPs in Ingushetia has no immediate plans to return home (July 2001)**

- Risks for life and health are cited as the main reasons for not returning

"Despite the attempts by the Russian government agencies to use carrot and stick measures to encourage IDPs to return to Chechnya, as of October 2001, 146,278 registered IDPs from Chechnya remained in Ingushetia [Note by HRW: In January 2001, the number was 146,782. Figures provided by the Danish Refugee Council] A Human Rights Watch survey among IDPs in Ingushetia showed that the overwhelming majority had no immediate plans to return home, preferring to wait for the security situation to improve.

In July 2001, Human Rights Watch conducted a survey among 232 IDPs from various camps, spontaneous settlements, and the private sector regarding their feelings about return. Only thirteen respondents said they had concrete plans to return to Chechnya. Nineteen said they did not want to return at all. The remaining 200 said they eventually wanted to return to Chechnya but currently had no plans to do so, overwhelmingly citing a perceived risk to life and health as the primary reason. One hundred ninety-six of these respondents cited these risks as the most important or second most important reason for not returning. They also cited other reasons for not returning at that time: the loss of their homes was cited as an important reason (seventy-one participants), as was the unclear future of Chechnya (approximately two-thirds). About one-third also cited psychological trauma due to losses suffered during the war as an important obstacle to return. Interestingly, very few of the displaced cited the lack of infrastructure, employment opportunities or properly functioning schools as reasons for not returning." (HRW February 2002)

## **UNHCR avoids stimulating false sense of security in Chechnya (February 2001)**

- UNHCR activity in the region remains the preservation of a safe haven in Ingushetia for Chechen IDPs until conditions are created for safe return to Chechnya

"(a) Given the current situation in the North Caucasus, especially the slow progress in finding a political solution to the Chechen conflict, the overriding focus of all UNHCR activity in the region remains the preservation of a safe haven in Ingushetia for Chechen IDPs until such time that a conducive atmosphere is created for safe return to conflict affected areas. UNHCR maintains a cautious approach to humanitarian assistance within Chechnya, to avoid stimulating a false sense of security among the IDPs in an area where UNHCR is unable to provide even limited protection monitoring and cannot pretend to meet the massive basic assistance needs.

(b) In view of the fact that the changing security situation in the region poses difficulties for long-term planning, UNHCR maintains the position that its staff members, both national and international, should remain in Ingushetia. It continued providing basic life saving winterization support materials (windows and roofing materials) for some 750 families, as well as relief aid for Chechen IDPs inside Chechnya itself. However, no further substantive material assistance towards reconstruction of shelter is contemplated by UNHCR as this is considered to be the responsibility of the federal authorities.

(c) UNHCR is supporting government efforts to re-establish a civilian administration and the rule of law inside Chechnya through training initiatives for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and law enforcement officials. Such initiatives are taking place outside of Chechnya, so as not to suggest that the Republic is safe for return at this stage." (UN CHR 1 February 2001)

## **Return to the Prigorodny district (North-Ossetia)**

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### **Cooperation agreement signed between North Ossetia and Ingushetia (October 2002)**

- Both parties have agreed to accelerate the repatriation of the displaced Ingush

"At separate ceremonies in Vladikavkaz and Magas on 11 October, the presidents of North Ossetia and Ingushetia, Aleksandr Dzasokhov and Murat Zyazikov, signed two documents intended to 'mark the beginning of a new stage' in bilateral relations and to draw a line under the interethnic clashes of October 1992, during which some 700 people were killed and between 35,000-65,000 Ingush fled or were forcibly expelled from North Ossetia. An 'Agreement on the Development of Cooperation and Good-Neighborly Relations' obliges both sides to adopt necessary measures to eliminate the consequences of those clashes, including expediting the repatriation of the displaced Ingush, preventing the formation of illegal armed or separatist groups, and establishing mechanisms for consultation to prevent the emergence and escalation of new tensions, according to [ingushetia.ru](http://ingushetia.ru). The agreement, which exists only in Russian, also stresses the commitment of both republics to peace throughout the North Caucasus and to preserving the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. In a subsequent declaration, the two presidents affirm their commitment to 'a policy of constructive dialogue'; to peace, mutual understanding, and economic cooperation among all regions of the North Caucasus; and to protecting the rights of all citizens of both republics regardless of their ethnicity." (RFE/RL 15 October 2002)



## **Most displaced will return but a small portion is likely to stay durably in Ingushetia (2001-2002)**

- Programme of Action signed by authorities in North Ossetia and Ingushetia in October 1997 to facilitate return of the displaced
- Number of villages in North Ossetia where Ingush displaced can return has increase progressively
- Some 20,000 Ingush have returned permanently to Prigorodny, as of October 2002 More than 20 000 IDPs have applied for assistance to return to the area
- Several thousand displaced are likely to settle in Ingushetia permanently
- Return movements continue to be hampered by violence in North Ossetia (2001)

*Number of returnees (figures compiled by the Special Representative of the Russian President to Prigorodny)*

*Total of return movements to North Ossetia since August 1994: 20,782 persons (3,741 families) (UNHCR 18 October 2002)*

*2000: 2,392 persons (424 families) (UNHCR 7 March 2001)*

*2001: 1,867 persons (353 families) (UNHCR 1 April 2002)*

*2002: 831 persons (165 families) (as of 1 October 2002) (UNHCR 18 October 2002)*

*A total of 11,088 persons who suffered from the 1992 Osset-Ingush Conflict have registered as 'forced migrants', as reported by the Ingush government on February 2003. The Special Representative of the Russian President for the Osset-Ingush Conflict stated that these people would be provided with all kind of state assistance for their return and reintegration in their previous place of residence, including housing support. According to the Ingush government, 21,000 persons have been granted state aid since 1994. All funds allocated in 2002 for housing construction and social, cultural and municipal facilities (202 million rubles) have been have been used. According to the 2003 federal budget, this sum will reach a total sum of 200 million rubles. (Government of Ingushetia, 7 February 2003)*

"Return of ethnic Ingush IDPs from Ingushetia to North Ossetia has been fraught with problems since it started. Since 1994 when 'official' return involving federal authorities started, wagon settlements guarded by federal army soldiers were created by federal authorities in villages where safety of returnees could not be guaranteed otherwise, which resulted in numerous security incidents. In 1996, following the agreement to increase the number of villages for Ingush return to eight, two more new wagon settlements were created. One in Prigorodny district itself, in Tarskoye where the village population is openly hostile to the returning Ingush and another 'transit' settlement in Mayskoye, unilaterally established by the local Ingush authorities and where IDPs were moved on the assumption that they would eventually return to their villages of origin. While the Mayskoye transit camp became a bone of contention between Ingush and Ossets over return, the Tarskoye settlement was eventually burnt down by Ossets in July 1997.

The Federal Governmental regulation No. 274 of 6 March 1998, on opening bank accounts for those displaced as a result of Osset-Ingush conflict to rebuild their destroyed houses or to purchase new housing especially enabled Ingush IDPs to return and rehabilitate their former houses. As of 31 December 2000, 2,993 bank accounts were opened for 14,270 persons. The first instalments had been paid to 2637 persons, second instalment 1 162 persons, and the third instalment to 665 persons.

During 2000 the return process and the relationship between Ingush and North Ossetian authorities saw signs of improvement. The number of villages Ingush returned to expanded, in accordance with the Plan of Action of 15 October 1997. In 2000, IDPs continued to return to Kartsa, Chermen, Dachnoye, Dongaron, Kurtat, Balta, Redant, Chmi, Vladikavkaz and Sputnik.

During 2000 a total of 2 392 persons (424 families) returned in an organised manner to Prigorodny. As of 31 December 2000, (since 1994) some 18 234 Ingush have returned permanently to Prigorodny, according

to the office of the Federal Presidential Representative to Prigorodny. In addition, more than 20 000 IDPs have applied for assistance to return to the area. Also, several thousand IDPs are likely to settle in Ingushetia permanently." (UNHCR 7 March 2001)

"On 15 October 1997, a Programme of Action by the State Bodies of the Russian Federation, the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania and the Republic of Ingushetia was signed to facilitate refugee return and improve local morale. The legal relationship is determined by a Treaty Regulating Relations and Cooperation between the Republic of North-Ossetia-Alania and the Republic of Ingushetia, signed in September 1997. The Ossetian side has abolished one law and three pieces of legislature which obstructed repatriation. The constitution of Ingushetia still contains Article 11, which insists on the 'return of the territory which Ingushetia was illegally deprived of'. This article contradicts federal legislation and the Ossetian side could appeal to the Federal Constitutional Court to abolish it. But the existence of such a provision equally serves the interests of those Ossete nationalists who want to paint an image of the Ingush as aggressors." (Matveeva 1999, p. 28)

### ***Reports of violence against returnees (2001)***

"Ossetians thwart Ingush repatriation

Some 400 Ossetians blocked a border crossing with neighboring Ingushetia on 23 May [2001] to prevent the return to the village of Ir in North Ossetia's disputed Prigorodny Raion of some 87 Ingush families who fled the district during the fighting on late 1992, Russian agencies reported. At a subsequent meeting, North Ossetian Prime Minister Kazbek Kardinov and his Ingushetian counterpart Akhmet Malsagov agreed that 10 Ingush families will return to Ir every week, Interfax reported. The North Ossetians have systematically sought to prevent the return of any Ingush to Prigorodny Raion. LF" (RFE/RL 25 May 2001)

"Explosion hits passenger bus

A blast tore through a passenger bus on the border between two rival southern Russian republics Tuesday, injuring three women, police said.

The explosion hit in the evening in a neutral area between border checkpoints in the republics of Ingushetia and North Ossetia, near the Ossetian village of Chermen, said Magomed Ozdoyevm duty officer of the Ingush regional police department.

The cause of the blast was not immediately clear. Ozdoyev said it may have been a bomb placed in a nearby tree.

The bus had been travelling from the Ingush city of Nazran in Kurtat in Ossetia, and was heading into the disputed Prigorodny region when it exploded." (The Russia Journal 5 September 2001)

## **Resettlement**

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### **About 35,000 ethnic Ingush displaced will be permanently resettled in Ingushetia (2000-2001)**

- Ingush authorities will receive support from various international agencies for the resettlement of this population

"[A]s many as 30,000-40,000, who were moving between Ingushetia and Chechnya, have now decided to stay more permanently in Chechnya itself." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 8)

"The Government of Ingushetia has indicated that it will allow some 9,000 ethnic Ingush IDPs from the current emergency to resettle permanently in Ingushetia along with a further 28,000 IDPs of Ingush origin from previous hostilities. Once the necessary legal grounds have been prepared for the IDPs' integration into Ingushetia, UNHCR in co-operation with UNDP and FAO will assist with various multi-sectoral activities." (UN November 2000, pp. 24, 43)

"In the beginning of December 2000, following a meeting with group of people living in the Yuzhniy settlement, Sunzhensky District of Ingushetia, DRC/ASF carried out an assessment of the situation in the settlement. The Yuzhniy settlement is located at the border with Chechnya and has no particular infrastructure. Presently 65 families are residing in the village of Yuzhny in very poor conditions. This village has been established at the initiative of the Ingush administration with the intention that eventually 2000 IDP families of Ingush IDPs from Chechnya will be resettled. Though the land plots are in the process of being allocated, however, at present the facilities of the village are extremely limited with no running water or gas and only limited electricity supply. There is also no school, which is of great concern to the families. Hence, it is the intention of DRC/ASF to build a school and community centre in the village as a means of stimulating activity in the village and to ensure that the children have access to education. On December 30, 2000, DRC/ASF accomplished construction of the school. At the Opening Ceremony, both republican and regional officials greatly appreciated attention given by DRC/ASF to the settlement. The school is the first institutional facility built in the Yuzhniy settlement since its establishment." (DRC 12 January 2001)

### **Successful integration of the ethnic Russians displaced from Chechnya in the Stavropol region (2000)**

- Local communities and the Orthodox Church has largely contributed to this integration

"Other neighbouring regions, namely the Republic of North Ossetia-Alanya, the Republic of Dagestan and the Stavropol region accommodate in total approximately 10 000 people displaced after the recent conflict. However, certain areas have been accommodating large numbers of Chechen IDPs since 1992. According to the Russian official figures, as many as 300 000 ethnic Russians have left the Chechen Republic since 1992. For example, in the Stavropol region alone, the number amounts to 76 000 people. The delegation visited some settlements of Russian IDPs from Chechnya in the area of Budennovsk constructed with the assistance of local communities. The Orthodox Church has largely contributed to this integration. Undoubtedly, living conditions in these settlements are much better than those in IDP camps and the majority of IDPs have been successfully integrated into the local communities. Many of them have found employment." (COE 23 January 2001, para. 5)

## HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

### Access to North Caucasus

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#### Humanitarian community faces hostile security conditions in northern Caucasus (2002)

- Kidnappings and abduction of humanitarian workers remain a major threat
- UN security services have strengthened their presence in the area of operation
- Measure taken include international staff ceiling; irregular staff rotations, armed close protection and static security
- Several NGO offices were assaulted in Nazran (December 2002)

"The security situation in the North Caucasus in 2002 continued to be tense and its dynamic environment presented significant challenges to UNSECOORD in managing UN staff safety and security. In Sochi in May 2002, the donor, UN, ICRC, and NGO representatives met representatives of the Russian Government, Federal Security Service (FSS), and other departments at the second 'Meeting on Humanitarian Action in the North Caucasus'. Topics of discussion included security issues affecting the humanitarian community and it was noted that the long-standing problem of access to VHF (Very High Frequency) communications for the UN and its partners in the Republic of Chechnya remained unresolved.

The current risk to the UN and associated staff stems from four main sources of threat:

- kidnapping and abduction;
- targeting by extremists;
- mines and unexploded ordnance; and
- collateral damage or 'being in the wrong place at the wrong time'.

After a respite in incidents of kidnapping and abduction, two humanitarian aid workers were abducted in separate incidents in the North Caucasus in 2002. On 23 July, Ms Nina Davydovich, a Russian national employed by the local NGO 'Druzhba', was abducted in Chechnya while travelling between Grozny and Nazran. On 12 August, Mr Arjan Erkel, a Dutch national and head of MSF-Switzerland in the Republic of Dagestan of the Russian Federation, was abducted in its capital, Makhachkala. As this document goes to print, both cases remain unsolved and are under investigation by local authorities with, as yet, no information available on the condition of either victim.

2002 saw an expansion in the presence of UNSECOORD in the Russian Federation, as well as the appointment of the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator as the Area Security Coordinator for Security in the North Caucasus. The UNSECOORD Field Security Coordination Officer for the Russian Federation is based in Moscow but spends the majority of time in the North Caucasus. A second UNSECOORD Field Security Coordination Officer has been recruited for the North Caucasus and is based in Nazran. They are assisted by a number of highly skilled national staff who work in Nazran and Vladikavkaz. In 2002 UNHCR proposed to close its security office in the North Caucasus and engage UNSECOORD to coordinate and manage safety and security of its staff and programmes. To fulfil this increased responsibility UNSECOORD will recruit additional security and communications staff. Overall, this initiative should produce a more streamlined, efficient, and effective security structure for the UN in the North Caucasus.

To provide a relatively safe work environment, UNSECOORD has introduced, and continues to apply, stringent preventive security strategies for UN staff operating in the North Caucasus. These include: an international staff ceiling; irregular staff rotations to ensure an element of unpredictability; and armed close protection and static security at all times using the services of different guard agencies of the Ministry of the Interior. (These include OVO static security at the office premises both in Vladikavkaz and Nazran, as well as in places where UN international staff sleep; and mobile security escorts for missions to Chechnya, provided by the MOI's regional anti-organised-crime directorate [...], RUBOP.

The UN offices and private residences are also equipped with modern security technology including camera and alarm systems. UNSECOORD maintains around-the-clock radio rooms in Nazran and Vladikavkaz that offer communications support to UN and NGO staff travelling in the region. UNSECOORD conducts a security assessment immediately prior to any proposed monitoring or needs-assessment mission in Chechnya. Regular liaison and close contact between UNSECOORD staff and local law enforcement officials has further supported the UN's ability to move around Ingushetia and Chechnya." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 17-18)

#### Current Security Status

Mission Are (North Caucasus)	UN Security Phase	Since
Stavropol Kray	II	19.10.2001
The Republic of North Ossetia-Alania	III	30-01.1998
Republic of Ingushetia and the Republic of Dagestan	IV	05.03.1999
Republic of Chechnya	V	05.03.1999

(UNOCHA February 2002, pp. 39-40)

"Towards the end of [December 2002] several NGO offices in Nazran were assaulted by unknown perpetrators, leading to theft of money and other assets, and in one case to serious injuries of one security officer." (PINF December 2002)

*About the abduction of humanitarian workers, see for example:*

*"UN Emergency Relief Coordinator welcomes release of NGO staff member in the Russian Federation", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 10 January 2003 [Internet]*

*"Russian Federation: ICRC staff abducted in Chechnya released", ICRC, 18 November 2002 [Internet]*

*"European Parliament calls for Russia to pursue the release of kidnapped MSF volunteer, Arjan Erkel", Médecins Sans Frontières, 26 January 2003 [Internet]*

### **International human rights observers banned from Chechnya (2002)**

- OSCE mission in Chechnya has been closed down in December 2002
- Russia has also stopped key United Nations human rights monitors from visiting the region, including the UN representative on internally displaced persons

"On December 31, [...] the mandate of the OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya expired. Negotiations over renewing the OSCE mandate had collapsed after Russia insisted that the mission end its human rights monitoring and political mediation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs resisted efforts to grant a temporary extension of the mandate while negotiations continued, and on December 31 announced that the Assistance Group had to close. The Assistance Group had contributed to documentation of human rights violations, receiving victims of human rights violations at its offices in Znamenskoe and making on-site visits to gather information about abuses. It also provided valuable information to the OSCE about the situation in Chechnya through its confidential bi-weekly reports to OSCE member states.

Russia has also stopped key United Nations human rights monitors from visiting the region. It has not granted requests to visit Chechnya made by the special rapporteur on torture and the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary, and summary executions. In September it postponed a joint visit for the special rapporteur on violence against women and the U.N. secretary-general's special representative on displaced persons, citing, ironically, security concerns.

Human Rights Watch is calling on the international community to press Russia to stop forced returns, to hold its troops accountable for violations of humanitarian law violations, and to renew the OSCE Assistance Group's mandate. We call on Chechen forces to cease attacks on civilians, and to hold accountable those involved in such attacks. These concerns should be reflected in the resolution adopted on Chechnya at the forthcoming session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe." (HRW January 2003, p. 4)

### **Temporary suspension of humanitarian operations in Chechnya because of insecurity (2001-2002)**

- Abduction of two humanitarian workers in July and August 2002 led to suspension of most humanitarian operations, except for life saving activities
- ICRC reported suspension of activities in May and September 2001 following security incidents in Chechnya
- WFP was prevented from assisting all the targeted population because of reduced access due to security conditions in Chechnya (2001-2002)

"The operating environment in the North Caucasus remains extremely challenging. Liaison with the Russian security authorities has been constant since 2000 and almost all aid agencies, including ICRC, use armed protection. The principal threat remains kidnapping, as recently illustrated (on 23 July and 12 August) by the abductions – in Chechnya and Dagestan respectively – of two NGO aid workers. On 29 July, the UN suspended its operations in the republic, with the full support of NGO partners and key donors. On 9 September 2002, the United Nations agencies resumed their humanitarian programme in the Republic of Chechnya. The decision to resume operations followed extensive consultations with the Russian government, the donor community, non-governmental organizations, and civilians in need in the republic. Rising humanitarian need amongst the civilian population in Chechnya is the main reason for re-engaging in the region." (IASC-WG 10 September 2002)

"On 26 August [2002] WFP resumed relief food distributions in Chechnya, which had been on hold since 29 July due to the kidnapping of two relief workers. The suspension of the regular UN programmes will continue except for life-saving activities, which include the provision of potable water in Grozny and emergency food rations at the household level." (WFP 30 August 2002)

"Reduced access due to security conditions and low food stock have prevented WFP from assisting all the targeted 310,000 IDPs and vulnerable persons." (WFP 8 February 2002)

"A number of security incidents were recently reported in Ingushetia and Chechnya. Some relief workers from international organizations were targeted inside Chechnya." (WFP 21 December 2001)

"Security problems, which in addition to war-related hazards, such as landmines, include the ever-present risk of abduction and other forms of crime, are also the main hindrance to a full deployment of humanitarian organizations inside Chechnya. In May and again in September [2001], security incidents forced the ICRC to suspend its activities inside Chechnya for up to one month each time. During his visit to Moscow at the end of October [2001], the ICRC President received renewed assurances from the Russian

authorities for the safety of movement of ICRC staff, and activities have been in progress since." (ICRC 14 December 2001)

### **Media and international NGOs subject to strict control to access Chechnya (2001-2002)**

- Government enforces strict control on foreign and domestic media access to the conflict area
- Bureaucratic practices make access to Chechnya nearly impossible for newly arriving international NGOs
- All internationals must also be accompanied by armed escorts, who need special permits.
- Even when all necessary documents are obtained, harassment at checkpoints has to be expected
- International NGOs and the government of the Republic of Chechnya signed a letter of understanding (LOU) to facilitate access to Chechnya (October 2001)
- Lack of access to radio communication continues to hinder NGOs' ability to work in the republic (2002)
- Other obstruction practices include the high costs involved by security guards and the taxation on goods and services for the UN

"Eliza Musaeva heads Memorial's office in Ingushetia, the Russian republic bordering Chechnya and a home for tens of thousands of civilians who fled Chechnya since the latest war began in 1999. With no human rights groups actually based in Chechnya – both Memorial and HRW say Russian authorities have forbidden their observers to enter Chechnya, and mandate of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or OSCE, expired on 31 December – they depend heavily on refugees for information about the situation in the breakaway republic." (RFE/RL 21 January 2003)

"The security situation prevented most foreign observers from traveling to the region, and the Government enforced strict controls on both foreign and domestic media access [...]. Federal authorities – both military and civilian – have limited journalists' access to war zones since the beginning of the war in October 1999. Most domestic journalists and editors appeared to be exercising self-censorship and avoiding subjects embarrassing to the Government in regard to the conflict [...]. These restrictions made independent observation of conditions and verification of reports very difficult. Nevertheless there were numerous credible reports of human rights abuses and atrocities committed by federal forces." (U.S.DOS 4 March 2002, sect. 1g)

"Even though some effort from local Chechen authorities is visible, most of the very basic problems created by warfare (feeding, providing of clean water, shelter, seeds, basic education) are still being solved by international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) with the help of UN, OSCE and respectful international donors.

Despite (or because of) that the attitude of authorities towards INGOs is quite ambivalent. The horrendously bureaucratic system of permits for entering Chechnya almost makes the access to Chechnya for newly arriving INGOs impossible. In order to be able to enter Chechnya the INGOs now need two INGO registration papers from the Federal Ministry of Justice (take several months to one year to obtain), registration permit from the Chechen government (impossible to obtain without federal registration), monthly permits issued by Army Commandant of Chechnya for every single car (including trucks in convoys) and driver, special permits for international staff issued monthly by the Army Commandant with marked dates of their possible entry to Chechnya, INGO ID card and valid passports (international INGO staff with appropriate visa, i.e. labor or humanitarian, no commercial or tourist visa is acceptable).

All internationals must also be accompanied by armed escorts who need special permits. Even when all necessary documents are obtained, harassment at the Russian Army, FSB (Federal Security Service), OMON (armed units of Ministry of Interior), road police and Chechen militia checkpoints has to be expected. There are currently fourteen checkpoints on the short way from the Ingush border to Grozny suburbs only; inside Grozny and throughout the country the checkpoints are countless. Bribe taking, drunk soldiers, nervous teenage soldiers, shooting in the air – all of this is rather a rule than an exception.

The conditions have not improved recently, on the contrary, more and more obstacles have to be expected. Despite the joint effort of the UN and INGOs to make the conditions for entry easier, the only result was that the situation has not worsened (the infamous Chechen government Resolution No.22 about the conditions and movement of INGOs inside Chechnya is not applied in full, fortunately)." (PINF December 2001, para. 1.3.2)

***Letter of Understanding between international NGOs and the Government of the Republic of Chechnya:***

"On 31 October [2001], the representatives of humanitarian community and the government of the Republic of Chechnya signed a letter of understanding (LOU) on humanitarian action in Chechnya. All NGOs working in the region signed the LOU. The memorandum affirms that international humanitarian action is based on International Humanitarian Law and guided by standard humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. The LOU also confirms that the humanitarian community and the government will cooperate in providing humanitarian assistance in Chechnya. The LoU stipulates that the government will grant access to and freedom of movement in Chechnya by issuing passes, valid no less than three months. The LoU is now the reference point for permit applications." (UNOCHA 31 October 2001)

"Given the vast humanitarian needs inside Chechnya, the NGOs are willing to increase their operations in the republic. However, the continuing problems of access to and freedom of movement within Chechnya are hindering the humanitarian operations there. major progress on the issue of access was made when after months of talks between the NGO community and the Chechen Government a Letter of Understanding was signed on 31 October 2001, Further, insecurity in general and lack of access to VHF communications in particular continue to hinder NGO's ability to work in the republic." (UN OCHA February 2002, p. 13)

***See the full text of the Letter of Understanding in UNOCHA, [North Caucasus Humanitarian Action, February 2002, annex B \[Internet\]](#)***

"The Russian authorities continue to provide– although at a cost – armed guards and escorts to the UN and its partners in the region. However, over the past month, the Ingush government requested that aid agencies increase their contributions for this service and withdrew some guards from the premises of an NGO in Nazran. The UN is currently leading negotiations on this issue, highlighting that humanitarian actors should not be paying at all. On a related note, the government has yet to authorize the establishment of a VHF communications network, thus further hampering the extent to which the UN and its partners can operate safely. The Russian authorities should be engaged again, and at the highest levels, to solve this problem, as well as to address the still pending issue of the 20% VAT on goods and services that UN agencies continue to pay." (IASC September 2002)

**Reported diversion of aid (2001-2002)**

- Russian media reported payment of social benefits to deceased residents in Chechnya (February 2002)
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe expresses its concern on reports that up to "70 percent of relief aid does not reach directly those to whom it is addressed" (January 2002)



"Federal law enforcement agencies have found that funds allocated for the restoration of Chechnya in 2001 have been plundered, strana.ru reported on 25 February. So far, federal investigators have proved that some 91.3 million rubles (\$3 million) were misspent, often through social benefit payments to deceased residents, or 'dead souls', according to the website. While federal authorities sometime bring the perpetrators to justice, strana.ru commented that they fail to end the practice 'because there is no shortage of 'dead souls' in Chechnya while the war goes on.'" (RFE/RL 26 February 2002)

***Concerns of the Council of Europe:***

"The Assembly is deeply concerned by continuing grave humanitarian plight of the many thousands of people affected by the conflict, in particular those still in camps, and believes that they should be enabled to return home in safety, as soon as possible. It fervently appeals to the Russian authorities and to all Council of Europe member governments as well as to international humanitarian organizations urgently to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need and to take all necessary precautions to guarantee that the assistance is effectively and properly distributed. In particular, the Assembly is deeply concerned by the alarming reports that up to 70% of relief aid does not reach directly those to whom it is addressed. These reports should be immediately verified and better accountability and transparency in the distribution of the assistance should be established. The Assembly cannot emphasise too firmly that this action is imperative and that it finds the excuses for inaction totally unconvincing. It believes that if ever the adage 'where there is a will, there is a way' applies, it most certainly does so in this sad situation. " (COE 23 January 2002, para. 21)

**The response to lack of access by international agencies: from the 'remote control' concept to a more active presence (1999-2000)**

- Because of the insecure environment prevailing in North Caucasus, UN programmes were initially managed by local staff *in situ* ('remote control'), which, however, impeded adequate monitoring and reporting
- In December 1999, following negotiations and high-level UN visits, the federal authorities made security arrangements that permitted international staff to undertake regular visits to Ingushetia

"Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of activities is of fundamental importance to the UN as it helps to ensure the appropriate use of resources and enables the UN to remain accountable to beneficiaries and donor governments. At the initial stages of the current operation, the UN based its programmes on the 'remote control' concept, i.e. programmes were to be managed by local staff *in situ*, primarily because of the insecure environment that prevented visits by international staff. 'Remote control', however, impeded adequate monitoring and reporting: on the one hand, local staff was inexperienced to handle a sizeable operation and on the other, the demands on the staff were excessive.

In December 1999, following negotiations and high-level UN visits, the federal authorities made security arrangements that permitted international staff to undertake regular visits to Ingushetia. As such, the UN strengthened its ability to discuss its operations with the authorities and to monitor and report in a more regular and reliable manner. This has a considerable impact on overall performance and effectiveness.

The implementing arrangement between UNHCR and DRC strengthened the capacity to monitor and report considerably. The two organisations now have over sixty local monitors in Ingushetia, enabling them to oversee distributions of assistance and provide daily information to the UN offices in Moscow. WFP has contracted World Vision International (WVI) to monitor the receipt, storage, and dispatch of commodities to and from the extended delivery point at Vladikavkaz, and to spot check distributions.

During January, UNICEF and WHO hired local staff *in situ* and supported them with regular visits by expatriate staff. This field presence further strengthened the UN's overall capacity to monitor programmes and evolving needs in a wider range of sectors than had previously been the case. Similarly, more NGOs

have opened offices in the northern Caucasus, thereby further enhancing implementation modalities, monitoring and reporting of activities.

In sum, the operation has shifted from a 'remote control' mode to one of a more active presence. However, it still falls short of normal standards for monitoring. Therefore, monitoring still needs to be improved for example by: standardising distribution reports by sector; by making the quality, number, frequency of reports more consistent; making reports available to the government, donors, aid agencies, and beneficiary groups; and including host family members and displaced persons in the monitoring process.

The operational monitoring described above is complemented by strategic monitoring of the overall context and programme, mostly undertaken at the Moscow level, via the Resident Coordinator and agency representatives. Together these efforts ensure a better understanding of the effects on IDPs and host families of the evolving situation, as well as of the coverage and effectiveness of the humanitarian response." (UN March 2000, p. 8)

"UN humanitarian action has increased substantially since November 1999, despite insecurity, which has limited the number of UN international staff stationed in the areas to eight. National staff of UN Agencies now number over 200, including those currently employed under the UNHCR-WFP-DRC logistics operation and under WHO's health surveillance initiative. The overwhelming majority of staff is based in Nazran (Ingushetia) and Valdikavkaz (North Ossetia). The ICRC have five international staff in the region, and, combined with its partner the Russian Red Cross, has over 400 volunteers throughout the northern Caucasus. In addition to the presence of UN Agencies and ICRC, over 20 international NGOs now work in Ingushetia. Some one dozen of these carry out programmes in Chechnya. Organisations have few international staff, relying mostly on national staff to implement programmes. While the operation has shifted away from "remote control" to a more active international presence at the field level, this could change very quickly if the security situation worsens. As such, one of this UN programme's overall goals is to boost the capacity of local staff to become emergency relief 'managers'." (UN July 2000, sect. 3.2.1)

***A practice shared by international NGOs: the example of Médecins du Monde:***

"Humanitarian action rests on a few principles, one of which is free access to victims and unimpeded evaluation of their needs. In war-torn Chechnya, this is difficult, sometimes impossible (risk of abduction, bombing...). Without the presence of permanent expatriates, Médecins du Monde has relied, since 1998, on local personnel and has introduced 'remote control': linked with the organization, since the beginning of its intervention in Chechnya (1995), the coordinator or the administrators, doctors, psychologists, logistic staff and nurses, all Chechen, share the values and practices of Médecins du Monde. [...] All the same, expatriates go regularly to support their action with evaluation mission." (MDM 23 February 2000)

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

### Legal background

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#### **The CIS Conference: A regional process to address the problems of displacement (May 1996)**

- Conference attended by delegates from 87 States (including all 12 CIS countries) under the joint auspices of UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
- The Programme of Action calls for equal rights for internally displaced persons, the right to a nationality, the right to citizenship for anyone who was a member of a predecessor state, and the right to return for formerly displaced persons
- Governments and NGOs expressed broad consensus in June 1999 that there should be some form of continuation of the consultative and networking mechanism beyond 2000

"In line with General Assembly resolution 50/151 of 21 December 1995, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees convened on 30 and 31 May 1996 in Geneva a Regional Conference to address the problems of refugees, displaced persons, other forms of involuntary displacement and returnees in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and relevant neighbouring States (hereafter referred to as the CIS Conference). The Conference was the culmination of an ongoing process that had begun in 1994. It was held under the joint auspices of UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)(through its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)). The Conference was attended by delegates from 87 States (including all 12 CIS countries), 27 international organizations (in addition to UNHCR, IOM and OSCE), 2 other governmental organizations and 77 non-governmental organizations. The Conference adopted a Programme of Action, which had been endorsed by a Preparatory Conference held in Minsk (Belarus) on 8 May 1996.

The three main objectives of the Conference, cited below, are considered to have been met.

(i) Providing a reliable forum for the countries of the region to discuss problems of population displacement in a humanitarian and non-political manner: This was achieved through a series of sub-regional meetings and expert meetings to discuss such problems and identify solutions, and the establishment of a Drafting Committee tasked with the formulation of a wide plan for action to address those problems, based on a declaration of principles.

(ii) Reviewing population movements in the region, and clarifying categories of concern: The discussions held among CIS countries and between them and other countries, as well as with international and non-governmental organizations, were based on an analysis of the different movements of population, and led eventually to the identification of the various categories of populations displaced in the CIS countries. Definitions were developed, and were included in the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference.

(iii) Devising an integrated strategy which would enable the CIS countries to cope better with and prevent population displacement, as well as manage and regulate other types of migratory movements in the region: The Programme of Action, which was adopted by consensus by the Conference, is a framework for action by the CIS countries, in addressing displacement problems, on the basis of internationally recognized

principles, in a spirit of international cooperation, solidarity and burden-sharing." (UNHCR EXCOM 8 August 1996, paras. 1-2)

"The non-binding Program of Action affirms the right to leave and return to one's country, to move freely within a country, to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries, and commit its signatories to uphold the principle of nonrefoulement. The program also calls for equal rights for internally displaced persons, the right to a nationality, the right to citizenship for anyone who was a member of a predecessor state, and the right to return for formerly [deported] persons (the term given to people forcibly moved during the Soviet era)." (USCR 1999, p. 227)

"The Programme of Action also provides a basis for UNHCR's work in the CIS countries for the next few years. During the preparatory process, UNHCR and IOM developed a joint operational strategy that envisages both organizations collaborating closely in all their activities in the region, either by working together, or through sharing information and complementing each other. The joint approach should allow for a more effective distribution of tasks in the countries of the region and a more efficient use of limited resources." (UNHCR EXCOM 8 August 1996, para. 2)

*See the full text of the [Programme of Action](#) [Internet].*

"A Steering Group, composed of representatives of participating states and international organizations, was established to reconvene after the Conference to monitor the follow-up process. It met once a year from 1996 to 2000, to review progress reports submitted by the Follow-up Unit. Non-governmental organizations were invited to participate as observers and to submit independent reports. On 13-14 July 2000, the Steering Group met at its fifth and last session to review the achievements of the CIS Conference process in the implementation of the Programme of Action, areas necessitating further attention, and to take a decision on the future activities. A set of recommendations was adopted for future action, moving the process to a more advanced level of cooperation in the search for concrete solutions." (UNHCR November 2000, p. 6)

*See also [Joint UNHCR/IOM Document: Assessment Report of the Conference Process \(1996-2000\)](#) (pdf format) [Internet]*

### **An official category for IDPs and involuntary migrants from the former Soviet Union: the status of "forced migrant"**

- Internally displaced persons (except as a result of natural or human-made disasters) globally fall under the category of 'Forced Migrant' as defined in the Law of 20 December 1995
- Forced migrant status is also open to involuntary migrants from former Soviet Republics with Russian citizenship or who could obtain it by virtue of being former Soviet citizens
- The status is primarily meant to facilitate the integration of displaced persons in their new place of residence but does not preclude return

#### ***Law on the Introduction of Amendments and Additions to the Law of the Russian Federation on "Forced Migrants", 20 December 1995:***

Article 1. Notion of "forced migrant"

"1. A forced migrant shall be a citizen of the Russian Federation who was forced to leave his/her place of permanent residence due to violence committed against him/her or members of his/her family or persecution in other forms, or due to a real danger of being subjected to persecution for reasons of race,

nationality, religion, language or membership of some particular social group or political opinion following hostile campaigns with regard to individual persons or groups of persons, mass violations of public order.

Taking into account the facts stipulated in point 1 of the present article, the following persons shall be recognised as a forced migrant:

1) a citizen of the Russian Federation who was forced to leave the place of his/her permanent residence on the territory of a foreign state and came to the Russian Federation;

2) a citizen of the Russian Federation who was forced to leave the place of his/her permanent residence on the territory of a subject of the Russian Federation and came to the territory of another subject of the Russian Federation.

3. Recognition of a forced migrant shall be also extended to a foreign citizen or a stateless person, permanently staying on legal grounds on the territory of the Russian Federation, who left the place of his/her permanent residence on the territory of the Russian Federation for reasons set forth in Point 1 of the present Article;

4. Recognition of a forced migrant shall be also extended to a citizen of the former USSR, who used to reside on the territory of a former constituent republic of the USSR, who received refugee status in the Russian Federation and lost it, as he had acquired the Russian citizenship, upon availability of factors which prevented him/her from settling down on the territory of the Russian Federation during the time when his/her refugee status was in force."

"As a result of the 1994-96 conflict in Chechnya, some 162,000 IDPs were granted the status of forced migrant, in approximately 80 regions (subjects) of the Russian Federation. The status of forced migrant is primarily meant to facilitate the integration of such persons in their new place of residence, through the allocation of special allowances, assistance with housing, job placement, loans, and related support [7]."

Footnote [7]: "The status of forced migrant does not preclude voluntary return to the former place of permanent residence. Indeed Article 7.2(5) of the Law on Forced Migrants imposes upon local executive bodies the obligation to 'render assistance to a forced migrant at his/her request in the return to his/her former place of residence'." (UNHCR January 2002, para. 11)

*See also [Law on Forced Migrants, as amended in 1995 \(unofficial translation\) \[Internal link\]](#)*

*The Russian version of the Law on Forced Migrants, as amended in 1995, is available on the website of [Memorial \[Internet\]](#)*

*For the validity of statistics based on the forced migrant status, see "[Populations figures of the Federal and regional Migration Services flawed by inconsistent practices](#)" [Internal link]*

## **Local and national authorities**

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### **Reconstruction efforts for Chechnya from the government (2002-2003)**

- 142 million US\$ have been allocated by the Russian government in 2002 for the reconstruction programme in Chechnya
- A special effort has also been made to ensure the payment of pensions, wages in the public sector, child and unemployment benefits

- As a support to the return of IDPs, funds have also been allocated to the reconstruction of housing and utilities
- The government also claims progress in the rehabilitation of road infrastructure, the farming sector, healthcare and educational facilities
- The government however recognizes that money transfers to Chechnya have been slower than planned
- There have also been reports of misuse of federal funds in Chechnya

"The Russian Government is directing major efforts towards restoring normal life in the Republic of Chechnya. Activities of the federal and local authorities to achieve this goal are financed mostly from the 'Federal Target Programme on the Reconstruction of the Economy and the Social Sector of the Republic of Chechnya'. The Government Commission for the Reconstruction of the Economy and the Social Sector of the Republic of Chechnya, led by Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation, Viktor Khristenko, is responsible for the implementation of this programme. In 2002, the federal government allocated RUR 4.5 billion (about US \$142.4 million) for the programme: RUR 1.8 billion (about US \$57 million) for housing and utilities, about RUR 600 million (about US \$19 million) for the agro-industrial sector, RUR 250 million (about US \$7.9 million) for electricity, RUR 216 million (about US \$6.8 million) for public health, and RUR 120 million (about US \$3.8 million) for education. In 2003 it will allocate RUR 5.175 billion (about US \$163.7 million). In addition, considerable funds come from extra-budgetary sources, including the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation. The Pension Fund has fully paid pensions for 2001 to the extent of RUR 1.6 billion (about US \$50.6 million) and liquidated arrears of previous years amounting to more than RUR 800 million (about US \$25.3 million). In addition, the export sales of oil produced in Chechnya are a new source of extra budgetary revenues used to develop the social sphere (RUR 232 million, or about US \$7.3 million, in 2001). The third extra-budgetary source are economic agents (RAO Unified Energy Systems of Russia, OAO Gazprom gas concern, and the Russian Ministry of Railways), who are setting aside RUR 2.74 billion (about US \$86.7 million), which is 52.2 percent of the total amount, for the restoration of electrical energy, gas supply, oil industry and transport facilities.

In the eyes of the government, a major task which remains to be accomplished is the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to Chechnya. This is seen as an indispensable condition for normalizing the political and social situation. Federal executive bodies and the Chechen Government have adopted an action plan on the return of IDPs to Chechnya. In 2002, the federal centre has allocated RUR 1.826 billion (about US \$57.8 million) for the reconstruction of housing and utilities. Apart from the provision of housing, the economic recovery of Chechnya contributes to the return of people, with a special emphasis on job creation. Since October 2001 there are twenty functioning employment centres and more than 60,000 new jobs. In total, there are more than 150,000 jobs in Chechnya. Public sector workers' wages, pensions, and child and unemployment benefits are paid.

The Russian Ministry of Energy has carried out considerable work on the gas transport system of the republic (RUR 130 million, or about US \$4.1 million, in 2001). There is an agreement with Unified Energy Systems Russia to construct a power plant in Argun for RUR 400 million (about US \$12.7 million). 544 kilometres of high-voltage power transmission lines have been built. A total of nearly RUR 1 billion (about US \$31.6 million) has been spent on the reconstruction of electricity generating facilities. Twenty oil wells are operating. Regarding the restoration of the transport system, 120 bus routes are now open and the full 400 kilometre section of the railway system is operating. Fourteen bridges have been restored.

The farming sector has started working in Chechnya. So far, the harvest has amounted to more than 350,000 MTs of grain. The Argun Grain Reception Centre and a milling plant have started operating. Reconstruction of canning and wine making plants is ongoing. A workshop for fruit beverages and juices is due to be launched in Shalinsky raion this year.

Over the first seven months of 2002, the amount of tax and non-tax receipts rose 3.7 times to RUR 1.4 billion (about US \$44.3 million) in comparison to a similar period last year. Moreover, the federal share of receipts in Chechnya for the past seven months constituted RUR 785.3 million (about US \$24.9 million) - a ten-fold rise - and that of the republic RUR 626.5 million or about US \$19.8 million (a two-fold rise). Receipts in the Chechen Republic in 2002 became comparable to those in the other regions of the Caucasus.

In the public health system, there are fifty seven hospitals (4,800 beds), thirty two polyclinics, forty six dispensaries and 175 medical assistant-obstetrician stations. Grozny has nine hospitals and sixteen polyclinics. Under the federal programmes of combating tuberculosis, diabetes and other diseases, necessary drugs have been supplied to the medical establishments of Chechnya. The republic's medical college and its branches provided training to local junior medical personnel. In 2001, 51,000 children from Chechnya received sanatorium-and-health-resort treatment. In 2002 this number is expected to rise to 70,000. The Russian Government has voted for allocating RUR 150 million (about US \$4.7million) in compulsory social insurance funds for these purposes. There are 455 general education schools operating in Chechnya (356 in rural areas), including twenty seven evening schools, ninety six consultation centres and five boarding schools. Chechnya has three institutions of higher learning and nineteen specialized secondary educational establishments. In addition, telephone communication has been restored. A Kizlyar-Gudermes-Argun-Grozny digital fibre-optic line has been laid." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 89-90)

"Federal Security Service (FSB) Director Nikolai Patrushev has announced that his agency and the Audit Chamber have uncovered evidence that his agency and the Audit Chamber have uncovered evidence that 700 million rubles (\$23.3 million) in federal funding allocated for Chechnya was misspent, nns.ru reported on 3 December. The funds were intended to pay for restructuring the republic's social-welfare infrastructure. He did not say who was responsible for the misuse of the funds of what they had been spent. Patrushev said that he believes for more federal spending has actually been misappropriated in the republic. In 2000, the federal government allocated 7.5 billion rubles for reconstruction there, and in 2001 it allocated 11.4 billion rubles." (RFE/RL 3 December 2002)

*See also "Audit Chamber to create permanent inspection team for Chechnya", RFE/RL Newswire, 10 December 2002 [Internet]*

### **Government's reconstruction programme for Chechnya aims to facilitate return (2001-2002)**

- Federal government adopted a programme of reconstruction on 25 January 2001 and a similar programme was adopted for 2002 and subsequent years in August 2001
- 1.8 billion roubles (US \$62 million) was allocated in 2001 for housing reconstruction
- The Programme aims to bring living conditions inside Chechnya back to normality, and to create an environment favourable to the return of all IDP
- The government reports progress in the restoration of economic activities and public services
- According to the Federal Minister for Chechnya, the 2001 targets have been fulfilled by 80%, with the worst result in the health and education sectors
- The government also recognises that transfers from the federal centre to Chechnya are slower than they should be

"The Government of Russia is implementing the Programme to Restore the Economy and the Social Sector of the Chechen Republic, approved on January 25, 2001. For these purposes a sum of 14.4 billion roubles (US\$496.4 million) has been set aside for the current year; 4.5 billion roubles (US\$155.1 million) is to come from the federal budget, the remaining sums from off-budget sources. As of now, over 2 billion

roubles (US\$68.9 million) of budgetary funds has been transferred. In August-September, another 1.5 billion roubles (US\$51.7 million) will be allocated. For the practical realization of the Programme a federal state unitary enterprise Directorate for Construction and Rehabilitation Works in the Chechen Republic has been established within the State Committee for Construction (Gosstroj) of Russia.

On August 23, 2001, the Government endorsed a similar programme for 2002 and subsequent years." (UN November 2001, pp. 94-95)

"The Government of the Russian Federation allocated RUR 14.4 billion (US \$500 million) as part of the Federal Targeted Programme for Social and Economic Rehabilitation of the Republic of Chechnya in 2001. The Programme aimed to bring living conditions inside Chechnya back to normality, and to create an environment in which all IDPs would be able to return to their place of origin. These efforts resulted in a number of significant improvements: people in Chechnya are regularly receiving their salaries, pensions, and child allowances; and some important branches of the regional economy and infrastructure, such as oil production, transport, and communication systems are working again, thereby providing employment for parts of the civilian population and generating additional financial resources for rehabilitation. However, the government has recognised that transfers from the federal centre to Chechnya are slower than they should be and this issue needs to be resolved." (UN November 2001, p. 10)

"The federal programme aimed at rebuilding Chechnya is about to be stopped. 'The situation has considerably aggravated: the funding has been suspended for three months,' Anatoliy Popov, the head of the federal enterprise in the charge of the rebuilding work in Chechnya, told a news conference in Moscow on Thursday. 'In this situation, we have to suspend the work. It is going slowly, and if the problem of funding is not resolved, the work will have to be stopped,' Popov said. [Interfax]" (DRC 31 March 2002)

*See also*

- [Order No. 1707-r \(25 December 2001\), on financing of the federal target program for the restoration of the economy and the social sphere of the Chechen Republic in 2001 \[Internet\]](#)
- [Order No.1740-r \(29 December 2001\), on the implementation of the Federal Migration Program in the territories of the Chechen Republic and the Republic of Ingushetia \[Internet\]](#)

*See also "Reported diversion of aid (2001-2002)" [Internal link]*

"The Government Commission on Economic and Social Reconstruction of Chechnya, which met on 30 July, discussed mid-year results of the 2002 federal target programme of reconstruction of the republic. According to the Deputy Prime Minister, Victor Khristenko, who chaired the meeting, they are 'not fully satisfactory' despite the fact that there is an improvement as compared to last year. The Federal Minister for Chechnya, Vladimir Yelagin, said that the programme for which the government had allocated RUR 4.5 billion (about US \$145 million) was fulfilled only by 17%. The situation with housing reconstruction is slightly better, as this programme has been fulfilled by 30%. According to government officials, the measures to rebuild the republic's infrastructure are lagging due to problems with financing procedures." (UN OCHA 8 August 2002)

*See also Government of the Russian Federation, [Factsheet on the situation in the Chechen Republic, 8 October 2002 \[Internet\]](#)*

### **Federal institutions mandated with the issue of internal displacement (2000-2001)**

- Functions related to the implementation of the federal migration policy have been transferred to the Ministry of the Interior (October 2001)
- The Ministry for Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy was responsible at the federal level for the policy regarding IDPs between June 2000 and October 2001



- The Ministry has planned to enhance coordination mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian assistance (October 2000)
- The Ministry of Civil Defense, Emergencies and Natural Disasters (EMERCOM) coordinates and channel international aid in the Northern Caucasus
- The general policy of the government is to encourage Chechen IDPs to return to their place of origin by concentrating assistance in Chechnya

"The Federal Ministry of Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy was created by Presidential Decree No. 867 of 17 May 2000, to replace the former Federal Migration Service. By another Presidential Decree of 16 October 2001, the Ministry was liquidated and those functions related to the implementation of the federal migration policy were transferred to the Ministry of the Interior." (UNHCR January 2002, footnote 8)

"Duma Speaker Gennadyi Seleznev, former President of Ingushetiya Ruslan Aushev, and human rights NGO's concerned with IDP's criticized the plan, charging the Interior Ministry could not address adequately the needs of internal refugees, and that it was appropriate to entrust law enforcement organs with humanitarian programs for internal refugees. The Duma's International Relations Committee chair Dmitry Rogozin welcomed the move, arguing that law enforcement would be more effective in preventing illegal immigration." (U.S.DOS 4 March 2002, sect. 2d)

"As part of ongoing government reforms, the Federal Migration Service was dissolved in July 2000. The Ministry for Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy of the Russian Federation has been designated to take over the responsibility for all migration and refugee matters. This may result in changes in state migration and asylum policy as well as personnel changes. UNHCR is concerned that this may affect FMS eligibility officers from various regions of the country who have been trained by UNHCR on refugee status procedures and on many aspects of refugee protection." (UNHCR November 2000, p. 45)

"According to the information received from some humanitarian agencies, the recent restructuring of the federal administration and transfer of competence regarding IDP camps from EMERCOM to the Ministry for the Federation and Minorities as from 1 October 2000 seem to have contributed to this unsatisfactory situation. The Russian authorities admit that the restructuring might have caused some momentary bureaucratic confusion but they have confidence in the advantages of the new structure in a long run." (COE 23 January 2001, para. 37)

"In late 1999 and early 2000, in the first stage of the crisis, the Ministry of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Natural Disasters (EMERCOM) promptly provided relief assistance to the affected population. This assistance included the building and organisation of camps for displaced persons, and the provision of basic relief supplies, including food. EMERCOM has distributed a total of 21,000 tons of food commodities in the Northern Caucasus - 12,000 tons in Ingushetia, and the remaining quantity in Chechnya and Dagestan. In comparison, WFP has distributed, between February and October 2000, about 16,000 MT of commodities (most of it in Ingushetia). The Russian Government appointed EMERCOM to co-ordinate and channel all international humanitarian relief assistance in the Northern Caucasus.

Under its winterization programme, EMERCOM, in collaboration with UNHCR, is presently establishing a new tent camp in Ingushetia in order to accommodate about 12,000 IDPs shifting from two train camps and other settlements. EMERCOM has also made plans to establish new camps inside Chechnya in order to accommodate IDPs returning from Ingushetia and Dagestan.

The general policy of the Government of the Russian Federation is to encourage Chechen IDPs to return to their place of origin. In line with this policy, and as a result of resource constraints, EMERCOM has tended to reduce the level of assistance it provides in Ingushetia and to concentrate resources in Chechnya. WFP and the UN, based on an assessment of the security situation in Chechnya, have refrained from any actions that would effectively 'push' IDPs back.

To begin the reconstruction of Chechnya, the Government approved Resolution 639 titled 'On the Complex of Top Priority Measures to Ensure Normal Functioning of the Economic and Social Sphere of the Republic of Chechnya in 2000'. The resolution envisages expenditures worth US\$ 290 million for various reconstruction programmes in Chechnya. However, implementation is significantly behind schedule for want of funds." (WFP 2001, paras. 15-18)

*See also [Factsheet on the situation in the Chechen Republic, Government of the Russian Federation, 8 October 2002 \[Internet\]](#)*

*See also ["Government's reconstruction programme for Chechnya aims to facilitate return \(2001-2002\)" \[Internal link\]](#)*

### **Distribution of food aid in Ingushetia regularly suspended because of disrupted payments from the Federal authorities (2000-2001)**

- Delay in the payment of the food suppliers by the Federal authorities obliges Ingush administration to suspend the distribution of hot meals and bread
- This situation provokes unrest among the displaced population in camps and spontaneous settlements

"Termination of complementary food distributions for IDPs in Ingushetia, by the Government, provoked public unrest among IDPs in the camps and spontaneous settlements of Karabulak municipal district. Some 20,000 people have reportedly been left without hot meals and bread and this could create a worrying humanitarian situation with the coming winter." (WFP 12 January 2001)

"On November 9 The Head of the Ingush Territorial Representative Office of the RF Ministry for Federal Affairs, Migration and Nationality Issues, Mr. Gireev, reported that from 13 November state deliveries of hot meals and bread for the Chechnya IDPs in Ingushetia would be resumed. By that time, it is expected that the Federal Authorities will transfer 43 mln. rubles to pay existing debts to the suppliers of food in the republic. However, this sum is not enough to cover all the debts, which presently constitute over 40 mln. rubles." (DRC 10 November 2000)

"The Ingush Migration Service, on October 12, suspended provision of hot meals and bread to the IDPs in Ingushetia because of the Russian government's debt of over 400 million rubles. However, on October 17, the Minister for Federal Affairs, National and Migration Policy, Aleksandr Blokhin, dismissed the information of the Ingush officials concerning the 400 million rubles debt saying that 'we don't have such information, and this figure (400 mln. RR) lies on the conscience of those who voice it'. According to the Minister, the official number of IDPs in Chechnya is 181,000 persons, whereas in the neighboring Ingushetia the figure constitutes 122,450 individuals. Out of them, around 40,000 IDPs will be living in tent camps in the territory of Ingushetia. The information obtained at the Ingush Ms indicates that on October 18, provision bread to the IDPs in Ingushetia was resumed. But, unless the MS receives money by October 23, the distribution of bread will be suspended again." (DRC 24 October 2000, p. 2)

#### ***Recent reports of aid suspension:***

"According to the Ingush authorities, they suspended bread distributions to IDPs from Chechnya as of 1 March because of the arrears to Ingush companies and organizations providing IDPs with food. In 2001 alone, the arrears totaled RUR 200 million (about US\$6.45 million). There is a risk that electricity and natural gas supply to all IDPs camps will be cut off for the same reason." (UNOCHA 15 March 2002)

"Around 3,000 Chechen refugees have been denied food since the beginning of the year in the neighbouring Russian republic of Ingushetia, following a suspension of deliveries by aid organizations, an senior aid worker said Friday.

The organization responsible for providing food to the refugees in the eastern district of Sunzhensky, close to Ingushetia's border with Chechnya, had suspended delivery of food supplies because it had not received payment, the official, Zendi Umalатов, told Itar-Tass news agency.

Technically, the Russian federal government is responsible for providing financial backing to support the provision of services to the Chechen refugees." (AFP 11 January 2002)

"Stanislav Ilyasov, the chairman of the government of the Republic of Chechnya, told ITAR-TASS on 1 November that a shortage of funding from Moscow had prevented the republic from being able to get ready for winter. He said that some 1 billion rubles (\$34 million) are needed over the next two months." (RFE/RL 2 November 2001)

### **Neighbouring republics reluctant to host more Chechens, except Ingushetia (1999-2001)**

- Stavropol Region, Dagestan, and North Ossetia tightened border controls and set rules of transit, stipulating the 'temporary' nature of their hospitality
- Despite its limited resources, Ingushetia hosts the bulk of the Chechen displaced population

"In early October [1999], with prospects waning for preventing a protracted, bloody war, neighboring Stavropol Region, Dagestan, and North Ossetia tightened border controls and set rules of transit, stipulating the 'temporary' nature of their hospitality.

'Until recently, Russians mostly fled from Chechnya. Now, Chechens are leaving too,' FMS director in Stavropol, Viktor Dulin, told Itar Tass on September 28. In response, he said, Stavropol authorities set up 'temporary' accommodations in Mineralnyye Vody and Kurskiy districts on the Chechen border 'as resting points before they transit out of Stavropol.' According to Dulin, Stavropol cannot host more Chechens because some 300,000 unregistered migrants and 74,000 registered 'refugees' from previous conflicts strain Stavropol's acute shortage of schools, medical facilities, jobs, and housing. Dulin emphasized that Stavropol serves as 'a transit point' for fleeing Chechens, on their way to official reception centers in Astrakhan, Saratov, Orenburg and other regions farther north.

North Ossetia also envisioned a temporary, transit-based role for itself. On September 29, Deputy of the North Ossetian parliament, Viktor Ishchenko, told Itar Tass that the entire border between North Ossetia and Chechnya was patrolled. Fleeing Chechens, he said, 'are received by the [local FMS], registered, and dispatched to the Mineralnyye Vody railway station to be sent to various Russian regions.'

Dagestan--which hosts thousands of displaced ethnic Chechens from the previous war--closed its borders. On September 29, Dagestani authorities reported housing about 2,000 Chechens in 'temporary' camps set up in the Kizlyar and Nogaisky districts bordering Chechnya. On September 30, Itar Tass reported, 'The administrative [Dagestani] boundary with Chechnya has been closed.' Less than one week later, the New York Times talked to displaced civilians trapped in Dargo and Benoy, just inside Chechnya's eastern border with Dagestan. 'No one from our village went to fight [with the Wahhabis] in Dagestan. We don't believe in fighting our neighbors. If we go to Dagestan, they shoot at us now.'" (USCR October 1999)

"The difficult economic situation in Ingushetia does not allow for the provision of sufficient assistance to the victims of the conflict. Ingushetia is one of the poorest republics of the Russian Federation (it was rated third poorest in 1992). With a local population of 320,000, the Republic is not in position to provide for

160,000 displaced persons. The utilities (water, electricity, gas) are over-stretched, public services (schools, hospitals) are strained and the labour market is saturated. Despite limited resources, the Government and the people of Ingushetia are committed to providing all possible support and assistance to Chechen displaced persons.

More than 80% of the displaced persons are staying in private accommodation. This means anything from a little bit of space in a crowded cow shed to a heated room in the host's residence. For better accommodation, rent is usually paid. The poorest IDPs tend to stay with the poorest hosts and not pay rent. A large number of poor host families have now exhausted their reserves. There have already been cases of eviction because IDPs were not able to pay rent and utility charges." (WFP 2001, paras. 5-6)

## **International response**

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### **Coordination effort within the international humanitarian community (2002)**

- The international community interacts closely with the federal reconstruction commission for Chechnya, both at the central and local level
- The UN Humanitarian Coordinator continues to work with the government and to promote a coordinated approach to humanitarian action amongst all organizations
- The United Nations, ICRC, and NGOs have agreed that one focal point should be the custodian to ensure each sector's coordination
- UNHCR ensures the coordination for issues pertaining to protection, human rights and rule of law
- OCHA facilitates aid monitoring missions to northern Caucasus for representatives from donor countries

"Coordination in this operation takes place within three distinct, yet inter-locking, spheres: the organisational, the geographic, and the sectoral. Within the organisational sphere, the main groups of actors are the host government, bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors, UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement, and NGOs. The geographic sphere is marked by two components: first, the federal and second, the regional, which in itself is divided into four areas (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, and North Ossetia). The sectoral sphere comprises the different subdivisions within which humanitarian action takes place, for example, protection, food, shelter and non-food items, health, water and sanitation, education, mine action, and economic recovery.

The key for a successful operation is for the three spheres to be in harmony, and in this particular case it is brought about mostly by strong coordination between the different groups of actors. The role of the federal government in facilitating this is paramount.

At the federal level, Minister Vladimir Yelagin heads a government working group within the framework of the Commission for the Reconstruction of the Economy and the Sector of the Chechen Republic. The UN, ICRC, and NGO representatives take part in the working group's periodic meetings. In Chechnya, the government has established a working group, led by a deputy prime minister, to enhance interaction with aid agencies and support the efficient delivery of aid. The UN, ICRC, and NGOs participate in meetings which are held in Grozny, Chechnya. In Ingushetia, the aid community continues to meet the local authorities weekly. Each of these mechanisms is needed, as is a strong link between the three. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator, whom OCHA supports with an office in Moscow, and a Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator-Area Security Coordinator for the North Caucasus, backed by an OCHA sub-office in Nazran, continue to work with the government and to promote a coordinated approach to humanitarian action amongst all organisations.

Within the sector sphere, the United Nations, ICRC, and NGOs have agreed that one focal point should be the custodian to ensure each sector's coordination. Focal points organise meetings in Nazran in which Chechen and Ingush authorities participate, weekly or fortnightly. Security permitting, it is now expected that similar meetings will take place regularly in Chechnya itself. The table below shows which organisation manages each sector."

Sector	Focal Point
Protection, Human Rights, and Rule of Law	UNHCR
Food	WFP
Shelter	UNHCR
Non-food Items	ICRC
Health	WHO
Water and Sanitation	IRC
Education	UNICEF
Mine Action	UNICEF
Economic Recovery and Infrastructure	UNDP

(UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 16-17)

"The UN Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of UN humanitarian action, with OCHA serving as the coordination secretariat. Primary activities include:

- Maintaining a dialogue with the federal government and counterpart governments in Chechnya and Ingushetia to ensure an effective framework of cooperation, in particular concerning operational modalities, and governmental assistance and future plans.
- Ensuring that UN agencies coordinate advocacy, contingency planning, needs assessments, and programme design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This takes place, *inter alia*, by managing the consolidated appeal process (CAP).
- Promoting programme coordination and information exchange and management between UN agencies, ICRC, and the non-governmental sector. The UN Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for the North Caucasus, based in Nazran and supported by OCHA's sub-office there, has become a focal point in the region for organisations working in the region. A comprehensive website (<http://www.ocha.ru>), with a web-based database, has been elaborated to facilitate information exchange and management.
- Organising regular contact between the donor community, UN agencies, OSCE, and the ICRC to harmonise the international community's response to the humanitarian consequences of the crisis. This takes place, for example, by OCHA facilitating aid monitoring missions to Chechnya and Ingushetia for representatives from donor countries." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 86)

### **ICRC plans for 2003: focus on economic security in Northern Caucasus**

- The ICRC has reoriented its programmes towards both emergency and rehabilitation programmes
- More efforts will also be directed into Chechnya itself with the goal of maintaining economic security of its residents
- ICRC intends to target the most vulnerable cross section of the displaced and resident populations using both social and economic criteria

"Over the course of 2002, the ICRC has completed three in-depth studies, investigating primarily but not exclusively the economic security situation of the displaced and resident population affected by the ongoing security operation in the Chechen Republic. These reports, covering Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia respectively, have provided the ICRC with a better insight as to how to respond adequately to the needs of the most vulnerable, taking into account their coping mechanisms and the work done by both humanitarian and state actors.

Based upon these findings, and from the ICRC experience in the region since 1992, the year 2003 will see a substantial shift from mainly emergency oriented response, to one which addresses both emergency and rehabilitation oriented needs in the affected republics. While maintaining programmes in Ingushetia and Dagestan the ICRC will, within security and access constraints, move more of its efforts into the Chechen Republic itself with the goal of maintaining the economic security of its residents with diverse support.

The operational concept for ICRC humanitarian response in the North Caucasus for 2003 can be summarised as follows:

- A global approach of targeting the most vulnerable cross section of the displaced and resident populations affected by the situation in Chechnya, using both social and economic criteria.
- A substantial shift of food, non-food, and medical assistance into Chechnya, comprising over 65% of the proposed budget for the ICRC North Caucasus humanitarian response.
- Provide additional economic input at the household level in the form of food and non- food assistance in Chechnya, employing economic criteria for the identification of beneficiaries in urban centres, and employing community based identification strategies for new programmes in rural areas.
- Pursue structural support to state services to ensure availability and affordability of essential services to residents. This will include: doubling the current ICRC surgical support to ten reference hospitals; further rehabilitation of hospitals; support to laboratories and blood bank; training of medical staff; support to primary health care (PHC) structures in Urus-Martanovsky and Shalinsky raions; financial and technical support to water pumping stations in Grozny and increased cooperation with Vodokanal; capacity building for the Orthopedic Centre in Grozny.
- Continue not only visits to those detained in relation to the situation in Chechnya, but further dialogue with relevant authorities on respect of the civilian population.
- Raise awareness among civilians about the danger of mines by carrying out community-based programmes.
- Strengthen programmes aimed at promoting IHL for armed and security forces. Pursue programmes with Universities and secondary schools.
- Continue to reinforce the cooperation between all members of the Red Cross movement, collaborating closely with both the Russian Red Cross and its branches in the North Caucasus and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

In order to implement its programmes in the North Caucasus, the ICRC needs an estimated US \$26 million. In addition, for its programmes implemented via the Regional Delegation based in Moscow (promotion of IHL, as well as cooperation programmes with the Russian Red Cross) an estimated US \$4.5 million is required." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 103-104)

*See also "Facts and Figures: The North Caucasus and the South of Russia", ICRC, December 2002*

## **Response to the UN Consolidated Interagency appeal for 2002: strong but declining (November 2002)**

- Almost 80 percent of the financial requirements have been covered, compared to 89 percent in 2001
- UN projects in the agriculture and economic recovery sectors did not received any donor support, as well as UNESCO education programmes

"The *United Nations Consolidated Inter-agency Appeal for the North Caucasus: 1 January 2002 – 31 December 2002* initially sought US \$31.9 million from the international community to enable UN agencies to provide humanitarian relief to civilians affected by the crisis in Chechnya. This was revised down to US \$24.6 million during the mid-year review. Humanitarian assistance within the framework of the CAP aimed to complement relief provided by the Russian Government, international organisations, and NGOs in the following sectors: protection, food, agriculture, shelter and non-food items, health, water and sanitation, education, mine action, and economic recovery and infrastructure. As of 18 October, the donor community had pledged **US \$18.2 million** or 74% of the requirements [...].

While the response to the 2002 CAP was strong, there has been a downward trend in donor interest since the start of the current operation in 1999. Twenty-three countries contributed US \$45.4 million or 85% to the *1999-2000 Appeal*; sixteen countries contributed US \$38 million or 89% to the *2001 Appeal*. As in 2001, UN projects in the agriculture and economic recovery sectors did not receive any donor support in 2002, and projects in these sectors could not be implemented. While this did not affect the survival of the target population, the projects planned in these sectors could have provided an important opportunity for increasing the beneficiaries' self-reliance. In the education sector, UNESCO did not receive any support. In general, late receipt of funds for the education sector meant that several programmes in this sector could only be implemented with delay, and core programmes in the education sector could not be expanded." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 6-7)

*The total response from donor states to the UN CAP for 2002 covered 78.4% of the needs as of February 2003. For detailed information, you can consult the Financial Tracking System of Reliefweb [Internet: <http://www.reliefweb.int/fts/>]*

## **UN consolidated inter-agency appeal for 2003: objectives and constraints (November 2002)**

- The international community will continue to complement governmental efforts
- One priority objective is the protection of the civilian population as long as insecurity prevails in Chechnya
- The focus on people inside Chechnya is increasing, as their needs are considered higher than those of people in neighbouring republics
- Humanitarian agencies anticipate that human rights abuses in Chechnya will continue in 2003 and the population there will continue to have emergency needs for protection and assistance

"Given the overall context, anticipated scenarios [see below], and needs in the protection, food, shelter and non-food items, health, water and sanitation, education, mine action, and economic recovery and infrastructure sectors, the aid community will continue to complement governmental efforts and work towards the following three strategic goals:

- To enhance the protection of, and respect for, the basic human rights of the civilian population as long as insecurity in Chechnya determines the need.

- To help civil society groups and local NGOs gain the confidence, skills, and capacities to contribute to the development of society.
- To support governmental structures, especially in the legal, health, education, and other social spheres, to function effectively.

This inter-agency programme targets different numbers of beneficiaries in each sector, ranging from 134,000 in the shelter sector to 1,260,000 in the health sector. The table below provides an indication of the proportions of UN assistance reaching civilians in need throughout the region, and planned for 2003, based on the principle of impartiality.

Proportion of UN aid reaching populations in need in Chechnya and Ingushetia (%)

Year	UNHCR			UNICEF			WFP			WHO		
	C	I	O	C	I	O	C	I	O	C	I	O
2000	4	89	7	15	85	0	11	89	0	19	48	33
2001	40	55	5	35	60	5	43	57	0	60	30	10
2002	40	50	10	50	45	5	58	42	0	70	30	0
2003	50	44	6	60	40	0	62	38	0	66	32	2

C = Chechnya; I = Ingushetia; O = Other, i.e. Dagestan and North Ossetia

The increased focus on people inside Chechnya reflects their needs being higher than those of people in neighbouring republics. Working in Chechnya poses special challenges: fifty-five Russian and expatriate aid workers have been abducted in the region since 1995; ten more have lost their lives. The region remains one of the world's least safe: two aid workers, Nina Davydovich and Arjan Erkel, were abducted in July and August of 2002, and extreme measures remain in place to help the aid community manage the environment and reduce the number of incidents. The role of the Russian authorities in helping aid agencies confront insecurity has been substantial, although more could be done to help resolve the lack of access to communications equipment. Access to and freedom of movement in Chechnya remain a challenge which the authorities and aid community continue to confront." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 1-2)

"Together with governmental, international organisation, and NGO partners, the UN considered a number of possible scenarios for the North Caucasus. While it is a truism to state that one cannot predict the future, the aid community believes that these scenarios are valid for 2003.

#### Scenario 1

The most likely scenario is a continuation of the current political, security, and socio-economic situation in the region. Human rights abuses in Chechnya will continue and the population there will continue to have emergency needs for protection, food, shelter, health, water and sanitation, education and mine action which cannot be met entirely by the authorities. Limited return movements will take place, despite the government's reconstruction programme of individual homes as well as pressure exerted on IDPs in Ingushetia to return. Some IDPs residing in tent camps in Ingushetia will gradually move to the housing sector or to settlements in the republic. About 30,000 IDPs are likely to stay permanently in Ingushetia. Administrative procedures for working in the North Caucasus could be tightened, and aid agencies would find access to and freedom of movement in Chechnya difficult.

#### Scenario 2

A less likely, but possible, scenario entails heightened political tensions in Chechnya associated with disputes over power, the foreseen referendum on the constitution, and possible presidential elections. IDPs will be expected to return but will be unwilling to do so. Some people in Chechnya, including recent returnees, will move to Ingushetia or other parts of the Russian Federation. Aid agencies will struggle considerably more with security and access.



### Scenario 3

The least likely scenario includes rapid progress towards a political accommodation in Chechnya, and a consequent return of most IDPs to Chechnya. The federal government disburses substantial financial means to the government there *inter alia* to help host returnees in Chechnya. Aid agencies would find access easier, although security problems for the population and aid workers could continue." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 13)

"The current focus on the situation of IDPs should not undermine the need to provide assistance and protection to the civilians caught in the middle of the crisis inside Chechnya, in particular 140,000 IDPs and 40,000 people who have been moving between Chechnya and Ingushetia over the past two years. The UN has progressively expanded the provision of assistance to civilians in Chechnya (WFP, for example, distributed food to 170,000 people in July 2002) and is planning to further increase it, security situation permitting. NGOs and ICRC also share this trend. By increasing its action in Chechnya, in fact, the UN will work more effectively with the governmental counterparts engaged in providing assistance and, above all, will be in a better position to advocate on protection issues." (IASC-WG 10 September 2002)

***70 percent of the work in the health sector, 60 percent of the food aid, 50 percent of the education programmes and 40 percent of the protection and shelter work targets civilians in Chechnya. (OCHA 15 August 2002)***

### **Protection activities for 2003: UNHCR takes the lead (November 2002)**

- The international community advocates for the safety of IDPs in Ingushetia
- Human rights special presidential envoy in Chechnya maintains field presence with the support of the EU, the Council of Europe and UNHCR
- UNHCR also supports local human rights NGOs who operate counselling centres in Chechnya
- UNHCR will, in close coordination with other international agencies, assist those institutions and organisations in Chechnya to ensure a safer environment for returnees and IDPs

Beneficiary Population	Number
IDPs in Ingushetia	110,000
IDPs in Chechnya	140,000
Total	250,000

### **"Objectives**

- Preserve a safe haven for IDPs in Ingushetia.
- Ensure the right of IDPs to choose their place of residence within their own country.
- Ensure the principle of voluntary return to Chechnya in safety and with dignity.
- Promote possible integration schemes for those IDPs in Ingushetia (and elsewhere) who are not able or willing to return to Chechnya.
- Assist the authorities in the protection of citizens' rights to ensure a safer environment for returnees and IDPs in Chechnya.

"The Office of the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for human and civil rights and freedoms in the Chechen Republic operates from eleven field offices in Chechnya, supported by the EU, Council of Europe (CoE), UNHCR, and OSCE. The international staff of the ICRC carries out visits to detention places in Chechnya and in the surrounding republics. Both the OSCE and CoE have an international presence in Znamenskoye in northern Chechnya. Memorial and the Collegium of Advocates are, with support from UNHCR, operating counselling centres in several locations in Chechnya, providing

legal support to IDPs, and returnees. [Memorial and the Collegium of Advocates are operating from three to nine counselling centres, respectively, in Chechnya] The number of courts of law and of appointed judges has steadily increased in 2002, but the efficiency of the civilian judiciary remains limited due to the exclusive competency of the military prosecutor's office on cases involving the military." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 19)

### **"Proposed action**

The activities described below will be conducted in Ingushetia and other North Caucasus republics either by UNHCR or governmental and non-governmental partners (see project sheet RUS-03/P01). Governmental and non-governmental partners already working in the republic will implement activities in Chechnya. Co-ordination of activities with OSCE and the CoE will be maintained. In the field of protection and promotion of International Humanitarian Law, the ICRC will continue in 2003 to work according to its working modalities and to its mandate.

#### Lobbying and promotion of the rights of IDPs, returnees and other affected populations

- UNHCR will, together with its strategic partners, continue to liaise with relevant authorities at the local, regional, and federal level in order to ensure that IDPs are granted basic rights in accordance with international norms and Russian legislation.

#### Protection monitoring and intervention

- By strengthening its own resources and partners' staff, UNHCR will facilitate a co-ordinated approach to protection issues in the region.
- By working with its implementing partners which monitor the situation, UNHCR will have an overview of the living conditions and protection situation of IDPs in Ingushetia, and will undertake timely protection interventions when required.

#### Access to legal status, documentation, registration and other civil and social entitlements

- UNHCR will support local NGOs and the Collegium of Advocates to provide legal counselling to IDPs and returnees, as well as legal representation before the courts, and access to legal documentation.
- A local UNHCR partner will disseminate public information relating to the civil and social rights and allowances of IDPs and returnees through the media in Chechnya.
- In parallel, support will be provided to enhance national mechanisms for the issuance of legal documentation to IDPs, as well as for the implementation of applicable legislation defining the status of IDPs and related rights and allowances.
- For IDPs wishing to remain permanently or temporarily in Ingushetia or elsewhere in the Russian Federation, UNHCR will continue to advocate on their behalf, seeking to legalise their residence status and avoid forced return to unsafe areas. UNHCR, in co-operation with the local authorities, will continue activities to facilitate integration of IDPs who do not wish to return to Chechnya, in Ingushetia or in other regions. Community-based activities will support and sustain integration initiatives.

#### Capacity building

- UNHCR will, in close coordination with the CoE and OSCE/ODIHR, assist those institutions and organisations in Chechnya mandated with the protection of citizens' rights, in order to ensure a safer environment for returnees and IDPs in Chechnya. This will be done by organising law refreshment courses for advocates active in Chechnya and equipping counselling centres and selected courts in Chechnya.

#### Indicators

- Return movements take place on a voluntary basis, in safety and with dignity.

- Secondary displacement is avoided to the extent possible. If unavoidable, the conditions at the new location should be better than those IDPs previously had.
- Undocumented IDPs are issued documents and IDPs are properly registered by the relevant authorities. Returnees in possession of temporary IDs are issued with permanent identity documents.
- IDPs and returnees in Chechnya receive appropriate legal counselling and have effective access to legal remedies.
- Opportunities for IDPs to integrate locally in their new place of residence remain available " (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 20-21)

**UN Agencies' financial requirements for Protection/Human Rights/Rule of Law (US\$)**

UNHCR	Sector total
3,148,391	3,148,391

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for protection-related activities (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

Danish Refugee Council (DRC) (DRC registration activities)	International Humanitarian Initiative (IHI)	Sector total
1,000,000	50,000	1,050,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

**Food aid will target up to 300,000 persons in Chechnya and Ingushetia in 2003 (November 2002)**

- Basic food rations are distributed by WFP and its implementing partners in Chechnya
- In Ingushetia WFP has been providing basic food rations to all registered IDPs from Chechnya since February 2000
- Complementary food parcels are being distributed by ICRC, the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent Society (SARCS), and Islamic Relief (IR) in camps and settlements of Ingushetia
- The objective for 2003 is to ensure that the basic nutritional needs of IDPs and of the food-insecure vulnerable population in Chechnya and Ingushetia are met
- In view of constant movement of people between Ingushetia and Chechnya, WFP will adhere to the principle 'food follows people'

Beneficiary Population	Gender and Age Breakdown			Total
	Women	Men	Children (0-16)	
IDPs in Ingushetia	34,000	28,000	48,000	110,000
Food-insecure vulnerable groups in Chechnya	50,000	41,000	52,000	143,000
School feeding and food-for-work in Chechnya (1)	9,000	6,000	22,500	37,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>122,500</b>	<b>290,500</b>

(1) Part of the 47,000 beneficiaries of school feeding are members of families receiving relief assistance; therefore, these beneficiaries are excluded in order to avoid double counting

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 25)

"Existing sources of income such as pensions and allowances are far below the requirements of households. Therefore, the provision of food aid remains of vital importance to the vulnerable groups in the region. The

government plans to provide food assistance to the IDPs in Chechnya equivalent to RUR 15 (about US \$0.47) per day per person in the TACs in Chechnya, while in Ingushetia such assistance in IDP camps and settlements has been discontinued since early 2002. However, as the document goes to print, no food has yet been provided in the TACs.

WFP has been providing food aid in the North Caucasus since the beginning of 2000. While in 2001 more than 100,000 people benefited from its assistance in Chechnya, their number in 2002 reached 160,000. Basic food rations are provided by WFP and its NGO implementing partners in seven out of ten affected raions (four in Grozny city, Groznensky (rural), Achkhoy-Martanovsky, and Sunzhensky). The school-feeding project was launched by WFP in December 2001 initially covering about 20,000 primary school children. This project was further expanded in September 2002 to cover 45,000 primary and pre-school children with supplementary hot meals. Food-for-work and institutional feeding activities, supported by WFP, involve approximately 5,000 beneficiaries in Chechnya.

As well as the food it receives from WFP, DRC currently provides food aid to over 90,000 vulnerable people in the eastern and southern regions of Chechnya. ICRC is distributing bread every second day, and sugar, oil and tea on a monthly basis to 45,000 beneficiaries in eight urban centres of the republic as well as providing dry food rations, also on a monthly basis, to 480 beneficiaries in seven institutions. Food parcels are distributed by the ICRC to 2,500 beneficiaries in TACs, and the Chechen branch of the Russian Red Cross carries out a social programme for 820 destitute people in Grozny. Action Contre La Faim (ACF) provides food aid to about 19,000 people in the southern regions of Chechnya.

In Ingushetia WFP has been providing basic food rations to all registered IDPs from Chechnya since February 2000. Since that date the number of registered IDPs from Chechnya has gradually gone down from 150,000 to 110,000. Complementary food parcels are being distributed by ICRC, the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent Society (SARCS), and Islamic Relief (IR) in camps and settlements of Ingushetia. Several international and local NGOs also run supplementary feeding projects in schools and kindergartens for IDP children.

#### Objectives

The objective is to ensure that the basic nutritional needs of IDPs and of the food-insecure vulnerable population in Chechnya and Ingushetia are met. Apart from providing relief food WFP will promote integration and self-reliance, and target supplementary feeding for children.

#### Proposed action

WFP will continue to supply basic food rations to IDPs in Ingushetia and to targeted vulnerable populations in Chechnya (see project sheet RUS-03/F01). As in the past, WFP will act as the focal point for the coordination of food aid issues with the government, ICRC and the NGO community.

In Ingushetia the present arrangement between the humanitarian food aid providers is that all IDPs are provided with basic food rations by WFP and additionally with complementary food parcels by the ICRC, SARCS and IR. This agreement will on the whole remain in place in the coming year. From spring 2003, the ICRC plans to target vulnerable IDPs living in Ingushetia more specifically, according to both social and economic criteria. This will cover 45,000 most vulnerable IDPs based on the following social criteria: large families, single mothers, handicapped people, orphans, and certain households with elderly or chronically ill persons. The SARCS will provide food for 5,000 beneficiaries and IR's caseload will be about 13,000.

The enormous needs in Chechnya have determined the application of a geographic targeting approach in the provision of food aid by WFP and other agencies. Out of the 460,000 vulnerable population (60% of 785,000 total population of the republic - source: DRC), WFP will assist 180,500 beneficiaries while the

remaining 280,000 will be covered by ICRC, ACF, DRC, and IR. Both bulk food and complementary food parcel distributions, put together, enable the most vulnerable to cover their basic needs.

WFP will provide basic food assistance to 143,000 food-insecure vulnerable people in the central parts of the republic, which are heavily affected by the hostilities.

Under the school feeding programme, WFP will support 47,000 children (45,500 primary school children and 1,500 pre-school age children). WFP will also carry out food-for-work activities such as the rehabilitation of schools, kindergartens, and hospitals, street cleaning and tree planting.

WFP relief food assistance will be delivered and distributed in Chechnya by DRC, IR, and People in Need Foundation (PINF). School feeding and food-for-work activities will be implemented by the above mentioned NGOs, as well as by Caritas Internationalis, CPCD, and the Chechen Refugee and Displaced Persons Council (CRDPC).

Other agencies will continue their food aid mainly in the areas which are not targeted by WFP. DRC will supply food aid to 198,000 members of the most vulnerable households in seven raions of the eastern and southern regions. DRC's beneficiaries will be divided into categories depending on the degree of their uncovered food needs and the rations will be adjusted accordingly. ICRC is planning to continue its bread and sugar, oil, salt, and tea programme in the urban area for 55,000 persons. Economic criteria, which allow better identification of the most vulnerable, will progressively replace social criteria. ICRC will also carry out at least two distributions of non-food items, together with ten kg of sugar for food preservation, to 55,000 beneficiaries in the rural areas. The ICRC will distribute dry food to seven institutions and the most vulnerable TAC residents shall be referred to the bread and sugar, oil, salt, and tea distribution project. ACF will continue operating in the southern mountainous region of the republic assisting 19,000 beneficiaries. Those beneficiaries will receive dry rations once every three months. ACF's institutional feeding project will cover 1,500 patients and children per month throughout the republic. IR intends to support about 2,000 households with its food aid.

In view of constant movement of people between Ingushetia and Chechnya, and a possible return of IDPs after the spring of 2003, WFP will adhere to the principle 'food follows people'.

In 2003, the total WFP food requirement for emergency assistance to 290,500 beneficiaries is 34,011 MT. In order to purchase the above quantity of food and to cover transport and other costs WFP requires US \$15.7 million. Donors are encouraged to provide cash contributions that will allow WFP to procure the bulk of food supplies in local markets thus reducing transportation costs and delivery time." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 25-27)

**UN Agencies' financial requirements for Food (US\$)**

WFP	Sector total
15,718,320	15,718,320

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for food programmes (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	HELP	International Humanitarian Initiative (IHI)	Sector total
5,000,000	240,000	50,000	5,290,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

*See also:*

- *European Commission (Humanitarian Aid Office – ECHO), “Northern Caucasus: Commission grants EUR 3 million in aid for victims of the conflict in Chechnya”, 8 January 2003 [Internet]*
- *WFP, Project No. 10128.0, Emergency Food Assistance to Conflict Affected Internally Displaced Persons and Vulnerable Households in the North Caucasus, 1 January to 31 December 2003 [Internet]*

**International community supports camp maintenance and housing reconstruction (November 2002)**

- International community wants to ensure basic, warm and dry accommodation for IDPs and returnees
- UNCHR plans to assist 6,000 IDP or returnee families in Chechnya
- Basic shelter assistance will be provided by UNHCR to ensure that IDPs who wish to settle permanently in Ingushetia have adequate living conditions

<b>Beneficiary Population in Ingushetia</b>	
Type of accommodation	Number of IDPs
Camps	23,070
Settlements	27,427
Host families	59,503
<b>Total</b>	<b>110,000</b>

<b>Beneficiary Population In Chechnya</b>	
Shelter: returnees or IDPs	6,000 families or 24,000 people

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 31)

**"Objectives**

Ingushetia

- Camps and settlements will be such that people live in warm, dry, weatherproof, safe, sanitary, and hygienic conditions.
- Proposed relocation sites will be monitored so that IDPs are provided with better living conditions than those currently available.
- Where the potential for more permanent settlement exists, shelter conditions will be adapted, and advice given to IDPs on how to handle their shelter needs themselves.
- Accurate data on the shelter and living conditions of IDPs in targeted camps and communities will be regularly updated.
- Integration activities will be further developed together with the Ingush authorities.

Chechnya

- Returnees receive adequate shelter, and vulnerable IDPs and returnees get NFIs.

**Proposed action**

UNHCR will continue to coordinate the shelter sector. ICRC will manage non-food item coordination. In exploring more solutions, UNHCR will continue to support, mediate, and liaise between beneficiaries,

NGOs, and local government partners to promote the shelter-related rights of IDPs. These rights include registration and access to acceptable shelter and living standards and physical safety (to be provided by the government) in camps and other places of residence. In 2003, basic shelter assistance will be provided by UNHCR to ensure that IDPs who wish to settle permanently in Ingushetia have adequate living conditions [...]. In 2003 ICRC plans regular NFI assistance and seasonal input for 55,000 most vulnerable people in rural areas identified by community leaders (hygienic kits, bed linen, plastic sheeting for greenhouses, metal buckets, sugar for preserves, summer and winter shoes, and clothes for children). In Dagestan, ICRC will provide NFI and seasonal input for 5,000 IDPs.

- Partner organisations will upgrade temporary settlements in Ingushetia.
- Alternative accommodation will be provided to IDPs evicted from host families, or relocated from existing tent camps.
- UNHCR's implementing partners will assist the most vulnerable IDP families returning to Chechnya by providing basic building materials as well as box-tents where required.
- IDPs who wish to reside permanently in Ingushetia have opportunities to integrate.

**Indicators**

- All IDPs in Ingushetia have basic, warm, dry accommodation.
- Evicted families and possible new arrivals have alternative shelter in Ingushetia.
- Families relocated will benefit from improved living conditions.
- Returnees to Chechnya can live in warm, dry conditions while repairing their homes."

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 32)

**UN Agencies' financial requirements for Shelter and Non-Food items (US\$)**

UNHCR	Sector total
2,019,263	2,019,263

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for Shelter and Non-Food items (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	HELP	International Humanitarian Initiative (IHI)	International Medical Corps (IMC)	International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Mercy Corps	People in Need Foundation (PINF)	Sector total
2,000,000	1,121,400	200,000	300,000	632,256	1,250,000	73,741	5,577,397

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

**WHO coordinates 2003 health programmes in Ingushetia and Chechnya (November 2002)**

- WHO will continue to coordinate activities in the health sector with local and federal health authorities
- Epidemiological surveillance system will be further promoted
- UNICEF will continue to support immunization programmes in Ingushetia and Chechnya
- Primary health care will also be promoted with the support of the ICRC and other NGOs involved
- UNICEF will shift its focus on mother and child health to Chechnya
- Work of the psychosocial support network for children traumatized by hostilities and displacement will be intensified

Beneficiary Population	Number
IDPs in Ingushetia	110,000
Residents in Ingushetia	350,000
IDPs in Chechnya	140,000
Residents in Chechnya	660,000
Total	1,260,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 37)

### Objectives

In order to help achieve an adequate level of health care for the affected population and to ensure the qualitative development of health care, the international humanitarian community will continue to focus on:

- coordinating the international humanitarian health assistance with local services as well as providing essential support to the existing health care facilities to improve the capacity of preventive and medical care in primary health and hospital care;
- promoting the skills of local health care providers to improve the quality of care with special emphasis on primary health care, family and community practices; and
- developing and promoting strategies and effective tools to increase the health awareness of the general population, including care-seeking behaviour for selected conditions of public health importance, and home management of common diseases and nutrition.

The above objectives hold true for both republics but with priority for assistance to the rehabilitation of health services in Chechnya.

### Proposed action

WHO will continue to coordinate activities in the health sector, emphasizing active partnership, operational information sharing and mutual technical support in the management of priority health issues, including gender considerations (see project sheet RUS-03/H01). WHO will seek to improve interaction with federal and local Chechen health authorities, to get reliable information on rehabilitation processes, to make technical assistance more targeted and to replicate good practices achieved in Ingushetia.

Especially in Chechnya, WHO will further promote the epidemiological surveillance system, by training staff in registration and referral and by strengthening data management and support of SES laboratories to ensure a timely response to prevent disease outbreak (see project sheet RUS-03/H02). The TB control programme in Ingushetia will enter its second year of implementation and health staff in Chechnya will be trained in TB case management and the follow up of treatment (see project sheet RUS-03/H03). In the HIV/STI area, assuming the commitment of local authorities, WHO will initiate activities to strengthen knowledge and appropriate skills in disease detection and care (see project sheet RUS-03/H04). Together with UNICEF, using its expertise gained in pilot projects in Russia, public awareness will be raised to prevent the spread of HIV infection.

UNICEF, in close collaboration with WHO and the respective Ministries of Health, will continue to support the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) with basic equipment and consumables in Ingushetia and by refurbishing secondary and tertiary level immunisation structures in Chechnya (see project sheet RUS-03/H05).

WHO, in partnership with UNICEF and NGOs, will promote the primary health care (PHC) approach to management of the most common diseases, stressing a rational use of drugs, particularly donated essential drugs (see project sheet RUS-03/H06). In 2003, the ICRC intends to double its input in rehabilitating medical infrastructures by providing water, heating and sewage disposal for several locations. The ICRC



intends to continue supporting primary health care and providing free medicine in primary care. These efforts will be coordinated with the MoH as well as the other NGOs involved in such projects. As part of PHC, family and community involvement is essential to ensure optimal care for mothers, new-borns and older children. Information, skills and motivation to sustain new practices are to be adapted to local conditions (see project sheet RUS-03/H07). Health services, based on a holistic approach, should become more accessible, responsive and friendly.

UNICEF will shift its focus on Mother and Child Health (MCH) care to Chechnya, with the procurement of infant starter kits and participation in the basic rehabilitation of selected maternity and paediatric facilities [...]. In Ingushetia the organisation will continue its community level sensitisation programme aimed at improving IDP mothers' awareness of their children's health and nutrition.

WHO will coordinate activities in the area of psychosocial rehabilitation and the provision of training to NGOs. It will also provide technical advice and therapeutic material to NGOs while stressing the priority of psychosocial rehabilitation inside communities by training parents, teachers and counsellors. WHO will collaborate with leading Russian institutes to promote specialized training on psychiatry and clinical psychology for specialists in Chechnya. UNICEF, in collaboration with selected partners, will intensify the work of the psychosocial support network for children traumatised by hostilities and displacement [...]. Donated supplies will be monitored during visits to Grozny and by NGOs working in Chechnya. (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 38-39)

**UN Agencies' financial requirements for Health (US\$)**

UNICEF	WHO	Sector total
965,000	2,391,000	3,356,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for health programmes (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

Handicap International (HI)	International Humanitarian Initiative (IHI)	International Medical Corps (IMC)	People In Need Foundation (PINF)	World Vision (WVI)	Sector total
546,000	350,000	1,200,000	125,023	500,000	2,721,023

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

*For more details on WHO programmes in Northern Caucasus, see ["Review of WHO Humanitarian Programs in North Caucasus \(Russian Federation\), 24 October – 12 November 2002"](#) [Internet]*

**Water and sanitation in 2003: international action focuses on Ingushetia and Grozny (November 2002)**

- The overall objective is to make available water and sanitation (toilets, showers, waste removal, etc.) facilities in Ingushetia and Chechnya
- The International Rescue Committee coordinates international water and sanitation programmes in Ingushetia
- UNICEF and the Polish Humanitarian Organisation will continue to support the water production and distribution, garbage and sewage collection in Grozny
- International Rescue Committee also plans to support the rehabilitation of water lines in Grozny

Beneficiary population	Number
IDPs in Ingushetia	110,000

Residents in Ingushetia	350,000
Residents in Grozny	70,000
Total	530,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 45)

## "Objectives

To make available water and sanitation (toilets, showers, waste removal, etc.) facilities in Ingushetia and Chechnya (selected sites in Grozny) in order to avoid health risks.

## Proposed Action

### Ingushetia

The programme, coordinated by IRC, will be implemented in collaboration with the Ingush Government, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, ICRC, IRC, and IR.

UNICEF will continue to distribute soap (toilet, anti-bacterial and laundry) to the IDP population still living in camps and in settlements. UNICEF will also distribute chloramide powder for environmental disinfection to health facilities providing services to IDPs, and external use anti-parasitic treatments for personal hygiene to IDPs.

ICRC will continue to truck water. It is also planning to work in small settlements on the removal of garbage and the construction of shower facilities. ICRC will then try to connect water bladders and shower facilities to the existing water lines.

IRC will also keep trucking water, using the water trucks provided for by UNHCR [...]. Construction and installation of shower facilities and latrines, and of water points will be conducted throughout the year. Sewage removal from latrines constructed by IRC and by other NGOs will continue as well. Garbage containers will be installed. To service the increasing number of garbage containers and constructed latrines, the number of garbage and sewage trucks will also be increased. IRC will continue to maintain all facilities (latrines, showers, water points and water bladders) provided by the IRC water and sanitation team.

ACF will continue to construct baths, latrines and connectors to the existing water lines. ACF will also try to increase water tanks in those settlements where IRC is not working. IR will continue to distribute hygienic kits in selected tent camps.

### Chechnya

UNICEF, with the PHO, will support and improve the water production and distribution programme in Grozny. UNICEF and PHO will continue to improve the sanitation programme, collecting about 40 MTs of garbage and sewage daily from garbage drums and latrines specifically installed for this purpose. Training in the use of incinerators for medical wastes and the distribution of chloramide powder to schools and hospitals is part of this programme as well [...].

WHO will provide training and conduct public education campaigns on drinking water quality control, protection and management of drinking water resources. Drinking water testing kits will be procured for both Ingushetia and Chechnya.

IRC will cooperate with Vodokanal on the rehabilitation of water lines in Grozny, and will keep working on the connection of constructed concrete reservoirs with the existing and operating water lines. Maintenance of constructed latrines will be ensured. IRC will install garbage containers, starting with

hospitals and schools. IRC in Grozny is planning to conduct garbage and sewage removal by renting garbage and sewage trucks in order to prevent the outbreak of diseases. It will also procure chlorine for sanitary treatment of constructed latrines.

#### Indicators

- At least 15 litres of water per person per day are provided, and water tests indicate low risk of faecal or other contamination.
- The number of water and sanitation facilities upgraded for longer-term use.
- There is at least one water point per 250 people.
- Public toilets are in place and function correctly.
- There is a maximum of twenty people per toilet.
- Domestic and medical refuse is removed from the settlements or buried on site before it becomes a nuisance or a health risk.
- Public hygiene facilities are used appropriately and equitably.
- Number of schools and health facilities in Grozny with access to potable water and safe latrines and served by the garbage and sewage collection system." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 46-47)

#### UN Agencies' financial requirements for Health (US\$)

UNHCR	UNICEF	Sector total
399,362	1,008,000	1,407,362

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

#### NGO financial requirements for health programmes (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)

International Humanitarian Initiative (IHI)	International Medical Corps (IMC)	International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Sector total
200,000	300,000	488,286	988,286

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

#### Education programmes for 2003: UNICEF will target up to 300,000 children in Ingushetia and Chechnya (November 2002)

- UNICEF will continue to support alternative schools for IDP children in Ingushetia
- Recreational, sport and cultural projects for IDP children and young people will also be strengthened
- In Chechnya, UNICEF school rehabilitation programmes will be pursued
- Child Friendly Spaces in Grozny will also be supported

Beneficiary Population	Numbers
IDP children in Ingushetia (age 3 – 17)	40,000
IDP and resident children in Chechnya (age 3 - 17)	265,000
Total	305,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 51)

"Within the framework of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which defines education as one of the primary needs for all children, UNICEF and its partners will:

- Increase primary and secondary school enrolment rates of IDP children in Ingushetia and of resident children in Chechnya.
- Decrease vulnerability to involvement in dangerous and illegal activities by increasing the availability of safe recreational facilities and by improving vocational skills among IDP children and adolescents in Ingushetia and resident children and adolescents in Chechnya.
- Decrease stress among IDP women and children in Ingushetia and among women and children in Chechnya by reactivating and strengthening day-care and pre-school facilities.

**Proposed action**

UNICEF's strategic approach is based on its close collaboration with the Ministries of Education in the Republics of Ingushetia and Chechnya, and makes use of partner NGOs' capacities to implement projects and activities directly involving the local IDP and resident communities. UNICEF's office in Nazran will continue its coordinating role, and the organisation will keep acting as collector and supplier of information on school-and pre-school facilities.

UNICEF will continue to support the network of alternative schools providing enrolment to IDP children in Ingushetia. In 2003 more focus will be on those children who complete their formal education before the 11th year. UNICEF and its partners will focus on those 'dropouts' who missed years of education during the conflicts and displacements, trying to bring them back to the school system. UNICEF will keep providing alternative IDP schools and regular schools hosting IDP children in Ingushetia with textbooks, school consumables and recreational materials. UNICEF will also look into making access to alternative schools easier for handicapped IDP children [...].

In collaboration with its partners, UNICEF will strengthen the network of recreational, sport and cultural projects for IDP children and young people, increase its efforts in the development and management of pre-school facilities catering for IDP children and support vocational training for IDP adolescents. All these activities will be developed with a special focus on gender aspects offering alternative options to boys and girls. Together with these risk and stress reducing activities, UNICEF will keep supporting summer recreational activities for IDP children.

In Chechnya, UNICEF will continue its school rehabilitation programme, contributing to the restoration of up to fifteen schools which have only limited damage. As well as providing these schools with furniture and materials, UNICEF will try to develop, in collaboration with partners, sport and recreational facilities in the same infrastructures [...].

In Grozny, in collaboration with Caritas Internationalis, UNICEF will continue to support and strengthen the existing network of Child Friendly Spaces, offering the only safe haven for a few hundred vulnerable children in town and therefore providing the parents and caregivers with the chance to earn some money." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 52-53)

**UN Agencies' financial requirements for Education (US\$)**

UNICEF	Sector total
3,253,000	3,253,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for education programmes (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

International Initiative (IHI)	Humanitarian	International Rescue Committee	Mercy Corps	Polish Humanitarian	People in Need Foundation	World Vision	Sector total
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	(IRC)		Organisatio n (PHO)			
200,000	317,560	70,00 0	120,000	275,689	1,117,00 0	2,100,24 9

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

### **Mine action: reduce number of victims through mine awareness (November 2002)**

- Agencies involved in mine action includes UNICEF, WHO, together with the ICRC and NGOs
- Main areas of activities are mine awareness and physical and psychosocial rehabilitation assistance
- Mine risk reduction education will target IDP children in Ingushetia and all children in Chechnya

Beneficiary Population	Number
School-attending children in Chechnya	200,000
School-attending children in Ingushetia	19,000
Mine/UXO affected children and women	4,000
Total	223,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 57)

### **Objectives**

- To reduce deaths and injuries from landmines and UXO by raising mine awareness and encouraging safe behaviour among IDP children in Ingushetia and all children in schools in Chechnya.
- To ensure physical and psychosocial rehabilitation of mine/UXO affected children and youth and promote their socio-economic reintegration through education and sports.
- To ensure proper data gathering by organisations, and IMSMA database management in order to use data to coordinate and fine-tune programme activities.

### **Proposed Action**

UNICEF and WHO, with the ICRC, local and international NGOs, will continue enhancing protection by educating the population about the danger of mines/UXO, and assisting them in their physical and psychosocial rehabilitation. UNICEF will continue coordinating mine awareness programme (MAP) activities [...].

#### ***Mine awareness/mine risk reduction education***

200,000 schoolchildren in Chechnya will take the core course in mine action, reinforced by mine awareness interactive presentations by [Voice of the Mountains] instructors at schools. UNICEF and its partners will continue mine awareness presentations for IDP children living with host families in Ingushetia. UNICEF, the ICRC, and DRC will develop, produce, and distribute materials and tools such as posters and radio clips containing mine awareness messages to 'refresh' the population's mine awareness knowledge and increase its vigilance.

#### ***Victim/survivor assistance***

UNICEF and WHO will provide prosthetic-orthopaedic assistance to children and adults at the Vladikavkaz workshop. UNICEF will increase the workshop's capacity and will continue distributing assistive devices. The two agencies will ensure that the workshop's prostheses are safe and durable, and can be maintained and repaired there. WHO will continue financing reconstructive surgery for defective stumps. HI will

conduct a series of joint workshops with WHO for surgeons and nurses, and with UNICEF on distribution of assistive devices and their maintenance. UNICEF will support child mine victims' rehabilitation, including physiotherapy, massage, and ultrasound diagnostics at the centre in Vladikavkaz.

UNICEF will provide group and individual counselling at the prosthetic workshop and rehabilitation centre; a counsellor will also work at camp B in Ingushetia. Heavily traumatised children will be seen at the psychological centre in Vladikavkaz. WHO will support psychological counselling in Grozny's centre for disabled children and adolescents.

The UNICEF Vocational Training Programme will continue in Grozny. Groups of thirty adolescent mine victims will undertake computing and English courses for three-month periods. The micro-project of football for adolescent amputees will continue in Grozny for fifteen child mine victims, complementing the ICRC's 'Sport in a Box' project promoting safe play areas for children in Chechnya.

**Information gathering and data analysis**

UNICEF will strengthen coordination with the ICRC, and with data gathering organisations, in order to increase the number of entries into the IMSMA database. UNICEF will organise follow-up training for the staff responsible for the management of the database." (UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 58-59)

**UN Agencies' financial requirements for mine action (US\$)**

UNICEF	WHO	Sector total
625,000	80,000	705,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for mine action programmes (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Sector total
1,000,000	1,000,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

**Economic recovery and infrastructure in 2003: UNDP supports transitional recovery process (November 2002)**

- UNDP is planning to support the integration of IDPs who want to stay in Ingushetia through vocational training, microcredit, and assistance to small enterprises
- Other projects will provide support to those who want to return to Chechnya, through vocational training and community mobilisation
- Proposed action for 2003 also include capacity building programmes for NGOs

"UNDP's strategy is two-pronged: one focuses on the immediate needs of people affected by the hostilities, and the other addresses, over the medium term, the broader regional poverty reduction and development needs. Programme emphasis will be on transitional recovery in Chechnya, Ingushetia, and North Ossetia. UNHCR will work in close collaboration with UNDP and focus on the provision of shelter wherever integration in Ingushetia is possible. UNDP will provide methodologies to conduct small economic development surveys.

DRC, Hilfswerk, and Mercy Corps will continue to support small and medium size income generating activities by providing small equipment and agricultural input grants, as well as vocational training or subsidised micro-credits, both in Ingushetia and Chechnya, and will focus on the needs of vulnerable disabled persons.

## Objectives

To support a) the Ingush authorities' endeavours to integrate IDPs who are unlikely to return to Chechnya; b) the economic recovery of people who are likely to return and reintegrate in their place of residence in Chechnya; and c) capacity building of local institutions and communities, primarily non-governmental.

## Proposed action [...]

Support the integration of those IDPs who choose to stay in Ingushetia by enhancing their economic self-reliance:

- A skills survey of the beneficiary population and a parallel survey of income generation potentials and local demands and shortages of specific skills.
- Vocational training and establishment of a micro-credit enterprise giving priority to vulnerable populations in the community.
- Assistance to small private sector enterprises with resource mobilization and investments that will create employment for vulnerable groups.
- Microfinance programme established and functioning.

Preparation for the return to and reintegration in Chechnya of those IDPs who wish to do so, when security improves:

- A skills survey of IDPs in Ingushetia and Chechnya.
- Targeted vocational training programmes.
- Mobilize and provide training for community based associations among the IDPs that will help increase their self-help capacity and coping mechanisms; assist such associations to formulate, and mobilize resources for, specific self-help projects.
- Mobilize local enterprises and identify income generating potential which would produce employment with modest investment of resources; mobilize and empower community based associations to strengthen self-help capacity and coping strategies.

Strengthen the capacities of people affected by the hostilities.

- Provision of technical assistance to vulnerable individuals, local NGOs and communities for the preparation of business plans and programme proposals; facilitation of resource mobilization from international sources for their business plans and specific projects.
- Establish databases on NGO activities and capacities; advocate for local NGO - local and regional authority - international community partnerships.
- Capacity building and skills development training of local NGO representatives including Sphere Training to government and local NGO representatives.

## Indicators

- Number and percentage of IDPs and surrounding families undergoing training activities.
- Number, employment opportunities, and turnover of newly created enterprises.
- Number of business plans and proposals presented to micro-credit institutions."

(UNOCHA November 2002, pp. 63-65)

## UN Agencies' financial requirements for economic recovery and infrastructure (US\$)

UNDP	Sector total
780,000	780,000

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 3)

**NGO financial requirements for economic recovery and infrastructure (The amounts requested do not constitute part of the UN appeal) (US\$)**

Danish Council	Refugee	HELP	Handicap International (HI)	International Medical Corps (IMC)	Mercy Corps	People in Need Foundation (PINF)	Sector total
	1,000,000	180,000	179,000	200,000	830,000	111,312	2,500,312

(UNOCHA November 2002, p. 4)

**Assistance scheme for host families in Ingushetia (2001-2003)**

- The Swiss humanitarian agency implements a programme of cash payment to about 11,000 host families

"During the winter of 2001-2002 the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA, part of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation within the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs) repeated its cash for shelter programme (CfSh) with UNHCR. Host families who provided shelter to IDPs from Chechnya on a private basis received retroactive, unconditional compensation of the equivalent of US \$100 via the postal system in Ingushetia. Some 11,000 host families benefited from the programme by the end of June 2002.

In addition, SHA financed various projects for vulnerable people in Ingushetia and Chechnya. Moreover, in North-Ossetia, SHA has supported medical facilities with equipment and staff training. These initiatives are planned to continue in 2003." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 16)

*See also "Swiss assistance for displaced Chechens in Ingushetia : Support for 16,000 host families", Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, 10 December 2001 [Internet]*

**UN human rights mechanisms address human rights violations in Chechnya (2000-2002)**

- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights visited Chechnya in March 2000
- The UN Human Rights Commission adopted a resolution regarding the situation in Chechnya in 2000 and 2001
- This resolution was not adopted again in 2002
- In 2002, UN monitoring committees criticized Russia for failing to hold accountable perpetrators of violence against women and torture in Chechnya
- In June 2002, Olara Otunnu, the U.N. secretary-general's special representative for children and armed conflict visited Chechnya
- The visit of the UN Representative on IDPs have been postponed for security reasons

"In late March [2000], U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson traveled to the area after an earlier refusal for her request for a visit sparked an international outcry. Robinson became the first senior international official to acknowledge receiving evidence of summary executions, torture, and rape. Although Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov at the end of the trip told Robinson she was welcome to visit Chechnya again in a few months, a formal invitation had not yet been extended at the time of writing.

*[Statement by the High Commissioner for Human Rights: "Situation of Human Rights in Chechnya in the Russian Federation", 5 April 2000 [Internet]]*



[In April 2000,][t]he U.N. Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution criticizing Russia for violations of human rights in Chechnya-the first time a resolution was adopted regarding a permanent member of the Security Council. The resolution, among other things, called on the Russian government to establish 'according to recognized international standards' a national commission of inquiry and mandate five special mechanisms of the Human Rights Commission to visit Chechnya and report to the commission and the General Assembly." (HRW December 2000, p. 318)

*See Commission on Human Rights:*

- *Resolution 2001/24 'Situation in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation', E/CN.4/RES/2001/24, 20 April 2001 [Internet]*
- *Resolution 2000/58, 'Situation in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation', E/CN.4/RES/2000/58, 25 April 2000 [Internet]*

"[In January 2002], the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women criticized Russia for failing to conduct proper investigations into, or hold perpetrators accountable for, rape and other sexual violence against women in the armed conflict in Chechnya. The committee urged Russia to investigate and punish sexual violence against women and girls in custody, adopt human rights education programs for the armed forces, and implement swift disciplinary measures for military and law enforcement personnel.

For the first time in three sessions, Russia escaped formal criticism of its conduct in Chechnya at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. A resolution, brought to a vote when European Union-led negotiations about a consensus-based chairman's statement failed, was narrowly defeated.

The Committee against Torture considered Russia's third period report in May. It expressed deep concern over 'numerous and consistent allegations of widespread torture ...by law enforcement personnel,' reports of widespread hazing and other forms of torture and ill-treatment in the armed forces, a 'persistent pattern of impunity' for torture, and reports of torture and ill-treatment in Chechnya. It recommended a series of steps to address these problems, including incorporating the definition of torture into domestic law.

In June, Olara Otunnu, the U.N. secretary-general's special representative for children and armed conflict visited Chechnya. Following his trip, he stated that more than three thousand children had died as a result of the conflict and that many more were falling victim to landmines. He called on both sides of the conflict to end the use of landmines, and on Russia to observe the principle of voluntary return of displaced persons, approximately half of whom were children. The Russian government on several occasions canceled long-overdue visits by the special rapporteur on violence against women and the representative of the secretary-general on internally displaced people, citing security concerns. The Russian government again failed to invite the special rapporteurs on torture and extrajudicial executions to visit Chechnya." (HRW 2002, Russian Federation)

*See "Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons call on the Russian Authorities to observe the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement", UN Press Release, 20 December 1999 [Internet]*

### **Measures taken by UN agencies to strengthen monitoring of humanitarian action in North Caucasus (2000)**

- UN follows a three-step approach for its humanitarian action inside Chechnya: security assessment - needs assessment - delivery of aid via local authorities and NGOs

- The UN increased the number of its international and local staff *in situ* in the region and created several partnerships with experienced local and international NGOs, shifting from a 'remote control' mode to one of a more active presence
- Other measures include: creation of a special monitoring group, monitoring coordination by sector, creation of a database to manage output and beneficiary based information, adoption of a common approach to use selected indicators

"The UN wishes to highlight that humanitarian action inside Chechnya called for programmes being based on assessed needs and all parties respecting the independence, impartiality, and neutrality of humanitarian programmes. While the UN will continue its three-step approach, i.e. security assessment - needs assessment - delivery of aid via local authorities and NGOs, this will now be increasingly supplemented by two initiatives. First, the establishment of partnerships with experienced international NGOs, whereby the UN and NGOs work together on assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Second, paying increased attention to capacity building of local staff so that the provision of assistance can continue if international assistance has to step back from the region." (UN July 2000, sect. 3.1.3)

"Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of activities is of fundamental importance to the UN as it helps to ensure the appropriate use of resources. It also ensures UN accountability to beneficiaries and donor governments. Much has been achieved during the first seven months of this operation to improve monitoring. The UN increased the number of its international and local staff *in situ* and created several partnerships with experienced local and international NGOs. The operation has continued to shift from a 'remote control' mode to one of a more active presence. Strategic monitoring of the overall context and programme, mostly undertaken at the Moscow level via the UN Humanitarian Coordinator and agency country representatives, has become a regular feature. Together these efforts ensure a better understanding of the evolving situation's effects on vulnerable populations, including IDPs and host families, as well as of the coverage and effectiveness of the humanitarian response. The quality, number, and frequency of reports became more consistent.

The UN is now taking additional measures to strengthen monitoring. First, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, supported by OCHA, will chair a special monitoring group which will meet once per month to review this programme's overall goals. Second, the agencies, which are focal points for sectors, have assumed responsibility for monitoring the goals and objectives that are relevant to their sectors. Third, the UN will create a comprehensive database to manage output and beneficiary based information and OCHA will issue monthly 'UN Monitoring' reports. Fourth, UN Agencies will aim to agree on a common approach to use selected indicators by which to measure the effectiveness of its programmes." (UN July 2000, sect. 3.2.4)

### **FEWER reviews objectives of UN and government policy in Northern Caucasus (2001)**

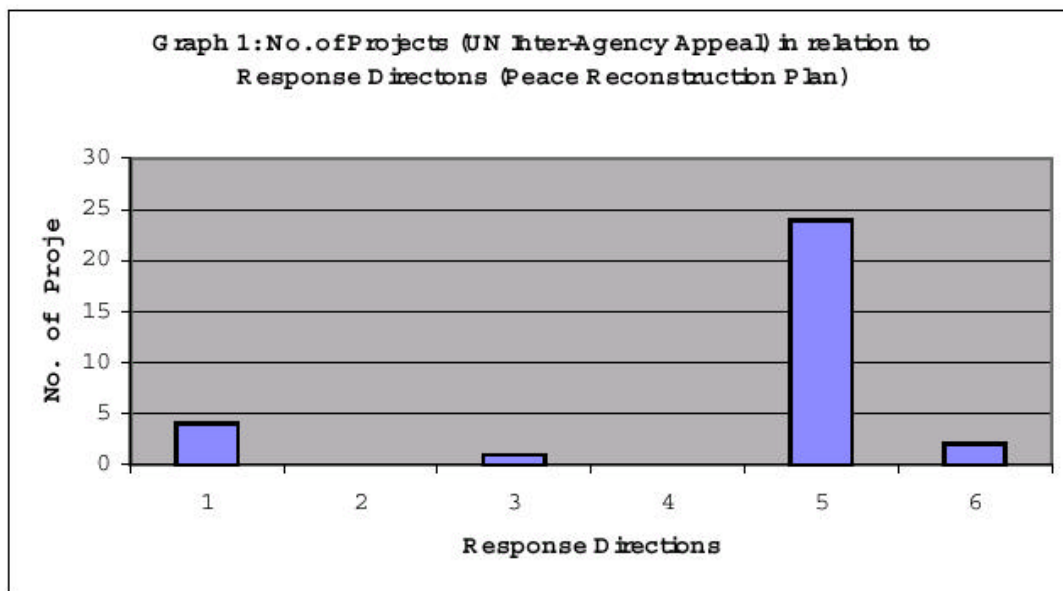
- There has been a downward trend in donor interest
- Agriculture and economic recovery sectors did not receive any support and were therefore not implemented in 2001
- Little or no progress was achieved in the political settlement of the conflict, the establishment of effective and transparent reconstruction mechanisms, and the creation of adequate security and human rights conditions

"The donor response to the *The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the Northern Caucasus (Russian Federation)* has been uneven. First, there was a downward trend in donor interest, reflecting changing donor priorities. Second, because the agriculture and economic recovery sectors did not receive any support, projects in these sectors were not implemented in 2001. While the survival of population was not affected by this, the projects planned under these sectors could have played an important role in providing

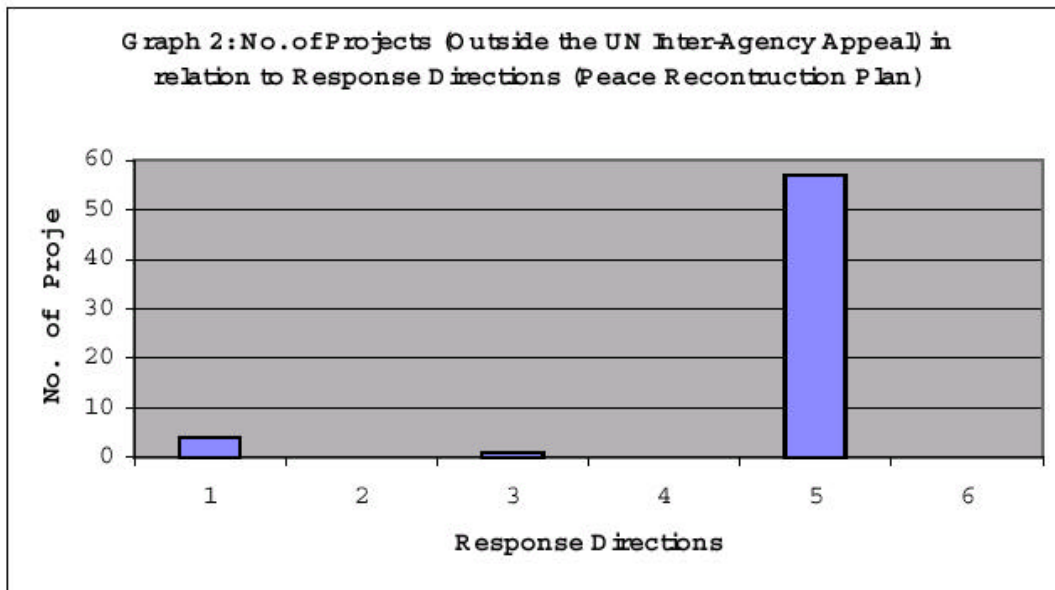
civilians in need with alternative means of subsistence, and provided in some measure a basis for temporary integration thereby reducing tensions and lowering reliance on humanitarian assistance.i The 2002 Appeal seeks \$31,946,549: including \$780,000 for projects on economic recovery and infrastructure, \$2,268,271 on protection/human rights/rule of law, and \$1,118,500 on agriculture, addressing the above concern.

A brief analysis of how the projects implemented in the region correspond to the Response Directions identified in the Plan follows below:

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the North Caucasus (Russian Federation) spent a total of \$37,871,324 (as of 5 February 2002) on 30 projects in the region in 2001. Of these, 24 projects (89,44% of funds) focused on *providing humanitarian aid for civilians, IDPs or refugees*, addressing Response Direction 5. Only 1 project (2,5%) addressed Response Direction 3 aiming to *optimise coordination between humanitarian actors in the region*, 2 (3%) focused on *Security* (Response Direction 6) and 4 (5,5%) – addressed Response Direction 1, *instituting job-creation schemes and educational programmes*.

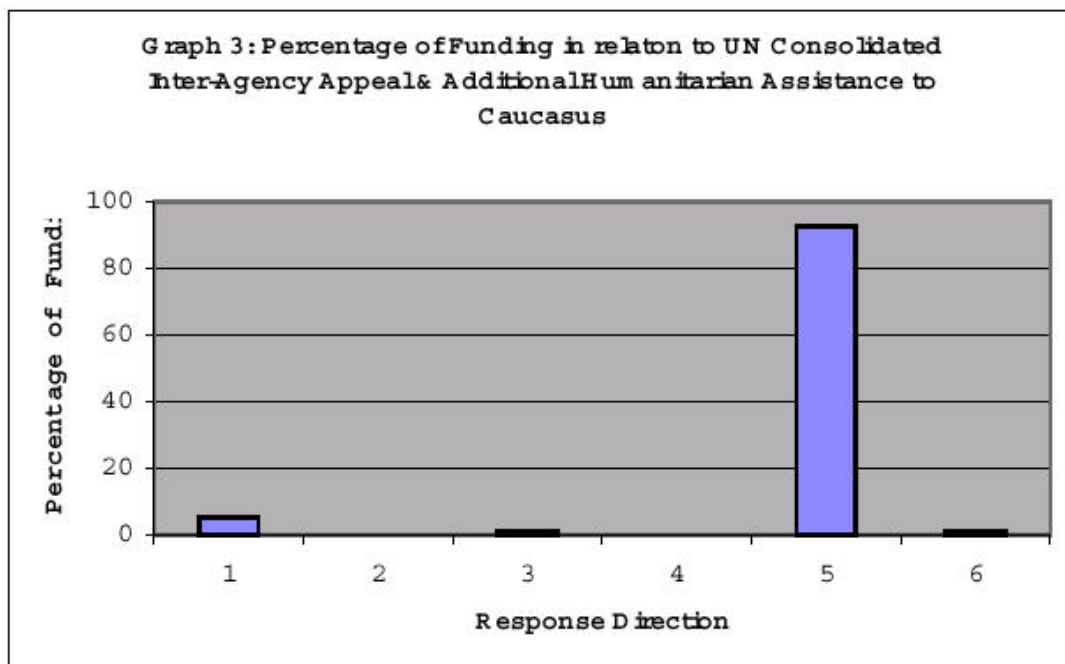


Additional Humanitarian Assistance for the Northern Caucasus (Russian Federation) was \$41,962,547 (as of December 2001). Of the 62 projects, four with 4,6% of the total funds spent, addressed Response Direction 1, Job creation and education schemes. Only one project (0,04%) addressed the Response Direction 3, Media and transparency of reconstruction and settlement efforts. The rest of the projects addressed Response Direction 5 Providing humanitarian aid for civilians, IDPs or refugees, accounting 95,4% of the funds spent.



The 3rd graph demonstrates, that funding in the North Caucasus is predominantly focused on projects aimed to meet the basic needs of civilians, IDPs and refugees (92,5% of funds). Only few projects were oriented on Job creation and educational schemes (5,2%) addressing Response Direction 1, Transparency regarding settlement efforts – Response Direction 3 (1,2% of the total funds spent); and Security, addressing Response Direction 6 (1,1% of the total funds spent).

Response Direction 2 (Initiate a Political Settlement Process) and Response Direction 4 the Autonomy of Chechnya) were not addressed by any of the projects analysed.



The government of Russia is implementing the Programme on Restoring the Economy and the social Sector of the Chechen Republic, approved on 25 January 2001 with a total budget of 14.4 billion roubles (\$496,5 million) of which \$155,1 million was allocated from the federal budget and the rest was to come from off-budget sources. According to the Foreign Ministry Press and Information Department ii , 2 billion roubles (\$68,9 million) of budgetary funds has been transferred in early 2001 with another 1,5 billion roubles (\$51,7 million) allocated in August-September 2001. A federal state unitary enterprise Directorate for Construction and Rehabilitation Works in the Chechen Republic has been established within the State Committee for Construction (Gosstroj) of Russia. On 23 August 2001, the government endorsed a similar support programme for 2002 and subsequent years. The governmental programme addressed mostly the economic reconstruction, transportation, fuel and energy, as well as the communications sector. Important progress was also reached in restoring the educational system (447 schools, 3 higher education colleges and 12 professional vocational schools began operation) and public health system (53 hospitals, 32 polyclinics, 46 doctor's outpatient clinics and 175 medical assistant-obstetrician stations were set up). The programme is addressing also the media sector in Chechnya. The newspaper circulation ranges from 3,000 to 10,000 copies (1 republic wide newspaper and 10 district newspapers), whereas television covers approximately 70% of the territory and 80% of the population of Chechnya at present.

The Russian Prosecutor General's office has opened 293 probes of crimes committed against the civilian population during the 1999-2001 counter-terrorist operation in the Chechen Republic. An investigation, however, is being conducted only on 179 cases and 57 cases have reached a pre-trial stage. So far, 11 servicemen have been found guilty and sentenced to different terms of imprisonment.

Programmes under UN Inter-Agency Appeal and the government of the Russian Federation cover all response directions outlined in this Post-conflict Reconstruction Plan, however, very little or no progress was achieved on the following directions due to the lack of political will, lack of coordination on programme design and implementation or insufficient allocation of resources:

- *Transitional and developmental activities* including income-generating projects in non-agricultural sectors;
- *Political settlement through negotiated agreements* with groups of combatants on: (a) decommissioning of weapons; and (b) reintegration/emigration based on an amnesty for combatants who have not committed war crimes. Furthermore, settlement has to involve *the participation of the Chechen population in broad-based political consultations*;
- *Security sector reform* involving gradual transfer of policing functions to local Chechen militias controlled by the regional administrations and abandoning the mop-up operation strategies that bring about serious violations of human rights;
- *Establishment of mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness and transparency of reconstruction efforts by the Federal and Chechen authorities; and the introduction and enforcement of special rules for military and law enforcement activities in the Republic*;
- *Resolving the problem of access* to the population of Chechnya by humanitarian relief providers with *guarantees of personnel security*." (FEWER February 2002, pp. 10-13)

## NGOs

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### **Czech NGO provides assistance to the "cellar people" in Grozny (2002)**

- People in Need Foundation assists vulnerable persons living in cellars in Grozny
- Assistance includes food and non-food distributions, and legal aid

"Cellar People – Podvalshchiki: "There is one group among the vulnerable whose situation is rather specific. In the beginning of the warfare a great number of civilians did not manage to leave Grozny before the massive bombing and hid in the cellars of their or their neighbors' houses.

Many managed to move forward once the heaviest bombing and shelling was over but many remained, some of them still living in the extremely difficult conditions of cellars. Some have gradually moved to upper floors of their destroyed houses. The issues concerning these people are rather complex. Having lived in extremely poor conditions for 2 years, they are totally reliable on what they find in the ruins or receive from others. Ironically enough, a big portion of these people is of Russian nationality. During the military operations they also lost their IDs and other documentation certifying their situation and vulnerability status, which excludes them from the possibility of receiving regular humanitarian assistance. Even many of those who possess IDs and registered for food assistance have been deleted from the beneficiary lists, unable to pick up their aid portions themselves. For the same reason, attention to their problems either by the state administration or other agencies is very limited if any as it requires individual assessment of all persons and continuous attention to their problems." (PINF 2002)

"The support to this special group of most vulnerable inhabitants of Grozny has continued throughout the whole month. The project now benefits approximately 940 people, including children, elderly and handicapped, who are regularly visited by PINF monitors in Grozny and provided with all basic assistance ranging from WFP dry food distribution, distribution of cloths and other non-food items to medical care and psycho-social consultations. The intensified effort to ensure these beneficiaries proper documents which would make them eligible for reception of state social benefits and humanitarian assistance resulted in decreasing the number of food aid beneficiaries to 350 as the rest now receives their rations through regular distribution points.

In December, PINF has continuously distributed food rations and winter non-food items, kindly provided by other relief and UN agencies. Four stoves and 939 hygienic kits were donated by German organization HELP, 65 winter children jackets by World Vision and 400 children socks, and 650 bedding sets by the UNHCR. PINF has also distributed New Year's presents to children, partly donated by UNICEF, and winter shoes for the elderly." (PINF December 2002, p. 5)

### **Over 30 local and international NGOs address consequences of Chechen conflict (2002)**

- NGO emergency programmes include distribution of food and non-food items, shelter assistance, health care, water, education, psychosocial assistance, mine awareness
- Ingushetia, a few NGOs have started implementing income generation, as well as small agricultural projects
- Two NGOs, MSF-Switzerland and DRC, are providing some assistance to displaced persons living in Dagestan
- Insecurity and lack of freedom of movement within Chechnya are hindering the humanitarian operations despite NGO will to expand their operations

"Well over thirty local and international NGOs are working to address the consequences of the situation in Chechnya, thereby complementing emergency relief being provided by the authorities, bilateral donors such as SDC/SHA, UN agencies, and international organisations such as ICRC and SARC. NGO humanitarian action in the region is based on assessment of needs, independent access to the affected population, and staff safety and security, and guided by the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence. To ensure efficient operations, NGOs continue to enhance relations with target communities and regional and district authorities, and strengthen collaboration with other organisations. Frequent discussions about policy and programmes among the NGO community, and

between NGOs and the UN and its agencies, promote complementarity, and help the humanitarian community at large to develop a coherent and strategic approach to alleviate the suffering of the affected population.

The emergency programmes carried out by the NGO community in Chechnya and Ingushetia include distribution of food and non-food items, winterisation and improvement of living conditions in the IDP camps and spontaneous settlements, provision of medicines and medical materials, running mobile medical clinics, provision of water tanking services, operation of wooden or tented schools, repair of school and health facilities, psychosocial rehabilitation for both children and adults, as well as mine awareness campaigns. In Ingushetia, a few NGOs have started implementing income generation, as well as small agricultural projects. In addition, various surveys and assessments, such as household survey and school assessments have been conducted in Chechnya. Two NGOs, MSF-Switzerland and DRC, are providing some assistance to displaced persons living in Dagestan. Several NGOs have created partnerships with the UN agencies to deliver, distribute, and monitor the end-use of assistance provided by the UN.

Given the vast humanitarian needs inside Chechnya, the NGOs are willing to increase their operations in the republic. However, the continuing problems of access to and freedom of movement within Chechnya are hindering the humanitarian operations there. Major progress on the issue of access was made when after various months of talks between the NGO community and the Chechen Government a Letter of Understanding was signed on 31 October 2001. Further, insecurity in general and lack of access to VHF communications in particular continue to hinder NGOs' ability to work in the republic." (UNOCHA February 2002, p. 13)

*For a detailed description of activities planned by national and international NGOs in Chechnya and Ingushetia, consult the [Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2003, Chechnya and Neighbouring Republics, November 2003, Annex VII \(Inter-governmental community overview\) \[Internet\]](#). You can also consult envelopes by sector in the subsection "International response" of the "National and International Responses".*

### **The Danish Refugee Council helps the Ingush displaced to resettle in Ingushetia (2000-2002)**

- Assistance includes housing aid and the provision of basic infrastructure

*The Danish Refugee Council providing some assistance to the estimated 30,000 Ingush IDPs willing to resettle durable in Ingushetia. DRC distributed building materials for 31 houses in Bed-yurt to be built by the IDPs themselves. DRC also builds a primary school in Bed Yurt. (DRC 31 January 2003)*

"UNHCR and its partners are also assisting with the integration of IDPs from Chechnya who wish to reside permanently on land plots generously provided by the government of Ingushetia. The government has provided basic infrastructure and the international community is assisting with shelter materials for individual house construction, community facilities, and income generation activities." (UNOCHA November 2002, p. 31)

"In the not too distant future DRC is planning to implement a rehabilitation project for some of the around 15,000 ethnic Ingush IDPs from Chechnya that have been displaced in Ingushetia and who plan to remain in this republic. Another group of great concern is the over 23,000 Ingush IDPs from the Prigorodny region of North Ossetia that were displaced during the 1992 Ossetian-Ingush conflict. DRC is now planning activities on job creation and a shelter projects in order to improve the living conditions for these groups of IDPs and create grounds for them to increase self-sufficiency. According to Mr. Malsagov [Prime Minister of Ingushetia], it has been long since his Government tried to raise the issue of assistance to the displaced people willing to reside in Ingushetia, especially the ethnic Ingushes from both Chechnya and Prigorodny

Region, but they were afraid of addressing that problem to the Russian Government. The Ingush government representatives expressed great interest in the DRC plan to start the rehabilitation project in Ingushetia." (DRC 4 April 2000)

### **Committee 'Civic Assistance', a local NGO providing assistance to the displaced in Moscow**

- Committee 'Civic Assistance' (CCA) provides legal counseling for refugees and forced migrants and plays the intermediary role for the relations between the refugees and governmental official structures
- During 2,5 years, CCA helped 15 thousands of refugees at its receptions in Moscow and in Centers for Temporary Reception of the Federal Migration Service

"The Committee 'Civic Assistance' (CCA) was formed in 1990 in connection with the appearance in Moscow of the first refugees - the Armenian victims of the pogroms in Azerbaijan when it became clear that the powers were not ready and could not protect and help refugees.

From the very beginning CCA took on the tasks of legal consulting for refugees and forced migrants and played the intermediary role for the relations between the refugees and governmental official structures, provided defense in the courts, and defended the rights of refugees for housing and work. In conjunction with these tasks, the members of the committee had constant contact with all structures dealing with refugee problems: the Federal Migration Service (FMS), the regional migration services, and the Commission on Refugees at the State Duma. At the moment one co-chair of the committee, Lydia Graphova, represents the interest of refugees in the President's Social Chamber, the other co-chair, Svetlana Gannushkina, invited as an expert consultant in the Duma's Commission on Refugees, takes part in the development of legislation in the field of refugees' and forced migrants' rights and the third co-chair of the committee Deputy of the State Duma, the member of 'Yabloko' (an apple) section Vyacheslav Igrunov defends refugees' rights at the meetings of the State Duma. CCA is accredited at the UNHCR and is in a constant contact with it and other international bodies.

This collaboration allowed the Committee to achieve some fruitfull results: From the beginning of 1998 the Committee got an exclusive right to use blanks signed by S. Gannushkina, for sending refugees, who have no status, to hospitals . It is a great achievement showing the fruitful collaboration of the CCA and governmental medicine institution. It is a pity that we cannot say the same about our collaboration with the official education structures.

On the base of legal expertise made by the members of the Independent Legal and Expert Council, CCA attained the abolition of a few governmental decrees pinching the refugee's rights.

In 1990, CCA began to hold twice a weekly reception of refugees. At the reception, because of the extreme need, CCA distributed some financial help, including some clothing and kitchen utensils. Besides, two professional lawyers, psychologist and therapist have taken part in the committee's weekly receptions. At the CCA works a small adjusting and educational center for refugees' children.

Since the beginning of the Chechen events, the influx of refugees to CCA has greatly increased, this made the activity of the committee even more important. During 2,5 year period it managed to help 15 thousands of refugees at its receptions in Moscow office and in Centers of Temporal Placing belonging to the Federal Migration Service. Human Rights Center of Memorial, led by Svetlana Gannushkina, visited Chechen refugees in the Centers of Temporary Placement. This work was conducted under the Memorials' program called 'Survey of the Situation of Forced Migrants from Chechnya.' The data base of CCA developed by volunteers was based on the search of the relatives of the inhabitants of Chechnya, with whose help about 200 people were found.



Financing of all mentioned above programs are based on UNCHR donations (\$1000 a month), individual donations (contributions of the CCA members constitute about one third of the entire sum of money distributed among refugees) and funds given by international bodies such as Sorec Foundation, the Tides Foundation, which allowed the Committee to survive during the first two years of the Chechen war, Mission in Moscow of the Union of Friends, a group of English Quakers, Basel canton, German 'Greens-90'.

Over 150 articles and reports have been published about the rights of refugees in the main human rights newspapers by Lydia Graphova, Svetlana Gannushkina, Elena Burtina, Elena Zaks. As much material was also publicized on the TV and on the radio programs 'Freedom,' 'Radio Rossia,' and 'Echo Moskv.' CCA also prepared in due times materials for reports for the President's Commission on Human Rights (PCHR) which were used by the chair of the commission Sergei Kovalyov. Committee played an active role in the preparation of the UN Conference on problems of involuntary migration in SIC and its follow up.

In 1997 members of the Committee created the first electron historical archive titled 'Man-in-the-street: what was in Store for Them in Armed Conflicts in the Former USSR. Chechen war 1994-1997'. This work was funded by the Open Society Institute." (Gannushkina March 2000)

*See the website of the [Committee 'Civic Assistance'](#) for more information [Internet]*

## **Response to human rights concerns**

### **Council of Europe closely monitors the situation in Chechnya (2001-2003)**

"Most Council of Europe institutions continued to monitor the situation in Chechnya, but their efforts yielded few tangible results.

The Council of Europe's agreement with Russia to second experts to the office of the Russian president's special representative for human rights in Chechnya was extended throughout the year. However, as the position of special representative remained vacant for months, the experts spent several months of the year at Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg. An extended mandate for the experts which the Council of Europe managed to agree on with Russia covered areas such as cooperation in the field of education and reform of the judiciary, raising concern that the crucial accountability component might become diluted as a result of these changes.

The Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) continued to monitor closely the situation in Chechnya. In January, it asked the Russian government to provide by April 10 a detailed list of investigations into violations against civilians; toward the end of April the Russian government provided partial statistical information of only limited use. PACE rapporteur Lord Judd carried out several trips to the region, repeatedly criticized Russia for continuing abuses and the lack of accountability, and expressed concern about the forced IDP return.

Human Rights Commissioner Alvaro Gil-Robles issued a constructive report in May which expressed concern about continuing reports of forced 'disappearances' and about the near-total lack of access to justice for those detained during sweep operations. The report recommended that the procurator general take steps to remedy this situation." (HRW 2002, Russian Federation)

*See also:*

*· [Visit by the Human Rights Commissioner from 10 to 16 February 2003: Council of Europe, "Human Rights Commissioner to visit Moscow, Chechnya and Ingushetia", 6 February 2003 \[Internet\]](#)*

· *Report of the Commissioner for Human Rights on his visit to Moscow, 19 September 2001, and "Recommendation of the Commissioner for Human Rights concerning certain rights that must be guaranteed during the arrest and detention of persons following 'cleansing' operations in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation", 30 May 2002 [Internet]*

· *Joint OSCE-Council of Europe Mission to Chechnya prior to the planned 23 March 2002 Referendum: "Council of Europe and OSCE plan joint action on Chechnya and trafficking in human beings", 6 February 2003 [Internet]*

· *Parliamentary Assembly: Resolutions 1315, 1593 and order no. 584, 30 January 2003 [Internet]: The Parliamentary Assembly calls upon relevant authorities to refrain from forcibly returning IDPs from Ingushetia to Chechnya. It also identifies measures to be taken to achieve necessary conditions for holding a referendum on the draft Chechen constitution on 23 March 2003. About the circumstances of the resolutions' adoption, see also "Lord Judd calls for postponing referendum", 31 January 2003, and "Lord Judd's resignation: English spin, Russian Duck", 6 February 2003, Chechnya Weekly, Jamestown Foundation [Internet]*

· *Latest report from the Council of Europe's experts in the Office of the Presidential Human Rights Representative in the Chechen Republic, 24 January 2003 [Internet]*

· *Parliamentary Assembly, "Evaluation of the prospects for a political solution of the conflict in the Chechen republic", Report by Lord Judd, Political Affairs Committee, 28 January 2003 [Internet]*

*For more information on the work of the Parliamentary Assembly and other institutions of the Council of Europe regarding the conflict in Chechnya, see "The conflict in the Chechen Republic: Work of the Parliamentary Assembly", 5 September 2002 [Internet]*

"On 19 December 2002, the European Court of Human Rights (EctHR) declared admissible six cases concerning alleged crimes committed by the Russian federal forces against civilians in the Chechen Republic in 1999-2000, in particular extra-judicial executions, torture and indiscriminate bombings. More than 120 similar applications have been submitted to the Court." (COE 24 January 2002, add)

*See also "Six complaints against Russia concerning events in Chechnya declared admissible", press release by the European Court of Human Rights, 16 January 2003 [Internet]*

## **UN human rights mechanisms address human rights violations in Chechnya (2000-2002)**

- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights visited Chechnya in March 2000
- UN Human Rights Commission condemned violations of humanitarian law and human rights in Chechnya by federal forces (2000 and 2001)
- As of February 2002, the federal government failed to invite UN rapporteurs to undertake visits to northern Caucasus, including the UN representative on IDPs
- The Special Representative for children and armed conflicts visited Chechnya in June 2002
- The visit of the UN Representative on IDPs has been postponed for security reasons

"In December 1999, Human Rights Watch called on the Security Council to establish a commission of inquiry to investigate violations of the laws of war in Chechnya. The Security Council, however, never formally discussed Chechnya.

In late March [2000], U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson travelled to the area after an earlier refusal of her request for a visit sparked an international outcry. Robinson became the first senior international official to acknowledge receiving evidence of summary executions, torture, and rape. Although Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov at the end of the trip told Robinson she was welcome to visit Chechnya again in a few months, a formal invitation had not yet been extended at the time of writing.

The U.N. Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution criticizing Russia for violations of human rights in Chechnya—the first time a resolution was adopted regarding a permanent member of the Security Council. The resolution, among other things, called on the Russian government to establish 'according to recognized international standards' a national commission of inquiry and mandated five special mechanisms of the Human Rights Commission to visit Chechnya and report to the commission and the General Assembly. At the time of the General Assembly session in the fall, none of the special mechanisms had been able to visit. The Russian failure to implement the resolution was raised at a one-day commission session in September but no public record of the discussion was issued." (HRW December 2000, pp. 318-319)

"Human Rights Watch welcomed a resolution adopted today by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights expressing grave concern about human rights violations in Chechnya. The 22 to 12 vote, with 19 abstentions, followed fresh reports detailing Russia's failure to investigate atrocities. [...]

Introduced by the European Union and cosponsored by 16 countries, the resolution strongly condemns the use of disproportionate force and serious human rights violations by Russia's forces and calls on Russia to ensure that both civilian and military prosecutors undertake credible and exhaustive criminal investigations of all violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. It also raises concern about the pattern of forced disappearances, torture and summary executions perpetrated by Russia's forces in Chechnya.

But the resolution stops short of calling for an international commission of inquiry, a body for which Human Rights Watch and other groups had advocated." (HRW 20 April 2001)

"At the commission's September 25 [2001] session, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson spoke about Russia's noncompliance with the resolution, specifically its failure to create a national commission of inquiry and to issue invitations to special mechanisms. The Russian delegation responded that the Russian Federation does not consider itself bound by the resolution." (HRW 2002, p. 346)

"The Commission reiterated its request that the relevant special mechanisms of the Commission undertake missions to the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation without delay [Resolution 2001/24, April 2001]. The High Commissioner has been in contact with the Government of the Russian Federation with a view of facilitating the visits. [...]

The remaining mandates mentioned in the Commission's resolution in Chechnya – the Special Rapporteur on torture, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons – requested in the first half of 2000 to undertake missions to the Republic of Chechnya and neighbouring regions. None of these mandates has received an invitation." (UN CHR 26 February 2002, paras. 7-9)

*See also:*

*Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation, E/CN.4/2002/38, 26 February 2002 [Internet]*

*Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/24, "Situation in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Republic", E/CN.4/RES/2001/24, 20 April 2001 [Internet]*

*Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation, E/CN.4/2001/36, 1 February 2001 [Internet]*

*Statement by the High Commissioner for Human Rights 'Situation of Human Rights in Chechnya in the Russian Federation', 5 April 2000 [Internet]*

*Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/58, 'Situation in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation', E/CN.4/RES/2000/58, 25 April 2000 [Internet]*

*"Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons call on the Russian Authorities to observe the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement", UN Press Release, 20 December 1999 [Internet]*

#### **Developments in 2002**

"A mission of the Representative of the Secretary-General (RSG) on IDPs, Francis Deng, to the North Caucasus region, which was planned to start on 30 September after an initial postponement of almost a month, has again been cancelled by the Russians at the last minute for reasons of security. The mission, together with the UN Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Radhika Coomaraswamy, was seen as a significant opportunity to raise the plight of Chechen IDPs with the Russian authorities." (ICVA 25 September 2002)

#### **Visit by the Special Representative on children and armed conflicts (June 2002)**

"At the conclusion of a week-long (17-24 June) visit to the Russian Federation including the Northern Caucasus, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara A. Otunnu, welcomed assurances concerning the voluntary return of displaced populations from Chechnya. He stated ' I raised the question of voluntary return of displaced populations from Chechnya with the Deputy Prime Minister and senior ministers of the Russian Federation, the President of the Republic of Ingushetia and the Government of the Republic of Chechnya; they all gave me direct and firm assurances that the displaced persons will not be forced to return against their will. All the displaced persons I met are very eager to return to their homes, they remain very concerned about their own security.'.

The main objective of the visit was to assess first-hand the situation of children affected by the armed conflict in Chechnya. [...]

In the Northern Caucasus, Mr. Otunnu visited the three Republics of Ingushetia, Chechnya, and North Ossetia-Alania. In Ingushetia, he toured the tent camps and spontaneous settlements for the internally displaced persons as well as schools, health and recreation facilities. In Chechnya, Mr. Otunnu visited hospitals, children's trauma centers, and he met with displaced families at one of the temporary accommodation centers." (UN 24 June 2002)

#### **OSCE mission in Chechnya: contribution to the restoration of human rights (2001-2002)**

- Mandate of the OSCE Assistance Group includes assistance for the speedy return of refugees and displaced persons
- OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya has been allowed to return to Chechnya in June 2001 after its evacuation in December 1998
- Assessment visits to IDP camps in Ingushetia and Chechnya have been conducted

- In Chechnya, the OSCE Assistance Group receives human rights complaints which are transmitted to Chechen and federal authorities
- Federal authorities have so far refused any OSCE involvement in the search for a political solution to the conflict
- The Russian Federation refused to extend the mandate of the OSCE mission, which expired on 31 December 2002

"The OSCE Assistance Group (AG) was established by the Permanent Council on 11 April 1995 (PC.DEC/35), which set forth the following tasks for the AG:

(a) To promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the establishment of facts concerning their violation; help foster the development of democratic institutions and processes, including the restoration of the local organs of authority; assist in the preparation of possible new constitutional agreements and in the holding and monitoring of elections;

(b) To facilitate the delivery to the region by international and non-governmental organizations of humanitarian aid for victims of the crisis, wherever they may be located;

(c) To provide assistance to the authorities of the Russian Federation and to international organizations in ensuring the speediest possible return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes in the crisis region;

(d) To promote the peaceful resolution of the crisis and the stabilization of the situation in the Chechen Republic in conformity with the principle of the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and in accordance with OSCE principles, and pursue dialogue and negotiations, as appropriate, through participation in 'round tables', with a view to establishing a ceasefire and eliminating sources of tension;

(e) To support the creation of mechanisms guaranteeing the rule of law and order.

The OSCE AG began working in Grozny on 26 April 1995 and operated from there until 6 December 1998, when its international staff was evacuated to Moscow owing to the deteriorating security situation. During the year 2001, the immediate priority of the AG's activities was to ensure the return of its international staff to Chechnya. The negotiation process that began in 2000 to solve technical problems impeding the Group's return led to the signing of a memorandum of understanding on security between the AG and the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. On 15 June 2001, after almost 2½ years of evacuation, the AG returned to Chechnya.

Currently, the AG focuses its activities on stabilizing its presence in Chechnya, maintaining relations with federal authorities in Moscow and establishing new contacts with local and federal authorities in Chechnya and adjacent regions. Through these activities, the AG can monitor and assess the latest developments in the political, economic and human dimension fields.

In Grozny the AG has met with representatives of the Chechen administration. Discussions have focused on the general situation in the Republic and on IDPs living in Ingushetia. The large high number of IDPs in Chechnya and adjacent regions remains a source of serious concern to the AG. In this regard, the AG has conducted assessment visits to IDP camps in Ingushetia and Chechnya, also meeting with relevant federal and local officials. In Znamenskoye, permanent contacts are also maintained with the Office of the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Human and Citizens' Rights in the Chechen Republic, Vladimir Kalamonov.

In Moscow the AG meets with representatives of the Russian federal authorities on issues related to Chechnya. Additionally, the AG has attended parliamentary hearings organized by the Parliamentary Commission on Normalizing the Socio-political Situation and Human Rights in Chechnya, where the problems of a safe and speedy return of IDPs to their permanent places of residence were discussed. The

AG cooperates closely with human rights organizations such as Memorial and Human Rights Watch, exchanging information on the human rights situation in Chechnya. Documented allegations of human rights violations in Chechnya are also regularly reported by the AG to the OSCE participating States.

In the Znamenskoye office, the AG receives complaints on the human rights situation. The complaints received by the AG cover more than 200 cases of disappearances and several cases of killings, as well as mistreatment, torture and robberies. All the cases have been registered in a database and handed over to the Chechen authorities, as well as to Mr. Kalamanov's office. It was agreed with that office to hold meetings every two weeks to exchange information and views concerning human rights violations. In order to combine efforts, the AG meets regularly with Council of Europe experts working in Mr. Kalamanov's office in Znamenskoye.

The AG works to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the victims of the crisis. The Group participates in coordination meetings with United Nations agencies in Nazran/Ingushetia and in Moscow, and cooperates closely with international organizations and NGOs.

Before and after its return to Chechnya, the AG sought to identify programmes directed towards post-conflict social, psychological and professional rehabilitation of victims. Owing to the limited financial resources, the AG has targeted programmes at children and young people, who represent the most vulnerable and affected group. Projects were funded from the budget of the AG as well as from voluntary contributions from participating States and private companies.

The AG stands ready to assist the conflicting parties in the search for a political solution to the crisis. Thus far, however, the Russian authorities have not appeared prepared to accept OSCE involvement in these processes, arguing that the political part of the Group's mandate has already been exhausted. Conversely, Chechen rebels call regularly for OSCE mediation." (UN CHR 26 February 2002, paras. 57-65)

***Consult also the website of the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya [Internet]***

"The OSCE mission mandate expired December 31 [2002] after Russia and the OSCE failed to agree to extend it. The six-person mission had been tasked since mid-2001 with promoting respect for human rights, facilitating humanitarian aid, and promoting peaceful resolution of the crisis in Chechnya. Russian officials reportedly stated that the mission would cease to exist.

[...]

Negotiations over renewing the OSCE mandate collapsed after Russia insisted that the mission relinquish its human rights and political dimension." (HRW 1 January 2003)

"Following talks in Moscow on 4 February with Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Netherlands Foreign Minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who is the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) chairman-in-office, said that the OSCE will send a 'special mission' to Chechnya to determine whether conditions on the ground are conducive to holding the planned referendum, Reuters reported. He also said that the OSCE and Russia will continue discussions, which he predicted will not be easy, on a long-term OSCE presence in Chechnya. Moscow has refused to extend the mandate of the OSCE mission in Chechnya, which expired on 31 December." (RFE/RL 5 February 2003)

***See also:***

***Open letter to the President of Russian Federation Mr. Putin, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International Helsinki Federation, International League for Human Rights, 23 January 2003 [Internet]***

***"Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs regarding the closure of the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya", Government of the Russian Federation, 4 January 2003 [Internet]***

## **Federal government under international pressure to improve human rights records in Chechnya (2000-2002)**

- Further to international pressure, President Putin appointed Vladimir Kalamonov as his special representative on human rights in Chechnya (February 2000)
- The Russian Parliament elected an Independent Commission on human rights in northern Caucasus (April 2000)
- Several thousand complaints from citizens, ranging from destruction or theft of property to rape and murder have been registered in Chechnya
- Neither organization was empowered to investigate or prosecute alleged offenses and had to refer complaints to the military or civil prosecutors
- The number of cases of investigation and prosecution of crimes committed by the federal servicemen against civilians are pale in comparison to the total number of complaints
- The Prosecutor General issued two decrees, providing for new regulations to be applied during search operations (July 2001, March 2002)
- International observers report that the decree has failed to stop human rights abuses to be perpetrated during these operations

"In response to international criticism of the human rights situation in Chechnya, several federal government bodies were established to examine alleged domestic human rights violations. In February 2000, President Putin appointed Vladimir Kalamonov as Special Presidential Representative for Human Rights in Chechnya. Kalamonov's office, with a staff of 25 persons, including 3 experts from the Council of Europe, opened branches in Moscow and in a number of locations in the northern Caucasus to take complaints about alleged human rights violations. In April 2000, Pavel Krasheninnikov, Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Legislation, was elected head of a newly created Independent Commission on Human Rights in the northern Caucasus. In September 2000, the Commission opened nine offices in Chechnya and three in Ingushetiya. Together Kalamonov's office and Krasheninnikov's commission heard several thousand complaints from citizens, ranging from destruction or theft of property to rape and murder; however, neither organization was empowered to investigate or prosecute alleged offenses and had to refer complaints to the military or civil prosecutors." (U.S.DOS 4 March 2002, sect. 1g)

***On 11 July 2002, President Putin appointed Abdul-Khakim Sultygov his Special Representative for Human and Civil Rights in the Chechen Republic.***

"Under pressure from the international community, Russia's civilian and military procuracies began opening criminal investigations into many reported abuses of human rights [49]. On March 5, 2002, the military procuracy announced that it had opened 11 criminal investigations into crimes by military servicemen against civilians since the beginning of the current anti-terrorist operation in Chechnya; [50] as of April 2001, the civilian procuracy had opened 294 investigations. [51] The numbers of investigations opened, however, cannot obscure their inadequacies. Human Rights Watch's analysis of a list of 359 cases, and research on specific individual cases, found that the vast majority of cases had either been suspended or lacked vigor. Human Rights Watch is not aware of a single investigation into evidence of torture or ill-treatment.

In April 2001, the Joint Working Group of the State Duma and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe prepared a list of all criminal investigations into alleged abuses by Russian troops against civilians in Chechnya. According to the list, the civilian and military procuracies had begun 294 and 65 criminal investigations respectively. However, of the 359 investigations, only seventy were under active investigation – forty-nine by the civilian and twenty-one by the military procuracy – and no fewer than 191 investigations had been suspended. Out of 110 investigations into 'disappearances', seventy-nine (seventy-two percent) were suspended. Procuracies had transferred case materials to the courts in only nineteen

cases. By March 5, 2002, military courts had convicted twenty-three military servicemen for abuses against civilians, although as of this writing, the government has not provided details regarding the nature of the crimes and sentences. [52]"

Footnote [49]: The military procuracy is responsible for investigating crimes committed by those serving in the armed forces, including the army, as well as by those serving in the Ministry of Internal Affairs' armed forces. Crimes committed by other Ministry of Internal Affairs personnel (including Otriady Militsii Osobogo Naznachenia (OMON) and Spetsnaz) are under the jurisdiction of the civilian procuracy.

Footnote [50]: "V Chechne za prestuplenia protiv mirnogo naselenia privilecheno k ugolovnoi otvetstvennosti 55 voennykh (Fifty-five military servicemen are being prosecuted for crimes against the civilian population in Chechnya), Interfax news agency, March 5, 2002.

Footnote [51]: Updated figures on investigations by the civilian procuracy were not made available as of this writing.

Footnote [52]: "V Chechne za prestuplenia protiv mirnogo naselenia privilecheno k ugolovnoi otvetstvennosti 55 voennykh (Fifty-five military servicemen are being prosecuted for crimes against the civilian population in Chechnya), Interfax news agency, March 3, 2002. In September Rossiskaia Gazeta, the State Duma newspaper, published Russian government information regarding eleven out of fifteen convictions, which at that point was a comprehensive accounting. Of the eleven, six had either been amnestied or paroled, and five were serving active sentences -one for looting, two for murder, one for attempted murder, and one for mishandling a weapon. See [www.rg.annons/anons/arc\\_2001/0920/3.shtm](http://www.rg.annons/anons/arc_2001/0920/3.shtm), (accessed September 20, 2001). (HRW 18 March 2002, p. 11)

"The figures provided by the Russian authorities on the investigation and prosecution of crimes committed by the federal servicemen against civilians pale in comparison to the hundreds of complaints of serious human rights violations which NGOs such as Memorial receive after each and every new mop-up operation, regardless of which federal forces carried out (army, militia, or FSB). Several mop-up operations sparked criticism and promises of investigations even by military commanders (such as those in Sernovodsk and Assinovskaya in July 2001, or in Argun and Tsotsin-Yurt in December 2001/January 2002). As a result of some of the allegations raised in connection with the former cases, the Prosecutor General issued a decree (Order No. 46 of 25 July 2001), in accordance with which mop-up operations require the presence of a prosecutor. This decree seems now to be applied in the Chechen Republic, but has failed to stop human rights abuses to be perpetrated during these operations. The representatives of the prosecutor's office seem to be unwilling or unable to prevent them happening, let alone to investigate them in due form afterwards and bring those responsible to justice". (COE 21 January 2002, para. 7)

"On March 27, 2002, Gen. Moltenskoi issue a decree to improve the conduct of servicemen in Chechnya. The decree acknowledged that 'unlawful actions by military servicemen toward civilians have had an extraordinarily bad impact on the process of stabilization in the republic, and has completely reversed the efforts by the military command regarding guaranteeing security, law and order, and favorable conditions for economic renewal.' [198] Among other things, the decree required all police and Ministry of Internal Affairs troops to give their first and last names while on search-and-seizure operations. It did not require the same for Ministry of Defense, Federal Security Service, or other personnel who may be involved in detaining individuals or searching private homes. The decree also required all vehicles, including military transport vehicles, to clearly display registration numbers. [199]

Footnote [198]: "Decree No. 80 of the Command of the United Group of Forces in the Northern Caucasus Region of the Russian Federation, on Measures to Enhance Efforts by Local Governmental Authorities and Law Enforcement Agencies of the Russian Federation in the Fight Against Unlawful Actions and Accountability for Officials for Violations of Law and Law and Order in the Conduct of Special Operations and Targeted Operations in Settlements in the Chechen Republic. Issued March 27, 2002, Khankala."



Footnote [199]: "The decree also reinforced elements of Decree No. 46, by requiring that sweep and targeted operations involve the local military commandant, head of the local civilian administration, a representative of the village elders, and a representative of the military procuracy. Like Decree No. 46, Decree No. 80 requires a commander, upon completing a sweep or targeted sweep, to sign a report including, among other things, a list of those detained during the operation and of all arms and ammunition seized. The list must also be signed by other local officials." (HRW April 2002, pp. 37-38)

*About the functioning of the judicial system in Chechnya, see "Operation in the courts in the Chechen Republic", Memorial, 15 October 2001 [Internet]*

*See also "Prosecutor's Office launches a number of criminal cases dealing with infringements of law by military men in Chechnya", Government of the Russian Federation, 31 January 2002 [Internet]*

*See also*

*Memorial, "Several examples of the many occasions in May 2002 where order No. 80 of the OGV(s) Commander has been deliberately flouted", 6 June 2002 [Internet]*

*"New regulations on Chechen search operations violated", RFE/RL, 3 April 2002 [Internet]*

*A translation of Order No. 80 can be found in "Conflict in the Chechen Republic", Political Affairs Committee of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, 22 September, Part I, appendix 3 [Internet]*

## **References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement**

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### **Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of May 2002)**

#### **Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation**

None

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<p>International Conference on Internal Displacement in the Russian Federation: The Conference was organized by the Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Moscow-based NGO "Partnership on Migration", and the Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement. The 70 participants included government experts and officials who deal with issues relating to forced migration, representatives of local NGOs and displaced communities, local academics and lawyers, representatives of regional and international organizations and international NGOs working in the country, as well as international experts, including Francis Deng, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons. The Guiding Principles were acknowledged as a useful tool for the development of a migration policy framework and for the review of existing legislation and regulations. Participants also recommended that the Guiding Principles should serve as a framework for training and education seminars.</p>
<p>Source: The Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement - Institute of State and Law of the Russian Academy of Sciences - Partnership on Migration</p>
<p>Date: 25-26 April 2002</p>
<p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concluding Statement - International Conference on Internal Displacement in The Russian Federation [Internet]</li></ul>

**Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages**

The Guiding Principles have been translated into the Russian language.
Date: 1998
Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GP in Russian [Internet]</li><li>• Handbook for Applying the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (OCHA, Brookings), Russian Version [Internal link]</li></ul>

**Training on the Guiding Principles**

None

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACF	Action contre la Faim
ACT	Action by Churches Together
AFP	Agence France Presse
ASSR	Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
CCA	Committee "Civic Assistance"
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
COE	Council of Europe
CPCD	Centre for Peacemaking and Community Development
DP	Displaced Person
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECPT	European Convention for the Prevention of Torture
EDP	Extended Delivery Point
ERMCOM	Ministry of Civil Defense, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters
FDP	Final Distribution Point
FMS	Federal Migration Service
FO	Field Office
HF	Host family
HIA	Hungarian Interchurch Aid
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ID	Identity Document
IDP	Internally displaced person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IR	Islamic Relief
IRP	Involuntary Relocated Person
MDM	Médecins du Monde
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH/I	Ministry of Health Ingushetia
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Migration Service
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
MT	Metric tonne
MTchS	Russian Ministry for Disasters and Emergencies
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODHIR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe
PHC	Primary Health Care
PINF	People in Need Foundation
POW	Prisoner of War
RF	Russian Federation
RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
SES	Sanitary and Epidemiological Station
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections

TB	Tuberculosis
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSECOORD	United Nations Security Coordinator
USCR	U.S. Committee for Refugees
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VAT	Value Added Taxes
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WVI	World Vision International

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