

Rehabilitation of Asylum Seekers Reception and Accommodation Centre, Martkopi village, Georgia

EU-Funded SPCP-SC (TACIS)

Progress update of 31 July 2009

Background

Under the Strengthening Protection Capacity Project, the National Stakeholders' Consultations on refugee protection gaps identified a strong need for reception facilities to accommodate the growing number of asylum seekers in Georgia in 2008. A temporary reception facility for asylum-seekers was established, based on a rental contract to mitigate effects caused by a delay in identifying a suitable longer term reception facility.

UNHCR, with the help of the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation (MRA), finally identified a site for the reception centre in July 2008. It is a rundown building located in the village of Martkopi about 15 km north-west from Tbilisi. Measurements of the premises and assessment of the building including structural stability done by contractors showed that it would be more cost-effective to rehabilitate only one part of the building (Wing A), and demolish and reconstruct the other part (Wing B). Rehabilitation of Wing A is starting in August 2009 followed by the demolition and reconstruction of Wing B. Everything is due to be completed by December 2009. Asylum seekers currently accommodated in a temporary reception facility will move to the new reception centre in January 2010 (14 asylum seekers are currently accommodated in this temporary facility in Tskneti which is funded by UNHCR and managed by MRA).



**Building in Martkopi Village to be transformed into the
asylum seekers reception and accommodation centre**

Activities and Progress

Measurement and Assessment of the site

Visual research of the former building of the Agricultural Department located in Martkopi village as well as detailed measuring works were conducted by a UNHCR contractor.. As a result, the following outputs were produced: composition of the construction complex, topographic plan of the site territory, general plan of the territory and of the building per stage,

A seismic analysis and technical assessment of the building was carried out by experts from a company contracted by UNHCR to assess the compliance of the current construction with existing norms and requirements.

Project design

Based on the findings, a project design was tendered and developed by an architectural company upon the UNHCR request. As initially stipulated in the design assignment, the project design encompasses specifications for general plan, data and so called “red lines” of the site territory; size, space, list of other necessary buildings of the construction bearing in mind its future function, design and characteristics of the adjacent territory, basic construction solutions and necessary building materials, infrastructure fitting, and interior/exterior communication supply systems (water, gas, drains, lighting, telephone, etc) .The project design served as a baseline to announce a tender for the rehabilitation /reconstruction of the reception centre.



The design of the reception centre building

Tendering procedure

The tendering procedure encompassed two stages; during the first one organized in May 2009 six companies submitted bids to UNHCR. Following the first step of the procedures in July 2009 UNHCR invited these companies to submit a firm offer on price quotation in line with the specifications elaborated in the project design. Representatives of the five companies who submitted bids at the second stage were presented at the opening of bids at UNHCR office Tbilisi. The successful bidder was identified by the UNHCR Local Contracting Committee (LCC) based on an analysis of the offers and recommendations from UNHCR Shelter Unit. The LCC recommendation was then approved and confirmed by UNHCR Committee on Contracts at Headquarters.

Licenses and permits

In parallel with the measurement/assessment exercises and tendering procedures, MRA followed up on submitting the construction plan for approval of the local municipality in Gardabani. The MRA has been actively involved in obtaining technical permits as well as all other necessary documents for the rehabilitation /reconstruction of this reception centre.

Management

The project has been implemented in close collaboration with UNHCR core partner, the MRA. The Memorandum of Understanding on a cooperation framework between MRA and UNHCR is in the process of being completed. The MoU articulates the core issues related to the reception centre rehabilitation and management, such as:

- Commitment by MRA that the building identified and rehabilitated (reconstructed) will serve solely for the purpose of receiving and accommodating asylum seekers for an indefinite period of time;
- Ensuring that UNHCR will have full and unhindered access to the reception facility and to the persons of concerns accommodated there for the period the building is used for the specified purpose;
- Commitment by MRA to monitor and supervise the rehabilitation/reconstruction works on the site in coordination with UNHCR as well as observation of all legal requirements, including engagement in issuance of all required urban planning and technical permits and provision of all necessary infrastructure fittings (water, electricity, gas etc);
- Issues related to functioning and maintenance of the reception centre.