

Humanitarian and Social Programmes

Final Report on
Assistance to
Needy, Elderly
Survivors of
Nazi Persecution



IOM International Organization for Migration

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental body, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

International Organization for Migration

17 route des Morillons

1211 Geneva 19

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 717 91 11

Fax: +41 22 798 61 50

E-mail: hq@iom.int

Internet: <http://www.iom.int>

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Humanitarian and Social Programmes

Final Report on Assistance to Needy,
Elderly Survivors of Nazi Persecution

Holocaust
Victim Assets
Programme
S W I S S B A N K S



IOM International Organization for Migration

German
Forced Labour
Compensation Programme
REMEMBRANCE, RESPONSIBILITY and FUTURE

Acknowledgements

The International Organization for Migration acknowledges first and foremost the contribution of HSP's donors, the US District Court for the Eastern District of New York (Swiss Banks Settlement) and the German Federal Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future", for inspiration, guidance and understanding that has exceeded any material input towards joint programme infrastructure and activities.

IOM is deeply indebted to HSP's over 60 external service providers, non-affiliated professional social service organizations, faith-based and ethnic NGOs working in 17 countries, without which it would have been impossible to locate and to assist many of the more than 73,000 Holocaust survivors touched by this unique programme.

Internally, HSP has been a team effort from start to finish. Backed by IOM's Director of Claims and Compensation, a small core of dedicated staff at Headquarters carefully managed the programme's creation, expansion and many adjustments. HSP Geneva did so in support of a much larger HSP field team that performed the often more difficult work of project development, monitoring and reporting in daily cooperation with mission colleagues and the Organization's implementing partners.

If this publication could express IOM's gratitude to no one else it would recognize the profound contribution of HSP's individual beneficiaries. With their hospitality, their stories, their trust and their tears they have rewarded each one of us with much more than we could ever hope to give to them.

Delbert H. Field, Jr.

Coordinator, Humanitarian and Social Programmes (HSP)

Foreword

IOM's Humanitarian and Social Programmes for survivors of the Nazi Holocaust began as a complement to individual claims activities, aimed at providing meaningful assistance to thousands of men and women whose suffering of more than 60 years ago might otherwise have gone unrecognized.

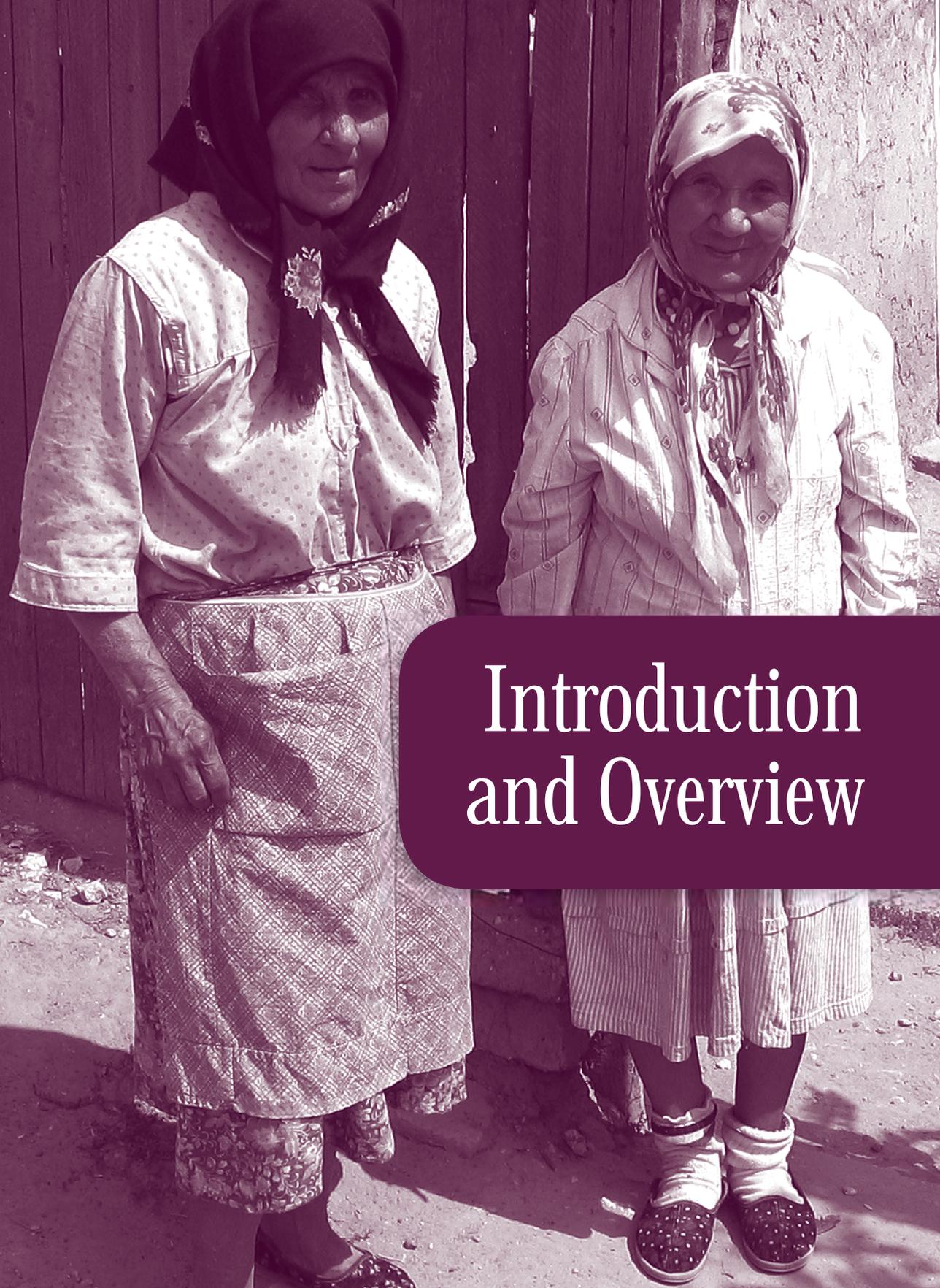
IOM succeeded in this task and it did more. HSP became a temporary lifeline of support for more Roma, disabled, Jehovah's Witness and homosexual survivors than most experts had once thought existed. In addition, it served to expose a number of community-wide needs outside the programme's mandate, which others, given adequate funding and political commitment, may now more easily address.

While the programme covered in this report has ended, IOM field offices continue to work with former HSP partners on more sustainable projects for Roma of all ages in the areas of health, employment creation, education and community stabilization.

IOM is convinced that cooperation between increasingly competent grassroots NGOs and the international community will strengthen the foundations of civil society in a region once torn apart by prejudice, nationalism and war. This cooperation will also reinforce lessons of tolerance and interdependency, and reduce the likelihood that misunderstanding and want will once more give rise to persecution, exclusion, displacement and extermination based on differences between neighbours.

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Introduction and Overview

Background

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was designated as one of the implementing agencies to process claims and pay compensation to former slave labourers and certain other victims of the Nazi regime under the Settlement Agreement reached in the Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation (Swiss Banks) before the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York (HVAP) (subsequently referred to as “the US Court”).

For many survivors, assistance represented the first recognition of their suffering in nearly 60 years.

IOM was in charge of processing claims of non-Jewish victims or targets of Nazi persecution who were forced to perform slave labour for German companies (Slave Labour Class I) or who sought entry into Switzerland to avoid Nazi persecution, but who were denied entry or were deported, detained or otherwise mistreated (Refugee Class). IOM was also responsible for claims of individuals who were forced to work for Swiss companies or their German subsidiaries, whether or not such individuals were victims or targets of Nazi persecution (Slave Labour Class II).

The US District Court for the Eastern District of New York (Swiss Banks Settlement), approving the Special Master’s Proposed Plan of Allocation and Distribution of Settlement Proceeds of 11 September 2000 (Special Master’s Plan), also designated IOM to administer a humanitarian assistance programme to needy, elderly Roma, Jehovah’s Witness, disabled and homosexual survivors in furtherance of *In re Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation (Swiss Banks)*. The US Court’s initial allocation to IOM for survivor assistance was US\$ 10 million. Two subsequent allocations, drawing on interest accrued on funds administered by the US Court, raised the Court’s total contribution to US\$ 20.5 million.

IOM was likewise designated by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany as a partner organization of the Federal Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future”. The German Foundation was in charge of making financial compensation available through partner organizations to former forced labourers and those affected by other injustices under the Nazi regime. IOM dealt with claims covering

the “rest of the world, non-Jewish” category. This category comprises non-Jewish victims living anywhere in the world except Moldova, Poland, the Russian Federation, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. IOM was also responsible for certain property claims that could be made under this Programme (GFLCP).

In the law creating the Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future” IOM was also given responsibility, inter alia, for delivering social assistance to persecuted Sinti and Roma, and assigned resources in the amount of DEM 24 million (EUR 12.27 million) to carry out relevant tasks.

IOM had been selected by these donors to deliver similar forms of assistance to members of specific victim groups. The largest of these was expected to be the Roma, a group of concern to both donors. Intent on maximizing available resources and programme synergies, IOM agreed with the German Foundation and the US Court that activities would be combined wherever possible. Assistance to victim groups other than Roma was fully covered by the US Court. IOM carefully tracked each donor’s contribution to programme management, project oversight and victim assistance.

Beneficiaries

In contrast to IOM’s claims-based Holocaust compensation activities, which the Humanitarian and Social Programmes (HSP) complement, HSP assistance was based on a person’s membership in a particular victim group rather than on individual proof of persecution. IOM did not seek to “do the impossible” of reaching every living member of each target group; however, it did seek to locate and meaningfully assist as many as time and resources permitted, in recognition of the suffering endured by all group members.

The programme’s internal mission statement was *“to deliver in a timely manner meaningful humanitarian and/or social assistance to needy, elderly survivors in specific target groups within the framework established by the US Court and the German Foundation”*.



Beneficiaries assisted, by country

Country	Roma and Sinti	Disabled	Jehova's Witness	Homosexual	Total
Austria	-	-	-	1	1
Belarus	1,806	-	-	-	1,806
Croatia	-	-	3	-	3
Czech Republic	3,498	5	-	-	3,503
France	-	-	-	1	1
Germany	-	-	-	2	2
Hungary	15,220	-	12	-	15,232
Latvia	694	-	-	-	694
Lithuania	75	-	-	-	75
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2,585	-	-	-	2,585
Republic of Moldova	2,342	40	186	-	2,568
Poland	1,825	922	109	-	2,856
Romania	10,245	-	243	-	10,488
Russian Federation	9,163	894	23	-	10,080
Serbia and Montenegro	4,746	-	-	-	4,746
Slovakia	8,995	-	-	-	8,995
Ukraine	8,905	-	1,300	-	10,205
Total	70,099	1,861	1,876	4	73,840

Programme donors encouraged IOM to act and use available resources without undue delay to provide comfort and recognition to needy Holocaust survivors, during what may have been the final years of their lives. Building on models used in respect of other Holocaust survivor groups, IOM agreed with donors to carry out projects of humanitarian and social assistance consisting of both material and non-material aid.

In four years the IOM programme had reached over 73,800 victims of Nazi persecution, most of whom lived in isolation and extreme poverty in Central and Eastern Europe. Nearly 70,100, or 95 per cent, of HSP's beneficiaries were Roma.

There were both large and small projects, ranging from delivering a winter's supply of coal to eight survivors in Poland, to offering comprehensive assistance to over 7,000 former victims of persecution in

Romania. Most HSP projects provided multiple types of assistance on a regular basis. The average project duration was 18 months.

The average value of assistance received by all 73,840 HSP beneficiaries was US\$ 437. The programme's 70,099 Roma beneficiaries received an average of US\$ 436 in total assistance, or US\$ 168 from the German Foundation and US\$ 268 from the US Court.

Roma and Sinti survivors

The largest beneficiary group consisted of Roma victims. Authoritative estimates of the number of group members of all ages living in Central and Eastern Europe vary from national census figures of approximately 1.3 million persons, to more generous estimates, cited by minority rights groups and various international institutions, totalling some 5.5 million people.



“To deliver in a timely manner meaningful humanitarian and/or social assistance to needy, elderly survivors in specific target groups within the framework established by the US Court and the German Foundation.” – HSP mission statement

At first, IOM had little reliable information on Roma survivor populations at its disposal. Official census figures were not always dependable. Individual Roma, whether out of fear or in a spirit of assimilation, often identify with another ethnic group or nationality. The representative of one Roma group, while seen by outsiders as an objective source of information, may neglect to recognize persons belonging to another Roma group as Roma.

In 2001, IOM contracted a specialized research firm to locate potential Roma beneficiaries. The firm conducted an extensive survey through Roma organizations in 17 European countries. Potential beneficiaries were identified according to criteria agreed upon by IOM and its donors.

The survey identified some 45,453 potentially eligible Roma survivors in 4,906 locations. This number was already much higher than had previously been anticipated. Though the survey process was limited by time constraints, the remoteness of some communities and local rivalries, the results were important in identifying large concentrations of needy victims and to help non-Roma service providers, IOM's initial partners in several countries, reach many individual victims.

Based on four years of programme implementation, IOM now estimates that its 2001 survey located just over 30 per cent of HSP's potential beneficiaries. Ongoing research by field offices and local service providers indicates that there may be some 144,000 needy Roma Holocaust survivors in Central and Eastern Europe alone.

Jehovah's Witness survivors

Jehovah's Witness victims represent HSP's most accessible and uniform beneficiary group. Soon after IOM's designation by the US Court, the Jehovah's Witness Holocaust Era Survivors Fund (JWHESF) approached the Organization. It estimated the potentially eligible Jehovah's Witness population at approximately 2,000 persons. Through JWHESF, IOM reached 1,876 persons who are still members of the Jehovah's Witness community.



While needy according to donor criteria, Jehovah's Witness survivors contacted in the course of programme implementation were generally less disadvantaged than members of the other numerous victim groups (viz. Roma and the disabled).

JWHESF, IOM's sole programme partner for this victim group, delivered assistance through its field network in Croatia, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Unfortunately, JWHESF was unable to identify or assist IOM in reaching Jehovah's Witness victims who were no longer members of their congregation. HSP was able to serve a handful of these persons through its disabled

and Roma assistance projects, on account of their “dual” membership in these other persecution groups.

“Many of these elderly and destitute survivors would have no one else to turn to if these humanitarian programs did not exist.” – Special Master’s Plan, p. 117

Disabled survivors

IOM’s concerted search for disabled survivors of the Holocaust began in June 2002. Despite nearly 18 months of extensive research and subsequent outreach to national and international organizations for the disabled, very few eligible victims were located. In total, over 360 disability organizations were contacted. Not until IOM began its systematic investigation at the community level did it begin to gain access to promising sources of information.

IOM was able to assist 1,861 needy, elderly disabled victims of Nazi persecution. These were persons living in the Czech Republic (5), Moldova (40), Poland (922) and the Russian Federation (894).

Recent consultations with project partners indicated that an additional 3,000 unassisted disabled survivors may be living in the Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland, and the Russian Federation. Should additional funding become available, IOM believes that it could build on its successful strategies and identify several thousand more beneficiaries in other countries.

Homosexual survivors

IOM first sought to reach eligible homosexual victims through 67 gay support organizations and 22 specialized publications. These efforts yielded virtually no information concerning the existence or location of potential beneficiaries. IOM field offices had similar results.

Thanks to the good offices of the Programme Coordinator for Europe of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, IOM reached four homosexual survivors in Austria, France and Germany. Living alone and of advanced age, all gratefully accepted HSP medical assistance and homecare.

Programme environment and challenges

Central and Eastern Europe is a region where the circumstances of many persons, regardless of age and ethnicity, have worsened considerably since the end of communism. The elderly, and persons “living on the edge” such as the Roma, have been hardest hit by the universal collapse of state services which earlier could be relied upon to meet some of their most basic material, social and medical needs.

IOM concentrated its HSP activity on Central and Eastern Europe as most former victims still lived there and were in greater need than those of group members living elsewhere.

For many survivors the assistance received represented the first recognition of their suffering in nearly 60 years. It came at a time when, by their own account, life had not been worse for them since the Second World War. Some victims indicated that help received under HSP had allowed them to go on living, as without it they might have frozen or starved to death.



Despite growing international concern for the plight and potential instability of Roma communities in Central and Eastern Europe, IOM encountered no programmes of consequence, apart from its own, that offered humanitarian and social services to elderly Roma. Isolated members of other victim groups were often found to be equally destitute and forgotten.

In designing and managing its programme, IOM had to consider a number of important variables, in particular local living conditions, victim concentrations, their most urgent needs, service provider capacities, the Organization's own capacity to monitor and, of course, available donor resources. IOM's approach to each victim group was of necessity varied, depending on the case. Specific modes of communication and beneficiary sensitivities had to be respected. Non-beneficiary group neighbours, equally poor, were likely to be envious. In deference to Roma law, for example, otherwise competent NGO partners sometimes refused to assist, or even to acknowledge, members of another clan.

When IOM first undertook to carry out HSP, the actual scope of its mission was unknown. Effective ways of reaching survivors were either untried or non-existent.

The lack of established local delivery infrastructures was particularly challenging. Once access had been achieved, IOM found that self-help practices, notably volunteerism, were exceptional rather than the rule.

One of the greatest obstacles IOM faced was the establishment of a relationship of trust with a number of Roma leaders at various levels, as well as with individual victims. Survivors often indicated that they had been "promised much and given little". Roma of all ages live in an environment where literacy and employment are still rare and where suspicion of outsiders exists alongside dependency on external institutions.

In order to succeed, IOM needed to devote time and energy to overcome the resistance it at first encountered from some members of the Roma community. That its efforts were effective is supported by the fact that some of IOM's initial detractors eventually became its implementing

partners, that the Roma press has written favourably about HSP and, most importantly, that the assistance got through.

Few potential service providers had previously managed aid projects on the requisite scale and in locations where survivors lived. Non-Roma NGOs often had the appropriate technical expertise, yet lacked the experience or access required to work in Roma settlements. Roma NGOs, which knew and could locate their own people best, may have been excluded from past opportunities as “high risk” or “high maintenance” from an oversight standpoint and had yet to be tested with large projects.

For mainly historical, political and demographic reasons, individual country situations differed. IOM had to develop the right combination of projects and partners in each, and ensure coordination and information sharing between its field offices, in order to achieve good results overall.

Assistance

IOM’s donors specified that HSP assistance could consist of food, winter aid, hygienic supplies, clothing, emergency financial support, medical care, social support, legal counselling and homecare. The same assistance types had been employed, often in combination, for several decades to support elderly Jewish Holocaust victims living in Eastern Europe.

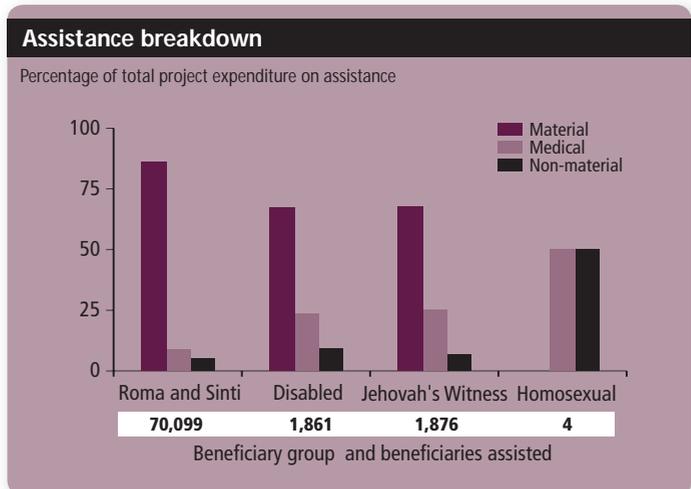
Many survivors were very old when HSP began. Of those IOM encountered, most were extremely poor and cut off from social services, and required just about everything HSP might offer, and more. As mentioned above, partner capacities, community remoteness and programme resources determined IOM’s ability to provide assistance consistently in line with needs. Only a few NGOs with ready access to Roma communities had the capacity to provide more sustainable forms of assistance. Even fewer were able to offer these services to large numbers. IOM had neither the time nor the means to build up partner capacity before actual assistance delivery began.



Of course, the long-term impact of material aid cannot be compared to medical care or legal and social support in situations where these are accessible to victims. A hearing aid, a pair of eyeglasses or facilitated access to benefits are also often less costly than a bimonthly parcel of food.

Material aid, while frequently more expensive, is generally easier to procure and deliver. Material aid, as other international agencies confirmed, can also win community trust and open the door to accepting more sustainable, if less tangible, forms of aid. Still, the most convincing argument for prioritizing material assistance is the harsh fact that, without donations of food, clothing and fuel, many ageing victims simply would not survive.

The individual chapters of this report include detailed information on the types of assistance delivered. Many victims received more than one form of aid. While feedback concerning “most popular” assistance was not always easy to quantify, beneficiary preference was overwhelmingly in favour of material assistance forms, probably because these met their most immediate needs. Material assistance even outstripped basic healthcare where the latter was available. In more than one instance IOM heard, “what use is there for medicines when there’s nothing to eat and the house is cold?” Non-victim community members told IOM that, thanks to HSP assistance, they no longer saw their elderly Roma neighbours begging in the streets.



The ideal HSP project would have been one where comprehensive assistance, based on individually assessed needs, was delivered by a multi-capacity, community-based partner. Unfortunately, this sort of basic-needs oriented, sustainable and cost-effective project could not have been achieved for many Holocaust victims in their lifetimes.

HSP assistance types and definitions		
Assistance type	Definition, Examples	Note
Material assistance		
Food (except food packages)	Cafeteria or communal eating service for elderly survivors; home-catered individual meals (“meals on wheels”); individualized provisions (such as grocery shopping for the housebound)	Where possible, activities not only supplied needed supplementary nutrition but also brought together isolated victims to foster a sense of community and combat loneliness
Food packages	Standardized selection of basic foodstuffs routinely delivered to individual victims	
Clothing	Gender and community appropriate garments	
Winter assistance	Heating and cooking fuel for the victim’s place of residence; blankets; warm clothing; minor home repairs	
Emergency financial support	Emergency rent to prevent eviction; cost of emergency relocation; funds to prevent utility shut-off; cost of emergency medical or dental care not paid for by national insurance systems; cost of essential healthcare equipment; emergency food assistance; winter clothing; home repairs; other (by approval)	Reserved for individualized, unanticipated cases assisted on an ad hoc basis
Hygienic supplies/other	Additional materials and services to victims in keeping with the general intent of the above, such as hygienic supplies (home cleaning products, soap, toothpaste); bathing facilities outside the victim’s home	
Medical assistance		
Medical and/or dental assistance	Physician-prescribed medications and healthcare equipment; treatment in healthcare institutions; facilitation of access to existing healthcare schemes	
Non-material assistance		
Homecare	General domestic assistance in the victim’s place of residence, such as help with cooking, cleaning, bathing and laundry, food shopping	
Legal assistance	Drafting wills; preparing and transmitting legal documents in connection with accessing social services; legal representation in inferior jurisdictions (court hearing matters of a minor nature); helping with relevant family law issues; general legal advice	Services rendered in connection with the German Foundation ‘Remembrance, Responsibility, and Future’, the Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation (Swiss Banks), political advocacy or class action lawsuits were excluded
Social assistance	Assistance in accessing existing state social services (legal, medical, insurance, social security and pension benefits); activities providing social interaction for isolated victims; counselling (both of individual victims and family members where the victim is the end beneficiary); group workshops to facilitate social interaction and access to benefits	

Food package assistance

Early on the German Foundation excluded payment for food packages from its share of HSP project resources. For 16 months the US Court paid all costs connected with this most popular form of aid to Roma survivors. The Foundation eventually agreed to fund up to EUR 3 million in food packages in countries where needs were particularly severe and more sustainable forms of assistance unavailable.

Selection of partners and project development

HSP benefited from working through the network of field offices that had successfully implemented the claims programmes on behalf of the same two donors. HSP maintained and built on existing contacts with survivor communities and representatives in order to identify significant concentrations of eligible survivors and to ascertain the most urgent needs HSP would need to address.

HSP regularly verified its findings against those of IOM's claims processing activities, thus significantly enhancing its ability to assess country and group persecution levels, as well as to identify substantial concentrations of eligible survivors in locations where claimants had previously been successful in obtaining individual compensation.

Working through its field offices, IOM proactively and steadily built up a network of organizations able to administer humanitarian and social assistance.

HSP eligibility criteria

Membership in a victim group	Roma and Sinti, disabled, Jehovah's Witness, homosexual
Age	Born before 9 May 1945
Persecution	Presence on German-occupied territory
Need	Living on less than US\$ 4 a day



IOM field offices publicized HSP programme requirements and eligibility criteria through local and national media, as well as through contacts with state agencies, NGOs and other organizations known for their experience in relevant fields. IOM solicited project proposals from a variety of large and small, Roma and non-Roma NGOs, faith-based and non-affiliated professional social service organizations as well as government agencies. Some of the entities contacted were involved in ethno-cultural promotion, private enterprise, political activism, religious ministry, educational programmes and public media.

IOM required potential service providers to have a good record of delivering similar types of assistance, access to beneficiary communities and the capacity to meet its record-keeping and reporting standards. IOM sought wherever possible to work through a number of service providers in each country. This was done not only to maximize coverage but also to foster competition that would have a positive impact on assistance and costs. Often potential Roma partners were reluctant to work with IOM until they saw that the Organization was able to reach many beneficiaries, using large non-Roma NGOs and its survey lists, without them.

Before potential service providers carried out needs assessments IOM advised them of beneficiary eligibility criteria, i.e. persecution group membership, born before 9 May 1945, presence on German occupied territory and subsistence on US\$ 4 or less a day. It was soon discovered that many victims were living on considerably less.

IOM required that the information in project proposals be detailed, clear and verifiable. Each proposal included a project plan, locations and number of beneficiaries to be assisted, a description of assistance, frequency of delivery as well as itemized budgets (in US dollars) and staffing strength. Project activities were organized into implementation phases, usually including beneficiary identification and needs assessment, assistance procurement, preparation and delivery and project completion.

Field offices checked each potential service provider's experience, financial records and two independent references. They assessed the impact of potential projects on their overall HSP "country plan", although many proposals never reached this stage. Proposals eventually endorsed by field offices were submitted to programme management in Geneva. After another cycle of queries and redrafting, an agreement was signed for most. From start to finish, IOM often worked for six months with a potential partner before signing a project agreement.

The capacity of individual service providers was a major factor in the types of assistance IOM could offer in a given location. A very limited number of NGOs were able to implement complex projects delivering comprehensive assistance to large numbers of beneficiaries. In several countries IOM began with relatively small projects allowing to test partner capacities and to gather additional information on beneficiary numbers and needs before launching larger projects.

After more than a year of outsourced project activity, during which HSP reached more than 35,000 beneficiaries through 37 partners in 11 countries, IOM found that it had identified a few high concentrations of accessible survivors for which no appropriate implementing partner could be found. After consultation with donors, the Organization developed a limited number of projects for direct implementation.

IOM directly realized HSP projects for Roma survivors in Serbia and Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. In Poland, disabled beneficiaries were included. IOM also directly assisted homosexual survivors. All of these projects relied to some extent on local NGOs for beneficiary identification, community access, needs assessment and assistance delivery. Programme management required field offices to follow the same accounting, assistance tracking and reporting routines as those applied to outsourced projects.

Project implementation, reporting and monitoring

IOM entered into 74 agreements with external service providers based in Belarus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Ukraine and the United States of America. IOM implemented seven HSP projects directly.





IOM delivered HSP assistance to needy Holocaust survivors in 17 countries. It worked with over 60 organizations associated with victim communities, closely monitoring their activities through its network of field offices.

Following the agreement in March 2002 with the Jehovah's Witness Holocaust Era Survivors Fund Inc., the first countries to begin the implementation of Roma assistance projects were the Czech Republic and Ukraine in June of the same year. Projects in Belarus, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Serbia and Montenegro were also approved by IOM later that year.

Assistance was extended to Roma survivors in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Slovakia during 2003, as well as in Latvia and Lithuania in 2004.

Outreach efforts targeting disabled and homosexual victims began in 2000. Significant results became evident only in late 2003, when IOM identified and began providing HSP assistance to members of these groups. While outreach to homosexual survivors did not lead to the identification of many eligible victims, HSP assistance to disabled continued to expand following the identification of survivor populations in the Czech Republic in 2003, Poland and the Russian Federation during 2004, as well as in Moldova in 2005.

IOM's programme expansion strategy was primarily based on the availability of funds, the known size and needs of survivor populations, as well as their persecution during the Nazi era.

For reasons of programme planning and limited resources, the phase-out of HSP activities was carried out gradually. Roma project activities in the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland were completed in 2004. In Belarus, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine activities ended in 2005. In four countries with large and needy survivor populations (Romania, Serbia and Montenegro and Slovakia, as well as Poland for disabled survivors only) HSP assistance was delivered until January 2006.

Individual project design began in most cases when interested service providers contacted IOM and discussed the needs of the identified survivor community and suitable forms of assistance. IOM field offices provided support with designing projects in accordance with programme criteria and goals.

IOM field staff reviewed proposed activities in the light of local conditions and needs, and verified that assistance and infrastructure costs did not exceed local norms. The Geneva staff reviewed proposals for accuracy and consistency with programme goals and prioritized assistance models appropriate for both local conditions and for implementation in other programme locations.

Many project proposals were submitted for review three to five times before being approved. Successive review cycles often meant that proposals had to be redrafted, activities re-examined and adjusted, costs explained or reduced to match changing programme capacities and needs.

Each project operated on an individual timetable, agreed between the service provider and IOM, with regard to starting date, assistance delivery, reporting and end date. IOM regularly monitored all aspects of project implementation. Service providers were required to submit detailed reporting to IOM Geneva every two or three months, according to the agreements, on activities and expenditures. Field offices checked and verified these reports prior to the payment of next instalments. Deviations from the agreed plan or outstanding questions could delay payments.

IOM negotiated project revision agreements, or extensions, with many successful service providers. Reasons for extension included a substantial increase in beneficiary numbers, changes in the forms of assistance, changes in project length, new locations and increased costs.

IOM monitoring was designed not only to ensure that each project adhered to the agreed plan, but to keep an eye on beneficiary needs and satisfaction. Once projects were in place, IOM met regularly with service providers and beneficiaries. IOM staff visited all projects during each reporting period to check financial and assistance records and to interview victims. Intensive early monitoring helped to spot and resolve problems. Monitoring helped to identify “best practices” for use in other locations and to refine project models. Finally, it helped IOM to keep service provider overheads low, so that the maximum amount of donor resources could be spent on actual assistance. Data from all projects was collected and tracked in a database in Geneva.

IOM applied the same reporting requirements and funding transfer procedures to all projects, irrespective of location, type or size. While more frequent attention may have been paid to larger projects where financial exposure was more substantial, IOM still spent time and resources in overseeing smaller projects. Whenever possible, IOM sought

to combine visits to several activities in the same area. IOM Geneva visited all projects, accompanied by local staff, to review records, observe assistance delivery and meet with partners and beneficiaries.

Although the chief motivation for rigorous oversight was proper programme management, IOM's controls also had a significant capacity-building effect on less experienced service providers, and led to valuable new insights into community needs and how to meet them.

IOM staff gave particular attention to partners that encountered difficulties. A few projects, where the appropriate use of project resources and delivery of assistance could not be verified were terminated early. Unused resources were returned to IOM and reallocated to other projects targeting, wherever possible, the same communities. Savings realized in the course of other HSP projects were also returned and redistributed.

Though more time-consuming to oversee, many small projects implemented by grassroots NGOs were especially successful. Unlike projects covering large territories and many beneficiaries, they were able to deliver individually tailored assistance. Conversely, professional service organizations, with proven experience and administrative capacity but less immediate community access or local knowledge, could implement geographically large projects consisting of multiple types of assistance. HSP worked best in countries where both project types operated.

Donor reporting and budgets

IOM reported on a quarterly basis to its donors. Reports gave service provider details, project locations, assistance types, beneficiary numbers and cumulative expenditures. Each quarterly report was accompanied by a request for funds to cover anticipated project costs for the following quarter.

IOM reported annually on HSP, in conjunction with reporting on compensation claims activities, to its donors as well as to the

Organization's members. The Organization also regularly consulted with both donors on specific challenges and achievements, as well as on strategic programmatic issues.

IOM maintained separate HSP administrative (IOM staff and office costs) and operational (project) budgets for each donor's share of the programme. The US Court's budget was denominated in US dollars. The German Foundation's budget was initially in DEM, before being converted into euros when this currency came into use. Administrative budgets were periodically revised and renegotiated with donors.

The Court and the Foundation proportionally shared the cost of projects benefiting Roma. In most cases, each donor's percentage of a project or project extension was determined when the project or extension began. The percentage was based on the donor's total available funding for Roma projects at the time. Another factor was each donor's agreed contribution to HSP food package assistance.

IOM staff

At its period of greatest activity, IOM managed HSP with 30 dedicated staff, 25 of whom worked in field offices supported by five colleagues in Geneva. Field teams generally consisted of two members assisted part-time by specialized finance and medical personnel.

Field staff publicized the programme, located potential partners, solicited proposals and supported project development, project monitoring and reporting. HSP staff in Geneva reviewed, gave feedback on and approved projects. IOM Geneva was also responsible for overall programme management, overseeing and tracking all project activities, on site project monitoring, donor liaison and reporting.

Programme staff met twice yearly for three-day planning and training workshops. Whenever possible, visits to assistance activities were included. Such workshops offered the opportunity to discuss project development, oversight and best monitoring practices.

Outreach, media and public information

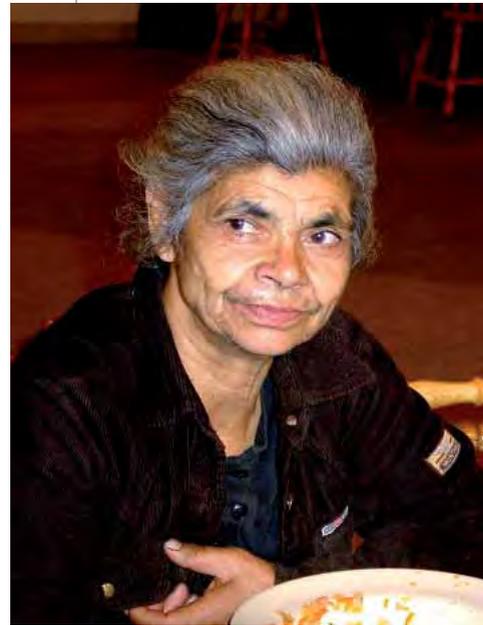
Despite considerable efforts on the part of IOM and its partners, getting appropriate information on HSP to beneficiary communities was a constant challenge. IOM persevered, intent on letting victims know that assistance came from programme donors in recognition of their suffering during the Nazi period. Under IOM's direction and supervision, individual service providers were contractually required to publicize the programme, its goals and donors.

Each HSP beneficiary received a card stating the programme rationale and information about donors. Other materials included special packing tape (for food and hygienic packages), mini-posters (for clinics, legal and social service offices) and wall calendars. Information shared with blind beneficiaries in Poland was in Braille.

Many Roma survivors were illiterate. Members of all groups frequently found it hard to isolate memories of a particular period in a lifetime marked by persecution and deprivation under successive regimes. Disabled survivors were often deaf or blind and lived alone. Perhaps the most common obstacle to significant communication was the victims' advanced age. On the other hand, IOM came to realize that the most important message it could hope to convey was the most simple, i.e. that "someone is helping".

Survivors who had filed claims with IOM for financial compensation often feared that HSP assistance would nullify their claims. Others welcomed HSP, again mistakenly, as aid still awaited from the "Swiss Fund" programme concluded several years before. IOM information materials, though provided together with assistance, were at times contradicted by community leaders seeking to take personal credit in order to gain political capital.

IOM regularly posted information about HSP aimed at potential partners and the general public on its websites. Press releases marked important programme milestones. A special briefing was held for interested



government and agency representatives at the UN Office in Geneva. On International Roma Day, 8 April 2005, IOM held a press conference at the UN to draw attention to the fact that, while the programme was ending, survivor needs remained very great. IOM's "Op-Ed" article on the same topic was published in a number of European newspapers, in print and online, on the same day.

IOM responded regularly to questions about HSP from individuals, the media, victim support organizations and governments. Programme staff took advantage of monitoring travels and their own increasing knowledge to speak with government and NGO experts interested in the plight of Holocaust survivors.

Each year IOM organized an "HSP Partners" meeting in Geneva. Key NGO representatives from implementing countries assembled with donors and IOM staff. These fora were an opportunity for the German Foundation, the Office of the Special Master and IOM to receive feedback, to discuss implementation problems and successes, and to involve partner NGOs in future programme planning.