



This project is funded by the European Union

ROMA ACTION



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About the project

Hilfswerk Austria International (HWA), in partnership with Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V (ASB), Roma Association Kali Sara – RIC and 11 local government institutions is implementing yet another project in support of Roma population in B&H.

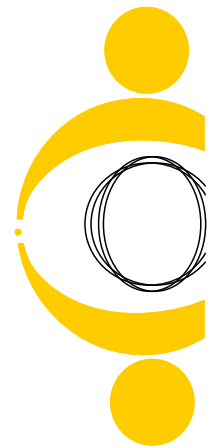
ROMA ACTION project aims at social inclusion of vulnerable Roma families in flood and landslides affected areas through construction/reconstruction of housing units and provision of social and economic measures.

The project is funded by the European Union through the instrument of pre-accession assistance IPA 2013 in the amount of 2.5 million Euro, with the local co-funding in the amount of 327.227 Euro.

The project is being implemented in the cities of Tuzla, Bijeljina and Zenica, Municipalities of Gračanica, Banovići, Kakanj, Zavidovići, Modriča and Brčko District B&H. All project local administrations with Federation B&H Ministry of Displaced persons and refugees and Ze-Do Canton Ministry of labour, social policy and refugees are participating in the project through co-funding.

This project is specially designated to vulnerable Roma families affected by floods and landslides, and as such it aims to significantly improve living conditions for 140 vulnerable Roma families in 9 administrative units in B&H.

Roma Action



Representatives of EU Delegation in B&H, Hilfswerk Austria International, Kali Sara – RIC and local authorities place a foundation stone for construction of a social housing building for 8 Roma families in Kakanj.



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Project partners:



Expected results



Social housing building in Kakanj

- 140 Roma families in 9 selected locations moved into reconstructed and newly built housing units and thereby their living conditions significantly improved
- Improved social and economic inclusion for at least 140 Roma families in project locations affected by floods through specially tailored socio-economic measures
- Improved economic sustainability for at least 70 Roma families through ensuring measures necessary for survival after floods
- Raised awareness on equal opportunities of social integration through civil registration, education of children, young people and target Roma families through 8 interactive workshops
- Support given to at least 4 thematic working groups at the State level in 4 sectors related to the Roma with the purpose of drafting proposals on how to tackle the crucial problems
- More than 800 individuals will directly benefit from project implementation.

Proactive involvement of local authorities

All relevant local authorities established financial, administrative and technical prerequisites for project implementation, including the timely provision of construction land for social housing, as well as the permits for technical infrastructure. Thereby they proved their determination to treat Roma as equal citizens. Representatives of local authorities are directly involved in project implementation through the work in local Project implementation teams, beneficiary selection committees and all other administrative and technical project sectors.

Roma Associations and representatives had given their full support to the project idea and unreservedly provided all necessary information.

B&H Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees and Federation Ministry of displaced persons and refugees are also involved and are providing full support in the area of their jurisdiction.



Project partnership



The project shows all advantages of cooperation between international and local organizations which have an extensive experience in the area of protecting Roma rights, and the specific activities in improving living conditions, social inclusion and economic prosperity of Roma population.

Hilfswerk Austria International is implementing the project in partnership with Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V and Roma Association Kali Sara – RIC. Apart from experience in implementing project for support to socially vulnerable population, all three organizations have a long and successful tradition of cooperation with local authorities, and this significantly contributes to the successful implementation of project components. The trust and partnership between organizations and local authorities resulted in the significant financial support of all involved levels of governance, which in the end resulted in allocation of 2.5 M€ by the European Union.

The established partnership is successfully nurtured and the joint base of knowledge and experience is being successfully used in project realization.

Project partners:



Currently in implementation

Preparatory activities have been successfully completed in all project locations. Bilateral agreements between HWA and all partners in the project have been signed and project implementation teams have been established. Beneficiary selection committees completed the beneficiary selection. The process was conducted using the transparent criteria, with the participation of civil and project structures using the “case by case” approach. Roma families are well informed, prepared and directly involved in the project implementation together with local authorities and relevant civil structures.

Out of the total of 140 housing units that shall be provided by the Roma Action Project, 68 will be new apartments in social housing buildings, and 72 existing housing units will be reconstructed, after all the legal requirements are met and all necessary documentation is collected.



The construction of social housing buildings envisages the following:

- Kakanj – a building with 8 apartments,
 - Gračanica – two buildings with 6 apartments each (in total 12),
 - Banovići – two buildings with 4 apartments each (in total 8)
 - Brčko – a building with 18 apartments
 - Zavidovići – a building with 12 apartments and
 - Modriča – a building with 10 apartments
- Kakanj - zgrada sa 8 stambenih jedinica.

The construction of the buildings in Kakanj, Gračanica and Banovići is in its final stage, and the hand-over to the beneficiaries is foreseen for March 2017. In Bijeljina 12 reconstructed houses were handed over to the beneficiaries in December 2016, while the reconstruction of 36 houses is in the completion phase.

The procedure for selection of the most favourable bidder for construction of a social housing building with 18 housing units in Brčko District B&H is under way.



Social housing buildings in Gračanica

Kali Sara-RIC workshops

Partner association Kali Sara-RIC in cooperation with B&H Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees devised a plan for seven thematic workshops that took place as scheduled. The main topic of the workshops was an analysis of the current efficiency of the State programme for Roma in the areas of education, housing and health protection.

Workshops were held in seven different locations in July and September 2016 (Mostar, Zenica, Tuzla, Bijeljina, Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Bihać). 132 persons – representatives of the Ministries, Municipalities and local NGOs. This work resulted in drafted Action plan B&H for solving problems of Roma in the areas of employment, housing and health protection 2017-2020.



ROMA ACTION 2015 - 2017

A detailed assessment and update of Roma needs and relevant strategies brainstormed with several institutions enabled the embracement of the project philosophy and deadlines by all interested parties. The intervention logic, with strong cross-cutting nuances, encompasses clearly described efforts focused not only in house construction and renovation but also in promoting Roma economic inclusion through small humanitarian and economic grants. Fruitful discussions were oriented towards further capacity building of local Roma associations and local authorities, creating the favourable environment for mutual active participation in the future improvement of the Roma living conditions and social inclusion.



They said about the project...

Suzana Jašarević,
HWA Director for B&H:

The Roma community in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most vulnerable one in the region which is still facing deeply rooted economic and social challenges. Besides other problems, housing remains a key concern for many Roma families that was unfortunately intensified by the 2014 floods. The issue of housing is accompanied with increasing needs for employment and education of Roma. The pertinence of the action to B&H efforts for the Roma Decade is high as it represents a combination of efforts by the Project partners, MHRR B&H and project Municipalities/Cities for providing measures for social housing, dwelling reconstructions and economic inclusion.

There are three key factors for the satisfactory implementation pace: the implementation team with 20 years long experience in delivering tangible results on vulnerable categories issues in B&H, project partners and committed project stakeholders which have confirmed and fulfilled their pledges and obligations. More visible impact should materialise during the last phase of the project once delivery of all humanitarian grants, social housing and dwelling reconstruction has been completed.

Massimo Mina,
Head of Operations Section for Social Development, Civil Society and Cross Border Co-operation at the EU Delegation to B&H:

Mr. Mina welcomed the commitment of all involved in the project emphasising the importance of Roma inclusion in the society, and stated: "The housing issue is one of the biggest priorities, but other measures are also needed for improvement of the situation of Roma population, including education, health protection and employment. The Roma Action project will also address these issues and provide 70 Roma families with grants to improve their economic status".

Dervo Sejdić,
Kali Sara - RIC:

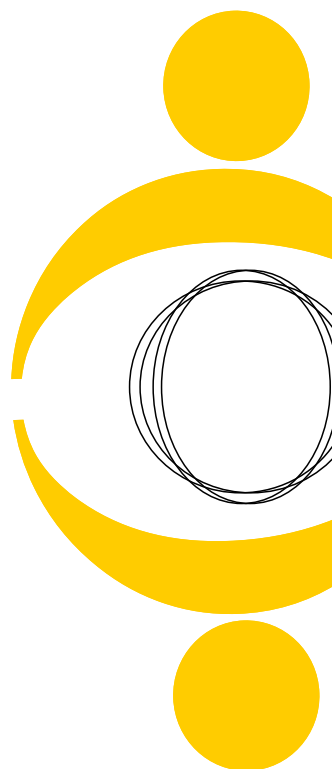
By contributing to an improvement of the living conditions of Roma families affected by the floods, the project has already contributed to achievement of the overall results. There is an obvious major inclusion of Roma NGOs and representatives in local decision making processes related to Roma issues.

From this perspective, the project will provide a positive contribution to the previous and current efforts of the international community and B&H authorities towards solution of Roma housing problems.

Next steps

Reconstruction of 12 housing units in Zenica will start in January 2017. A social housing building with 10 apartments will be built in Modriča and in Zavidovići a new building will have 12 apartments.

A survey of beneficiaries of reconstructed houses and houses in reconstruction is under way and will be continued with the purpose of assessing needs and interests for allocation of grants for economic sustainability. Grants will be given to 60 families.



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