



DECADE OF  
**ROMA**  
INCLUSION  
2005 - 2015

## **PROGRESS REPORT 2010**

## **GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA**

June 2011



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#### **1. BASIC INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION OF THE ROMA MINORITY**

According to unofficial estimates, the number of Roma in Albania varies from 80,000 to 120,000, between 2.5 and 4.7 percent of the total population of 3.5 million. The estimated growth rate of the Roma population is 3%, higher than that of the Albanian population reported at about 1.9%. Roma people are spread almost all over the country's territory (mainly in segregated quarters) or in villages close to the towns. The greatest number of Roma are concentrated in Central and Southeastern Albania in the areas of Tirana, Durrresi, Elbasan, Fieri, Berati, Korca, Pogradeci, Bilishti, Gjirokastra, Delvina, Kruja, and Shkodra.<sup>1</sup>

The Albanian government has, since 2003, adopted a National Strategy for Roma and in 2008 joined the Decade of Roma Inclusion Declaration. In 2009 with support of UNDP a National Action Plan for Roma was prepared aligning the Strategy with the commitments under the Decade. The Action Plan sets six priority areas including education, employment, health, housing, cultural heritage and equal opportunities. Despite the expressed political commitment, the government has provided very limited financial resources for implementation of the National Action Plan while there need to be a better monitoring and reporting mechanism from both line central and local authorities towards Technical Secretariat for Roma at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO), responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for Roma. The strategy for Roma and its Action Plan however do not extend to the Balkan Egyptians with the rationale that unlike Roma, the Egyptians do not constitute a distinct minority group, thus not relying the state support on the vulnerability of the groups but on their acceptance as minority.

There is a low level of recognition of Roma values and diversity in the Albanian society. A recent UNDP commissioned study on Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup> reveals a substantial propensity of the Albanian public to discriminate against Roma people (half of respondents (49.3%) would not like them as neighbors).

<sup>1</sup> National Strategy for Improving the Living Conditions of Roma Minority, Council of Ministers 2003

<sup>2</sup> Civil Society index for Albania, p.24

Recently, the Government is moving away from this position and is increasingly recognizing social vulnerability, as opposed to membership of a recognized minority group, as the main rationale for the positive measures in favor of Roma communities.

The Roma minority is subject to long-standing social exclusion leading to high unemployment and illiteracy rates up to four times higher than majority. Despite Albania's growing economy in the early 1990s, high unemployment, poverty and wide regional disparities remain daunting challenges. Further, the recent financial crisis has increased the trade deficit and reduced income from remittances. Based on the 2005 Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), 18.5% of Albanians lived below the poverty line of approximately 50 USD (4,900 Albanian Lek) per capita per month<sup>3</sup> although this fell to 12.4% in 2008<sup>4</sup>. The situation is even worse for the Roma: the average income per capita for the Roma community is around 3.3 times less<sup>5</sup> than for the non-Roma population, and as much as 80% of the Roma community lives below this poverty line. The average income per month of a Romani household according to the survey was 68 EUR, compared to the 174.5 EUR for non-Roma living nearby Roma. The monthly income of 51 percent of Roma does not exceed 50 EUR, whereas half of the non-Romani population earns incomes over 150 EUR per month.<sup>6</sup> The incomes of Roma families usually come from employment in low-skilled jobs, often in the non-formal sector. The most common occupations include collecting scrap metal, street cleaning and seasonal work in the agricultural sector, or sale of second hand clothes. These jobs provide very low incomes to Roma families. The unemployment rate for Roma individuals who completed elementary education is 39 percent, secondary education levels are 15 percent and the percentage of those who have completed higher education is just over 8 percent.

Immigrant remittances, a major source of Albania's GDP, continue to fall: a report by the Central Bank of Albania show that remittances in the first quarter of 2010 totaled 170 million Euros, 13 million Euros less than in the corresponding quarter of 2009. This was the second lowest quarterly remittance quarter since 2005.

Projections for GDP growth were also conservative: at the low end, EBRD projects a GDP growth rate for 2010 of 1.4%, while the IMF predicted a 2.3% rate of growth for 2010. Both estimates were below the growth rates achieved in 2008 (7.9%) and 2009 (3.3%). While any positive growth was impressive, especially in light of the global and regional economic downturn, forecasts for 2010 suggested that growth would continue at a slow pace, and the previous high rate of economic growth was not likely to resume until 2015.

## **2. INSTITUTIONAL PROVISION AND EVALUATION OF ROMA INTEGRATION POLICY**

The Government of Albanian in enhancing social inclusion of vulnerable communities. Together with International Organizations and Roma civil society it has implemented various projects in support of Roma on 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Albania Urban Growth, Migration and Poverty Reduction" World Bank, Poverty Reduction and Management Unit, December 2007

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.undp.org.al/index.php?page=MDG/mdg\\_albania](http://www.undp.org.al/index.php?page=MDG/mdg_albania)

<sup>5</sup> At Risk, Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe, UNDP, 2006, p. 8

<sup>6</sup> At Risk Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe, UNDP, 2006, p. 9

An overview of the progress achieved by Albanian Government which aims at improving the social inclusion of Roma community, through encouraging participatory local planning, facilitating access to rights and strengthening institutions for social inclusion is available.

A model of participatory planning has been introduced in the local government units where vulnerable Roma community reside (Tirana, Durres, Fier, and Elbasan<sup>7</sup>). The approach relies on mobilization of local communities into community-based organizations (CBOs) which function as open community forums, where local needs are prioritized and implemented in partnership with respective local authorities. The identified and agreed infrastructure projects include both hard and social infrastructure including road rehabilitation, bridge reconstruction, sewage systematization and the construction of community centers with kindergarten and health facilities. Besides the newly established CBOs, the programme is working closely with the existing Roma and Egyptian NGOs, whose capacities in implementing development projects need to be strengthened. To this end, the programme is drafting relevant trainings, following which small grants for implementation of small-scale development projects will be provided to Roma and Egyptian NGOs. During year 2010 only one Roma people from Elbasani region represented in the local government units in which was introduced the model of participatory planning. During 2011 this number (7) shows a significant progress of the representatives from the Roma community in the local government units.

Facilitating access to rights and services was major objective during 2010, focusing on civil registration, safety and community policing, health mediation, child protection and pre-school education, as well as on employability. Various public institutions, professional organizations, employers associations and micro-credit institutions are implementing the different activities under this objective. The UNDP programme in close consultation with MoLSAEO and the National Employment Service is elaborating labour market analysis to identify concrete recommendations in applying certain incentives for accommodating vulnerable Roma individuals in the labour market. The assessment is expected to provide a map of opportunities for vocational courses, micro-credits, on the job training as well as internships schemes, benefiting Roma group including artisans, unskilled individuals living in rural and remote areas, unskilled individuals living in urban or semi-urban areas and recent university graduates. Meanwhile, several individuals are being assisted in applying for jobs through employment offices.

Community awareness campaigns on the importance of birth registration and on how to register have been conducted in Roma Settlements. Round table on civil registration has been organized identifying a series of recommendations for measures to be taken by institutions directly/indirectly concerned with civil registration of Roma community members.

Community policing is a component which is adjusted as per the needs of marginalized communities, involving trainings to police and community mediators as well as implementation of joint awareness raising activities. Health, child protection, early childhood development and school access, often have been combined together

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<sup>7</sup> In Albania there are 375 local government units : 65 municipalities and 310 communes.

with assistance provided to both communities and respective authorities creating a set of multidisciplinary practices for better integrating vulnerable children from an early age. 250 copies of Roma Decade NAP have been produced and disseminated to line ministries, regional councils, municipalities/communes, Roma NGOs and other partners organizations: Two editions of the programme newsletter (500 copies of each), Roma artisan catalogues (750 copies), fliers on employment and health (250 copies of each), and a flyer on cultural diversity/inclusion (1000 copies) have been produced and disseminated to beneficiaries, partner institutions and media representatives. T-shirts with the slogan “I love development” written in Romanes, Albanian and English have been produced and utilized during all communication activities<sup>8</sup>.

Over 20 community participation and awareness raising activities have been organized with between 15 and 300 Roma individuals mobilized per activity. The programme has been paying attention to ensuring gender-balanced participation in events and has utilized several internationally-marked days in order to maximize the visibility and impact. The variety of activities held include community self-help actions, a university students’ essay competition on social inclusion, workshops in neighborhoods in education, health, employment, disability etc, as well as sports and football games with communities and reps of local authorities.

The Technical Secretariat for Roma at MoLSAEO in close collaboration with UNDP, since April 2010, is implementing the component on strengthening of institutional capacities for minority inclusion at central level; it is implemented at local level in partnership with regional councils and local government units. The programme is creating a web-based reporting and monitoring system, which will be utilized by Technical Secretariat to generate annual progress reports of the Roma Decade National Action Plan (NAP).

The information system shall be a centralized on a web application, located at MoLSAEO that will work over the internet or the government network (GovNet) where available. This approach ensures that:

- Data entered are immediately available to all interested parties, without need for costly and time-consuming data transfer from the local units to MoLSAEO
- Indicators and reports are produced without delays, and available immediately to interested parties.
- Changes and improvement are implemented in the central server and are immediately available to all parties, without need for costly and time consuming software installations in personal computers of the users.
- Reduction of needs for IT staff to administer the system. The system administrator is located at MoLSAEO. There is no need for system administrators in the local offices.

The system will provide the following functions:

- Data collection: an interface will be available for entering data for each data collection unit type. Data collection units are: schools, health centers, MoL

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<sup>8</sup> See the Annex 3 on the awareness raising promotion materials

local units etc. Maximum effort shall be made to check the entered data for quality through validations, use of reference tables and standard identifiers.

- Reporting system: an interface will be available for accessing pre-calculated reports and indicators. The user interface shall offer the capability to modify existing reports and even create new reports from scratch. A report dissemination mechanism shall be supported, that will allow users to register their interest in specific reports, and have reports delivered to their mailbox or RSS reader.
- User management: an interface will be available to add, modify, activate, deactivate the users of the system, according to pre-defined security policies.
- Access control: an interface will be available to control access to different parts of the system, according to pre-defined security policies.
- Reference data: an interface will be available to manage reference data. Examples are the organizational units, geographic locations etc.

While strengthening the capacities of focal points for Roma in line ministries during year 2010, the programme has created 10 technical working groups on Roma in all regions during 2011 where the Roma community is present, which regularly report on the progress of Roma Decade NAP at local level<sup>9</sup>.

Local government officials have mobilized communities with communication and awareness raising activities, which involve vulnerable groups and the mainstream population. Particular attention has been paid to media, with ongoing communication with the networks of journalists to increase the level of positive reporting on vulnerable communities. The close contact has been with media often through the UN press club composed of 12 professional journalists, who have been introduced to the programme activities and invited on field visits in community neighborhoods. The flow of information provided to journalist has often encouraged them to write several articles in daily papers where Roma have been portrayed positively.

#### Overall Legal Framework

A new law 'Protection Against all Forms of Discrimination in the Republic of Albania' was made effective in March 2010. The law prohibits discrimination on several grounds including ethnicity and language, in the area of employment, education and services. The education chapter III prohibits discrimination in education institutions, and authorizes temporary 'special measures' to overcome historical discrimination and promote equality in education. A Commissioner for Equal Protection has been established to review complaints and is empowered to impose sanctions such as fines to violators of the provisions of the anti-discrimination law. So far there has been no case law in the Albanian courts to show how effective these norms are.

#### Measures targeting Roma

In Albania there are institutions at central and local level dealing with Roma and minority issues. Since 2004, based on the Council Ministers Decision No. 127 date 11.3. 2004, the State Committee on Minorities in the Council of Ministers was

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<sup>99</sup> More details will be provided to 2011 progress report

established. This is an advisory body at the prime minister's office composed of representatives of minority groups. Roma are represented in the Committee. This body is weak and has not much influence. The Office of Minorities at Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for monitoring the implementation of international and European standard of human rights of minorities. The Office reports on a regular basis on the progress of the Albanian government in meeting such standards. The Social Protection Directories in municipalities were recently established to address issues of vulnerable groups of population such as children, women, the elderly and disabled as well as Roma (in those municipalities highly populated by Roma).

In April 2010 several steps has been taken to facilitate implementation of the National Action Plan for Roma at the local level. MoLSAEO in collaboration with regional councils has established regional committees for social services. These committees are responsible for implementation of national strategies including the National Action Plan at local level. They are composed of regional education, health, employment, police, social service directorates as well as representatives of local government and NGOs. The committee meets quarterly and one of these meetings is on the Roma action plan, at which the various institutions will report on the progress at the local level for implementing the Action Plan. During year 2010 the reporting system has been vague and was not able to support the indicators' progress report. In this situation further steps for improvement are taken during 2011 with UNDP support .A National Strategy for Children was adopted in 2005 with considerable emphasis on child rights and education. The Strategy is intended to promote quality education for all children regardless of their background or ability. It includes specific measures targeted at Roma children. For example Roma children are given priority in enrolment in pre-school education and language courses for Roma children are provided. The government established an inter-ministerial body to oversee implementation and form links with the National Strategy for pre-university education. Its role is to develop policy frameworks to address the enrollment of marginalized children.

Integrating in the kindergarten educational programme, preparatory classes for roma children who face difficulties in communicating in Albanian, in order to assist their integration to the compulsory education system is the important activity carried out by the education institutions and local NGO-s in country. 659 is the number of Roma children enrolled in kindergartens (pre-school education system) during year 2010; In addition 36 is the number of Roma children enrolled in the preparatory classes in kindergarten.

A new law no. 10347 "on child protection" dated 4.11.2010 provides for the right to children belonging to national minorities, to express freely their ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic belongingness.

Based on information received from Technical Secretariat for Children at MoLSAEO, there are central and local institutions that are responsible for implementing the law. At central level, there exist National Council for Child Protection, and National Agency for Children (which will operate under MoLSAEO), is being established within March this year, with a by decision of council of ministers. At local/municipality level, there exist Child Protection Units.

The National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007–2013 is an overarching document intended to harmonize government policies on development including those related to the achievement of the Millennium Goals, accession to the EU and Albania's membership of NATO. It covers strengthening of civil registration systems, transport, economic and social development amongst others to radically overhaul Albania's governance systems. Plans for education in the medium-term (2007-2010) include doubling salaries of teachers, increasing the responsibilities of local government and reforming the examination system. Plans for the long-term (2011-2013) include providing for a preparatory year before primary school and per capita student financing 'in order to eliminate inequalities and promote access'. In terms of secondary education it aims for an increase in the net enrollment rate to 76%. There are specific references to the Roma National Strategy and the need to overcome barriers to education. Those are related to: Ensuring equal access to all levels of the educational system for children and youth from Roma minority; Elimination of the excluding and inferior attitudes towards Roma in the school community and transformation of cultural diversity into a source of knowledge that is conducive to an environment of mutual respect, tolerance and understanding; Preserving and developing the cultural identity of Roma pupils and students.

It also commits to supporting Roma professional training programmes<sup>10</sup>. It reaffirms its commitments to the National Strategy for Children.

### **3. SITUATION OF ROMA IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION**

There are a number of strategies specifically related to education in Albania. The Ministry of Education and Science developed a long-term strategy document on pre-university education for the period 2004 – 2015. Previously called the National Strategy for the Development of Pre-tertiary Education it was revised in the framework of the project “Quality and Equality in Education” funded by the World Bank, under the name National Strategy for Pre University Education. It covers preschool, primary education and high school. The main goal is to improve the quality of the teaching and learning processes and increase enrolment from low-income groups. It provides for preparatory classes for children from groups in need including Roma, who are entering in the first year of primary education. The MoES also adopted a Strategy for Pre-school Education in July 2009, covering the period (2009-2013). According to MoES for the academic year 2009-2010 in Albania there are 659 Roma children in kindergarten, 36 in the preparatory classes (overall there are 100 preparatory classes) and 165 children that have attended the kindergarten and are ready to enter the first year of primary education. MoES has also committed to open preparatory classes close to the schools near to Roma community. 36 is number of Roma children enrolled in the preparatory classes in kindergarten during 2010. Based on the year 2011 target, 20 % more than actual achieved in 2010, the number of Roma children expected to be enrolled in the preparatory classes in kindergarten is foreseen to be 43 by end of 2011.

The National Strategy on Children of 2005 includes objectives such as a priority focus on the inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education; ensuring the attendance of 5-year old Roma children in kindergartens and teaching them Albanian to prepare



them for the first grade; priority inclusion of Roma pupils in compulsory 9-year education, by offering scholarships or supporting them with other programmes; organizing adequate professional and traditional courses for Roma children in vocational secondary schools. However, in practice no scholarships were specifically set aside for Roma and there is no information as to how many Roma children have benefited<sup>11</sup>. Teachers have been instructed to include in their work plan consultation on issues of importance on education with students and their parents. A career advice service is available in all schools. This is a good step taken from MoE to have inclusive education for Roma children.

In June 2008 the Assembly of Albania adopted a law which provides for monetary compensation in cases of registration of children and of undeclared births within time limits of the budget. These legal provisions constitute good incentives for registration. However migration makes the situation difficult. The MoES has issued a directive allowing for enrolment in school of Roma children lacking personal documentation such as a birth certificate. This measure has improved the school attendance of Roma children mainly in Tirana, Korca, Durres and Gjirokaster cities where lack of personal documentation is wide-spread amongst Roma. 500 out of 120,000 Roma people through out Albania are lacking identification documentation by the end of 2010<sup>12</sup>.

“Second chance” is a mainstream programme which has opened a total of 61 classes for the benefit of 469 children between 6 to 16 years old, of whom 50% are reported to belong to Roma ethnicity<sup>13</sup>. The MOES (Directory of Educational Analysis and Policies) is the decision-making body responsible for implementation of the program. The Directorate of the Curricula and Training in the MOES drafted the program and regional education directorates are responsible for its implementation in schools. Regional Education Directorates are also working to bring in Roma children to schools by creating special classes that prepare pupils to join mainstream classes. This is being implemented in Tirana, Shëngjin, Morava, Fushë-Kruja, Elbasan, Vlora and Shkodra. In Levan commune, Fier Regiona children from 6 to 16 years old who had abandoned school were trained with the purpose of catching up and re-entering school. After several months of intensive training, children joined the relevant regular grades of elementary school in mixed classes with non-Roma children.

659 is the number of Roma children enrolled in pre-education school during year 2010. From this total, 177 Roma children who attend pre-school education are benefiting from the fee waiver during year 2010.

Providing parental counseling at schools and kindergartens for Roma parents, regarding their rights and responsibilities for the educational development of children is an activity implemented and achieved during 2010. Number of teachers/specialists trained to counsel Roma parents during 2010 is 132. Based on the targets set from the MoES this number is projected to be increased obviously by 7% in year 2011 to 35% in year 2015 compare with 2010 achievement. In addition during 2010, 54 (fifty four) awareness raising campaigns did run by the Regional Education Directorates

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<sup>11</sup> MoLSA with UNDP support is improving the data collection process for this specific information through the upgrading of the Monitoring and Reporting system of the NAP. In the next year progress report, more data will be available regarding children in vocational secondary schools.

<sup>12</sup> This data are providing from the local NGO AMARODROM.

with Roma parents participation. There were a large number of Roma parents (401) participated in those activities during year 2010. Based on the targets set for this activity in 2015 it is anticipated that we shall achieve 541 (or 35% more than 2010) Roma parents participants in such campaigns.

During 2010 we continued activities, financing sufficiently and systematically, throughout the country the “Second chance” programmes for the children who have abandoned school, aimed at their integration in the regular education system. The number of “Second chance” classes initiated during this year was 62 and the number of Roma children enrolled in “Second chance” classes was 310. The ratio of Roma children against the total number of children who have benefited by the “second chance” classes was 60.4%.

For the children with a big age-difference, the Regional Education Department in Fier authorized the creation of additional special classes under the rational that it was the only alternative for those children to receive primary education. There have been some problems: there has been a discriminatory attitude of teachers toward Roma children. Due to lack of trainings teachers encountered difficulties in such classes and often refused to continue with teaching. Nevertheless, recently with the increasing collaboration among local authorities, Regional Education Department and Roma NGOs in Levan, trainings have been offered to teachers while Roma teacher assistant have been mobilized to assist the children with homework preparation.

The Ministry of Education has provided 26 quotas for Roma children to study in the public university. For the academic year 2010-2011 the Ministry of Education will have quotas for Roma student in public university as well in subjects such as public administration, social sciences, police academy, law, economics and teaching.

#### Areas of progress

Important advances relevant to the education of Roma in Albania in recent years include:

- General improvements which affect all children: such as the increase in teachers' salaries, renovation of laboratories, and extension of compulsory education to nine years.
- Some improvement in Romani pupils' access to textbooks and school supplies through activities carried out by the government, civil society and international donors.
- Reconstruction of schools where there are many Roma (Berat, Korça, Fier, Lushnja, Elbasan, Shkodra, Tirana).
- The amendment of the National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion.
- Increase in number of pre-school facilities.
- The introduction of the regulation to allow access to school with-out registration .
- Implementation of the Second Chance programme to reduce abandonment from school.

#### Pre-school Education

According to the Ministry of Education, only 13.5% of children of age-group 3 -5 years attended pre-school education. The education of pre-school children is one of the major objectives of the Strategy for the Roma. 103 awareness campaigns have been organized involving consultations with Roma parents and with 294 teachers trained for such purposes. 659 Roma children of 3-5 years have been registered in kindergarten, of which 165 are ready to enter in the primary school. 36 children have been registered in the preparatory classes helping them in catch up with Albanian language.

In recent years good efforts have been made by Roma associations such as Amaro Drom Union, Romani Baxt, Roma for Integration and others to sensitize the Roma community of the importance of enrolling children in kindergartens. The MoES and UNICEF are carrying out a number of projects in pre-school education. The opening and functioning of Roma kindergartens was one of the priority measures which has received extensive support from foreign and local donors, owing to the fruitful cooperation between them and the Roma associations setting up kindergartens in some areas where there are large concentrations of the Roma population. For example under UN Joint Programme Empowering Local Communities in Albania a kindergarten was set up in Roma village, Fshati Rom, in Fier in collaboration with the Qender commune in 2010. The people of Fshati Rom identified the kindergarten as the most important priority in a participatory needs assessment conducted by the UN Joint Program.

#### **4. SITUATION OF ROMA IN THE AREA OF EMPLOYMENT**

The number of Roma population registered in the employed office in National Level is 6.814. During this year from the program of promoting employment are employed 20 Roma that have profit from the training program. During 2010 have profit free professional training 63 Roma in different professions. In 2010, 1485 Roma families are taken social assistance and 659 are taken invalidity payment. More information we will be send to you together with progress a report that is in preparation.

In 2010 two short term studies of the labor market were conducted by Employment National Service office, including Roma employment issues. Two awareness campaigns were organized during year 2010 on the opportunities and benefits of the employment programs, targeting unemployed Roma individuals. Roma community, during these activities is informed to be registered at the local employment office, getting the “unemployment” status and then to have possibilities to take all services offered for this target group.

Three projects that promote employment are implemented and 6,800 representatives from the Roma Community benefited as well. In addition about 7,000 job seekers from Roma community are registered at the respective employment offices which are advised regarding actual programs of the labor market. In the schemes for promoting employment of persons in need, such as salary subvention schemes and tax crediting for employers, 0.01% of the total fund used for such schemes are allocated for Roma people and 1.6% of Roma beneficiaries versus the total number of beneficiaries benefited in these programs.

As regards the opening of vocational training and other qualification programs for the Roma youth in order to create a new trained Roma generation who can compete in the labor market 62 unemployed Roma people participated in the vocational training courses such as those related to; Tourism, hair-dress, solar panel, bricklayer, plastering and tile-layer

A database with Roma associations/NGOs working in the area of child protection was not in place during 2010 because the Ministers Council Decision No 1945 “to license the Roma Associations/NGOs “ was in power by end of year 2010.

## 5. SITUATION OF ROMA IN THE AREA OF HOUSING

During 2010, 8 small scale infrastructure projects have been identified by Local Government and Roma community and are being considered for co-financing by the UNDP programme and respective local government units. It is to be highlighted that community infrastructure priorities were identified by consensus of Roma.

Community. Table presents their respective status in a summarized manner

Table 3: Infrastructure development projects agreed for co-financing	
Areas	Infrastructure projects identified and agreed for co-finding with LGs
Kamza Municipality in Tirana	Rehabilitation of communal sports facility
Nenstacioni Quarter in Tirana	Construction of Community Service Centre comprised from health clinic, kindergarten and community meeting room
Fushe-Kruja in Durres	Rehabilitation of main road in Roma neighbourhood
Nishtulla quarter in Durres	Construction of sewage system
Levan Commune in Fier	Construction of Community Service Centre comprised of kindergarten, health clinic, and community meeting room
Driza/Roma village in Qender //Commune, Fier	Construction of first phase sewage system at Roma village
Peqin municipality in Elbasan	Reconstruction of a bridge, systematization and cleaning of the river
Cerrik municipality in Elbasan	Construction of Community Service Centre comprised from health clinic, kindergarten and community meeting room

2010 data collected for all the indicators of the NAP, showed that there are not available data for indicators related to number of legalized Roma houses, which met the relevant technical and legal standards, and also number of resolved requests versus the total number of requests by Roma families. But there are data available (see table No.3) regarding water supply and sewage projects implemented in the areas inhabited by Roma. In national level, twenty three projects focus on water supply and sewage interventions are implemented during year 2010.

Dissaggregated by qarku such as Tirana 1; Vlore 2,; Berat 2; Fier 3; Elbasan 1; Korce 1; Lezhe 6; Durres 6; Shkoder 1. As a result of these projects , in the national level, benefited 1710 families with improved water supply and sewage system Disseggragated by qarku Korce 300 families; Elbasan 100 families; Lezhe 250 families ; Durres 600 families; Berat 40 families ; Fier 100 families; Vlore 320 families.

During 2010 the amount of funds allocated for the building and reconstruction of the houses of Roma families has been “0”. Accordingly, not any house built and reconstructed for Roma families in need. Based on the data provided by the MoPWTT the same situation expected to be also during year 2011. But from year 2012 there are money allocated in the budget regarding building and reconstruction of the houses of Roma families. This amount will be respectively: Year 2012 – 30 million leke; Year 201– 30 million leke; Year 2014 – 60 million leke.

## **6. SITUATION OF ROMA IN THE AREA OF HEALTH**

The Ministry of Health has supported Roma communities with promotion materials (leaflets, posters, stickers, and TV spots) on immunization, on nutrition and on protection from most frequent diseases have been prepared and disseminated. Further, training of health care providers and Roma community members has been followed by community-based activities, such as child health days and other outreach activities to provide basic health services (immunization, growth monitoring, nutrition advice, antenatal care). Support has been provided to strengthening partnership for improved access to primary healthcare services through the organization in November 2010 of multi-disciplinary consultation workshops on challenges related to immunization and other health issues. Participants included representatives from the MoH, the IPH, regional public health authorities from Vlora, Shkoder, Fier, Durres, Tirana, Korca, Elbasan, MoLSAEO, as well as Roma NGOs. It was suggested that Roma mediators should be involved and that similar activities should be run in other districts populated by Roma communities.

A sub-regional conference of South East European countries was organized in Tirana during April 28-29 as part of activities related to the 2011 European immunization week. The conference contributed towards developing a common regional platform for South East European countries to control and prevent the spread and re-emergence of vaccine-preventable diseases.

## **7. SITUATION OF ROMA IN THE AREA OF SECURITY**

The Government considers birth registration as a key element of civil registration to protect Roma children from the crime of trafficking, and to facilitate their access to education and health services. However, often other civil registration issues, notably related to child custody, transfer of residence, unemployment registration, certification of divorce or marriage, regaining of Albanian nationality and obtaining identification documents, are crucial for human security of vulnerable Roma and for linking them with public and social services. 393 cases have been identified (comprised of individuals, couples, and families) in need of various types of civil registration. Births of 66 unregistered children have been registered and the registration of another 100 births is in process. In the meantime, 40 Roma families

have been supported to apply for the social housing programme in the municipality of Tirana and 30 individuals have been equipped with identification documents, while other cases of civil registration are in process. The programme made a particular effort to assist with applications of those who have been homeless, female-headed households, people with disabilities and those who are without property.

Further, 256 officials from civil registry offices and maternity homes have received relevant training on challenges and solutions to birth registration of vulnerable Roma communities. The focus was to train civil registry officials to apply administrative procedures effectively, in an attempt to avoid more complicated court proceedings. The training of staff of maternity homes focused on improving the record keeping of births in response to challenges encountered and also to the requirements of the newly adopted legislation.

In addition, the programme has noticed the need for improving certain administrative procedures of various types of civil registration. A list of recommendations was identified during a civil registration roundtable organized in February 2011 in close partnership with MoLSAEO and MoI, with involvement of several partner institutions and organizations. Some of the major proposed improvements include: extending the provision of free state-legal-aid in cases of civil registration; authorizing the prosecutor to intervene when parents fail to show up in courts to register their children; streamlining the interviewing process of mothers in the maternity homes to eliminate declaration of inaccurate personal information about the child; and authorizing consular offices to facilitate registration of children born abroad whose parents returned to the country without proper documentation. The recommendations call for a coordinated response from courts, civil registration offices, health authorities, state social services and consular offices.

The programme is collaborating with a legal aid organization in order to address civil registration cases requiring special court and administrative procedures as well as to implement the identified recommendations through preparation of necessary by-laws, training of public authorities, and offering mobile legal services. The programme has also partnered with Roma NGOs operating in remote and isolated communities in the regions, in order to increase local awareness of and capacities for addressing civil registration issues.

The municipality of Tirana has established a multi-purpose centre to protect children from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. Key beneficiaries of services centre are 7 Roma and Egyptian communities in Tirana, a total of 234 families with 530 children and 467 adults (areas covered: Shkoze, Sharre, Kinostudio, Bregu i lumit, Yzberisht, Selite, the recently established community at the Botanic Garden, and two small communities at Shallvare and Kombinat).

These services are provided through ARSIS (a local NGO) with the support of the municipality and UNICEF under the framework of the joint programme. Direct services have been offered to street children including the provision of hygienic washing facilities and daily services including counseling on education, health and nutrition, as well as the establishment of the 24 hrs emergency service in Tirana. Direct and indirect support is provided to parents of children in need by a multidisciplinary team (Iudobus) comprised of a psychologist, a social worker, a

social animator, a doctor and a lawyer, which provides services in the community. Beside, the network of the centre has been strengthened by improving the referral and case management systems.

The newly established multi-purpose centre is offering educational and recreational activities to children and their family members, while an outreach team works in communities and streets to identify and assist new cases. Two teachers provide 27 children with daily supervision and support with their homework and lessons. Preparatory lessons are provided to 31 pre-school children while simple lessons and exercises of mathematics and literature were provided to 53 children who have dropped out of school or who had never attended school. Currently the centre is in the process of enrolling 12 of the beneficiary children in kindergarten, in close collaboration with State Social Service and Ministry of Education. In addition, recreational/cultural activities such as drawing and art classes were organized.

## **8. DEVELOPMENT OF ROMA CULTURE AND LANGUAGE**

The Ministry of Culture has promoted the cultural values of the Roma minority .The entire society has learned about Roma values and Roma traditions as one of the ways to contribute to the acceptance of the other and the reduction of prejudice as part of the efforts to strengthen social cohesion and increase tolerance and solidarity.

The Roma minority has made commendable efforts to preserve its language and to pass on to the future generations their values and traditions. The Roma civil society organizations play an important role in strengthening the cultural identity, the revival, enrichment and transmission of values and language from one generation to the other. Through the dissemination of the results of their research, study, publications and other activities, Roma civil society organizations working in the cultural field have been successful in creating a new vision and understanding of Roma culture. They have made a contribution to the increase of self esteem and self respect within the Roma minority itself and the change of society's attitudes and expectations towards the Roma community.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARD IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF THE ROMA MINORITY ON NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL**

As recommendations for further measures for improving the situation of Roma in Albania we have to underline:

1. Ensuring equal access to all level of the education system for children and youth from Roma minority.
2. Preserving and developing the cultural identity of Roma pupils and students.
3. Empowering of Roma community by increasing access to the labor market, trainings program and social protection schemes.
4. Providing opportunities for Roma to access housing and infrastructure services in compliance with the state standards.
5. Raising awareness among the Roma population and health care and public health services.
6. Ensuring Social inclusion and Increasing Access of the Roma minority in Public Institution.