



## **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA PROGRESS REPORT 2012**

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

In order to ensure adequate finding solutions for Roma issues, i.e. one of the biggest minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted the following documents:

- In 2005 – Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Roma
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 – The Council of Ministers adopted the Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina on Roma Issues in the Fields of Roma Employment, Housing and Health Care.
- On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed Declaration to join Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015
- The Revised Action Plan on Roma Education was adopted in 2010.

The basis of all the adopted documents was included in the Law on Protection of Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina that was adopted in 2003.

The last census in Bosnia and Herzegovina was in 1991 and only about 8.000 Roma declared them as Roma. All information from the field stated that there were more Roma in B&H, taking into consideration that Roma are the biggest minority population in the state.

That was the reason that the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina had registration process of Roma population and their needs in 2010.

In 2010 and 2011, the registration data were included in the unique data base. The registration process continued to be opened for each Roma returnee family or other Roma who missed the chance to be registered. Local Social welfare centers have led the registration process and they were delivered technical equipment (computers) in order to establish their data base.

Special attention was paid to data protection, according to the Law on data protection.

Registration of Roma needs was useful for better planning of activities and funds.

Totally about 17.000 Roma were registered and if we take into consideration those that were not registered and were absent, it is estimated that there are about 30 - 40.000 Roma in BiH.

As per data of the World bank in 2011 and media reports, about 48% of Bosnia and Herzegovina population has lived under the poverty line limit. 18% of the BiH population is at the bottom of living standards, including Roma population.



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### ***1. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR ROMA INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION***

As it was reported, the Ministry for Human Rights and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina developed and adopted the Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Fields of Employment, Housing and Health Care in 2008.

In 2012, the Ministry started revision of the Action Plan, as per recommendations of the Decade and European Commission. The revision was finally supported by the UN Agencies in BiH, including UNDP. A lot of Roma representatives were included in the revision process, in all fields.

Ministry for Human Rights of BiH and Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina plan regular financial means on the state level each year (1,5 million EUR), in order to finance implementation of the Action Plan for Roma issues. The financial means are increased by co-financing of other ministries and implementing partners, especially in Roma housing.

The financial means have been increased by donations of international organizations that co-financed our activities. Majority of municipalities on local level allocated funds for improving Roma living conditions or invested them in infrastructure projects.

The state budget means for 2011 were decreased because of late adoption of the budget on the state level, but activities in 2012 were continued as it was planned.

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina regularly applied for IPA means with EC. We got 500.000 EUR by IPA 2008 that was implemented by CARE International organization. As per the project, 5 regional Roma coordinators were engaged and one Roma coordinator on the state level.

In 2012, many workshops and meetings were organized with participation of Roma NGO representatives and local authorities, in order to educate them about guidelines for establishing independent monitoring system.

Planning of funds will be continued on regular basis in the following years. All the funds will be used only for improvement of Roma inclusion in the society, by providing them better living conditions, allocation of small grants for employment, etc.



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### **2. EDUCATION**

In July 2010, Council of Ministers adopted revised Action Plan on Roma Education, consisted of goals and measures to be implemented on the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina has 12 Ministries of Education and one Department for education in Brčko District of BiH and all of them were responsible for implementation of the Action Plan in 2012.

Results of the adopted Revised Action Plan on Roma Education in 2011 were that there was increase of number of Roma children enrolled to elementary, secondary schools and universities. It was visible that number of children that left education was lower.

There were no budget means on the state level in 2012, in order to support realization of the measures and activities planned in the revised Action Plan on Roma Education. However, the responsible Ministries on Education on the entities level allocated budget means, but it is still not enough to support considerably Roma education.

In 2012, the Roma Board on the state level, as counseling body of the Council of Ministers of BiH, was established and two representatives of the Roma Board participated in monitoring team on the state level in order to monitor implementation of the revised Action Plan. There is lack of financial support for the team, because none of budget means were allocated and there were no donations.

At the very beginning of 2012, the Ministry, in cooperation with relevant institutions on the state level, entities and cantonal level finished activities on Methodology for collecting data for the first report about social exclusion of children in BiH. The adopted questionnaires were sent to the relevant institutions. The first report will be made in 2013.

As continuation of the activities, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH started development of Guidelines to recognize socially excluded children in BiH, in order to monitor exclusion/inclusion of children on regular basis. At the end of 2012, proposal of the document was finished and we expect to be adopted soon.

The Guidelines will include recommendations for competent ministries and local authorities in order to plan activities for Roma children health care, social inclusion, education, etc.

Statistics data were given in the Progress Report 2011.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are no segregated "Roma" pre-schools, primary or other schools.

Roma children don't attend special schools/classes in Bosnia and Herzegovina unless their health situation requires such education.



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Only Centers for social welfare provide regular counseling services to Roma children on regular basis, but there were no many Roma children that were interested to approach the Social welfare centers. Being aware of the fact, it was planned to form Daily centers but none of them was formed yet. The Ministry was formed that only IN-Fondation ( Fondation for social inclusion of children and youth in BiH) initiated idea to open 4 daily centres for the children and they applied for donation with REF. The Ministry supported the idea, but in 2012 we didn't get any further information whether the project was approved.

In 2012, the Ministry organized 5 round-tables (in Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Zenica and Banja Luka) and presented the first report on implementation of the Revised Action Plan, for 2011. The round-table meetings were supported by OSCE. The main topic that was discussed was how to collect statistics data for 2012. Representatives of the competent education institutions declared they were not able to provide data at the end of a year, but only after finished school year. The monitoring team agreed with the information and they have been working to collect data after finished school year 2012/2013. These statistics will be included in the next Progress Report for 2013.

We got an information on round-table meetings organized in Živinice-Tuzla and Bijeljina( municipalities with the highest number of Roma population) that many Roma families left Bosnia and Herzegovina together with their children, leaving education process. After the first half of the school year 2012/2013 almost one third of Roma children went to abroad and didn't finish the year.

Schools were faced with problems of many Roma children who didn't attend lessons regularly. Schools were tolerant towards Roma children, but it had results in bad results in the school of Roma children.



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### 3. EMPLOYMENT

After three years of implementation of the Action Plan for Roma employment, expected results were not achieved. Many planned goals and measures were not supported by necessary financial means.

On the other side, we were faced with other problems (economic crisis, increase of unemployment, low possibilities for employment, limited employment in public sector, etc) and the fact that Roma were not enough qualified or educated, lack of regular registration with Bureau for unemployed, lack of knowledge of needs of labor market, made that planned goals were not realized.

As per available budget on the state level, we continued to allocate the agreed budget means. That means that we could have only 430 EUR per year, allocated for employment of Roma, including the state means (350 EUR) and the rest was co-financed by the responsible entities and cantonal institutions.

As we reported, 212 Roma were included in employment programs for 2009 and it showed positive examples in the area of employment in BiH.

In 2012, the same amount of 350 EUR was allocated for Roma employment on the state level. The means were used for Roma employment through relevant institutions for employment in both entities and Brčko district of BiH. The Ministry signed Memorandum of understanding with all of them.

Institutes for employment will continue necessary education of Roma within the planned measure: co-financing self-employment of Roma. The Institutes took an obligation that Roma representatives would be included in commission for selection of beneficiaries.

It is very important to mention that the Ministry made concrete activities, together with the Institutes for employment, in order to establish mutual monitoring body, that will monitor spending of the means and process of employment. The Institutes are obliged to realize the funds from 2012 until September 2013.

There were some problems that we were faced in employment of Roma and it was agreed to pay more attention to these problems in future. They were as follows:

- low qualification of registered unemployed Roma
- lack of knowledge to manage self-employment projects
- lack of interest of employers to employ Roma
- lack of coordination with local authorities in order to help Roma to enter own business, lack of support regarding registration of business or issuance of permissions
- lack of good communication and coordination in order to follow up realization of projects for those Roma that were employed (number of permanently employed Roma after a project expired, communication with employers, etc).



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The revised Action Plan on Employment will pay more attention to problems for employment of Roma. 10 basic principles adopted by EU will be included in the document.



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### 4. HOUSING

The Action Plan on Roma Housing was adopted in July 2008, but in 2012, the Ministry started revision of the Action Plan on Roma Housing in order to include real planning of activities, budget, to establish better indicators in order to be able to evaluate results. The Revised Action Plan on Roma Housing started in June 2012 and will be finished in May 2013, based on Decade and EC/EU recommendations.

As we reported in the previous reports, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina decided to plan in the state budget 1.500.000 EUR for Roma issues, each year. Out of the amount, 1.000.000 EUR was allocated for Roma housing.

Based on the planned budget means, the Ministry usually announced Public Call for submitting Roma housing projects each year and it was also done in 2012. Commission on selection of the projects checked all locations from the submitted projects and based on confirmed priorities in the field, the Commission recommended 23 projects to be funded by the budget means of 2012. Implementation of the projects will be continued in 2013.

Municipalities, cities, entities, local and international organizations, institutions and donors and Roma NGOs could submit their applications. All projects were based on co-financing by implementing partners and in this way available budget means could be increased.

Priority was given to construction of Roma houses, reconstruction and improvement of living conditions and infrastructure.

The following criteria were applied:

- the means were used for the most vulnerable Roma families that could confirm ownership, or for Roma homeless if municipalities allocated location (like in Zenica, Bihac, Mostar, etc.),
- co-financing was crucial in decision making process,
- attention was paid to number of housing units and costs per Roma housing units in the projects,
- infrastructure connections were obligatory ( in some locations it required reconstruction of electricity network or other infrastructure and the process was delayed),
- Two Roma representatives on local level were included in the Commissions for selection of beneficiaries, etc.

When a project was approved, Commission on selection of beneficiaries, consisted of municipal representatives, Social welfare center representative, implementing partner (if it is not the municipality) and Roma representatives, selected the most vulnerable Roma families, as beneficiaries of the projects. The Ministry representatives were observers of the process of selection.



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### TOTAL RESULTS UNTIL THE END OF 2012:

- Totally invested budget means, donations and co-financed funds by implementing partners, from 2009-2012, amounted **6.050,000 EUR** (including funds for 2012),
- Housing projects were realized in **55** municipalities or locations (including data for 2012),
- **162 newly constructed housing units** were finished,
- **198 reconstructed** housing units were finished (without data from 2012)
- **TOTALLY 360 housing units were constructed or reconstructed** until the end of 2012. Realization of minimum 90 housing units, from the budget means for 2012, have been continued in 2013. Real data on total number of the housing units will be reported in the Progress Report 2013.
- **TOTALLY 270 Roma families were beneficiaries of infrastructure projects.** Infrastructure projects, approved in 2012, will be realized in 2013 and figures will be available in the next report.

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for IPA funds on regular basis. In 2012, the Ministry was approved 5 million EUR, through IPA 2011-2014. The project will be realized in two phases and 80% of the approved funds will be used for Roma housing.

Good practice in Roma housing, especially for Roma homeless families without property, i.e. social housing, were realized in Zenica, Bihac, Mostar and Teslic municipalities. The municipal authorities allocated locations for Roma homeless families and housing units were constructed by the budget means.

We are constantly improving our methodology based on lessons learned and previous experience.

Here are some examples of social Roma housing in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- *Zenica – social housing*







DECADE OF  
ROMA  
INCLUSION  
2005-2015

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### **Social housing in Teslić municipality**





DECADE OF  
ROMA  
INCLUSION  
2005-2015

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### Social housing in Mostar





DECADE OF  
ROMA  
INCLUSION  
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### Social housing in Srbac





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### 5. HEALTH

Realization of the Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Health Issues, adopted in 2008, was continued in 2012.

As we reported in previous reports, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Council of Ministers of BiH made Decision to plan in the state budget 1,5 million EUR for Roma issues. Out of this amount, 105.000 EUR was allocated for health care.

During 2012, certain and measurable results were achieved in implementation of the Action Plan funded by means allocated from previous years.

The ensured financial means for Roma healthcare including 2012, are implemented by the competent institutions and based on signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry for Human rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and entity Institutions for Public Healthcare and Department for Healthcare in Brcko district of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Financial means for 2012 and as per signed Memorandum of Understanding, will be used in 2013 for the following purposes.

- Goal 2 in the Action Plan –raising awareness about healthcare, information campaigns regarding health protection, prevention, education sessions, etc. The goal will be implemented in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic Srpska and Brčko District of BiH.
- Goal 3 in the Action Plan- to ensure and implementation of prevention measures in order to improve health insurance and care of Roma population, priority programs, immunisation of Roma children and oral healthcare.

At the moment, realization of the Memorandum is ongoing. The Memorandum was signed on 4th December 2012 (due to delay regarding adoption of the state budget for 2012). The institutions are obliged to report about implementation on 30th June 2013.

Most of activities for 2012 have been realized in local Roma settlements and in this way all obstacles and difficulties in implementation are visible and lessons learned will be discussed in further development of methodology.

In 2012, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina cooperated with World Vision and finalized four program modules from the Action Plan for Healthcare.

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees doesn't have statistics on the state level about Roma included in healthcare problems, because all statistics are on local level. Taking into consideration that last census of BiH population was in 1991, the Ministry is aware only about



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5.272 Roma persons who reported lack of health insurance during the last registration of Roma needs in 2010.

Revision of the Action Plan on Healthcare started in June 2012 and will be finished and adopted by BiH Council of Ministers in June 2013.