

BVS/BRETHREN SERVICE PROJECT FORM

Name of project/organization: *Christian Humanitarian Association "Bread of Life"*

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BVSer's job title: co-worker/assistant on income generating projects.

BVSer's immediate supervisor(s): *Danko Malešević*

Description of project/organization:

Please include

- *overall purpose or goals of your organization,*

Bread of Life is a Christian humanitarian aid organization, which was founded by the Protestant Evangelical churches in Serbia. Our office in Prijedor began its work in 1996, providing aid to a large number of refugees and displaced persons in the NW of Bosnia. Our work originated from the desire to present the needs of the most endangered and marginalized in the society in front of the church, government, important institutions and donor organizations.

As it is well known through history, Christian communities and churches have tried to be present and to help people in need. Through our humanitarian organization we are trying to fulfill Christ's commandment to care for the endangered, poor and the sick and to show the life and love of Jesus Christ, encouraging and equipping churches and individuals to get involved in fulfilling the physical needs of people. We are called and devoted to provide for people in the realm of their families, communities and surroundings in view to their spiritual, physical, psychological, social and emotional benefit.

- *description of programs,*

As planned Bread of Life (hereinafter BoL) has reduced classical material aid programs and has focused itself on development of programs that will ensure the basics for long term employment and self-sustainability of our beneficiaries but also the organization itself.

Food Program

One of our first activities has been the distribution of food packages and other material items to refugees and displaced persons in Prijedor area. Through this program we have distributed 1.200 t of food and about 100.000 loaves of bread to the most endangered families in the Prijedor region.

The food program will be continued as a follow up to income-generating programs implemented by Bread of Life. The food program fills out the social part of our income-generating programs and follows programs like E&I (Employment and Income), Self-sustainable Returnee Program, Goat Farms, Trial Project and others. Through this program BoL will distribute 1600 food packages to socially endangered families with 4 or more children and to most endangered families on our work area (Prijedor, Krupa na Uni, Prnjavor, Petrovac).

Through the years the project has been supported by: Dorcas Aid International – Netherlands, MCC – USA, IMO – Germany, Feed the hungry- Czech, SAM- Sweden, Transmission- Netherlands, Mission Relief Transport- Netherlands, Sarepta- Netherlands, Serbian Humanitarian Fond- Germany, Ministry for displaced persons and refugees of RS, Spiritual Reality- Croatia.

Material Aid Program

During aid distributions (clothing, shoes, other items) Bread of Life will focus mostly on families with 4 or more children, but also on already known social cases in the area of NW Bosnia. The humanitarian aid received (hospital materials and equipment; wheelchairs, diapers for adults, furniture, blankets, etc) will be distributed to the local Prijedor hospital and similar medical centers. This year we are expecting 4 shipments from our Swedish partner organization HUMANBRIDGE. Bread of Life has, during the last 11 years, in total received about 200 shipments of humanitarian aid with total weight of 3.000.000 kg.

Through the years the project has been supported by: HUMANBRIDGE – Sweden, Dorcas Aid International – Netherlands, MCC – USA, IMO – Germany, SAM – Sweden Transmission- Netherlands, Mission Relief Transport- Netherlands, Balkan Aid- UK, Lakarmissionen – Sweden, NRA – Sweden, Interact – Sweden, Reninsborg helping hands – Sweden, UNHCR – BiH, Serbian humanitarian Fond- Germany

Self-sustainable Returnee Program

The project provides help to returnee families and assists them within their first steps to start up their lives in their pre-war homes again. The program includes the distribution of heifers to returnee families. These families, who are the primary beneficiaries, are then obligated to pass on the first born calf to another returnee family, and in this way the number of beneficiaries of the project is increased. Although Bread of Life has planned to reduce these kinds of programs and to increase its activities in income-generating programs, this program is being continued throughout the coming year. Bread of Life has distributed 15 heifers in the municipalities of Prijedor, Bosanski Petrovac and Krupa na Uni. So far through this program Bread of Life had 450 primary beneficiaries and the same number of secondary beneficiaries who have received a calf. Also a part of refugees has been helped through the distribution of: sheep, seed, tractor connections, greenhouses, various tools etc.

Through the years the project has been supported by: Interact - Sweden, Dutch Mennonites – Netherlands, Lakarmissionen – Sweden, MCC – USA, NRA – Sweden, IMO – Germany, CFGB – Canada, FRB – USA, IOCC – USA, LDN – Germany, Patmos – Finland.

Development programs (Income-generating programs)

- **Trial Project**

Through Bread of Life's work we have tried to recognize and meet the needs of the population. From the classical material aid programs through self-sustainable projects we have come to the biggest needs of the population at the moment in NW Bosnia. The need for employment and income-generation through one's own work and the need to ensure a healthier life has become a challenge for our organization. In order to answer that challenge, Bread of Life has started its first income-generating program - Trial Project - 2 years ago in the municipality Novi Grad/Bosanski Novi. The project provides help to people to express their own wishes and ideas through a financial stimulant and through other activities like exchange visits, educational seminars, practical advice and other activities. Given that a large number of people in the municipality Novi Grad/Bosanski Novi are farmers and mostly cow breeders, Bread of Life has decided to focus the main project activities on livestock.

Bread of Life has provided a deposit for 14 allocated loans free from interest payments for farmers who would like to expand their farm with a high quality imported milk cow. The farmers are obligated to pay back the loan in 2 years and the funds will be used in that program (revolving fond) or a similar program. Besides interest-free loans, the project provides educational activities like: seminars and practical advice in the field of cow breeding, cooperation with the local Advisory Service of the municipality, and visits to successful farms in Topusko (Croatia).

The project is on-going and we plan to continue the above-mentioned activities in order to bring the project to its conclusion, but with the possibility of continuation in the same or nearby municipality.

Through the years the project has been supported by: Dorcas Aid International- Netherlands.

- **Employment and Income**

Because of the difficult living conditions (jobs, infrastructure, education...) in rural areas, many young people are leaving their villages and are moving into the cities. The rural areas become more and more isolated and natural resources stay unused. With the goal to contribute and help, Bread of Life has begun the implementation of the project Employment and Income (E&I). Main goal of the project is to prevent young people from leaving their villages, and to ensure work and better living conditions for them and their families. The project provides help through distribution of interest-free loans for agriculture and crafts activities with a payback period of 3 years and a grace period of 6 months. Besides interest-free loans, the project provides also educational activities like: seminars and practical advice in the field of agriculture, visits to successful farms, and apprenticeship in the field of craftsmen.

The project is on-going with a duration of 4 years and the possibility of expansion or continuation. It is being implemented in the municipality Krupa na Uni. It is a very remote and isolated area and the population is mostly self-employed on their own properties, producing products for their own needs. Bread of Life has seen the potential of this area and has designed activities that would contribute to these producers becoming more market-oriented and increase their production, allowing them a larger income.

Through the above-mentioned activities we plan to stimulate 30 families (120 people) toward specialized production to make their farms competitive in the market and to increase the financial income of their households. Bread of Life has also employed a new worker for that project and has opened a field office in the municipality. **Through the years the project has been supported by:** Dorcas Aid International – Netherlands,

Education Centre in Local Community

In an effort to encourage education and professional development, Bread of Life, Prijedor manages a program that offers low-cost instruction for courses in English and computers (Word, Excel, etc.). This program offers individuals who cannot afford this type of education from institutions available in the city a valuable alternative to personal development. The “Education Centre” began its work in April 2003. The project was supported by MCC-USA. The computer courses began with second hand equipment and continued over the past 5 years with a few updates. During 2007 the service given to beneficiaries has increased. The centre now offers education in higher levels of English and computer courses (Advanced Word and Excel courses, Corel, Web design, Photo Shop, Access). The beneficiaries are divided into groups and have classes 2 to 3 times a week.

The quality of lectures and the favorable price made that the response to this program has been overwhelming. The beginner computer course has been completed by 480 students and the English course (I and II level) has been attended by 420 students. In 2007 we had 100 students in English and computer course. In coming years we plan to expand our offer and buy more modern equipment. **Through the years the project has been supported by:** MCC - USA

Christmas Presents

The distribution of Christmas presents has become a traditional activity of our organization which has made Bread of Life very popular among the youngest population in this area.

Around Christmas, the day of Christ’s birth, children from West Europe pack toys, sweets and other amusing things into shoe boxes and then they send them to children all over the world. Every year in December when we start the distribution we devote ourselves totally to the distribution. In 2007 we have distributed 8000 Christmas presents to all elementary schools in the Prijedor municipality, but we also included the children of returnees and preschool children. Bread of Life has also organized a distribution of packages to kids from families with 4 or more children in the Prijedor Theatre accompanied by a Christmas show. Although the costs for the distribution are not entirely covered, Bread of Life has not stopped the program, since the happy faces of the children always give us new will and desire to continue the program. In total, Bread of Life has distributed more than 160,000 packages since the beginning of the program.

Through the years the project has been supported by: Samaritan's Purse - UK, Children in distress – UK, Billy Graham Evangelist – Germany, De Bermhartige Samaritaan – Netherlands.

Capacity building of organization

Even though the goal of our organization is the creation of conditions for individual economic development, dignity and a stable social environment in the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bread of Life has realized that it needs to invest and to develop its own human resources. The biggest support on this field we have received from MCC through a 6 year long engagement of their volunteers and from Dorcas Aid International through the Capacity Building program. Although the support from MCC has finished, the engagement of their volunteers has brought Bread of Life to a higher level of work that gives us new possibilities for progress and development of projects.

The support from Dorcas Aid International has continued through 2007 with following courses and trainings: English and computer courses, administrative organization, financial management, time management and planning etc. **Through the years the project has been supported by:** MCC – USA, Dorcas Aid International - Netherlands.

Abbreviation used in the document:

MCC – Mennonite Central Committee (Canada and USA),

FRB – Food Resource Bank

IMO – International Mennonite Organization (Germany),

LDN – Liebe deinen Naechsten (Germany)

- *brief history,*

Bread of Life is a Christian humanitarian aid organization, which was founded by the Protestant Evangelical churches in Serbia. Our office in Prijedor began its work in 1996, providing aid to a large number of refugees and displaced persons in the NW of Bosnia. Since March 1997 we are registered as a civic association at the court of law in the city Banja Luka, and we are authorized to work on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- *size, structure, staffing of your organization,*

For the last four years Bread of Life has its own premises that are in possession of the Protestant Evangelical Church in Prijedor. The premises have been renovated and equipped for the needs of the work of our association. So far on our projects we have engaged 6 workers, and 2 workers are engaged in a project as lecturers (Education Centre in Local Community). We are in possession of computers where all our documents are kept, and also material aid databases and financial databases. The director of Bread of Life is responsible to the assembly-board which is the governing and executing organ. Until now we have implemented projects worth about 6.000.000 €.

- *brief description of your location/area,*



Prijedor is a town and municipality in north-western Bosnia and Herzegovina, located in the Republika Srpska entity. Prijedor is second largest town in Republika Srpska after Banja Luka.

The city lies on banks of rivers Sana and Gomjenica at the bottom of the legendary mountain Kozara. The city Prijedor has a population of 119,096 citizens which are settled in three main settlements (Ljubija, Kozarac and Omarska) and in about fifty villages spread out on 834 km². At the beginning of the 20th century, the first industrial sites were built, like the first factory of bricks and tile; and the first export association of food and stock. During that time the first konditor (confectionary) factory was opened which had been one of the most profitable firms and is now privatized and still works successfully. After the Second World War Prijedor experienced big economic growth through its coal mines and the biggest factories of paper and

cellulose in Yugoslavia. Also, the city of Prijedor is situated on the crossroads of important trade routes. Because of this position, the city is suitable for faster economic development and prosperity. There is a railway which passes through the city of Prijedor and connects with Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Zagreb. This is also a very important segment for economic development of the municipality. In the municipality, economic capacities like the nutrition industry; the industry of non-metal mineral raw materials; sales and agriculture have been supported and developed. The basic assumption for the further development of this municipality is the fact that during the last war, economic capacities were not entirely destroyed, and the technological basics for further development were preserved.

Job description:

- *List specific duties the volunteer would be required to do.*

To assist the BoL director and program manager in the writing and implementation of income-generating projects

1. To assist the BoL director and program manager in the writing and implementation of income-generating projects.
2. Assistance with fundraising for new projects and contact with new and existing donor organizations.
3. Assistance with creation and development of new and existing capacities of the organization.

- *Optional or flexible duties?*

Compliance with work policy of Bread of Life

- *Training offered?*

The volunteers will receive help in the search for an adequate teacher of the Serbian language; they will also have access to all education activities/trainings organized as all other Bread of Life employees.

Minimum requirements or prerequisites:

- *E.g. education, skills, abilities, experience, physical requirements, gender, age, etc.*

Bread of Life would prefer a younger male/female person or a young married couple with experience in work in the NGO sector in a developing country or in Eastern Europe, who are able to easily adjust to new environments, cultures and separation from family. Bread of Life would also prefer an expert in the field of economics or agriculture, if possible.

Housing for volunteer:

- ☐ *in community*
☒ *in independent apartment*
☐ *on project site*
☐ *with family*
☐ *other*
☒ *Must the volunteer seek his/her own housing?*

Other comments:

Accommodation could be provided immediately before the arrival of the volunteer. Accommodation could be a flat or one floor of a house that is being rented. The size would depend on the volunteer.