

Desk Review of Social Exclusion in the Western Balkans

Department for International Development

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List of Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
EAR	European Agency for Reconstruction
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
ERRC	European Roma Rights Centre
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
GIR	Gender Implementation Plan
GOF	Global Opportunities Fund
NAP	National Action Plan for Gender Equality
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFP	(Poverty Reduction Strategy) Implementation Focal Point (Serbia)
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INSTAT	National Institute of Statistics in Albania
IPS	Integrated Planning System (Albania)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOLESP	Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Policy
MOLSAEO	Ministry of Labour Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MRG	Minority Rights Group
MTDS	Medium-term Development Strategy
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration
NSSD	National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PLWHA	Person living with HIV/AIDS
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAP	Regional Assistance Plan
RS	Republika Srpska
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIS	Social Inclusion Strategy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Executive Summary

Tackling social exclusion is an important concern for DFID due to its links with poverty reduction¹ and to the rights based approach to development, which aims at ensuring that all are able to participate in, and benefit from, poverty reduction equitably. Since the 1980s, the Western Balkans region has experienced a period of war and profound change. This has seen the emergence of increased long-term unemployment, declining incomes, the erosion of social protection systems, and a rise in poverty levels.

Although Western Balkans countries are considered to be on-track, in terms of national averages, to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), considerable poverty and social exclusion exist (DFID 2006). This means that not all persons will be able to attain the indicators laid down in the MDGs unless targeted action is taken.

Background to the study

This desk review of social exclusion in the Western Balkans covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo² and Serbia. The purpose of the review is to highlight key social exclusion concerns in the four geographical areas. It was carried out alongside a Gender Impact Review and a Stock-taking on Ethnicity. The review is based on a literature review of English language texts and on telephone interviews conducted with staff from 15 international, government and national non governmental organisations. It is thus a limited study and can only be one step in a wider process of analysis.

Seven drivers of social exclusion are analysed for each of the four geographical areas. These are: ability/disability; age; gender; HIV/AIDS; ethnicity, refugee/Internally Displaced Person (IDP) status; and spatial exclusion. Other drivers are explored according to country context, including sexual orientation, unemployment, low income and low education levels.

Regional summary

The regional summary of country findings demonstrates the interplay of different factors of exclusion:

- Persons with disabilities are likely to be excluded from the labour market, the health and education systems, and are more prone to falling into poverty.
- Children and youth can be socially excluded by unemployment, engagement in child labour or criminal activities (such as trafficking or sexual exploitation), by family violence, and through living in slums and overpopulated urban zones - in addition to discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, poverty, disability or HIV/AIDS.
- The elderly are exposed to poverty but are also vulnerable due to lack of access to services, dependency on family and social isolation.
- Although men and women are equal by law in all four “countries”, gender based exclusion is common. Female poverty and high female unemployment are common.
- The prevalence of HIV/AIDS appears to be low in the region and there is scarce information about how the pandemic is impacting on the most excluded groups. While HIV/AIDS is not one of the main drivers of social exclusion (see note in general comments) in terms of numbers, it would appear that People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) on the whole do suffer dramatically from social exclusion as a result of their illness. This social exclusion is exacerbated where persons affected are also intravenous drug users or commercial sex workers

¹ DFID launched a policy paper entitled: ‘Reducing Poverty by Tackling Social Exclusion’ in September 2005.

² Kosovo is still considered a province of Serbia. Its final status is currently being discussed. This review will be referring to four geographical areas as opposed to four countries –whenever it’s possible.

- Social exclusion of groups on the basis of ethnicity or of IDP/refugee status can be found in each country. The Roma people on the whole are those seen to be most at risk of poverty, discrimination, unemployment, lack of education and exclusion, which exacerbates discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity.
- Remoteness/ spatial exclusion is a key factor of exclusion across the region. Persons living in rural areas are particularly vulnerable to exclusion caused by lack of services, infrastructure, employment and poverty.
- Unemployment and low education levels contribute significantly to social exclusion, primarily through the vicious cycle of lack of education enhancing unemployment and poverty. Groups already suffering from social exclusion are more likely to suffer from unemployment and low education. The informal economy usually engages those who are already socially excluded, such as Roma, women, refugees, IDPs and internal migrants. Work in the informal economy tends to be insecure, low paid, irregular and means that persons are often outside of the social insurance system, necessary for accessing health care and pensions. This differs per geographical area. For example, in BiH, there is universal access to health provision; in Kosovo, public health services are free to all, although payments of 5-50 Euros need to be made for services. Those on social assistance schemes who are unemployed or unable to work are exempt from this charge and thus have access to truly free health and other public services; in Serbia unemployed persons only have access to free health services if they are registered with the National Employment Agency; in Albania, although there is a pledge that health services are free at the point of delivery unofficial payments for basic care are still commonplace (DFID 2003).

“Country” summaries

In Albania, all seven factors contribute to social exclusion, with rurality, poverty, gender and age the key drivers. Disability is clearly an important driver of social exclusion and further analysis is needed. A poor, rural, Roma, girl child would be particularly socially excluded.

The Albanian poverty reduction strategy, the National Strategy for Socio Economic Development (NSSD) was replaced in 2005 by a process to produce a National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), which will define the Government of Albania’s national agenda. Under NSDI, a series of sectoral and crosscutting strategies will be developed; and one crosscutting strategy will specifically focus on socially excluded groups –the Social Inclusion Strategy (or SIS). The SIS will be based solely on existing government strategies, including for Roma, Children and people with disabilities; and specific commitments within sectoral ministries. As yet, there is no formal gender equality strategy.

Persons suffering from social exclusion were included under the NSSD and positive examples given of impact on the social inclusion of elderly and persons with disabilities. Issues facing children, women, HIV/AIDS, Roma women, and rural poor were also included. It is hoped that the efforts to improve social inclusion will be increased through the current NSDI process; however, concerted efforts are needed to monitor this; and to ensure that links are made between poverty eradication and social exclusion.

The principle of non-discrimination is incorporated into Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Constitution, Constitutions of both entities and Brcko District. However, evidence suggests that social exclusion on the basis of discrimination still exists. The political division of Bosnia and Herzegovina is pertinent to social exclusion in the country. Financing for social welfare is local which means that richer areas who are better able to raise revenue can provide better services. Thus socially excluded groups will have access to different forms of social protection simply on the basis of where they live. Attempts are being made to readdress this situation with the 2006 introduction of VAT (PDV) at a single rate but the effect of this in terms of reducing geographical inequalities has yet to be seen as there are currently no

mechanisms for re-distribution of the revenue collected. Other groups particularly at risk of social exclusion are minority returnees, Roma, women, persons with disabilities not resulting from war, civilians injured as a result of war, elderly persons and those who are unemployed or living on low incomes.

The BiH PRSP or Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) was agreed in 2004 and is now being revised. The earlier version had no targeting, no cross sectoral strategic planning and lacked any focus on social exclusion, with a strong emphasis on pro-economic growth.

Social exclusion in Kosovo has different factors, with disability, gender, rurality, being a minority community, unemployment, poverty and age, some of the main drivers. There is no poverty reduction framework yet in place in Kosovo. However, DFID is currently supporting the development of the Kosovo Development Strategy and Plan (2007-13).

In Serbia, being Roma, female or gay are the drivers of the most extreme social exclusion. The increasing regionalisation of poverty also needs to be monitored. Excluded groups in Serbia feel increasingly isolated, threatened and undermined. Increased street violence, with attacks on men who have sex with men and Roma people in particular have been noted. Discrimination in schools, employment and public services has the impact of increasing poverty, which enhances social exclusion in a self perpetuating cycle.

Serbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, approved in October 2003, brings together 27 government strategies and has the targeting of the most vulnerable social groups as one of its three strategic goals; it addresses many of the gender aspects of poverty, including in a separate annex. The first six month review of the PRSP implementation was conducted in June 2006. A key concern is that many of the PRSP initiatives are project oriented which means that certain groups, such as the Roma and people with disabilities, typically attract more support. The impact of this on actually reducing social exclusion remains to be seen.

Challenges

This desk review has revealed that social exclusion is a multi-layered phenomenon. It can be argued that there are two levels of drivers of social exclusion. These are related to:

- Intrinsic qualities of 'who one is' that can lead to social exclusion i.e. gender, ethnicity, disability, age.
- Qualities that one obtains in life that can lead to social exclusion i.e. unemployment, poverty, lack of education, HIV/AIDS and the stigma attached to routes of transmission (for example, being an intravenous drug user or a commercial sex worker), refugee/IDP status, living in remote areas.

In the Western Balkans, vulnerable persons commonly experience multiple exclusions, which in turn lead to further exclusion. Roma women, for example, are more likely to be subject to a second set of exclusion drivers, such as unemployment or lack of education.

Poverty can be a driver as well as a consequence of social exclusion. People do not benefit equally from new opportunities generated by economic growth; and growing economic inequality can exacerbate social exclusion. The Millennium Development Goals establish a number of targets that need to be met. There is a danger that since these will be measured on the basis of national averages, they will reflect a situation that exists only for the socially included. A social exclusion perspective underlines the importance of ensuring that all persons have the opportunity of benefiting equitably.

Social exclusion leads to a non fulfilment and/or violation of rights. Lack of enjoyment of basic human rights, particularly economic and social rights, leads to a deepening of poverty and to a furthering of social exclusion.

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1. Introduction

During the 1980s, the Western Balkans region embarked upon a process of profound economic, cultural, political and social transition which saw the emergence of increased long-term unemployment, declining incomes and the erosion of social protection systems. The resurgence of ethnic nationalisms and the consequent wars of the 1990s had a major impact on poverty in the region. The region remains the poorest in Europe, with over 17% of the total population of the region classified as 'poor' i.e. unable to satisfy the minimum national standards for basic food and non-food needs (Matković 2005).

Although the Western Balkans "countries" are middle-income countries and considered broadly to be on-track, in terms of national averages, to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), considerable poverty and social exclusion exists (DFID 2006). It is particularly important to note that excluded groups are often invisible in national census data and in other surveys used to measure the MDGs. If socially excluded groups are to benefit from attainment of the MDGs³, then specific efforts will be required in terms of programme design and monitoring, in order to target socially excluded groups.

Background to the Study

This desk review of social exclusion in the Western Balkans covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia. The main objective is to review some of the primary drivers of social exclusion in the region and to explore how poverty reduction initiatives are addressing social exclusion. It is part of a wider process of analysing social exclusion concerns across the region, in the context of the Regional Assistance Plan⁴ (RAP) review. This desk review was carried out alongside a Gender Impact Review⁵ and a Stock-taking on Ethnicity report⁶.

Methodology

This desk review is based on a literature review of English texts (see Bibliography and CD-ROM which accompanies this review and contains all the information that is available electronically) and on telephone interviews conducted with staff from 15 international, government and national non governmental organisations (see Annex 10⁷).

Each of the "country" (or geographical area) sections and the regional section explores at least seven drivers of social exclusion. These include: ability/disability; age; gender; HIV/AIDS; Ethnicity, Refugee/Internally Displaced Person (IDP) status and; spatial exclusion. Other drivers are explored according to "country" context. These include sexual orientation and unemployment. These drivers were selected on the basis of the literature review, and telephone interviews⁸.

³ It is not within the scope of this desk review to analyse attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in each country. The reader is thus referred to the 2005 Human Development Reports.

⁴ DFID is also commissioning other studies which will link into this piece of work and provide more depth data on some of the issues that impact on and create social exclusion. These include: 'Understanding migration (internal, cross border and internationally) as a driver of poverty reduction in Europe and Central Asia region';

'Understanding the routes in and out of political violence: An assessment of the linkages between identity politics, exclusion, inequality and political violence in EMAD countries'; 'Social Inclusion and European Integration'; 'Human Rights & Social Exclusion Indicators'.

⁵ This report identifies how to improve gender mainstreaming into existing country programmes.

⁶ This report explores good practises or entry points within DFID programmes on (non)discrimination of ethnic groups.

⁷ DFID in each country provided contact details. Emails with a proposed discussion guide were sent to all contacts and discussions were held with those who responded.

⁸ It is worth noting that some of the factors highlighted in this report would apply to socially excluded groups throughout the world and are therefore not necessarily specific to the Balkans.

Limitations

The desk based review was conducted within a very short timeframe. It does not represent a comprehensive Social Exclusion Review. It is understood that this review is the first step in a wider process and that a more participatory approach will be taken in future stages.

The views presented are based on those contained in the literature available in English or from persons interviewed by telephone⁹. The literature is limited and the data is often conflicting. All available data has been used and sources are referenced in the text. No persons experiencing social exclusion (other than some of the interviewees) were consulted. Fewer people were interviewed in Albania and Kosovo than in Bosnia and Serbia, which has implications for the diversity of perspectives provided. Very little literature took a social exclusion perspective and it was therefore necessary to 'interpret' studies on vulnerability and poverty in order to view them through the lens of social exclusion¹⁰.

Good quality, reliable, quantitative data is hard to obtain and numbers given should therefore be used with caution. Collecting data on social exclusion is notoriously difficult, particularly due to issues around access. Further analysis and attempts to quantify social exclusion are therefore necessary.

Structure of the report

The report is divided into 7 sections. After the introduction, there are four geographical area studies, and then a regional section analysing the main drivers of social exclusion, followed by some concluding thoughts.

Defining Social Exclusion

Tackling social exclusion is an important concern for DFID due to its links with poverty reduction and the unfulfillment of basic human rights. Social exclusion impacts on all the MDGs and has also been a leading cause of conflict and insecurity in many parts of the world. DFID's 2000 Target Strategy Paper 'Realising human rights for poor people' argues that the International Development Targets will only be achieved when poor people are engaged in the development processes which affect their lives. Clearly where certain groups of people are socially excluded they will not be able to engage fully in, or benefit equitably from, poverty reduction initiatives.

In September 2005, DFID launched a policy paper entitled: 'Reducing Poverty by Tackling Social Exclusion'. This policy guides the thinking in this review. In this, DFID defines social exclusion as:

... a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like the household. (DFID 2005: 3).

People are excluded by institutions and behaviours that reflect, enforce and reproduce prevailing social attitudes and values. Sometimes State institutions deliberately discriminate in their laws, policies and programmes. Other times exclusion is subtle and unintentional, for example when minority groups are excluded by language barriers from services and political participation (Matkovic 2005). The drivers of social exclusion are country and community

⁹ These persons were not a random sample but were those suggested by DFID and those available to be interviewed within the time frame.

¹⁰ It is also important to note that this review does not look at DFID programming.

specific and other factors such as long term unemployment may also be relevant as they may lead to social exclusion and not only to income poverty.

The result of social exclusion is that a person may become excluded from economic, social and political processes which promote human development and may therefore be denied access to rights and opportunities (see also de Haan 1999). This means that that socially excluded persons have 'little chance of influencing decisions or policies that affect them and little chance of bettering their standard of living' (Combat Poverty Agency 2006) despite the fact that an economy as a whole may be growing.

Conceptual links between 'social exclusion' and 'poverty'¹¹:

Social exclusion takes us beyond a definition of poverty which refers to lack or want and identifies the multi-dimensional processes that lead to and cause deprivation (de Haan 1999:9). Poverty is thus an element of social exclusion and poverty reduction can lead to increased social inclusion. Unfortunately, mainstream poverty reduction initiatives often fail to reach excluded groups and reductions in income poverty may not lead to reduced social exclusion. Special efforts may therefore need to be made to address social exclusion within poverty reduction initiatives. This may require additional targeted policies and programmes such as affirmative action.

According to DFID (2005: 5), social exclusion has two main impacts:

- Causing the poverty of particular people, leading to higher rates of poverty among affected groups
- Reducing the productive capacity, and rate of poverty reduction, of a society as a whole.

Social Exclusion and the European Union

Tackling social exclusion has become a primary policy objective required of European Union States. European Union accession is high on the political agenda in the Western Balkans and it is therefore worth highlighting the 1993 Copenhagen eligibility criteria for membership of the European Union which requires institutions to guarantee human rights and respect for and, protection of, minorities.

Furthermore, the Lisbon European Council meeting of March 2000 asked Member States and the European Commission to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and the creation of social inclusion by 2010. Member States have been required to co-ordinate their policies for combating poverty and social exclusion through a process known as the 'Open Method of Coordination'. From 2006, three policy areas provide the framework for this process and one of these is 'Eradicating poverty and social exclusion'. Countries wishing to accede to the European Union will need to demonstrate a commitment to tackling social exclusion.

¹¹ There is not the scope in this study to enter into an analysis of poverty in each country. The reader is referred to Matković's (2005) 'Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Western Balkans' which provides a detailed comparative assessment of poverty in the region as well as to World Bank Poverty Assessments. Matkovic's study is provided in the accompanying CD-ROM.

2. Country trends: Albania

- In 1991, Albania embarked on an intense period of political and economic reform aimed at establishing a democratic system through the protection of individual rights and at raising the standards of living through a free market economy.
- Albania is presently undergoing a process of transition from a centralized economy to a market based one and from a rural to an urban population structure. This process deeply influences the socio-economic structure of the country and, along with the overall positive influences, generates some adverse side effects. In the process of transition certain segments of society may be neglected and delays may occur in intervening in some social problems as a result of limited public resources.

Sources: Briefing Note on Albania, PROTECT CEE ILO –IPEC

- Albania appears to have made significant progress in poverty reduction. DFID 2000 cite that approximately 20% of the Albanian population was living on less than \$1 a day.
- The 2005 UNDP Human Development Report reveals quite a distinct shift, citing absolute poverty as being around 25% and extreme poverty, based on less than a dollar per day, as 4.7%.
- High economic growth accounts for most of this change which indicates that growth has been pro-poor. However, there have been no significant changes in inequality and the poor remain concentrated in rural areas.

Sources: UNDP 2005b; INSTAT and World Bank 2006.

2.1 Drivers of Social Exclusion in Albania

2.1.1 Ability/ Disability

Some 75,000 Albanians are recognized as disabled (Republic of Albania 2005b). Though the actual number is thought to be much higher, since legislation does not address those who developed disabilities from causes outside of employment after the age of 21¹² or who have not been certified as disabled by state disability assessment commissions. There do not appear to be any statistics available to provide data on the numbers of people with disabilities who are not accessing state benefits, or the number of people with disabilities who are unemployed. None of the statistics on disability are gender disaggregated.

Exclusion from employment is a key concern. According to the National Strategy on people with disabilities, only 2,275 out of 9,533 (or 24%) people who are partially able to work have found employment. This is significantly higher than the 15% overall unemployment rate in Albania (UNDP 2005), indicating that disabled persons are indeed particularly excluded from the labour market. Furthermore, according to UNICEF, the benefit system provides a minimum standard of living but is not enough to cover basic social needs needed for social integration (pers. comm.).

In 2005, the Government of Albania published its first national strategy on people with disabilities (Republic of Albania 2005b). The increasingly active disability movement worked alongside state institutions to draft the document and this is reflected in the rights based

¹² Mine wounds caused by the conflict on the border with Kosovo would appear therefore not to be included in the statistics. If DFID choose to pursue a more in-depth exploration of disability it would be important to contact some of the organisations working on de-mining the area.

approach taken. The Strategy is accompanied by a National Action Plan, which includes targets, allocates implementation responsibilities to specific state and non state entities and highlights where funds are to come from.

However, a budget is not provided within the Strategy and implementation, as with any Strategy, will need to be monitored. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has committed to providing ongoing support, in close co-operation with the Ministry, the Disability Rights Foundation and other civil society organizations. The document uses a social inclusion/exclusion perspective, referring to disability as a 'process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for themselves, not taking into account the impairments other people have.'

According to the OSCE, the National Strategy is: 'a big step forward, bridging the gap between people with disabilities and the policy-making that affects them. It aims to improve their living conditions, particularly in the fields of education, employment, support services and free access. Over the next few years, old buildings and transport systems will have to be modified, education and services will need to be made more accessible and a great deal of legislation will need be amended or drafted from scratch' (OSCE 2005). The Council of Ministers have approved the Strategy¹³.

Implementation of the strategy is therefore something to follow over the next few years when exploring the social exclusion of persons with disabilities in Albania¹⁴.

RECOMMENDATION: DFID might usefully explore the possibilities of linking with organisations working with persons with disabilities in order to build on this preliminary, and thus limited, analysis of social exclusion. For example, it may be worth considering the primary causes for disabled people being out of work and how could these be addressed to reduce social exclusion (through accessible education, flexible approaches to work, access to social services and transport). Furthermore, DFID might consider providing support to improve the statistical base on people with disabilities, to include data on those not accessing state benefits, and those who are unemployed; and to improve the gender disaggregation of available data.

2.1.2 Age

2.1.2.1 Children and Youth

In Albania, 40% of the population is under 18 years of age. About 32.8% or 293,000 children in Albania live below minimum standards (less than \$2 per day) (Republic of Albania, Ministry of Finance. 2005: 25). Furthermore, Albanian children are facing other dangers emerged during transition, such as school dropouts, violence, blood-feud (see 2.1.7), trafficking, exploitation and criminality (Republic of Albania, Ministry of Finance. 2005: 25). These factors all enhance social exclusion caused by poverty.

UNICEF Albania (pers. comm.) considers the most socially excluded groups of children to be:

- Children without parents
- Children of poor families
- Children of Roma¹⁵ families
- Children affected by blood feuds (see 2.1.7)

¹³ Strategies are not as a rule legally binding.

¹⁴ The OSCE will be continuing to support the National Strategy in close co-operation with the Ministry, the Disability Rights Foundation and other civil society organizations.

¹⁵ For the purposes of this report, Roma is used as a generic name to cover those who describe themselves as Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, unless specified differently, as is the case for Albania .

- Disabled children.
- Street and working children (see below)
- Children affected by migration some of whom may not have legal status and thus have difficulties accessing public services and some who have moved to areas where there are insufficient services for the high demand¹⁶.

Child labour

In Albania, 32% of children are economically active. While many of these children may work to pay for their education or to contribute to family survival, it is important to note that a significant proportion of these are engaged in child labour, which is defined as economic activity that takes place under a minimum age specified in national legislation for that kind of work.

Additionally, it is hazardous or is an unconditional form of child labour (see ILO 2002a and 2002b). Within this group of children engaged in child labour, the most vulnerable¹⁷ are:

- Working Street Children: According to UNICEF, working street children are most vulnerable to recruitment for other forms of hazardous work or are easy prey to child trafficking¹⁸ and prostitution. Street life is often the entry point for criminal activities.
- Children involved in illicit activities: According to the 2003 estimates of the Ministry of Public Order, 42% of criminals in Albania were young people, mainly a) children from disadvantaged families with few opportunities for legitimate employment and/or b) children with low levels of education such as school drop-outs
- Children working in the formal sector: A large number of children work in extremely hazardous occupations and under dangerous conditions in the following sectors: construction, mining, small shoes and clothing factories.
- Children working in agriculture: Agriculture remains the main sector in the Albanian economy, representing about 50% of the GDP in 2002. Child labour in farming can be explained in part by the fact that adult family members have gone abroad or to towns to try to earn more money.

A consequence of child labour is that these children are most often excluded from participation in family life, from basic survival and development requirements, school, social life and the possibility of gainful, safe employment in the future.

Roma Children

Another group of children suffering from multiple exclusion are Roma children. In addition to exclusion due to discrimination as a result of their ethnicity, they are excluded by virtue of their childhood status and gender, particularly girl children. According to UNICEF (2006), three of the key factors which can lead to further exclusion of Roma children are:

- Early marriage: common in the Roma community due to cultural tradition, impoverishment, premarital pregnancy and the belief that marriage protects girls from sexual assault. For Roma girls, early marriage almost automatically means too-early

¹⁶ During the transition, many families migrated to big cities and to Italy and Greece. The services in the cities were not equipped to deal with the massive influx and local and migrant families have been unable to access services. In Tirana, for example, the population increased 3-4 times, without a similar increase in service provision. This has led to exclusion from education, health services, social assistance, social care, vocational/professional services for parents as well as the accompanying psychosocial problems that face migrants.

¹⁷ According to IPEC PROTECT CEE.

¹⁸ Trafficking in children: Patterns of child trafficking in Albania are: a/ flows from Albania to Greece and Italy (cross –border trafficking) and b/from rural to urban or from poor to wealthier areas (internal trafficking). See ILO-IPEC 2003. Trafficking in children outside Albania seems to have decreased during the last two years due to the government's enforcement measures at the borders and prevention work inside the country. Re-trafficking and incidence of internal trafficking appears to be also rising.

pregnancy and childbearing and lack of secondary education. NB. Early marriage also affects non Romani communities.

- **Child trafficking:** According to estimates, up to 90% of children trafficked for forced labour and begging in Albania are Roma. Poverty and lack of work opportunities for families are key 'push' factors, along with lack of education. Families are often directly involved in trafficking their children or encouraging them to work on the street
- **Lack of schooling:** Roma children in Albania average four to five years of education, compared to 11 years for the non-minority population¹⁹. In addition, Albania has the biggest gap in enrolment rates between Roma and non-Roma children in the Balkans. The cost of stationary and other school supplies is seen as prohibitive (UNDP 2005). The president of the Roma Union considers combating illiteracy the most urgent need.

Youth

Youth migration is a key concern in Albania and reflects a sense of exclusion from the potential opportunities available in the country. A youth opinion poll of 2000 revealed that when asked what they saw themselves doing when they were older, approximately 45% of Albanian youth responded that they saw themselves living outside the country as they did not see their future in Albania (UNICEF Undated)²⁰.

2.1.2.2 Elderly

According to HelpAge International, in Albania, many elderly women and men suffer social exclusion. It is worth noting that 10% of poor persons are elderly and this is principally attributed to the state guaranteed pension (UNDP 2005: 55). However, this pension is felt to be inadequate and many elderly persons are thus dependent on family support. Furthermore, there are very few centres that provide care for the elderly (pers. comm.). Consequences of this exclusion for women can be: emotional and psychological violence; low social status; lack of access to information about rights and entitlements; low pensions causing income poverty; loneliness; health problems; carrying the burden of emigration of younger generation. Elderly men have cited the following as resulting from their social exclusion: deterioration of social position after retirement; low pensions; social isolation leading to health problems and malnutrition; depression (HelpAge International 2006).

2.1.3 Ethnicity, Refugees/ IDP Status and Post conflict discrimination

According to interviews conducted as part of this review, discrimination according to ethnicity per se is not a key issue leading to social exclusion. The issue is more one related to the high rates of poverty of certain ethnic groups, such as the Roma, who tend to be poorer and have fewer resources, such as education and relevant skills, at their disposal to benefit from the employment opportunities available to better educated persons. Others, however, including major human rights organizations dealing with the situation of Roma in Albania, such as the European Roma Rights Center (ERRC) or the Minority Rights Group (MRG) would dispute this argument, claiming that the Roma are poor because they are socially excluded, and not the other way around (pers. comm.).

Two groups cited as facing severe exclusion are the Roma and the Egyptians. The 2002 World Bank Qualitative Poverty Assessment identified the Roma as the poorest segment of the Albanian society, suffering from poor health, low levels of education and inadequate housing, all exacerbated by social exclusion and cultural marginalization. Estimates of

¹⁹ The figure of 11 years is given as being 9.5 years according to World Bank Working Paper, no. 53, 2005. This reveals yet again the difficulties in statistical analysis. Statistics on enrolment rates and completion rates were not available in the literature review, including in the UNDP HDR.

²⁰ It is important to note that the interviews took place with young people from high school immediately after the Kosovo crisis so UNICEF believe that fear of war was a significant factor influencing the high percentage. However, they feel that although the percentage might be lower now, it would still remain high.

numbers of Roma living in Albania range from 10,000 to 350,000. The Egyptians is another, more numerous, minority group with similar problems to the Roma, but they speak Albanian (while the first language of the Roma is Romani). However, since language is used as the criterion for defining minority groups in Albania, the Government does not recognize the Egyptians as a minority group. The government has insisted in communications with various regional and UN treaty-reporting and other monitoring bodies that the Egyptians are not recognised, not only because they do not speak a separate language but also because in every other social and cultural aspect they allegedly do not differ from Albanians (pers. comm.). This clearly has implications for the efforts to target Egyptian populations as part of social exclusion initiatives²¹.

While the Albanian Constitution underscores the equality of all citizens, and laws and policies prohibit discrimination, the Roma and Egyptians suffer from psychological, social, economic and political discrimination. According to UNICEF (2006), the Roma are facing growing health problems, with increased incidences of illnesses related to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and low access to nutritious foods along with increasing maternal, infant and child mortality. Immunization rates are low while sexual risk behaviours related to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections are high.

The lack of opportunities available to Roma and Egyptians minorities also contributes to social isolation of young people, who find themselves with little chance of finding employment or end up working in the lowest paid service sector, including collecting garbage and selling used clothes. The increasing use of intravenous drugs demonstrates the lack of hope for this highly marginalized group. As a result they enter adulthood with no expectations of improving their lives, which leads to a continuing of the cycle of poverty, exclusion and marginalization. Exclusion and poverty are thus both cause and effect of many of the problems facing the Roma and Egyptians (UNICEF 2006).

In terms of policy measures taken to address the exclusion of the Roma in Albania, it is worth noting that in April 2003 the Albanian Government adopted the Project Strategy for the Improvement of Living Conditions of the Roma Minority. However, the implementation of the Strategy is weak due to low financial commitments and the limited number of actions taken. It is also worth noting that Albania is not participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 initiative, where nine southeast European pledged to close the gap in welfare and living conditions between Roma and the non-Roma in their countries, and to end the poverty and social exclusion of Roma.

2.1.4 Gender, female poverty

Women in Albania are more at risk of social exclusion, as they are in most of the world, due to gendered power relations. Gender inequalities are evident in political and corporate leadership and decision-making, in employment and the informal sector, and in access to healthcare. Women suffer from domestic violence and the trafficking of women appears to be a still growing phenomenon. There is an overriding sense in Albania that the gap in differential opportunities for women and men is widening. Roma women face multiple discrimination and consequently exclusion on the basis of their gender as well as their ethnicity, poverty and low education levels.

- **Labour market and pensions**

It is estimated that a large number of women only marginally participate in the labour force. Since the 1990s, more women than men have been made unemployed from the formal sector, either because retrenchment has hit sectors and jobs more dominated by women; or

²¹ For further information, the reader is referred to the 2005 World Bank report: De Soto H., Beddies S., Gedesh I. 2005. 'Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion'

because of discrimination in terms of who is retained, whereby men tend to be favoured over women, largely for socio-cultural reasons. In addition, large numbers of women are either underemployed in farming activities or working in the insecure and unprotected informal sector. According to Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOSLAEO), the labor force participation rate in 2004 was 68.6% for men, compared to just 46.4% for women²². Discrimination in recruitment, women's childcare responsibilities (particularly given the collapse of state childcare facilities), and the cutting back of social sectors in which women are traditionally employed, are all contributory factors. Women's average salary is 70% that of their male counterparts.

- Pensions and state benefits.

As a result of accumulated differences (in years of work and lower wages), women's pensions are lower than men's (Matkovic 2005). In addition, women tend to have fewer entitlements to cash-transfer benefits, such as maternity benefits, because of their limited participation in the formal labour force and consequent non-contribution to the national social insurance scheme (DFID 2000). The collapse of state benefits such as childcare facilities has worsened the situation, as fewer women are now able to take up full-time employment, with risks to their future benefits and pensions entitlements.

- Violence, discrimination and abuse

Despite gains made for women during the socialist years, Albania has remained a male dominated society. Gains made prior to the 1990s, in terms of equal employment and more active political participation, have generally been lost, and women's principle role is once again seen to be primarily within the family unit. Violence against women is generally recognized as a problem but there is no data to support either its existence, or absence. It is not clear whether such violence was a hidden phenomenon during the socialist era, or if it has re-emerged in recent years, as a result of economic hardship and the effects of migration. Women and girls, especially in rural areas, face discrimination and social exclusion. A recent nationwide survey reported that 8% of women had experienced domestic violence and 25% had experienced some form of abuse. Early marriage, arranged marriage and selective abortion all take place (UNICEF 2005).

- Commercial sex work

It is clearly a gender issue and according to the World Bank (2005) as many as 30,000 Albanian women and girls might be working as commercial sex workers in Europe. Many of these women have been trafficked for sex work, either through false promises of marriage or employment, or through coercion at the time of kidnapping. Although prostitution is illegal in Albania, women are often forced into sex work while waiting to leave Albania.

- Female headed households

Migration continues to be a significant factor affecting both women and men in Albania. with both negative and positive impacts on all family members. More men migrate overseas, but a larger percentage of women migrate internally. One consequence of the large numbers of persons migrating out of Albania is that many families have been left without a male head of household, particularly in the North of the country. Women headed households are finding it difficult on their own, particularly as they find it harder to find employment than men (pers. comm.). Households headed by women are at a higher risk from poverty (Republic of Albania, Ministry of Finance. 2005: 25).

- Political participation and decision-making

²² Note that the labour force participation rate differs quite substantially from the unemployment rate, from the same source (MOLSAEO 2004). The unemployment rate in the formal sector in 2004 was 17.5% for women, and 12.4% for men. Although unemployment rates are higher for women than for men, the 5-percentage point difference is better than in some EU member countries.

Despite some efforts to promote and protect gender equality within the national machinery and legislature, women's participation in political life is decreasing and further analysis is needed to understand this shift. In Parliament, women hold just 10 seats out of a total of 140 (7%); although significantly for the first time in history, the Albanian Parliament has been held by a woman since July 2005. Women enjoyed much stronger political representation during the socialist era. This lack of representation in key decision-making positions is not a reflection of women's educational status.

- Education

In general, Albanian women are better educated than men²³; and according to the National Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT), achieve higher qualifications. School drop-outs rates for girls and boys are fairly similar, although there are different causal factors. Official data shows that the numbers of girls leaving university are higher than boys and that there is a 100% equality ratio for youth literacy. Albanian laws on education ensure equal access to the education of girls and boys, however, in rural areas the numbers of girls attending secondary education are lower than for boys. According to UNDP some of the primary reasons are 'poverty, problems of infrastructure, the remoteness of schools, legacies from the past, a lack of security (especially to girls)²⁴. Interviews revealed that security in rural areas is a key factor reducing the attendance of girls. Parents are afraid to allow their girls to travel to the urban areas alone for fear that they will be taken to Italy or elsewhere to work as commercial sex workers (pers. comm.).

- Health

Whilst the law guarantees health care for all, in reality, health care services are often unaffordable and therefore inaccessible to women and men alike – although the willingness of a household to spend on healthcare for different family members is likely to differ²⁵. Whilst public spending in the health sector is considered to be "gender neutral", there are in fact significant gender differences as to who actually benefits from these services.

RECOMMENDATION: More information is needed to understand the extent and causes of violence against women, so that the issue can be better addressed at the national level (including through legislation, and within emerging sectoral strategies under NSDI). Equally, a clearer evidence base is needed in order to understand the factors that are keeping girls in particular from attending secondary school.

2.1.5 HIV/AIDS

Although the country had only 141 confirmed HIV infections in December 2004, national projections indicate the number of infected people may reach 10,000-15,000 by 2010. In 2003, it was reported that 70% of cases have been detected among returning migrants (Republic of Albania 2003: 17). Other populations at increased risk include injecting drug users, commercial sex workers and the Roma community (see Republic of Albania 2003 and World Bank 2005 for further information).

The disease is increasingly being 'feminized' in Albania, with women accounting for 47% of new cases in 2004 as opposed to 19% in 2002 and 23% in 2003. This is potentially linked to the fact that 66% of transmissions are linked to heterosexual sex (World Bank 2005 53-54) or according to the Western Balkans Programme to Combat HIV/AIDS 85% of transmissions

²³ Although this is not the case for Roma and some other ethnic communities

²⁴ These generalized statements clearly need unpacking and further analysis of push and pull factors is needed. For example, is there a stratification in skills and qualifications for boys and girls? What is the reason for the drop-out rate? Is it early marriage, lack of finances, few employment opportunities after leaving university which de-incentivises education?

²⁵ There is no specific data available on this

are linked to heterosexual intercourse²⁶. There could be a link between this and the fact that most returning migrants with HIV/AIDS are young males between 20-40 years old who then engage in heterosexual intercourse with Albanian women. The National Strategy on HIV/AIDS was adopted in 2004, but the surveillance system remains weak (UNICEF 2005).

Thus, while HIV/AIDS is not a leading driver of social exclusion at present, if projections are accurate there is the possibility that it will be in the future. This possibility could be real particularly if the stigma and social exclusion seen in other countries in the region and elsewhere become also common in Albania.

RECOMMENDATION: Further analysis of the impact of HIV/AIDS on social exclusion in Albania is needed.

2.1.6 Remoteness/ spatial exclusion²⁷

There is a profound difference in living standards in urban and rural zones. Rural areas continue to be the poorest parts of the country. 29.6% of the Albanian rural population continues to live below the poverty line as compared to 20.1% of the urban population. About 48% of the people who work in agriculture are poor and about 28% of the inhabitants of rural areas form part of the lowest quintile income bracket (UNICEF 2005, see also Republic of Albania, Ministry of Finance. 2005: 28-29).

Poverty is a key driver of social exclusion and therefore the high indicators of poverty in rural areas highlight social exclusion of rural populations. Furthermore, social exclusion is exacerbated by both high levels of unemployment in rural areas and temporary employment and underemployment in urban areas. The latter has been brought about by rapid rises in rural-urban migration. In parallel with migration to urban areas, peri-urban squatter settlements have developed which lack basic social services or provide adequate levels of formal and informal social protection to prevent households falling into poverty (DFID 2000).

2.1.7 Blood feuds

Blood feuds refer to conflicts or disputes between different families. Usually they involve killing as a form of revenge for an injustice inflicted upon a member of a family by a member of another family. Blood feuds were given as another factor contributing to social exclusion, particularly in remote areas in the North and North East of the country (DFID Albania, pers.comm). These feuds means that people from certain families are excluded from working together, going to school together and some people are even unable to leave their homes (pers. comm., UNDP 2005). Young boys are particularly affected in that they are unable to leave the home to attend school as the honour system means that only boys can be victims of blood feuds.

2.2 Social exclusion and national policy frameworks for poverty reduction.

In 1999, the Poverty Reduction Strategy process was introduced in Albania. This provided an opportunity for the Government of Albania to pursue a coherent long-term approach to poverty reduction, as well as to support Albania's aspirations to become a member of the European Union. The Strategy was developed by government with broad consultation with civil society including the private sector and, according to a 2004 report the consultation process continues to be enhanced with every successive year (Oxford Policy Management and Birks Sinclair. 2004: 11). The NSEED emphasised education, health, health care and infrastructure as priority areas for policy interventions.

²⁶ According to this source, only 2% of transmissions are through intravenous drug use.

²⁷ Spatial exclusion is defined on the basis of where one person lives. For example, people who have moved from one part of a country to another, or across borders, can suffer exclusion.

The Albanian poverty reduction strategy, the National Strategy for Socio Economic Development (NSEED) has currently completed its policy lifespan and a National Strategy for Development and Inclusion is being developed to replace it. Under NSDI, a series of sectoral and cross-cutting strategies will be developed. The sectoral strategies will be costed and monitored against a set of agreed indicators. Cross-cutting strategies will draw on relevant sections from the sector strategies, but will not be able to mention anything additional, that has not been included within a sector strategy. The cross-cutting strategies will not be costed or resourced separately, and will draw on indicators already included within sector strategies. It is therefore essential that line ministries recognise the need to include social exclusion concerns within their sector strategies.

The Social Inclusion Strategy (SIS) is the cross-cutting strategy that will incorporate the various strategies for social exclusion. Three existing strategies, on Roma, children and people with disabilities, will be incorporated within this; unfortunately the Gender Equality Strategy will not be completed in time to contribute. According to OSCE (2005), the previous NSEED had successfully incorporated the key Disability Strategy measures, into sectoral priorities and the overall objectives; and it is expected that this will work successfully again under NSDI. This potentially provides for two opportunities for social exclusion concerns to be monitored: both through the Monitoring and Reporting Structures set out in individual strategies (Roma, Disability, Children etc.), and also through the sectoral indicators developed under NSDI.

The following section analyses how the earlier NSEED addressed social exclusion, in order to highlight issues and areas that DFID will need to monitor closely, to ensure they are included within the forthcoming SIS and the sectoral strategies under NSDI.

Persons suffering from social exclusion were included under NSEED. For example, the exclusion of the elderly was to be addressed through increased funding to raise and equalise urban and rural pensions with an 8% expansion for urban pensioners and a 15% rise for rural pensioners and equalisation measures for those that are operating under different laws dependent on year of retirement (Republic of Albania, Ministry of Finance. 2005: 74).

Issues facing children, women, persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDS, Roma women, and rural poor were all included in the Strategy; although there was very little addressing issues faced by ethnic minorities – perhaps due to the fact that ethnicity is not seen to be a factor of social exclusion²⁸. According to UNICEF, the NSEED did not address children's rights sufficiently. It is hoped that this will be better addressed through the NSDI; along with the concern that it is not clear how economic growth has impacted on reducing social exclusion.

The NSDI is attempting to incorporate the MDGs, EU accession and various sector-based strategies within a single, integrated planning system²⁹. Albania and the European Union signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) on June 12, 2006. It will need to be monitored how influential this has been in ensuring that the new NSDI takes on board the social inclusion requirements of EU accession.

RECOMMENDATION: Clearly, it will be important for DFID and others to monitor the development of this Strategy to ensure that social exclusion concerns are adequately addressed.

²⁸ See also Republic of Albania, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Department of Social Services 2005 for further detail on specific strategies for groups facing social exclusion.

²⁹ see <http://www.undp.org.al/?fnews,18>

2.3 Concluding thoughts for Albania

All drivers discussed lead to exclusion. Those that appear to be most pertinent appear to be rurality, poverty, gender and age. Further analysis is needed notably of the impact of disability on exclusion. Being a poor, rural, Roma, girl child appears to lead to some of the greatest social exclusion.

3. Country Trends: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

- The impact of war has clearly been substantial in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with direct material damage to industrial facilities estimated at \$ 50-60 billion, the destruction of the system of public administration and governance, the interruption in the development of knowledge and technological innovation, the brain drain of qualified workers and experts and the destruction of the social fabric, of social ties of tolerance and co-existence and the dissolution of families and small communities.
- According to recent DFID commissioned research (DFID 2005b), there has been an overall improvement in living conditions since 2001. Employment rates for the working age population (15-64 years) increased by around 6% between 2001 and 2004 although unemployment rates for BiH have fallen by only 1% over the same period³⁰. In addition, the aggregate unemployment rates increased between 2003 and 2004, reversing the previous downward trend. The increase in unemployment is greater in the RS than in FBiH. Education levels remain low for the majority of the population.
- People with no educational qualifications continue to be least likely to be in paid employment followed by those with primary school education only. They are also most likely to be long term unemployed and are significantly less likely to have moved into employment from unemployment between 2001 and 2004.
- Mean household income levels for BiH have increased, mainly due to increases in income from employment sources. While overall income levels have improved in both entities, the data suggest an increasing gap between average income levels in the RS and FBiH, a difference which appears to be largely due to higher wages and returns to employment in FBiH over the past four years.
- The political division of Bosnia and Herzegovina is pertinent to social exclusion in the country. The country is divided into two entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska (RS). In Republic of Srpska, financing of social welfare is organized on two levels, entity and municipal. In the Federation, cantons are responsible for collecting revenue for social welfare.
- Since the economic capacities of cantons are very different and in many cantons below the level of needs, socially excluded groups will have access to different forms of social protection simply on the basis of which canton they live in.
- Attempts are being made to redress this situation with the 2006 introduction of VAT (PDV) at a single rate. This has replaced local sales' taxes and is collected at state level, prior to redistribution. Redistribution remains a contentious issue, however, and the effect of the new initiative on reducing the geographical inequalities have yet to be seen as there are currently no mechanisms for re-distribution of the revenue collected.
- It is also worth noting that the last census took place in 1991, which makes it difficult to note who is actually where, for example, which also makes it difficult to quantifiably measure social exclusion with any accuracy.

³⁰ Reasons for this apparent discrepancy are not given in the DFID report and it would be useful for this to be explored in the next phase of the Wave research.

3.1 Drivers of Social Exclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina

3.1.1 Ability/ Disability

The Council of Ministers agreed in 2003 to the Standard rules for equalizing possibilities for persons with disability, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993. This means that authoritative bodies in Bosnia-Herzegovina, FBiH, Republic of Srpska and Brcko District, are obliged, through joint work, to implement activities that improve the position of persons with a disability. A Law on the Protection of mentally disabled persons has also been seen to be very positive in the legal sense as it sets a legal foundation for the promotion of protection of persons with mental health issues.

However, implementing the legal framework remains the challenge. While there is no accurate data on disability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is estimated that almost 10% of the total population is made up by persons with disabilities. These persons are further excluded by the poor quality and number of support services, which in turn further affects their already vulnerable psychological condition (UNDP 2003: 64). Persons with disabilities are often unable to find work which means that they are usually not covered by social or health insurance, and when they are, the amount is so low that it does not cover all needs.

Unemployment levels for persons with disabilities is higher than for able bodied persons. In the RS, 32.4% of the disabled were in employment compared to 42.8% of the able bodied and 48.8% were not in employment compared to 31.5% of the able bodied. In the FBiH 24% of the disabled were in employment compared to 42.2% of the able bodied while 67.2% were not in employment compared to 37.3% of the able bodied (DFID 2005b: 63).

Furthermore, the bureaucratic nature of social policies means that it is also hard to access services. Lack of access within public transport systems and key government buildings, such as schools and hospitals, is a key issue in terms of exclusion of persons with disability.

Civil society organisations in the main cities are working seriously to support persons with disabilities. However, in rural areas support is limited and disabled persons are often kept hidden away in homes or institutions.

The level of exclusion also appears to differ according to the source of the disability. For example, those disabled from birth receive minimum support and are marginalised. They are entitled to a child benefit allowance which applies even when they are adults but does not allow for independent living. War veterans receive the highest level of support and even those with 20-30% level of disability and who can still work are entitled to receive an allowance. Civil victims of war, however, were not covered at all until very recently and their allowance is lower than those of the military disabled and only a few of the Cantons, such as Sarajevo, pay allowances regularly (pers. comm.). One informant noted that there is no provision whatsoever for the widows and children of the inter-Bosniak conflict in Bosanska Krajina.

Research on the state of children's rights has showed that children with some kind of disability are the group of children which suffer greatest social exclusion. These children have been 'very isolated, condemned to institutions specialized for dealing with them, exposed to prejudices or ignored by their community' (Our Children with Hi Neighbour. Undated).

3.1.2 Age

3.1.2.1 Children and Youth

The 'Alternative report on the CRC'³¹ compiled by two NGOs - Our Children and Hi Neighbour- is useful and is worth further exploration by the reader interested in the social exclusion of children and youth in BiH (see CD-Rom that accompanies this document).

The report reveals discrimination of children according to the following criteria:

- Nationality
- Financial status, with poor children being avoided by other children
- Disability (see 3.1.1 above).

Another important factor leading to social exclusion of children is lack of birth registration, particularly amongst Roma children. War, migration of populations from neighbouring countries and the unresolved citizenship status of these children's parents has meant that a number of children are unregistered (Our Children with Hi Neighbour. Undated: 14 and Ombudsmani Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine. Undated). Lack of birth registration will clearly have an impact on social exclusion of these children, in terms of accessing an identity, schooling, health, services and employment. No data is currently available on numbers of children who are not registered. Collecting such information is clearly a difficult task, particularly when there is a lack of census data. Lack of birth registration can be attributed to migration, but also to a fragile legal system which is not implemented. Prior to the war a legal structure for birth registration was in place and brought with it sanctions and penalties for failure to register. Such mechanisms are no longer as strictly enforced, particularly in rural areas (DFID, pers.comm).

One key concern expressed during the review was the nature of the education system which segregates children from the three ethnic groups (ethnic Serbs, ethnic Croats and ethnic Bosniaks). These children study according to a different curriculum and often do not mix within the school setting. This leads to a system of segregation and social exclusion (DFID, pers.comm.).

The youth literacy rate is equal for girls to boys. Unfortunately, very little information was available on social exclusion and youth during this short review.

3.1.2.2 Elderly

Interviews revealed that pensioners are one of the most excluded groups as the basic pension is not enough to live independently which means that additional support is needed from family members. The pension system is based on a 20 year contribution history and the sum paid out is the same regardless of salary. Staff and employers are therefore reportedly in collusion to under report their salaries so that they pay less contributions and receive the additional sum in cash. This means that there is less funding available to the current generation of pensioners. Furthermore, those who have not worked for the full 20 years lose their entitlements.

Therefore, those elderly who do not have family support and do not have a 20 year contribution history are finding themselves extremely vulnerable and excluded (pers.

³¹ This report was commissioned and supported by Save the Children Norway and involved contributions by members of the informal network of non-governmental organizations who work on the protection of children's rights in BH. These are *Be my friend* Sarajevo, *First smile* Banja Luka, *Centre for rights of the child* Konjic, SUMERO Sarajevo, OC *Lighthouse* Prijedor, *Our Children* Zenica, *Amica-Friends*, Srebrenica, *Education builds BH* Sarajevo, *Association for helping mentally insufficiently developed persons* Banja Luka, Land of Children Tuzla, *Children posts of the World* Sarajevo. Contributions were also given by Department for Children's Rights (Division for the Rights of the Child) at the institution of Ombudsmen of BH Federation Sarajevo, and BH UNICEF.

comm.). Widows, however, are able to take over their husband's pensioners rights, even if they themselves have not worked. Social exclusion is also furthered by the lack of social networks, for example social clubs, that may be found in other countries in the Balkans (DFID pers.comm.) and the lack of appropriate public transport, which is also a significant problem for elderly persons who may have disabilities as a result of the war.

No statistics were made available during this study on numbers of elderly people suffering from social exclusion. Again, this is made difficult by the lack of accurate statistics, particularly census data, generally. Help Age International conducted a qualitative survey but unfortunately have not provided the numbers of persons consulted. The organisation cite the following as being key factors influencing the social exclusion of elderly persons:

- Elderly women: Low social status; no access to information; lack of respect and decision making power in families; physical violence, lack of health insurance; very low or no pension; no control over their incomes; lack of mobility; domestic chores burden; lack of property inheritance rights and of property. See 3.1.4 for further information on the exclusion of elderly women.
- Elderly men suffer primarily from: low respect in the family; inability to manage on their own after losing their spouses, health problems, loneliness, lower economic power and at the same time lower social status (HelpAge International 2006).

Further analysis would be needed in order to quantify the issue of social exclusion of the elderly. However, it is clear according to the qualitative data provided and interviews conducted for this desk review that social exclusion is an issue which does affect the elderly.

RECOMMENDATION: No statistics on social exclusion among the elderly were made available during the review, and further analysis is needed in order to quantify numbers of elderly excluded. DFID could discuss with international organisations such as Help Age International, or local think tanks, in order to ascertain opportunities to support research, in order to improve the evidence base.

3.1.3 Ethnicity, Refugees/ IDP status and Post conflict discrimination

The issue of ethnicity is one that differs on a cantonal/local level and it is therefore difficult to make generalisations on the basis of a desk review. Further information is provided in the Ethnicity Stocktaking report, which should be read alongside this review.

Displacement is clearly an important factor leading to social exclusion in BiH. During the war, the largest displacement was recorded in 1995, when 1,282,000 persons were displaced. By the end of the war, 1.2 million Bosnian refugees had sought refuge in other countries and around 50% of the BiH population of 1991 had changed their places of residence (UNDP 2003).

As a result of displaced persons' return to their pre-war places of residence minority groups have been formed in a considerable number of municipalities in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Who specifically is the minority group differs from village to village which makes it difficult to draw broad conclusions but it is reported that all groups (ethnic Serbs, ethnic Croats and ethnic Bosniaks) are affected.

The status of children from these minority groups is becoming complicated for many reasons: low income, school curriculum and syllabus issues, language and religious studies and often a limited integration into the local community (Our Children with Hi Neighbour. Undated: 10). Minority returnees suffer from various forms of exclusion (Mercy Corps 2006). These include:

- State subsidies are often not paid to returnee farmers and returnees are insufficiently informed of entitlements
- Prospective minority returnees often cannot receive house reconstruction permission or assistance due to a lack of documentation
- Education in the place of displacement is not always recognised and students find themselves having to re-sit qualifications. Furthermore, most schools in return areas lack minority teachers
- Returnees are often not integrated into health systems in the place of return. There is a lack of doctors from minority communities and returnees fear losing other benefits as a displaced person if they register with the health system
- Lack of employment opportunities with public sector, state owned companies, often not respecting the 1991 laws on minorities. The private sector is still reluctant to recruit returnees as many have poor levels of education.
- Lack of documentation including for property ownership
- Lack of representation to claim for rights

The ethnic division in three groups by the Dayton Agreement has contributed to the specific neglect of the Roma and the lack of after war support to these groups in BiH. The Roma are thus an ethnic group that find themselves suffering dramatically from social exclusion. Although they have been given equal entitlements under the law the stigma associated with being Roma means that they often suffer from discrimination. According to Mercy Corps (2006), most lack health insurance, there is only a 15% school attendance and Roma have received very little house reconstruction assistance. UNDP vulnerability data reveals that Roma unemployment is at 52%, compared to 30% for the majority population (UNDP 2006).

In terms of policy frameworks, it is worth noting that despite overwhelming international humanitarian/development-related presence in the country since the Dayton Agreement was signed, the Roma have only become a focus of attention from 2000 and many of the major development agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina still do not have Roma-related programmes. Furthermore, the Roma are not one of the constituent peoples in BiH and their consequent limited participation in political life, alongside other smaller groups of ethnic minorities, deprives them of possibilities to advocate for their social inclusion. Finally, it should be noted that BiH is not taking part in the Decade of Roma Inclusion, which might negatively affect the economic and social situation of Roma in the country and cause a further lag in their development when compared to the rest of the region. The only existing state-level action plan relevant to Roma is the Action Plan on Roma Education, but little has so far been attained in terms of implementation (pers.comm.).

During the ethnicity stocktaking, religion was seen to be a significant factor for social exclusion in BiH with the religious leaders, particularly in rural areas, taking on political roles and reinforcing religious identities and divides. Many Croats are Catholic, many Serbs are Orthodox Christians and many Bosniaks are Muslims, while the majority of BiH Roma are Muslim. Before the war, it was estimated that two thirds of BiH Roma lived in today's Republika Srpska. However, a very small minority live there now, primarily as the entity is Serb (Orthodox)-dominated and most of them now live in the predominantly Muslim/Bosniak parts of the Federation. Multiple exclusions based not only on ethnicity, but also on religious background, caused internal displacement and deepened the level of social exclusion. Religious identity also reinforces the rigid system of ethnic segregation. The influence and power given to religious and minority leaders coming from the three "constituent peoples" enables them to promote their narrow interests and resist changes in important areas such as the education and policing systems.

There are other smaller groups of ethnic minorities, including ethnic Albanians and Chinese, but there is a lack of evidence on their social and economic circumstances.

3.1.4 Gender, female poverty

Gender is seen to be a key driver of social exclusion. According to UNDP (2003) and DFID 2005b, some of the main causes and outcomes of the social exclusion of women are:

- **Economics**

Low economic conditions and labour market segregation caused by a difference in access to resources and the market. Women aged 16-64 make up only 37.2% of the workforce in BiH. Furthermore, women head 25% of all households and 16% of the poor population live in such households (UNDP 2003). Reasons for female headed households being more likely to be in the poorest households are that they may be more likely to be widows living on a limited income from social benefits, pensions and other non-employment sources than male headed households. In addition, it may be the case that some female headed households with dependent children are unable to work or have limited hours of work or low paid part-time work due to their family commitments (DFID 2005b). Women are also more likely to earn lower salaries and to be located in less well paid jobs than men (DFID 2005b).

- **Low social conditions**

Traditionally men are the owners of private property, despite the fact that women have equal rights under the law to inherit and share property. By virtue of not possessing property, women are automatically excluded from loans since property is always required as collateral.

- **Dependency**

As result of the war, there are high numbers of women whose economic status is dependent of the rights of their spouses. Many did not work prior to the war and are therefore not entitled to benefits. War widow entitlements were very high in the immediate post war era but are now decreasing.

- **Training**

Lack of access to information on resources and professional training: this reduces the access of women to information on loans, changes in the market, and the spread of informal support networks.

- **Age**

Elderly women are more affected by poverty than elderly men: employment with age declines much more dramatically for women than for men. Women make up 58% of the population over 65, they often live alone, and if they live in the countryside, with no pension or other income, they are most at risk of falling below the poverty line.

- **Ethnicity/Social**

It has been more difficult for female-headed displaced and refugee families to exercise the right to return of property. Lack of access to education and low literacy levels means that many women, especially rural women, are not aware of their rights. Roma women face multiple discrimination and consequently exclusion on the basis of their gender as well as their ethnicity, poverty and low education levels.

3.1.5 HIV/AIDS

There is a relatively low recorded HIV/AIDS prevalence rate. The first case of AIDS in BiH was registered in 1986, and the first HIV-positive person was identified in 1989. Between then and late 2002, the total of registered HIV positive persons has reached 51. Persons

infected with HIV/AIDS cannot still receive adequate and high quality medical supervision, diagnostics, or specific treatment by antiviral medicines (UNDP 2003).

Of the HIV cases with documented transmission modes, 39% are attributed to heterosexual sex, 19% are attributed to homo/bisexual sex, and 13% to injecting drug use (UNAIDS/WHO 2004 cited in Romanian Association against AIDS. 2005: 4). These figures differ from those provided by the World Bank which cites 54% of transmissions being through heterosexual sex, 15% through homosexual intercourse and 14% by injecting drug use (World Bank 2005). This reveals the difficulties of relying on statistics; HIV/AIDS statistics in particular are notoriously difficult to collect.

There is inadequate public awareness as to causes of transmission, which leads to HIV/AIDS-related stigma and silence and consequently to exclusion of infected persons.

It is worth noting that those interviewed did not feel that HIV/AIDS was a main driver of social exclusion due to the low prevalence.

3.1.6 Remoteness/ spatial exclusion

Spatial exclusion is an important issue in BiH, notably due to the division of public services. Poor areas have fewer opportunities for revenue collection and therefore those living in poor areas have less access to public support. Exclusion based on ethnicity and displacement also differs according to physical place of residence (See 3.1.3 above) and 3.1.1 above also refers to the reduced access to services by people with disabilities in rural areas.

In rural areas there are some opportunities for subsistence farming if people own land. However, there are difficulties in transport links and communications due to the geography of the country. Those wanting to access education, health and social services have to travel much further at greater expense than those in urban areas.

Furthermore, many areas were destroyed during the war, and are still mined. While there have been re-constructions, people in certain locations are still suffering from exclusion due to inaccessibility and lack of infrastructure.

3.1.7 Unemployment

Another factor leading to social exclusion identified by a number of informants is the issue of unemployment and low income of working people. The actual unemployment rate in BiH has been calculated at 16.4% (16.9% for FBiH and 15.8% for RS). 33% of those employed are working in the informal sector. Most of those who are effectively unemployed are young men and women and unqualified persons. The overall percentage of those employed in the informal sector is considerably higher in the RS (41.4%) than in the FBiH (31.9%). (UNDP 2003). This means that labour is unregulated and accurate data collection difficult.

According to UNDP (2003), the reality of the situation is that a large portion of the workforce and population in both entities:

- are just above the poverty line, coping through various unsustainable survival strategies
- have insecure jobs or work in the informal sector without any job security
- work in very localised labour markets with little development stability
- have little chance to increase their income
- are very vulnerable with regards to internal and external factors such as privatisation, loss of local markets, decrease in payments through direct transfers from the international community or through a loss of confidence on the part of investors. The recent introduction of VAT nationally has also been seen to have consequences in market distortion and in increasing the vulnerability of the population.

Another group of people suffering from unemployment are those who worked in State-owned enterprises (pers. comm.). When the factories slowed down pre and post war, workers were neither laid off nor fully employed but were kept on a waiting list without receiving a salary or social protection contributions (health, pension). Staff are, however, entitled to these payments so many people do not want to leave the company as they will then not receive payments. In the meantime they are not able to find alternative employment (in the formal sector at least). This is despite the 2004 Labour Law which has specified that this category of waiting list workers should be either employed by the company or made redundant with redundancy payments made.

In BiH, everyone is entitled to basic health care but additional, specialist health care is provided on a canton or entity level which means that not everyone receives the health provision that they may need. This particularly affects the unemployed who may lack employee health insurance (which affects approx 750,000 citizens, Mercy Corps 2006) which means that they may suffer from exclusion from specialist health care.

3.2 Social exclusion and national policy frameworks for poverty reduction.

The PRSP is known as the Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS). It was agreed in 2004 and is currently being revised as was considered to lack a good prioritization of measures, no targeting or cross sectoral strategic planning.

The revised MTDS of May 2006 revealed that social exclusion is only referred to once and this is in passing as one factor that contributes to increased poverty. Gender equality and social protection of vulnerable groups are included, however, within the document. It is important to note that there are plans to develop a social inclusion strategy as part of a National Development Plan and in line with the EU accession process (DFID pers.comm).

Implementation of the MTDS has been weak. Key concerns expressed by interviewees during the review and which DFID may wish to explore further with a more in-depth political economy analysis are:

- strong political lobby that war veterans have, at the expense of other groups suffering from social exclusion
- lack of budget allocation to social exclusion
- lack of emphasis on children's exclusion
- EC accession agenda is very politicized and reforms are focused on governance reform, macro economic policy but not on the national, social protection agenda.
- Lack of capacity and strategic thinking within Bosnia for social reform issues
- Taboo in discussing gender as reasons for social exclusion
- Lack of monitoring of service implementation due to absence of involvement of client groups in service design
- Use of income poverty indicators with no social indicators being set as benchmarks.
- Pro-economic growth approach which does not take into account the differential impact of economic growth on socially excluded groups.
- Lack of access to accurate data
- Need for better awareness of the need for service deliverers to join up

3.3 Concluding thoughts for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Social exclusion clearly exists in the country. This is exacerbated by the organization of the State since it puts persons living in richer parts of the country into a different position from those living in its poorer parts. Although the recent introduction of national VAT collection should have an impact on equalisation once the mechanisms are in place for distribution. Other groups suffered from exclusion are minority returnees, Roma, women, persons with

disabilities not resulting from war, civilian casualties of war, elderly persons and those who are unemployed.

4. Country Trends: Kosovo³²

- Following the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, Kosovo is under temporary UN administration. Chapter 7 of the Resolution states that the United Nations Interim administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) shall fulfill the role of the government as an interim arrangement. Among other things, Resolution 1244 called upon UNMIK to perform basic civilian administrative functions and to protect and promote human rights.
- Kosovo was the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's (SFRY) poorest province. Unemployment was already high, reportedly rising as high as 70 percent in 1995. This unemployment rate was disproportionately high among ethnic Albanians (and Roma).
- After the conflict of 1998-99, the economic recovery was evident, significantly aided by the reconstruction boom financed by international donors. However, key industries have ceased to function, and/or are waiting to be privatized (pending the resolution of significant property related issues). Most of the economy relies now on the agrarian sector and small private enterprises that do not manage to absorb the entire workforce.
- According to the World Bank, in 2002 about 37% of the population was living below the poverty line of Euro 1.42 per day. The population living below the extreme (food) poverty line of Euro 0.93 per day was estimated at 15 %.

Sources: Briefing Note Kosovo, PROTECT CEE ILO –IPEC; World Bank. 2005b. Kosovo Poverty Assessment.

4.1 Drivers of Social Exclusion in Kosovo

4.1.1 Ability/ Disability

According to Handikos, a local organization of Kosovars with disabilities, there are approximately 40,000 people with disabilities in Kosovo. This number is based on the very conservative estimate that 3 to 5 percent of the entire population is somehow disabled (Fischer, J and Mindes, J. 2000). Other statistics suggest that disability is far more prevalent, with around 150,000 persons with disabilities in Kosovo living in poverty, isolation and stigma (UNMIK 2001. Comprehensive Policy Framework for Persons with Disabilities in Kosovo- December 2001).

According to Handicap International, the majority of people with disabilities are excluded. Their social inclusion is extremely low for the following reasons:

- Disability is currently not on the political agenda, with resolution of the status of Kosovo being the focus of political efforts.
- The general population has a low awareness of disability issues and people with disabilities are often hidden away within the family home.
- Legislation does not favour people with disabilities. Where legislation does exist there is a lack of implementation. In 2005, a law on disability pensions was adopted but it only provides entitlements to persons considered to be '100% disabled'. This is not defined and is based on a medical model as opposed to on a social approach. There is a general anti discrimination law but this is not implemented.

³² It is important to note the lack of data on Kosovo available for this review. This is partially as usually Kosovo is included under reports on Serbia, often without a specific breakdown.

- Low education opportunities: There are few possibilities for inclusion in schools or higher education establishments, which are not adapted to the needs of people with disabilities.
- Difficulties accessing employment: there are no laws regulating the employment of persons with disabilities and no adequate facilities for vocational training.
- Inaccessibility of government and private buildings. This includes hospitals and other public services.
- Gender: women with disabilities are 'doubly disabled'.
- Lack of documentation: to be eligible for State benefits disabled persons must have a disability certificate from the Regional Doctors Commission (Mercy Corps, pers.comm.).

4.1.2 Age

4.1.2.1 Children and Youth

Some of the key issues in terms of social exclusion of children and youth are:

- Lower enrolment rates of numerically small ethnic minorities (e.g. Bosniaks, Gorani, Turks) with only 77% of children between the ages of six and fourteen enrolled in school, as opposed to near universal primary school enrolment for Kosovo Albanian (97.5%) and Serb communities (99%).
- Continuation rates for girls of all communities between primary and secondary schools (upper secondary education) are lower than for boys (55% against 65%).
- Child labour: concentrated in the informal sector, including street work, agriculture, scavenging, night bars and illicit activities.
- Children used in criminal activities: According to UNICEF Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Kosovo, between 2000 and 2004, 3,461 children were either suspected or victims of criminal activity. Furthermore, the OSCE reported that approximately 180 juveniles were indicted for serious offences and that approximately 23% of all serious crime involved people under the age of 18. Almost 50% of the offences are related to theft.
- Trafficking: low numbers but have been increasing over past few years. IPEC report that only 40 or so official victims of child trafficking are being supported.
- 52% of the population is under the age of 25 and youth unemployment is high (UNDP 2005: 7).
- Lack of birth certification and birth registration which will exclude them from being eligible for social welfare provision. This particularly affects Roma children (Mercy Corps, pers.comm.).

4.1.2.2 Elderly

The elderly in Kosovo are seen to be one of the most excluded groups. They often find themselves excluded from public, private and social mechanisms due to a lack of targeted services and infrastructure, high unemployment rates even for relatively young people (apparently it is hard to find employment over the age of 35, pers.comm.) and lack of a sustainable and appropriate pension scheme. The basic pension scheme is eligible for those over 65, who are Kosovo residents, hold an UNMIK ID (with picture). The sum is 40Euros per month (pers. comm.).

A key dilemma is that many elderly persons do not have the necessary documentation that can prove their age or show that they are Kosovo residents. Furthermore, the application process must be done in person and is very slow (Mercy Corps pers.comm.). This means that those with access difficulties caused by age, or by disability, or other factors are not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled. These factors all contribute to poverty and to further social exclusion.

RECOMMENDATION: It is expected that exclusion based on age is exacerbated by other drivers, including gender, ethnicity, disability etc. but this would require further analysis. Should DFID wish to obtain further information and analysis on the social exclusion of elderly persons, it may be helpful to explore the possibilities of establishing closer linkages with organisations working with elderly persons, such as Help Age International.

4.1.3 Ethnicity, Refugees, IDPs and Post conflict discrimination

It is difficult to obtain statistics on the numbers of minority groups in Kosovo, as it is elsewhere in the world. Statistics need to be treated with caution, as in other sections. The Statistical Office of Kosovo estimates that, out of a total population of 1.9 million, 88% are Albanian, 7% are Serbs, and 5% are "Others" (Bosniak, Roma, Turk, Ashkali, Egyptian, and Gorani) (UNDP 2004). These 'others' are not, however, quantified and the percentages are not broken.

In order to provide some form of quantification, however, it is useful to refer to a new report by Minority Rights Group International (2006), which gives overall numbers as opposed to percentages. This again makes comparison difficult. According to Minority Rights Group (2006), 57,000 people consider themselves to be Bosniaks, 6,000 are Gorani, Turks are between 12,000 and 50,000; and Croats are living in 'two small communities'. The number of Albanians is not given other than to say that they are now a majority, although they are still considered to be a minority in certain communities and face consequent issues of social exclusion. According to the 1991 Census, 40,000 people considered themselves to be Roma. These statistics are not disaggregated by age or gender which makes comparison of how different sub-groups suffer social exclusion difficult.

UNHCR (2006) shows that there are still more than 20,000 internally displaced people in Kosovo, mostly Serbs and Roma. According to the 2005 World Bank Kosovo Poverty Survey, socio-economic disparities between Albanians and Serbs are modest. This should not be taken to mean that Serb minorities do not face social exclusion. Serbs living in enclaves experience social exclusion, and security is a concern with children being escorted to school by UNMIK everyday for security reasons (DFID, pers.comm.). Serbs feel that their security and mobility is at risk more than other minorities do (World Bank 2005b).

The World Bank survey shows a clear income and educational disadvantage among the smaller groups of ethnic minorities. In 2002, among them, the risk of extreme poverty was more than two times higher than that of the Albanians and the Serbs, while in 2003, secondary enrolment rates among them were two times below the rates of Albanians and Serbs (World Bank 2005b: 59).

Considerable political attention has been given to the Serb minorities and this has meant that the social exclusion of other minorities, such as the Turks, Bosniaks, Gorani and the Roma is often overlooked. For example, when the government of Kosovo was formed, 10 seats were reserved for minorities in Parliament but these were reserved for Serb minorities (even though other minorities constitute 5% of the population, with Serb minorities constituting only 2% more). Each government department is also required to have places for minorities, but these often go to Serbs. Furthermore, Serb and Albanian are official languages but the languages of other groups are ignored, which has implications for access to schooling and other services (pers. comm.).

In Kosovo the riots and violence of youth in March 2004 was directed mainly at Serbs and Roma property and a significant number of Serb Orthodox Christian churches were damaged or destroyed. Most have now been renovated but this has been a difficult issue.

The Roma are a group of people facing tremendous exclusion. They suffer from low education and literacy, leave school early, particularly girls who rarely attend beyond the age of 12 years, due to early marriage. Poverty has been inherited from generation to generation and Roma experience discrimination at school, in employment and in accessing services. Lack of political representation is seen to be a key issue (pers.comm.). The Roma community have a far lower Human Development Index than the rest of the population (UNDP 2004) and experience a higher rate of unemployment at 58%, with 75% of male youth aged 15-24 unemployed and 90% of women in this age group unemployed. Only 8% of working Roma hold legislative and managerial positions (no Roma woman holds such a position) in comparison to 13.94% ethnic Albanians, 16.19% ethnic Serbs and 15.58 % of other minority groups (Turks, Gorani, Bosniaks) (UNDP 2004).

4.1.4 Gender, female poverty

Historically, Kosovan women have been at an economic, political and social disadvantage in comparison to their male counterparts. The opportunities provided by post conflict reconstruction and peace building initiatives have been seized by Kosovo women activists, who have advocated for greater integration of gender dimensions in new institutions and frameworks established under the PISG and UNMIK as well as for the promotion of women's rights more broadly. As a result of these efforts the following is worth noting:

- Political processes: The Kosovo parliament has created a gender committee and the Advisory Office for Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Issues is established in the Prime Minister's Office to coordinate efforts at the central and local levels. Gender focal points have been identified in all 10 Ministries and municipal gender officers are in place in all 30 municipalities. An Office on Gender Equality has also been established and is functioning at national government level.
- 14 gender committees have been established at the municipal level.
- Policy level: A National Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality (NAP) and the Gender Law have been drafted through a broad consultation with women from parliament, government and civil society. Implementation of these policies is also included in the Standards for Kosovo. Enactment of Regulation 2003/13 on domestic violence, drafting of the anti-discrimination law and anti-trafficking regulation, and integration of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in the Constitutional Framework.
- Elections: A quota system was set up for general elections to ensure women's representation. 28% of Kosovo's Parliament is composed of women, higher percentage than in any transition country. A quota system for municipal elections has meant that women's representation in municipal assemblies ranges between 25% and 32%. However, only one of the Ministries' Permanent Secretaries and one Minister is female.

These are clearly important political steps towards achieving gender equality. But it will need to be monitored to ensure long term implementation as gender equality is far from being achieved in Kosovo and women are still significantly underrepresented in decision-making in all spheres and at all levels.

In the economic sector women remain very disadvantaged due to lack of education and training for women, traditional roles and perceptions in the society, limited access to credits and loans and to inherit land and some of the highest levels of maternal and child mortality in Europe. Some resulting indicators are the following:

- Participation rates in the labour market are only around 35%, the lowest in Europe (Matkovic 2005) and the unemployment rate is significantly higher for women (69%) than for men (40%) (World Bank 2005b). However, there are ethnic and urban

variations. In general, urban residence and Serbian ethnicity are positively associated with female employment and tend to reduce the male-female employment gap (World Bank 2005b). Roma women have the lowest rates of labour force participation (UNDP 2004).

- Women own only 8% of real estate and 6% of businesses.
- Only 41% of women of working age were active in the labor market, either employed or unemployed and actively looking for work, compared with 76% of men in 2002.
- Lack of awareness and education concerning public health issues and services for reproductive health and rights, including family planning.
- Women had a much higher rate of illiteracy (10%) than men (2%) in 2000.
- In rural areas, 26% of women aged 16-19 are considered relatively illiterate; of these, 9.5% were totally illiterate.
- In 2003, the ratio of girls to boys at the primary level was 0.89, which is lower than the ratio in any transition country in 2000 (ratio ranges around 0.94). At the secondary level, in Kosovo, the ratio drops to 0.87 (grades 6-9) and 0.82 (grades 10-12).
- Girls tend to abandon school earlier than boys.
- 28% female headed households are poor compared to 15% male headed households (world Bank 2005b)

4.1.5 HIV/AIDS

Kosovo has a very low rate of reported HIV/AIDS cases. Only 47 cases have been reported since 1986 and agencies do not therefore consider the pandemic to be a significant problem at this time. Fatality is high, however, due to lack of adequate treatment and antiretroviral drugs. There is no detailed demographic data (such as gender, geography, or income) on the People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), other than that most of the patients are in the 30-39 age group (United Nations Agencies in Kosovo. 2004). A four-year strategy for HIV/AIDS prevention is currently being developed by the Kosovo AIDS Committee and the HIV/AIDS office.

Interviews conducted for this review highlighted the opinion that there was a higher rate of HIV/AIDS to be found in Roma communities. This was attributed to high rates of poverty which led to increased prostitution and thus HIV transmission. The increased military presence in Kosovo was also seen as leading to increased prostitution and presumably HIV/AIDS. Further research would clearly be needed to substantiate these opinions.

RECOMMENDATION: Further research is needed to understand the levels of HIV/AIDS among the Roma community and to analyse further the extent to which HIV/AIDS leads to social exclusion in Kosovo.

4.1.6 Remoteness/ spatial exclusion

While this is seen to be better than it used to be, remoteness is still a problem, particularly in mountain areas where there are almost no employment opportunities and public services, such as schools, are few and far between. Remoteness is thus a key factor of social exclusion.

4.1.7 Unemployment

According to the ILO, unemployment is probably the main social and economic problem for Kosovo. Rates are especially high among youth (ages 16-24), women, and the rural population. The 2001 and 2002 Labour Force Surveys indicate that approximately fifty percent were unemployed during that period (Briefing Note on Albania, PROTECT CEE ILO –IPEC). Those without formal employment are often excluded from health and social insurance, which leads to the risk of further exclusion. It was seen in Section 4.1.3 that Roma, and Roma women in particular, experience the highest levels of unemployment.

Those who are officially unemployed are entitled to social assistance, a monthly payment or other for families without any income to help them meet their basic needs. Thus being unemployed does not necessarily mean that one is 'poor' or that one is socially excluded. However, the criteria for gaining official recognition of unemployed status are complex: no family member may receive cash income in exchange of work, even if only part-time; every family member who is able to work must be registered in the office; the family must be without resources of assistance from any member working inside or outside Kosovo; a family must not own more than one-half hectare of land; a family must have at least one child under age 5 (4 years and under) or care of an orphan child under the age of 15; a family must not own any commercial motor vehicle (including tractor or car). Official documentation is required for each of these criteria (Mercy Corps pers.comm.).

This means that many unemployed people may not be eligible for State support and consequently experience not only poverty, but also exclusion from State services.

4.2 Social exclusion and national policy frameworks for poverty reduction.

There is no poverty reduction framework in place in Kosovo as yet. However, DFID is currently supporting the development of the Kosovo Development Strategy and Plan (2007-13). There are also Terms of Reference for an EU Kosovo Development Strategy Plan but these were unavailable for the review and it is not clear the extent to which social exclusion is addressed.

RECOMMENDATION: DFID will need to monitor progress on each of these frameworks.

4.3 Concluding thoughts for Kosovo

Social exclusion is thus affected by many different drivers. It would appear that disability, gender, rurality, being a minority community (in particular Roma), unemployment and age are some of the main drivers.

5. Country Trends: Serbia

- Serbia saw a dramatic decline of GDP in the 1990s due to the deep economic, social and political crisis in the country enforced by long lasting economic sanctions, the collapse of former Yugoslavia and its market, and war in the region including the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999.
- The main reason for the sharp increase of poverty in Serbia is the dramatic decline in income and increase of unemployment. The most affected groups by income poverty were urban rather than rural populations, households with children, households where the head was unemployed, refugees and internally displaced persons.
- The survival strategies for poor families were to cut down on their needs, increase the subsistence economy, reduce savings and sell property. More than one million people were engaged in the grey economy (the share of grey economy is 35% - 40% of the officially recorded GDP).
- In 2000, more than one third of the population was estimated to be poor (2002. Unauthored. 'The Millennium Development Goals: How much is Serbia on Track'). This appears to be reduced dramatically, as according to the Serbian Government, in 2003, one in 10 citizens in Serbia (10.5%) was poor, with less than 1% of the population living in extreme poverty (the amount of the minimum food basket).
- Poverty is still a predominantly rural phenomenon with poverty in rural areas twice as high (14.9%) as that in the urban areas (7.1%). The largest share of the poor in 2003 was in Southeast Serbia (23.5%), while the lowest share was recorded in Belgrade (4.2%). The gap between urban and rural areas has widened since 2001, with

5.1 Social Exclusion in Serbia

5.1.1 Ability/ Disability

Persons interviewed expressed a concern with the high level of discrimination and exclusion faced by persons with disabilities. Reasons given were: the low level of awareness on disability concerns; physical barriers preventing access to services by persons with disabilities; minimal state support which ensures basic survival but does not allow for access to education, skills and employment. The Social Welfare Development Strategy has a policy for persons with disabilities but lack of implementation is seen to be a key issue. Persons with mental health disabilities are generally institutionalised and children with disabilities are placed in special schools which leaves little opportunity for interaction with other children.

A new law against discrimination of people with disabilities was adopted one month ago and the National Employment Service has partnered with local NGOs and government agencies to hire more people with disabilities. The extent to which this will lead to greater inclusion in the labour market of persons with disabilities remains to be seen.

5.1.2 Age

5.1.2.1 Children and Youth

There is a national strategy and action plan for children, as well as a Child Rights Council. In Serbia, the first eight years of schooling are compulsory and tuition free. The percentage of net enrolment ratio in primary education, proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 and literacy rate of 15 – 24 year olds, are all in range of 95% -99%, which indicate almost universal equality and accessibility to education. Ethnic minorities have the right to be educated in their native languages. However, Roma children are seen to be vulnerable to exclusion from education, with an estimated 40.000 Roma children of primary school age who are not enrolled, as well as high drop out rates, particularly between 5th and 8th grade and from secondary school. (Unauthored. 2002.)

Those interviewed felt that youth, as opposed to children, are most at risk of social exclusion resulting from conflict and unemployment. There are concerns that youth in particular are especially receptive to extremist ideologies, which perpetuate discrimination and consequent exclusion of certain groups. Youth suffer from high levels of unemployment and a run down education system, with limited access to computer and language studies, which are the skills which are in great demand in the market place.

See also 5.1.6, for discussion on differences in access to school space in rural and urban areas.

5.1.2.2 Elderly

According to the 2002 Census, Serbia ranks among the ten countries with the oldest population in the world, with only 13.4% of the population between 15 to 24 years. An important concern is the unemployment facing middle aged persons who are unable to find employment after being made redundant due to out of date skills and education.

In Serbia, those over 65 years of age form a large part of the poor (over one fourth) and face a poverty risk of 40% higher than the average population. The most vulnerable are the farmer pensioners and the elderly without pensions (Matkovic 2005).

According to the Government of Serbia (2005b), most elderly people in Serbia receive pensions, since pension insurance is mandatory for the largest part of the economically active population. Home care and social club programmes are also being developed. However, according to HelpAge International in Serbia, elderly women and men are still vulnerable to social exclusion, revealing that exclusion is not just related to income. Elderly women in particular cite that they experience: overwhelming housework levels; low pensions, which usually have to be shared with children and grandchildren; lack of income; loneliness due to losses (spouse, children); poor health and; violence by their husbands and children.

Elderly men suffer primarily from: no social contacts after retirement; inability to live on their own and take care of themselves; shorter lives than women; low pensions, lack of interest in social contacts and in politics (HelpAge International 2006).

5.1.3 Ethnicity, Refugees, IDPs and post conflict discrimination

Ethnic tensions

The Republic of Serbia is an ethnically and culturally heterogeneous community in which 16.1% of its population belongs to some of 24 minority communities. In Vojvodina, there are 7 official languages in Parliament. In Southern Serbia, there are 2 official languages: Serbian and Albanian. Members of different ethnic groups, who lived together for decades, suffered a series of wars, 'which were a product of nationalistic political strategies but were represented as (unavoidable) ethnic and religious conflicts' (UNDP 2005). OCHR (2004) have reported rising intolerance towards national minorities and anti-Semitism (anti-Semitic graffiti are appearing even in areas where there are no Jews). Ethnic tensions are noted particularly in Southern, South Western and Northern Serbia where there are many different ethnic groups.

Refugees and IDPs

Conflict in the 1990s led to a massive influx of refugees into Serbia. UNHCR data (December 2005) reveals a total of 139,180 refugees registered in Serbia and 207,506 IDPs from Kosovo. Refugees and IDPs often suffer from economic as well as social exclusion. According to Mercy Corps (2006b) the lack of long term housing or other long term social care provided to IDPs is due to a reluctance of local authorities to be seen to accept the long term presence of IDPs. This despite the fact that IDPs who are Serbian citizens are entitled to the same services as others. Unemployment rates of IDPs are 2-3 times higher than among the average population. Many do not have health insurance, which means that they have no access to health care as well as to other social services. Elderly are particularly affected as are often not entitled to pensions (pers.comm.).

Situations for refugees are seen to be improving as persons who have had refugee status for over fourteen years are now entitled to apply for Serbian citizenship which enables them to receive support and assistance as Serbian citizens.

Roma

Roma are six times poorer than the average (Matkovic 2005). The Roma represent a very large group with the highest degree of exclusion relative to the majority population. There are a great number of Roma among refugees and internally displaced persons, especially from Kosovo. This leads to multiple exclusion. Although there are four government action plans relating to health, employment, housing and education, two thirds of Roma live under the poverty line, they are six times poorer than average Serbian citizens, they suffer an unemployment rate that is two to three times higher. Roma women are doubly excluded and are two times more likely than Roma men to be unemployed. According to UNDP 2006, 38% of Roma children do not complete primary school (compared to 4% of children from majority

households) and only 33% of Roma respondents had attained primary or above education (compared to 86% of respondents from majority households).

Religious Background

According to interviews, religious background can also be driver of exclusion, especially for smaller groups who are not one of 3 main religions (orthodox, catholic or Muslim). There are around 50 registered religious communities in Serbia. According to the 2002 census 85% of the citizens declared themselves as Orthodox Christian. 5.5% are Catholic, 3.2% Muslim, and 1.1% are Protestant (UNDP 2005). In terms of multiple exclusions it is worth noting that in addition to being an ethnic minority, some Romani communities are also religious minorities: Roman Catholic in Vojvodina (Hungarian speakers), Muslims (in south Serbia or arrivals from Kosovo in the rest of the country), and also some evangelical Protestant groups over the past 15 years.

Government efforts

A number of attempts to reduce the social exclusion of Roma minorities can be found in Serbia.

For example, in terms of encouraging the political participation of Roma people, municipalities where over 10% of the population is from a minority group or where one minority is over 5% of the population are bound by law to form a Council for Ethnic Relations. The role of the Council is to involve members of minorities in reviewing various issues to ensure that matters of importance to minorities are tackled at the local level (UNDP 2005: 50). The 'Employment of Roma Coordinators in Local Self-Government' project aims to employ Roma representatives in all 120 Serbian municipalities where Roma live, again to ensure that Roma populations are represented in local decision making (Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2005a).

Serbia is taking part in the Decade of Roma Inclusion and has adopted four National Action Plans for Roma in the areas of employment, education, housing and health care. The implementation of these plans is now starting after some delays. The Secretariat for Roma was founded under the auspices of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights however with the Montenegrin independence this federal ministry was closed and the Secretariat has now been transferred to the Government of Serbia. This move has been accompanied by the allocation of additional staff and the appointment of the first Romani as head of Secretariat.

Finally, the Vojvodina regional government has recently promoted the Roma Inclusion Office, formerly a project of the Secretariat for Labour, Employment and Gender Equality, into a separate new state-founded institution.

5.1.4 Gender, female poverty³³

During the socialist era, women enjoyed equal access to education and almost full employment, but discrimination persisted albeit hidden, and re-emerged more overtly in the 1990s. In the past 10 years, women have lost most of the gains of the previous period. At the same time, there has been an evident strengthening of patriarchal values which has worked to reinforce traditional gender roles within society. The structural reforms introduced in Serbia since the transition in 2001, coupled with the general economic collapse, loss of infrastructure and deterioration of social security systems, tends to have hit the poor hardest, and in particular poor women. Romani women in particular face multiple exclusion.

³³ Much of this section is taken from the Gender Briefing on Serbia prepared as part of the Gender Impact Review which is another output from the overall Social Exclusion Review in the region.

- Labour market

During socialism, jobs were guaranteed, and it was very difficult to dismiss a worker. Since 2001, there has been extensive retrenchment, alongside the collapse of core industry, resulting in massive unemployment from the formal sector. This has particularly hit women, who were the main employees in the hard-hit textile and footwear industries; and in public administration and social services (health care, education, child care, social care institutions) which have all undergone significant cuts. Demand for part-time, temporary and seasonal jobs has increased and women have filled these positions; these jobs are much less secure, unprotected and do not provide security such as pensions, maternity leave or sick pay. Very few women have access to resources to start up their own businesses, or to purchase company shares, so women are not dictating how the private sector develops.

Women's labour force mobility is also restricted by family responsibilities; and this has been worsened as a result of the abolition of rights related to maternity leave and child care; as well as cuts in public spending for social services and social security (as women are increasingly having to take up reproductive and caring roles in the home).

Women are concentrated in low-paid sectors, and this horizontal segregation keeps women from accessing better-paid jobs such as in finance, banking or telecommunications - even though they may be equally or better qualified than their male counterparts. In 2002, for example, 46.1% of women had secondary education, compared to 36.4% of men; and 12.3% of women had high and higher education, compared to 9.9% of men. This discrepancy is also visible in the gender pay gap, which is estimated to be 5-17 percent. A part of this difference is explained by the greater number of hours worked by men relative to women (UNDP 2005). At the same time, social norms tend to dictate that an unemployed man will be given a job over an unemployed woman; and very few women are present at senior management levels.

- Political representation

Women are under represented at all levels of decision-making – particularly in the higher political positions. In 2002, there were 27 female members of the Parliament of Serbia (just 10.8%); and despite a comprehensive pre-election campaign by women's groups, this rose by just 4 to 31 in 2003³⁴. Of 30 Parliamentary Committees, women chair only five. There was just one woman cabinet member (5.9%), as Minister of Agriculture, but she was elected as Vice Prime Minister in June 2006, so there are now no women in executive Ministerial positions. Gender quotas were introduced into the Election Law as a result of strong pressure from the women's movement; but the majority of political parties have managed to avoid the quota. In rural areas, the quota system does not guarantee women candidates and there is only 4-5% representation rate.

Women from the Romani community have minimal political participation in public life in Serbia. For instance, out of 35 members of the Roma National Council, only two are women, and even the Council's Committee on Mother and Child is headed by a man.

- Violence and abuse

According to research, every second woman in Serbia experiences some form of psychological violence within the family during her lifetime, every third experiences physical violence, and every fourth receives threats of a violent act from a male family member or a partner. As a result of consistent campaigning by women's groups, domestic violence was introduced as a criminal act within the Penal Code in 2003; and incorporated into the new Family Law in 2005, with provision for protection and access to justice. However, domestic violence is still not given real credence at official levels, and the majority of the State's

³⁴ See also Unauthored: 2002

obligations on domestic violence that arise from international commitments are not fully implemented.

- Trafficking

Trafficking in women and girls is understood to be a major issue in Serbia, but there is no complete official data on it. The main sources of data are women's NGOs, UNICEF and IOM (International Office for Migration). These sources indicate that Serbia has become a major transit route. In 2001 it was announced that approximately 300 persons, mostly women, were identified as victims of trafficking, and 1018 foreign women were found in police raids on nightclubs or in illegal transit through the country. However, it is estimated that the real number of trafficked persons is much higher. There is no strong evidence to date that men are trafficked for work.

The most vulnerable persons to trafficking are young women, refugee and displaced women, and Roma women. The trafficking of children, particularly Roma, is also increasing. Romani women and girls are particularly vulnerable to the risks of trafficking due to the social and economic risks they are exposed to stemming from their high unemployment, poverty levels, lack of education.

The state recently started to take systematic measures to combat trafficking, including penalising it as a criminal offence. Some NGOs have set up hotline services for trafficking victims, and conduct media campaigns and workshops to sensitize young women about trafficking

- Health

The network of medical facilities (including special health care facilities for women and maternity wards) is well developed, as a result of high state investment before the nineties. However, resources have declined from \$200 per capita in 1990 to approximately \$60 per capita in 2000. The quality of services has also radically declined, due to a shortage of drugs/supply, and now obsolete equipment. Women are doubly affected: firstly, reproductive health care has declined and become unaffordable for many; and secondly, women are having to take on increased caring responsibilities within the home.

- Justice

As with health, the Serbian Constitution guarantees equal access to justice for all citizens, regardless of their sex; but women often experience difficulty in accessing justice. Women tend to lack confidence in using the legal system and courts, they have less access to information regarding legal procedures, are less able to access free legal, and are more loathe to start long criminal proceedings

- National machinery

According to the PRS Progress report (Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2005b), Serbia lags behind other countries in the region in establishing mechanisms for gender equality. Gender equality is not recognised by most key policy-makers and officials as a political priority. However, women's groups were the first within civil society to oppose the trends of the 1990s, and they have been pushing to get gender onto the political agenda. As a result of their efforts, there have been some positive moves towards implementation of CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action at the national level, building machineries for the advancement of women and putting women's issues on the government's agenda. Work on the Law on Gender Equality and the National Action Plan has begun and the Government recently established Serbia's Council for Gender Equality and a body for gender equality exists in the National Assembly. However, there remain large gaps, and those organisations and departments working to improve gender equality tend to be under-resourced.

5.1.5 HIV/AIDS

All official data on HIV/AIDS in Serbia are obtained through the Republican Institute of Public Health. There is a reported lack of accuracy and geographic coverage. HIV case reports are available for Belgrade only, with all other regions only having the capacity to report AIDS case reports. As far as the data can be interpreted, the burden of HIV appears concentrated in Belgrade, with more than 80% of all AIDS cases, and since 1987, 1419 HIV-positive cases registered there. It is acknowledged by local as well as international experts (including WHO) that the number of HIV-positive cases is an under-estimate and is perhaps ten times greater than the number of reported cases (Unauthored 2003).

In a country of 8 million, with an estimated prevalence of 0.1%, HIV/AIDS is not considered to be a priority issue. The majority of transmissions are thought to be through heterosexual sex and through men who have sex with men, which is a change from ten years ago when mainly drug users were seen to be carriers. Other vulnerable groups include, sex workers; prisoners; refugees and internally displaced persons and Roma communities. Unfortunately, no statistics were available on numbers of infected persons from the different risk groups. UNDP is currently conducting surveys aiming to estimate prevalence among drug users and commercial sex workers.

It is also important to highlight that these at risk groups, also suffer from multiple exclusions.

There is a great deal of stigma surrounding HIV/ AIDS, principally caused by a lack of awareness. A recent survey revealed that less than one third of health professionals, nurses and technicians knew how HIV can be transmitted. According to UNDP (2005), one third of young people think that HIV positive persons should not be allowed to work in any occupation which involves contact with other people.

According to interviews, infected people try to be invisible as they fear redundancy, isolation and stigma. There is one case of a female nurse who contracted HIV through heterosexual sex who has 'gone public' but she is a rare example. There is another case cited of an HIV+ couple who enrolled their HIV+ child into school which was then boycotted by all other parents. The Ministry of Health became involved and conducted an awareness raising campaign which ended successfully with the child's attendance at the school.

Thus while HIV/AIDS is not one of the main drivers of social exclusion in terms of numbers, it would appear that PLWHA on the whole do suffer dramatically from social exclusion as a result of their illness.

5.1.6 Remoteness/ spatial exclusion

According to the PRS Progress Report (Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2005b), regional differences in Serbia's development are the most pronounced in Europe and are increasing. Apart from the traditionally undeveloped south of Serbia and Old Raška, the newly impoverished areas are east Serbia, parts of central Serbia and the regional centers of the mining and traditional industry, which have experienced further demographic outflow from rural and underdeveloped regions. There is a deepening of poverty in rural populations, principally as a result of rural-urban migration and an ageing rural population. There is also a lack of infrastructure and cultural life which can lead further to a feeling of social exclusion in rural areas. The benefit system is State wide and therefore there should not be a difference in access to benefits on the basis of geography. Further analysis would need to be conducted to substantiate this and thus to understand the particular challenges of exclusion.

Poverty is still a predominantly rural phenomenon and in 2003 poverty in rural areas was twice as high (14.9%) as that in the urban areas (7.1%). The largest share of the poor in

2003 was in Southeast Serbia (23.5%), while the lowest share was recorded in Belgrade (4.2%). The data indicate widening regional differences in poverty: the ratio of the poverty index in Southeast Serbia and Belgrade equaled 5.6 in 2003, while only one year earlier it amounted to 2.1. The share of the poor in the total population declined slightly in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, Šumadija and Pomoravlje, as well as in western Serbia, while it increased slightly in Eastern Serbia. (Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2005.)

In terms of schooling (see also 5.1.2.1), there are also important urban – rural differences in the utilization of school space. In rural areas the number of pupils is rapidly declining whereas in the cities most of the schools work in shifts. This problem has been aggravated because of inflow of refugee and IDPs children in schools that are in urban areas (Unauthored 2002). The impacts of this in terms of exclusion needs further analysis. Do children in rural areas have better schooling as class numbers are smaller or do they suffer from school closures and lack of quality teaching, for example?

5.1.7 Same sex relationships, particularly among men

Homosexuality was cited in three of the five Serbian interviews as being one of the biggest causes of social exclusion (see also Beta News Agency 2001). During a Gay Pride demonstration a few years ago there was a 'brutal massacre' and as a result, there is an increased fear of being visible. Interestingly, female homosexuality is reported to be more tolerated as they have a longer history of being an organised movement, whereas men have only been organising themselves since 2000 (pers.comm.).

According to a recent survey on homosexuality (Mrsevic 2005), emotional violence, as one form of violence, was experienced by 32.5% of interviewed persons. 24.1% of these also experienced physical violence and an 'endangered existence' (a total lack of support and rejection by their families, deprivation of financial resources, being expelled from their homes, threats of murder, loss of work). 8.8 % of the interviewees experienced a combination of all types of violence, with sexual violence (rape, attempt of rape, talking persons into prostitution, trafficking, using sexuality for pornographic purposes, sexual harassment that includes touching, sexual harassment that excludes touching, exhibitionism, voyeurism...) as a prevailing one.

One informant interviewed reported that men who have sex with men were treated like 'traitors of nations'. The macho culture but also lack of education were seen to be the cause of all intolerance. An example of the high level of intolerance is revealed by the reported declaration of the Head of the Belgrade Police that he 'will clean the area of criminals, drug addicts and homosexuals' (pers.comm.).

5.1.9 Unemployment and under education

As seen in many of the sections above unemployment is a key driver of social exclusion, principally in its impact on income, which is a contributory factor to social exclusion. Lack of education is also a key driver as it keeps people out of the work place. According to the PRS progress report, the links between education and poverty are clear: 69% of poor people in Serbia had only elementary or incomplete secondary education, while only 2% had university degrees (Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2005b).

The impact of unemployment and under education are clearly more significant when combined with other drivers of social exclusion, such as gender, refugee and IDP status and ethnicity.

5.2 Social exclusion and links with national policy frameworks for poverty reduction in Serbia.

The protection of excluded groups was seen to be a major priority, alongside poverty reduction and the reform of the pension system, by the newly constituted Ministry of Social Affairs in Serbia from early 2001. Through the development of a large multi-level project on 'The Reform of Social Protection', the focus was on the protection of children, the elderly, disabled people and people with special needs. In 2002, the Social Innovation Fund was introduced as a mechanism for funding and supporting reform-oriented social services projects at the local level. It is designed to promote the development of sustainable community-based, alternative, social services implemented through partnerships between a plurality of service providers, in order to ensure that local level innovations inform central level reforms.

Serbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, approved in October 2003, brings together 27 government strategies and has as one of its three strategic goals:

- Efficient implementation and preparation of existing and new programs, measures and activities directly targeting the poorest and most vulnerable social groups (children, the elderly, the disabled, refugees and internally displaced persons, Roma, poor rural populations and the uneducated), particularly in the least developed regions of Serbia.

Thus in rhetoric at least, while the language of exclusion is not used, most of the excluded groups discussed above are being targeted by the PRSP. HIV/AIDS is included under the more general section on Health. Gender is seen to be a cross-cutting dimension and gender analysis should apply to all groups.

The first six month review of the PRSP implementation has only just been conducted (June 2006) and it would therefore be premature for this review to enter into an analysis of implementation. It has been noted that Serbia's focus on joined-up service delivery, incorporation of local perspectives and their aim to rationalise the implementation of lots of strategies are to be welcomed. One key concern with the PRSP is that many of the initiatives are project oriented which means that certain groups that attract funding are more likely to receive support (pers.comm.). Examples given were initiatives aimed at the inclusion of Roma and disability as being more prone to receive funding. There is therefore a need for systematic programming within Ministries and Government aimed at increasing social inclusion. For further detail on specific gains conducted through the PRSP, see Government of the Republic of Serbia. 2005b.

RECOMMENDATION: How effectively social exclusion is integrated into sectoral ministries needs to be monitored; and perhaps specifically reviewed in the first Annual Review of the PRS due in early 2007.

5.3 Concluding thoughts for Serbia

All seven drivers can lead to social exclusion. Those drivers that appear to have come out most strongly appear to be being Roma, female or gay. The increasing regionalisation of poverty is a key social exclusion issue that needs to be monitored and addressed.

According to telephone interviews conducted the results of social exclusion in Serbia are that excluded groups are feeling more and more isolated, with majority groups feeling threatened and undermined. This has resulted in increased street violence, with attacks on men who have sex with men and Roma people in particular. Discrimination in schools, employment and public services has the impact of increasing poverty, which increases social exclusion in a self-perpetuating cycle.

6. Main drivers of exclusion in the region

The findings of this study have confirmed Matkovic's (2005: 4) breakdown of groups most vulnerable to social exclusion in the region:

- the unemployed, dependents and the less educated
- households with many children and elderly households
- the poorest who often live in the rural areas and in the underdeveloped regions
- Roma, refugees and IDPs, and persons with disabilities.
- "new poor": elderly workers that become jobless, pensioners with low pensions, employed with very low and irregular wages, seasonal workers and those employed in the informal economy (working poor)

In addition, it has been shown that other regional drivers of social exclusion are sexual orientation, HIV/ AIDS, gender and ethnicity. Lack of citizenship or documentation can also lead to social exclusion from all basic services and other opportunities, such as employment. Lack of paperwork could be a result of war, displacement and illegal settlement and may be exacerbated by illiteracy, corruption and ethnic discrimination.

Regional Summary of Country findings

It is helpful to distinguish the recent history of Kosovo and BiH apart from that of Serbia and Albania when attempting to understand current day social exclusion.

Kosovo and BiH have had wars and major troop movements on their territories and today still have major international military and administrative presence to support peace and stability. In terms of poverty indicators, it is also important to note that relative poverty in Albania and Kosovo is considerably higher than that in BiH and Serbia. Kosovo, for example, has a GDP which is less than half that of BiH and two thirds of that of Albania³⁵.

Serbia also clearly has its own context specific situation in that it may today have the largest displaced and refugee population as well as the largest Roma population in numbers. All these factors will play a role in defining social exclusion trends in each country, at some level.

RECOMMENDATION: Further, deeper quantitative and qualitative analysis would be needed, however, on a country by country level before conclusions could be safely drawn linking specific factors of social exclusion with the specific context of each country. For example, can it be stated that the Roma feel more socially excluded in Serbia due to their numbers than elsewhere? Does the fact that Kosovo is the poorest country mean that the social exclusion experienced by specific groups is different to that in other countries?

Ability/ Disability

Regionally, persons with disabilities are likely to be excluded from the labour market, the health and education systems, and are more prone to the risk of falling into poverty.

Age: Children and Youth

- Education: enrolment ratios for boys and girls are heading towards equality
- Exclusion is an important concept that takes us further than income based poverty. For example, children growing up without adequate access to cultural and

³⁵ UNDP does not have comparable figures for Serbia.

educational services, with disabilities, with HIV/AIDS, or in slums and overpopulated urban zones, sometimes faced with trafficking, family violence, alcoholism, depression, can face long term social exclusion, even when they are officially living above the poverty line and their basic food needs are being met.

- Child labour is seen by IPEC to be a phenomenon in all four geographical areas as a socially accepted coping mechanism, with children exploited in the agriculture sector, in family owned farms where they are exposed to multiple hazards, in the construction sector, and in many different trades – from shoe making to brick kilns, for children as young as 10. Children are also exploited for criminal activities (begging, petty theft and drug peddling). They are also victims of sexual exploitation (prostitution and pornography). The sexual and labour exploitation of children happens at their place of origin, or through a trafficking process within and /or outside their home countries.
- Discrimination against ethnic minorities, and especially against Roma, and traditional harmful practices of these communities (like early marriage) also contributes to enhanced social exclusion of certain groups of children and can lead to lack of education and employment opportunities.
- Youth: An important proportion of the population in each of the Western Balkans countries is composed by young men and women. They share the characteristics of being unemployed; with low levels of higher education skills and with increasing expectations of migrating to the Western Europe. The levels of exclusion and poverty are higher amongst them than amid adult and married people.

The Elderly

It has been seen that the elderly suffer from social exclusion on the basis of their age in all four geographical areas. They are exposed to poverty but are also vulnerable due to lack of access to services, dependency on family and social isolation. In all four geographical areas, bar Albania, the elderly are closer to the poverty line than average (Matkovic 2005).

Gender, female poverty

Although men and women are equal by law in all four geographical areas, it has been seen that gender based exclusion is common:

- Female poverty and high female unemployment rates are common across all four geographical areas studied. Factors that contribute to this are insecure property rights; lack of political representation; limited access to social services; gender based violence (including domestic violence); single head of households; high unemployment rates, difficulties finding employment and unequal pay; lack of access to childcare and inflexibility in working patterns. Where women are employed, they tend to be very poorly represented at senior levels. Very few women are involved in private business, which may be a cultural concern in itself, or it may relate to women's access to capital (Matkovic 2005).
- Traditional role of women in family life: where a woman bears the double burden of working at the place of paid employment and unpaid labour at home, often does not possess property, does not always equally inherit property, and does not participate in politics.

Additional issues affecting women in the region, according to Matkovic (2005) are:

- Security: Domestic violence and violence against women has become more visible. There is still a stigma attached to reporting incidences of violence, although reporting has increased. There is a lack of institutional support for violence against women. However, in some places, there is a good (and improved) representation of women in the police and security services, and as lawyers and judges.

- Access to services: Women are increasingly taking on a caring role, as care services for the elderly and children has declined. This has contributed to the decline in women's employment; and in girls' and women's education.
- Multiple discrimination is experienced by women from minority groups, particularly Roma women.

Finally, it has also been noted that there are regional differences, with remote and mountainous rural areas demonstrating more negative trends in terms of gender (Payne 2006).

HIV/AIDS

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS appears to be low in the region but there is scarce information about how the pandemic is impacting on the most excluded groups. While HIV/AIDS is not one of the main drivers of social exclusion in terms of numbers, it would appear that PLWHA on the whole do suffer dramatically from social exclusion as a result of their illness. This social exclusion is exacerbated where persons affected are also intravenous drug users, commercial sex workers or men having sex with men.

Refugees, IDPs, Ethnicity and Post conflict discrimination

There appears to be significant social exclusion of groups on the basis of ethnicity or of IDP/refugee status in each country. Key issues identified in the region are:

- Roma people are most at risk of poverty, discrimination, unemployment, lack of education and exclusion, which exacerbates social exclusion on the basis of their ethnicity. Lack of personal documentation and sometimes citizenship contributes further to social exclusion, notably in terms of access to rights, including services and employment. This is particularly the case in Serbia (especially among Roma IDPs from Kosovo), but also in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Kosovo due to war, migration, new borders and new legislation. Roma in Albania also suffer due to lack of documentation, but to a smaller extent and for different reasons.
- All four geographical areas have been affected by the problem of refuge and displacement and in 2005 there remained almost 900,000 persons with refugee and IDP status³⁶. Those in camps or in temporary settlement face particular exclusion. The poverty index of the refugee and IDP population are 50% or even twice as high when compared to the poverty of the local population (Matkovic 2005).
- Unemployment, irregular and unstable sources of income, lack of health insurance, unresolved pension entitlements, loss of property and unresolved accommodation are source of poverty and social exclusion.
- Lack of data on the poverty of ethnic minorities. Although UNDP is now producing vulnerability data, including poverty, focusing on Roma, IDPs and those living in the same neighbourhood

Remoteness/ spatial exclusion

This was seen to be a key factor of exclusion across all four geographical areas. Persons living in rural areas are particularly vulnerable to exclusion caused by lack of services, infrastructure, unemployment and poverty.

Unemployment and low education levels

- These were seen to be key to enhancing social exclusion, primarily through the vicious cycle of lack of education enhancing unemployment enhancing poverty³⁷. It

³⁶ Even Albania had 95 refugees identified in 2004 according to UNHCR.

³⁷ According to Poverty Assessments, in all Western Balkan "countries" there is a strong correlation between poverty and education. Between 60% and 80% of the poor completed only primary education or less, and their poverty risk is significantly above average (Matkovic 2005).

has been seen that the widespread informal economy usually engages those who are already socially excluded, such as Roma, women, refugees, IDPs.

- Groups already suffering from social exclusion are more likely to suffer from unemployment and low education.
- Work in the informal economy tends to be insecure, low paid, irregular and means that persons are outside of the social insurance system, necessary for accessing health care and pensions.
- Access to social provision for unemployed persons differs for each country. For example, in BiH, there is universal access to health provision; in Kosovo, public health services are free to all, although payments of 5-50 Euros need to be made for services. Those on social assistance schemes who are unemployed or unable to work are exempt from this charge and thus have access to truly free health and other public services but this would not cover those who in the informal sector or are not registered with social assistance schemes (which would include those without documentation etc); in Serbia unemployed persons only have access to free health services if they are registered with the National Employment Agency; in Albania, although there is a pledge that health services are free at the point of delivery unofficial payments for basic care are still commonplace (DFID 2003).

7. Some concluding thoughts

This desk review has covered a number of drivers of social exclusion in four geographical areas. The limitations of the study mean that having a section of conclusions would be over ambitious as a number of gaps in analysis remain. However, it is possible to provide some concluding thoughts on some of the areas of the study that have not been covered in the regional synthesis contained in Section 6 above.

Multiple exclusions

This review has revealed that social exclusion is a multi-layered phenomenon. It can be argued that there are two levels of drivers of social exclusion. These are related to:

- Intrinsic qualities of 'who one is' that lead to social exclusion i.e. gender, ethnic background, disability, age.
- Qualities that one obtains in life that lead to social exclusion i.e. unemployment, poverty, lack of education, HIV/AIDS, Refugee/IDP status, living in remote areas.

It is possible to experience multiple exclusion, caused by a combination of any of the above. These multiple exclusions lead in turn to further exclusion. For example, if you are a Roma woman, you are more likely as a result to be subject to the second group of exclusions such as unemployment, poverty, lack of education, HIV/AIDS etc.

Further analysis will be needed to provide quantifiable, comparative conclusions which could guide programming as to which combinations lead to the worst forms of social exclusion in any given context.

Addressing social exclusion at these multiple levels will require a combination of a) tackling the behaviours and processes by which public and social institutions exclude certain people through influencing attitudinal and behavioural change using awareness raising and other strategies with b) concrete improvements in the social welfare, pensions and health systems available to ensure that all citizens can benefit from poverty reduction and economic recovery initiatives equitably with c) measures to address rural and urban poverty, notably in terms of lack of access to services in rural areas and in illegal urban settlements.

Poverty and social exclusion

It has been seen that poverty can be a driver as well as a consequence of social exclusion, particularly when married with other drivers of social exclusion. The opportunities generated by economic growth in the region have not been made available to all citizens equally and not all citizens are able to contribute to poverty reduction equally, thus highlighting the importance of using a social exclusion perspective to ensuring equitable and sustainable development and to attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

RECOMMENDATION: It will be important for DFID to monitor national survey designs and PRSPs to ensure that they allow for the disaggregation of indicators and other data in order to be able to monitor the impact of poverty reduction initiatives on all socially excluded groups.

Rights and social exclusion

It has been seen that social exclusion leads to a non fulfilment and/or violation of rights. Lack of enjoyment of basic human rights, particularly economic and social rights, leads to a deepening of poverty and to a furthering of social exclusion.

Is a regional approach possible/advisable?

This question was raised during the briefing for this work, and subsequently posed to the various people interviewed for this study. The responses are therefore personal, limited to the telephone interview format and will clearly need to be substantiated during the RAP review and other DFID processes.

There was a mixed response to this question. Some of the responses given were as follows:

- The EU agenda makes a regional approach inevitable, especially with countries at the same level of application.
- Difficult to work regionally on issues, such as commercial sex work, which are hidden and criminalised.
- It is difficult to work regionally in the Balkans due to political divisions and suspicions.
- Refugees/ IDPs : work needs to be country specific as people do not face the same issues everywhere, especially where many are now local citizens.
- Roma: Some interviewees felt that regional approaches to working with Roma tend to work in terms of lesson learning and sharing resources. Others felt that the specifics of each country meant that a country by country approach would work best.
- Social care systems, legislation and political government systems are different in the four geographical areas which makes a regional approach to exclusion difficult.
- Gender inequality is a concern everywhere so a regional approach is possible. There are some common gender concerns, such as encouraging the EU to locate gender more centrally within the EU social inclusion agenda; and promoting the closer monitoring of gender commitments following accession.
- Exclusion caused by trafficking, migration, HIV/AIDS, being Roma seen to be cross cutting border phenomena and therefore a regional approach would be desirable.
- Room for a common approach that also allows for country, local specificities.

This review suggests that most of the drivers of social exclusion are common to all four geographical areas and a regional strategy for tackling social exclusion *could* therefore be possible. Developing a common approach could ensure learning, avoid duplication and save resources. However, a regional approach would still require great sensitivity to national conditions in day to day implementation as the particularities of social exclusion clearly differ by country.

Thus, there is clearly no consensus on this issue of a regional approach and further internal discussion is needed.

Some thoughts around questions posed in the Annex to the ToRs

What are the links between ethnicity and religion?

This did not come up in the desk review and religion was only cited in the case of Serbia as relevant to social exclusion. However, this could simply be a reflection of the limitations of this study. During the ethnicity stocktaking, religion was seen to be a significant factor for social exclusion in Bosnia with the religious leaders taking on political roles. The majority of Bosnian Roma are Muslim. Before the war, it was estimated that two thirds of Bosnian Roma lived in today's Republika Srpska. However, a very small minority of them live there now, primarily as that entity is Serb (Orthodox)-dominated and most of them now live in the predominantly Muslim/Bosniak parts of the Federation. Thus, it can be seen how multiple exclusion, based not only on ethnicity, but also on religious background, caused internal displacement and deepened the level of social exclusion. This problem also exists for ethnic minorities living in one of the areas, where they are not defined as one of the "constituent peoples" as they are likely to have a different religion.

In Serbia religious background can also be a driver of exclusion, especially for smaller groups who are not one of 3 main religions (Orthodox, Catholic or Muslim).

In Kosovo the riots and violence of youth in March 2004 was directly mainly at Serbs and Roma property and a significant number of Serb Orthodox Christian churches were damaged or destroyed. Most have now been renovated but this has been a difficult issue.

Is HIV/AIDS likely to constitute a significant factor in social exclusion?

In all four geographical areas HIV/AIDS sufferers experience social exclusion but it was not seen to be one of the main drivers of social exclusion in terms of numbers. However, with the underreporting and the predictions of massive increase in transmission rates, it would appear that awareness raising and other prevention activities could have an important impact on reducing the potential social exclusion of persons who may become affected in the future. A prevention approach to increasing social exclusion in the future is therefore worth considering.

Would it be helpful to use the terms political and economic exclusion in the region?

Social exclusion covers political and economic exclusion, as per the DFID policy paper. Understanding of social exclusion/inclusion is already limited, despite it being common EU language. Bringing in the additional concepts of political and economic exclusion, as separate to social exclusion, could serve to confuse people and merely add extra jargon to an already over jargoned topic. This is not to deny that in the Western Balkans there are some very significant cases of political exclusion in the history and aftermath of the war but there is no reason why this can not be highlighted in any discussions around social exclusion.

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4.	Bosnia	Ana Maria Golemac-Powell	DFID
5.		Vedad Ramljak	World Bank
6.		Steve Powell,	Promente Consultancy
7.		Deborah McWhinney, Kerry Neal, Erna Ribar	UNICEF
8.		Richard Marshall and Armin Sirco	UNDP
9.	Kosovo	Valbona Bogujevci	DFID
10.		Nexhat Shatri	Handicap
11.	Serbia	Jelena Oplanic and Ana Redzic	DFID
12.		Milutin Delic HIV Prevention Among Vulnerable Population Initiative Project Director	UNDP
13.		Zorica Mrsevic	OSCE Gender Advisor
14.		Ivana Cirkovic	Coordinator for the Social Policy and Vulnerable Groups within the PRS team Government of the Republic of Serbia
15.		Aleksandra Vesic	Balkan Community Initiatives Fund - local NGO

Other persons who responded to questions by email and telephone:

16. Mark Chadwick Mercy Corps
17. Lindita Boshtrakaj ILO-IPEC
18. Lewis Temple HelpAge
19. Iva Jovanovic, G17/ ESPI Institute Serbia

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