



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION AGENCY



EUROPEAN CENTRE
FOR
MINORITY ISSUES



SUPPORTING LOCAL ROMANI COORDINATORS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO INTEGRATING ROMS IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

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European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)
Director Dr. Marc Weller

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GOVERNMENT**

Belgrade / Skopje

March 2007

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INTRODUCTION

Why this guide?

The purpose of this brief publication is to encourage replication and continuation of the pioneering work of the 3 main initiators with the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) as implementing agent in building the capacity of local Romani coordinators (RCs) and their non-Romani counterparts in thirteen municipalities in the Republic of Serbia. To this end, the guide brings together materials for relevant actors in Serbia and potentially other countries in the broader Balkan region interested in increasing and improving integration and contacts between Romani communities and local authorities.

The guide is based on the experiences gained from a pilot project implemented by the ECMI in cooperation with the Agency for Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia (formerly the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro), the European Agency for Reconstruction, and the OSCE. Whereas this Introduction presents the current guide in the context of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and ECMI's work with Roms, Section 1 provides a brief overview of the situation of Roms in the Republic of Serbia. Section 2 focuses on RCs as a link between Romani communities and the state, also attending to the role of non-Romani local officials. Section 3 offers a more detailed look at the design and implementation of activities for building capacity to address problems faced by Romani communities, as well as promoting multi-ethnic teambuilding at the level of local government. In similar fashion, Section 4 examines networking events as a means of following up the training programme. Section 5 surveys the results generated by the capacity-building and networking activities undertaken in the framework of the project, while Sections 6 and 7 explore measures to be taken to make the work of RCs sustainable. Finally, the two annexes at the end of this guide include personal profiles of the RCs and (non-Romani) heads of sector in the involved municipalities who agreed to serve as resource persons for other municipalities. Following on the recommendations resulting from the integrated analysis conducted in

Serbia and Montenegro in 2004,¹ in December 2005 ECMI launched an initiative designed to increase and improve contacts between Romani communities and local authorities through training and networking activities for RCs and their relevant counterparts in local government in thirteen municipalities in the Republic of Serbia. Funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the pilot phase of ECMI's work with RCs and municipal heads of sector ran through the end of 2006. The results of the pilot are presented in this guide to provide examples of good practice to be adapted for application in other municipalities in Serbia as well as in other countries in the region for the purpose of increasing and improving contacts between Romani communities and local authorities.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion: Municipalities' crucial role

The Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015) is an explicit commitment by nine governments in Central and Southeast Europe to combat the poverty, exclusion and discrimination faced by Romani populations in the region (as well as further afield). By signing on to the Decade, the governments of Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia have pledged to secure:

- Adoption of National Action Plans (NAPs) in the Decade's four priority areas: education, employment, health, and housing;
- Efficient and timely implementation of the NAPs, committing sufficient financial resources for this purpose;
- Coordination between line ministries and relevant government institutions in order to maintain coherence and continuity in NAP implementation;
- Transparency and sharing of information regarding the Decade within the government and with civil society, making available disaggregated data in accordance with international standards on data collection and data protection;
- Effective participation of Romani civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the NAPs; and

¹ For details of the integrated analysis in Serbia and Montenegro, see http://www.ecmirom.org/nasgc_uk_index.htm.

- An effective monitoring mechanism, which includes a way to measure progress in NAP implementation at the national level.

Also recognized by the governments of the countries participating in the Decade is the need for dialogue between local authorities and local Romani communities in order to make NAP implementation as effective as possible in improving the good governance system in general, particularly as it relates to Roms. While implementation of the NAPs began officially with the launching of the Decade in early 2005, bringing tangible improvements to local Romani communities requires municipal-level cooperation not only between local authorities and the local Romani communities, but also among the municipal-level officials active in the Decade priority areas. In the absence of such cooperation, the participating countries' political commitments run the risk of freezing at the level of declaration, with implementation suffering as a result.

ECMI programmes with Roms in the Western Balkans (www.ecmirom.org)

ECMI conducted the first global assessment of the needs of the Romani population of the Republic of Macedonia in 2003². When the research results indicated the necessity of mobilizing a critical mass of Roms to work toward the integration of Macedonia's Romani population as a whole, ECMI established Romani Expert Groups³ in the core areas of education, health, civil rights, and employment. In addition to contributing to the revision of the government's *Draft Strategy for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia*, the Expert Groups produced two volumes of reports on the research which they designed and conducted with ECMI facilitation, as well as a proposal for modification of Macedonia's electoral system.

Using a methodology adapted from the needs assessment in Macedonia, in 2004 ECMI conducted an integrated analysis of the situation of Roms in Serbia and Montenegro. Among the recommendations produced on the basis of the analysis was that initiatives should be supported which do one or more of the following at the local or regional level:

² For details of the needs assessment in Macedonia, see http://www.ecmirom.org/namkd_uk_index.htm

³ For details on the Romani Expert Groups, including downloadable research reports, see http://www.ecmirom.org/regri_uk_index.htm

- **Increase** and improve contacts between Romani communities and local authorities;
- **Enhance** Roms' market position as potential employees and entrepreneurs;
- **Raise** the level of information about while facilitating the realization of civil rights within the Romani population; and/or
- **Promote** attention to local needs on the part of successful Romani NGOs while improving coordination among Romani NGOs based in a given locality.

Most recently, with an eye to making operational and monitorable the NAPs adopted in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, in 2006 ECMI embarked together with UNDP's Bratislava Regional Centre on an initiative to develop a methodology to assist the national teams responsible for NAP implementation in identifying gaps in the implementation process that could jeopardize realization of the Decade goals, designing adequate responses to keep the implementation process on track, and building national capacities for monitoring and mid-term progress assessment.

Acknowledgements

ECMI wishes to thank the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for its support of the integrated analysis and subsequently this initiative. We hope that this guide will help to serve as a model for similar initiatives elsewhere.

Outside of ECMI, the project benefited from consultations with the Agency for Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia (formerly the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro), as well as with OSCE staff. A debt of gratitude is owed also to the Serbian NGO *Građanske inicijative/Tim TRI* for its role in giving life to the training activities undertaken in the framework of this initiative.

In addition to the RCs and municipal heads of sector who took part in the project activities and are profiled in Annexes I and II, ECMI wishes to thank the members of its Belgrade-based Project Team for their contributions to the project activities leading to this guide, as well as to the

guide itself: Igor Kostić, Nataša Markovska, Dragana Paspalj, Jelena Sekulić, and Slavica “Lola” Vasić.

Eben Friedman, Ph.D.

ECMI Regional Representative

Skopje, March 2007

1. ROMS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

1.1 Population

According to the population census of 2002, there were a total of 108 193 Roms living Central Serbia and Vojvodina, such that Roms constituted 1.44% of the total population of the Republic of Serbia⁴. By way of contrast, a survey of 593 settlements with more than 100 inhabitants or 15 families conducted under the auspices of the Ethnicity Research Centre found a total of 210 353 Romani residents, not including an additional 46 238 displaced from Kosovo.⁵ Finally, estimates from Romani non-governmental organizations (NGOs) indicate the Romani population of Serbia to be more than 750 000.⁶

1.2 Policies for the integration of Roms in Serbia

Notwithstanding the relatively progressive treatment of Roms in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the situation of Roms in Serbia stagnated from the latter part of the 1980s until late 2000.⁷ The last several years, however, have seen significant advancements in both the field of research and that of policy. Particularly noteworthy in this regard are the:

- *Law on Protection of the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities*⁸ (2002);
- *Draft Strategy for the Integration and Empowerment of the Roma*⁹ (2002); and
- *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*¹⁰ (2003).

Significant though they are, the advancements of the last several years can only be considered an initial step in the right direction, with the *Draft Strategy* itself calling for additional assessment studies. Conducting such a

⁴ This figure does not include Kosovo. See *Etnički mozaik Srbije* (Belgrade: Ministarstvo za ljudska i manjinska prava Srbije i Crne Gore, 2004).

⁵ Božidar Jakšić and Goran Bašić, *Romani Settlements, Living Conditions and Possibilities of Integration of the Roma in Serbia* (Belgrade: Ethnicity Research Center, 2002), p.14.

⁶ See, for example, *Human Rights in Yugoslavia 2003* (Belgrade: Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, 2004) p. 365. Indirect support for this contention comes from Belgrade officials, who estimate the Romani population of the capital area at 105 000.

⁷ In Kosovo, on the other hand, the situation for Roms deteriorated dramatically in 1999, such that the majority of Roms from Kosovo today live outside the province.

⁸ http://www.humanrights.gov.yu/files/doc/Zakon_Engleski.doc

⁹ http://www.humanrights.gov.yu/files/doc/Roma_Nacrt-Strategije_English.doc

¹⁰ http://www.seecrecon.org/serbiamontenegro/documents/reforms_statement_serbia/annex2-prsp_executive_summary_and_matrices.pdf

study in late 2004, ECMI generated a set of guidelines for Sida's work with Roms in Serbia (as well as in Montenegro). Among ECMI's recommendations was to increase and improve contacts between Romani communities and local authorities.

Increasing the presence of Roms at the level of local government shows considerable promise for improving relations between Romani communities and local authorities, as well as local organs of state agencies. This is so due in large part to:

1. The broad-based disadvantage of the Romani population as a whole; and
2. The tendency for disadvantaged Roms to be less ashamed of differences in education and economic status in dealing with other Roms than in their encounters with non-Roms.

Additionally, the *Law on Local Self-Government of the Republic of Serbia* provides for the establishment of a Council for Interethnic Relations in ethnically mixed municipalities.¹¹ Prior to the establishment of RCs in twelve municipalities through a cooperative initiative of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the European Agency for Reconstruction, and the OSCE in 2005, however, only the municipality of Leskovac in Southern Serbia had appointed such a coordinator.

¹¹ *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* 9/2002, Article 63. Available online at http://www.osce.org/documents/fry/2002/03/125_en.pdf.

2. STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Background

The *Law on Local Self-Government of the Republic of Serbia* provides for the establishment of a Council for Interethnic Relations in ethnically mixed municipalities.¹² Before 2005, though, only the municipality of Leskovac (Southern Serbia) had appointed a coordinator for Romani issues, integrating the position into the municipal budget but without developing detailed terms of reference. A significant change in the situation came when RCs were appointed in an additional twelve municipalities. The driving force behind this change was the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, supported by the European Agency for Reconstruction and the OSCE in its endeavour to bring about local-level action in realizing priorities set on the national level.

Integral to the establishment of RCs in the twelve municipalities was the signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and each of the included municipalities. Obligations under the memorandum of the municipalities, the Ministry, and RCs are summarized below.¹³

Obligations of the municipality

- To hire RC on a full-time basis for a 12-month period
- To provide office space and office equipment similar to that of other municipal employees
- To involve RC in planning and preparing local government decisions on issues concerning minorities
- To actively engage RC in solving problems faced by local minority communities

Obligations of the Ministry

- To provide 12 monthly salaries for each RC on the level corresponding to the RC's educational background and experience, also covering insurance and taxes as required by law

¹² *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* 9/2002, Article 63.

¹³ Summary based on document provided by the Agency for Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia.

- To organize training sessions and seminars for RCs
- To monitor RCs' activities and provide information and feedback as needed

Obligations of the RCs

- To acquire knowledge of public affairs in general and of local public administration in particular
- To work in accordance with the rules of local public administration
- To actively participate at meetings of local government
- To assess the situation of local Romani communities, actively contributing to designing solutions for issues faced by these communities
- To become relevant liaisons with the local Romani community, monitoring activities of relevant NGOs
- To report to the Ministry on a monthly basis
- To demonstrate results at project conclusion

While the demand for assistance from the Romani municipal employees demonstrated their potential to serve Romani communities, the continued existence of these positions depended in large part on the RCs' ability to generate the concrete results necessary to gain support from the municipal budget in future. The achievement of these results in turn required increased capacity on the part of not only the RCs, but also the (non-Romani) local government officials in charge of sectors within which Roms' complex and multi-faceted marginalization manifests itself, also the priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion:

- Education;
- Employment;
- Health; and
- Housing.

In cooperation with the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, ECMI identified the most appropriate way to increase the capacity of the RCs and their non-Romani counterparts in local government and designed the activities of the pilot project accordingly. The main project activities undertaken in this direction are described in detail in Section 3 of this guide.

2.2 Local Romani coordinators

The pilot project focused on the twelve municipalities in the Republic of Serbia in which RCs had been established as integral parts of municipal administration with the support of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the European Agency for Reconstruction, and the OSCE, plus the pioneering municipality of Leskovac (which had already appointed its own RC).¹⁴



Romani population in selected municipalities		
Municipality	Total population	Roms
Aleksinac	57 749	2.5%
Barajevo	24 642	0.8%
Bela Palanka	14 381	8.5%
Bujanovac	43 302	8.9%
Grocka	75 466	0.6%
Leskovac	156 252	2.8%
Negotin	43 418	0.6%
Novi Beograd	217 773	1.1%
Pirot	63 791	3.0%
Sombor	97 263	0.4%
Valjevo	96 761	1.4%
Vlasotince	33 312	0.8%
Vranje	87 288	5.3%

Scattered throughout the country (see above map), the municipalities involved in the pilot project were Aleksinac, Barajevo, Bela Palanka, Bujanovac, Grocka, Leskovac, Negotin, Novi Beograd, Pirot, Sombor, Valjevo, Vlasotince, and Vranje. As illustrated in the above table, all of these municipalities have a considerable Romani population according to the population census of 2002, since which time the size of the population can be expected to have increased.¹⁵

¹⁴ A brief profile of each of the RCs involved in the ECMI project activities is given in Annex I.

¹⁵ Additionally, census figures on Roms tend to be considerably lower than the number of persons who identify themselves as Roms in daily life.

¹⁶ Document provided by the OSCE Mission to Serbia.

The text below is an excerpt from the job description drafted for the RCs in the twelve municipalities included in the cooperative initiative of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the European Agency for Reconstruction, and the OSCE¹⁶

Tasks and Responsibilities / Competencies

The local Roma facilitator will have an office in the building of the Municipal Assembly, which will be open daily and will co-operate with other representatives of the local self-government. The officer who will be hired must submit reports to the Project Co-ordinator at the Agency for Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia and address him/her for assistance, cooperation and in case of any eventual difficulties at work.

The officer will:

- Determine the number, social status and priority problems of the local Roma community, as a base for developing local Action Plans for Roma.
- Initiate a decision by the municipal representative regarding the establishment of a working group for developing local Action Plans in the municipality where the local Facilitator is employed.
- Coordinate working group meetings for the drafting of the local Actions Plans, take notes and report to the Project Co-ordinator at the Agency for Human and Minority Rights.
- Prepare and deliver documents regarding local Action Plans for adoption at the Municipal Assembly.
- Ensure that local Roma NGOs submit their project proposals for the implementation of local Action Plans for Roma to the Small Grants Commission.
- Build capacity for cooperation and daily communication between the Roma minority and local administration.
- Submit a regular report to the Project Co-ordinator at the Agency for Human and Minority Rights about project activities, especially the work of the working groups regarding the local Action Plans, realization of the local Action Plans, their submission for adoption to the Municipal Assembly, and thereafter the projects related to the implementation of the local Action Plans.

Qualifications:

- Secondary education.
- Fluent Serbian language, Romani language is an advantage.
- Experience living in the local environment; close cooperation and experience with the local Roma population.
- Close cooperation, experience and understanding of the life and problems of the local Roma community.
- Knowledge of mandate/competencies and function of the local self-government will be an advantage.
- Familiarity with the program of Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.
- Capability and readiness for intensive cooperation and communication with people.
- Good organization skills.
- Computer skills (word, internet...).

Advantage will be given to Romani women.

2.3 Sector heads and their role in the integration of local Romani coordinators

Understood even minimally as “peaceful cohabitation and the retention of separate ethnic identities,”¹⁷ integration is a two-way street. In recognition of this fact, a key element of success is work with not only the RCs themselves, but also their most relevant non-Romani counterparts in municipal administration. Bringing the RCs together with their non-Romani counterparts to take part in common project activities simultaneously serves three purposes:

1. Providing the members of each group with a better understanding of the situation and experiences of the other group, while at the same time yielding a sense of variations within each group;
2. Helping to ensure that members of both groups have the same body of information at their disposal for accomplishing their tasks; and

¹⁷ See Zoltan D. Barany, “Living on the Edge: The East European Roma in Postcommunist Politics and Societies”, *Slavic Review* 53.2 (1994): 321-344, at 325.

3. Contributing to establishing self-sustaining routines of cooperation in addressing issues of common concern.

Before commencing project implementation, it is imperative to establish contact with heads of the relevant sectors in the municipalities covered in order to ensure their positive attitude, understanding and cooperation. To maximize the effectiveness of the cooperation, the individual sector heads should be designated by the respective municipalities on the basis of criteria agreed in advance for all involved municipalities.¹⁸

With an eye to creating synergies with the Decade of Roma Inclusion while maximizing coordination among the municipalities as well as between the individual municipalities and the central government, the sectors chosen for inclusion correspond to the Decade's four priority areas (see Section 2.1).

¹⁸ Information on the sector heads selected in the municipalities covered by the ECMI pilot is given in Annex II.

3. TRAINING PROGRAMME

3.1 Identifying training needs

The initial establishment of contacts with the municipalities was facilitated by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, which also provided necessary information and advice throughout the period of project Implementation. Training needs were assessed through consultations with the RCs, taking the following into account:

- Stakeholders' training to date;
- Stakeholders' subjective appraisal of areas in which their skills were insufficient for carrying out their respective functions; and
- Stakeholders' expressed interests in training topics.

Following the meetings in the municipalities, the findings of the assessment were compiled, including a preliminary mapping of training received by stakeholders to date. Next came consultation with the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights on its own experiences to date in building the capacity of the RCs and on the RCs' outstanding needs.

On the basis of these consultations, a schedule of training events was drawn up. The sequence and themes of the trainings as initially conceived were:

- **Computer literacy** (for RCs only);
- **Human and minority rights** (for both RCs and sector heads);
- **The Decade of Roma Inclusion and its Action Plans** (for both RCs and sector heads);
- **Project design and fundraising** (for both RCs and sector heads);
- **Advocacy** (for RCs only); and
- **Project management** (for both RCs and sector heads).

In order to ensure that the RCs had the tools necessary to complete their tasks, each participating municipality received a desktop computer with appropriate software and a laser printer for the use of the RC. The first training event in the series administered to the RCs accordingly focused on raising the RCs' level of computer literacy. This was imperative for the RCs to be able to make use of the donated technical equipment in their daily work.

3.2 Selecting trainers

All trainers involved in the training programme were selected on the basis of their proven track record in administering successful training sessions on the themes chosen for the pilot project. While many of the trainers had considerable prior experience in working with Roms, all trainers underwent a thorough introduction to the project and familiarized themselves with relevant policy documents before administering their first training. Wherever possible, the training teams also included Roms.

3.3 Peer support and the advantage of group trainings

Overall, the level of technical expertise among the RCs was similar enough to make group trainings useful. In those few cases in which significant differences in expertise existed among the RCs, ECMI attempted to give the RCs with superior skills a role in administering the content of the relevant training sessions to their peers from the other municipalities covered by the project.

3.4 Increasing capacity and cooperation among Romani coordinators and sector heads

In order to transfer necessary knowledge and skills as quickly as possible for application in the RCs' and sector heads' execution of daily tasks, the training events were carried out in as concentrated a fashion as possible, rather than as part of on-the-job-training.

Another crucial component of the training programme was close monitoring of the participants' progress. In the course of the pilot project in Serbia, this resulted in the addition of two training events:

- **Advanced advocacy**; and
- **Public relations.**

The additional trainings, designed for the RCs, were added at the request of the RCs themselves.

To encourage coordination between RCs and sector heads in their respective municipalities, a set of training sessions was administered to both groups simultaneously. The themes of these common training events were:

- **Human and minority rights (including the rights of women)**
- **The Decade of Roma Inclusion and the National Action Plans;**

- **Project design and fundraising;** and
- **Project management.**

All together, 13 RCs (eight male and five female) and 52 sector heads (evenly split between men and women) received training at eight training events. In the table on the next pages, an overview of the training programme and its target groups is presented. The purpose, content, and outputs of individual training events are detailed in the sub-sections which follow.

Overview of training sequence			
Sequence	Theme	Topics covered	Target group (s)
1.	Computer literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basics of computers • Microsoft Word • Microsoft Excel • E-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCs
2.	Human rights and gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic human rights • Human rights protection and promotion • Prejudices and stereotypes • Discrimination • Minority rights • Gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCs • Sector heads
3.	The Decade of Roma Inclusion and its Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Decade of Roma Inclusion and the National Action Plans (NAPs) of the Republic of Serbia • Role of local government • Importance and levels of planning • Case study analysis • Methods and techniques for needs assessment • Identifying interest groups • Defining goals, measures and indicators • Examples of good practices • Making local action plans • Presenting local action plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCs • Sector heads
4.	Project proposal writing and fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem analysis and definition • Project proposal goals and aims • Project methodology and activity plan • Project evaluation and indicators • Fund-raising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCs • Sector heads

Sequence	Theme	Topics covered	Target group (s)
5.	Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What project realization means • Job descriptions • Development of and roles within the project team • Leadership and teamwork • Monitoring and evaluation • Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCs • Sector heads
6.	Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy: key actors, steps, aims, and goals • Similarities and differences between advocacy, public relations and informing • Municipal cooperation with the NGO sector and participants' previous experience • Potential political solutions and decision makers at the local level • Target audiences - groups and individuals • Strategic communication in the advocacy process • Lobbying • Networks and coalitions 	RCs
7.	Advanced advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience exchange on creating advocacy plans and possible further cooperation among RCs; • Introduction to some key strategic and operational documents important for the RCs' work; and • Strengthening self-confidence in interpersonal relations. 	RCs
8.	Public relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic elements and principles of the communication process • Introduction to public relations • Announcements, press releases, and press conferences • Preparing for public presentations • TV interviews 	RCs

3.4.1 Training 1: Computer literacy

The first training event was a two-day seminar on computer literacy for the RCs.

The reason for making this the first training event for the RCs was the observed need for computer skills in order for the RCs to be able to carry out their duties in local government. Each municipality participating in the pilot received a desktop with appropriate software and a laser printer for the use of the RC.

Through this training event, it was expected that the RCs would gain a level of facility with computers which would be reflected in their daily work, thus allowing the RCs to demonstrate their competency and in so doing to move toward the systematization of their respective positions within the municipal structure.

Main issues of the seminar:

- Basics of computers
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- E-mail

Training 1: Computer literacy		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	Basics of computers	General overview of the components of a computer and their respective functions.
2.	Microsoft Word	Introduction to the popular word processing programme, with practical exercises.
3.	Microsoft Excel	Introduction to the popular spreadsheet programme, with practical exercises.
4.	E-mail	Overview of Microsoft Outlook and various web-based e-mail programmes, with practical exercises.

Putting skills to use

Particularly in a technical training event such as the one on computer literacy, it is critical to keep participants with more highly developed skills engaged in such a way as to allow them to make use of their skills to help their peers with less highly developed skills. Because one of the RCs participating in the pilot was a professional computer programmer, his task during the training event on computer literacy was to complete an individual course in Microsoft Access and to design a database to be used by all the RCs in their work.

3.4.2 Training 2: Human rights and gender equality

The second training event in the training programme and the first training event for both RCs and sector heads was a two-day seminar on human rights and gender equality.

Reasons for making a training event on these topics the first in the series of trainings administered to both groups included:

1. Creating a cooperative working atmosphere among the RCs and sector heads by addressing issues of universal application in the two groups' first common activity;
2. Identifying and addressing possible negative attitudes on the part of the RCs and sector heads toward minority rights and gender equality on the part of the RCs and sector;
3. Making clear that the rights of minorities and women are human rights, as opposed to special privileges which threaten the rights of the majority population in general and men; and
4. Laying the groundwork for the next training event, which focused on the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

It was thus expected that RCs and sector heads would emerge from this first common training event both better equipped and more favourably disposed to participate in the training event organized around the Decade of Roma Inclusion by sensitizing them to the general issues underlying the Decade as a whole.

Main issues of the seminar:

- Basic human rights
- Human rights protection and promotion - international and national aspects
- Prejudices and stereotypes
- Discrimination
- Minority rights
- Gender equality

Training 2: Human rights and gender equality		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	BINGO	Assesses participants' level of prior knowledge about human rights.
2.	Association/ classification	Encourages participants to share their thoughts on human rights and place specific rights in categories.
3.	Myths and facts	Addresses common errors in thinking about human rights, minority rights, and gender equality.
4.	Human rights documents	Introduction to basic documents on human rights and the protections they offer.
5.	Island	Interactive training session in which participants use the <i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i> to agree on a set of rules for governing a previously uninhabited island.
6.	European railroad	Choosing from a list, participants explain their preference for certain travel companions, in so doing locating and confronting their own stereotypes and prejudices.
7.	Stereotypes and prejudices	Exploration of associations with the terms 'stereotype' and 'prejudice', followed by a debate about certain statements.
8.	Step forward	Role play in which participants are assigned different identities to encourage them to identify with the objects of discrimination.
9.	Experience exchange	Participants exchange thoughts from their own negative and positive experiences surrounding (dis)respect for minority rights.
10.	Legal framework	Presentation of domestic legal framework governing minority rights and gender equality.
11.	Identifying problems	Problems of Roms in local communities listed and categorized.

3.4.3 Training 3: The Decade of Roma Inclusion and its action plans

The 3rd training event for the RCs and the 2nd training event for the sector heads was a three-day seminar on national and local action plans in the context of the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

This training event followed on the activities undertaken toward sensitization in the previous training by moving from the general level of human rights to the specific case of Roms. In this context, it was particularly important to focus on the Decade of Roma Inclusion as both:

1. A legitimate international initiative designed to address insufficient enjoyment of human rights on the part of an identifiable group of human beings; and
2. A framework for action to improve the situation of Roms in Serbia through action at the local level.

Anticipated outputs of this training were:

1. Heightened awareness on the part of RCs and sector heads concerning the Decade of Roma Inclusion and local government's role in Decade implementation;
2. Increased appreciation on the part of RCs on the one hand and sector heads on the other on the role and value of their counterparts in designing and undertaken relevant action on the local level.

Main issues of the seminar:

- The Decade of Roma Inclusion and the National Action Plans (NAPs) of the Republic of Serbia
- Role of local government
- Importance and levels of planning
- Case study analysis
- Methods and techniques for needs assessment
- Identifying interest groups
- Defining goals, measures and indicators
- Examples of good practices
- Making local action plans
- Presenting local action plans

Training 3: The Decade of Roma Inclusion and its action plans		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	The Decade of Roma Inclusion and the National Action Plans	Overview of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and the NAPs in the Decade's four priority areas: education, employment, health, and housing.
2.	Role of local government	Extension of previous session, focusing on clarifying the connection between the Decade and the National Action Plans on the one hand and municipal government on the other.
3.	NAP Education	Detailed presentation of the Decade NAP on education.
4.	NAP Employment	Detailed presentation of the Decade NAP on employment.
5.	NAP Health	Detailed presentation of the Decade NAP on health.
6.	NAP Housing	Detailed presentation of the Decade NAP on housing.
7.	Building a tower	Participants explore elements of the planning process as a group by constructing a tower out of cups, saucers and plates.
8.	Case study analysis	Definition of stakeholders; identification of problems of local Romani communities; introduction to needs assessment and identifying appropriate solutions; distinguishing goals, objectives, and indicators.
9.	Strategic planning	Structuring a project team; drafting strategic documents; setting timelines and priorities.
10.	Local action plans	Applies previous sessions in generating local action plans consistent with but distinct from their national-level counterparts.

3.4.4 Training 4: Project proposal writing and fundraising

The 4th training event for the RCs and the 3rd training event for the sector heads was a two-day seminar on project proposal writing and fundraising.

Whereas the first two common training events served largely to raise awareness about relevant needs and to sketch a framework for action to improve the situation of local Romani communities, this common training focused on technical skills necessary to undertake such action.

The anticipated output of this training event was the direct, practical application on the part of RCs and sector heads of the mutual appreciation gained in the two previous common seminars to defining and addressing concrete problems to be solved in a draft project proposal to be refined and submitted to potential national and international donors.

Main issues of the seminar:

- Problem analysis and definition
- Project proposal goals and aims
- Project methodology and activity plan
- Project evaluation and indicators
- Fund-raising

Training 4: Project proposal writing and fundraising		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	Introduction to fundraising	Overview of methods approaches to fundraising, with particular attention to strategic planning.
2.	Donors and tenders	Introduction to relevant parameters in calls for funding applications, including types of projects and organizations funded, tendering procedures, target groups, geographical areas, and deadlines.
3.	Problem tree	Identifying causes and consequences of a given problem.
4.	Elements of project proposals	Detailed analysis of the necessary components of funding applications as they relate to one another.
5.	Proposal writing: The introduction	Practical exercise in formulating the introductory section of a project proposal.
6.	Proposal writing: Defining the problem	Practical exercise in defining the central problem addressed by a project proposal.
7.	Proposal writing: Goals and objectives	Practical exercise in formulating and distinguishing among goals and objectives appropriate to the identified problem.
8.	Proposal writing: Budget	Practical exercise in budgeting for project activities appropriate to the project's goals and objectives.
9.	Proposal writing: Evaluation plan	Practical exercise in planning monitoring and evaluation of the project's success in realizing its goals and objectives.
10.	Proposal writing: Preliminary and supplementary materials	Practical exercise on writing composing project proposal cover letters, cover pages, executive summaries, tables of contents, and annexes.

3.4.5 Training 5: Project management

The 5th training for RCs and the 4th training for the sector heads was a two-day seminar on project management.

Like the training event immediately preceding it, this event focused on technical skills needed to undertake concrete action to improve the situation of local Romani communities through projects.

The 5th training event's focus on project management was intended to leave RCs and sector heads in a position to deliver on the claims contained in the project proposals generated as a result of the third training event.

Main issues of the seminar:

- What project realization means
- Job descriptions
- Development of and roles within the project team
- Leadership and teamwork
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Reporting

Training 5: Project management		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	Quiz	Review of knowledge gained from previous seminars to be applied in project management.
2.	Introduction to project management	Definition of project management through an examination of the project cycle.
3.	Job descriptions	Presentation of standard structure of job descriptions, followed by a practical exercise in which participants divide into groups to write a job description for a coordinator and associate to be hired for a hypothetical project.
4.	Teamwork	Conceptual introduction to teamwork and the difference between a team and a group, followed by a group exercise in which participant's practice planning and acting as a team in solving a mystery.
5.	Leadership	Interactive discussion of notions of leader and leadership, with particular attention to their role in a team setting.
6.	Monitoring and evaluation	Interactive discussion of monitoring and evaluation, focusing on similarities and differences between the two and how to conduct them.
7.	Reporting	Conceptual introduction to reporting and its importance, with an emphasis on structuring reports and the different types of reporting.

Putting skills to use

A small grants programme administered by the OSCE Mission to Serbia provided an important practical exercise of the skills gained in the training events on proposal writing and project management. Through a specialized training event co-organized with the OSCE on the small grants scheme, RCs applied their general knowledge of proposal writing and project management to the requirements of a specific donor.

Practical exercises of this type should be integrated in the capacity-building programme wherever possible. Topics to be addressed include:

- Donor grants management supervision mechanisms
- Writing project proposals in accordance with donor requirements
- Supporting implementing partners
- Monitoring projects in accordance with donor requirements
- Donor specifications and guidelines for financial and narrative reporting
- Tender procedures for workshops in the municipalities

3.4.6 Training 6: Advocacy

The 6th training event – the 2nd such event held *exclusively* for RCs – was a two-day seminar on advocacy.

In planning this event into the training programme, special consideration was given to:

1. The RCs' unique position as intermediaries between local Romani communities and municipal government;
2. The need for the RCs to demonstrate the value of their respective positions as a condition for these positions' appreciation by the beneficiaries, ensuring the positions' continued existence; and
3. The relative inexperience of many of the RCs in acting as an official representative of an authority.

The expected output of this training event was accordingly that the RCs would be able to advocate more effectively with local government for the needs of local Romani communities by proposing adequate solutions at both ends. In so doing, the RCs can act as a reliable link and secure the position of RC in their respective municipalities.

Main issues of the seminar:

- Advocacy: key actors, steps, aims, and goals
- Similarities and differences between advocacy, public relations and informing
- Municipal cooperation with the NGO sector and participants' previous experience
- Potential political solutions and decision makers at the local level
- Target audiences - groups and individuals
- Strategic communication in the advocacy process
- Lobbying
- Networks and coalitions

Training 6: Advocacy		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	Introduction to advocacy	Interactive definition of the notion of advocacy, with attention to relevant actors and their activities.
2.	Work of local governments	Informal exchange of information on examples of cooperation between RCs and local NGOs, accomplishments of local governments for Roms, and activities of RCs to date.
3.	Steps of advocacy	Group exercise on identifying decision makers and planning an approach.
4.	Goals and objectives	Discussion of the distinction between the goals and objectives of advocacy activities, with concrete examples.
5.	Target group	Group exercise on identifying the target group of advocacy activities, making use of analytical schematics.
6.	Cards of power	Group exercise on directing messages (written on cards) to appropriate actors for support.
7.	One-minute message	Group exercise on formulating concise messages which include a statement, evidence, concrete examples, and a call for action.
8.	Strategic communication	Participatory exploration of channels for transmitting messages, with practical tips on how to prepare for and behave in interviews.
9.	Lobbying	Tips on successful written and oral lobbying, followed by exercises in both.
10.	Networking	Definition of terms 'network' and 'coalition', with and illustrative example of successful networking by Romani NGOs followed by a group exercise on drafting a plan of networking and cooperation among the RCs.
11.	Mini-evaluation	Group exercise on RCs' advocacy needs through side-by-side comparison of individual strengths and weaknesses.

3.4.7 Training 7: Advanced advocacy

The 7th training event for RCs was a two-day seminar on advanced advocacy, held at the request of the RCs themselves to meet their need for additional skills in this area to accomplish their tasks.

While this training event was not among those included in the initial training programme, it was added in keeping with the ongoing monitoring integral to the training programme's success. As in the previous training event on advocacy, this follow-up event took into account the RCs' position in between local government and the local Romani population, their need to demonstrate results, and the novelty of their respective roles.

Like the previous training event on advocacy, the expected output of this training was that the RCs would be able to advocate more effectively with local government for the needs of local Romani communities, and in so doing to secure the position of RC in their respective municipalities.

Building on the previous advocacy seminar, the main aims of the seminar were:

- Experience exchange on creating advocacy plans and possible further cooperation among RCs;
- Introduction to some key strategic and operational documents important for the RCs' work; and
- Strengthening self-confidence in interpersonal relations.

Training 7: Advanced Advocacy		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	Individual presentations	Presentation of advocacy plans composed by RCs following previous training event on advocacy.
2.	Review	Brief quiz on key elements of advocacy, reviewing central concepts.
3.	Information sharing	Facilitated comparison of RCs' experience in local government work, with particular attention to the manner in which information is presented.
4.	Strategies and laws	Interactive review of relevant policy documents and standards which can be used to ground RCs' advocacy activities.
5.	Dignified and self-confident responses	Application of test for measuring level of self-esteem, followed by presentation of theory of human dignity and its three aspects: honor, respect, and consideration.
6.	Assertiveness and aggressiveness	Practical exercise on distinguishing between assertive and aggressive statements.
7.	Techniques for self-confident responses	Expressing understanding for others' wishes while maintaining one's position vs. the 'broken record' approach of simply repeating one's own position.
8.	Non-assertion and aggression	Group discussion on reasons for passive and aggressive responses.
9.	Fear	Interactive exploration of roots of stage fright, with techniques for overcoming 'the shakes' and coping with fear in interview situations.
10.	SWOT analysis	Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to networking activities among RCs.

3.4.8 Training 8: Public relations

The 8th training event for the RCs was a two-day seminar on public relations.

This event focused on selected aspects of the RCs' communication with actors within and outside local Romani communities.

The main consideration underlying the training event on public relations was to ensure the visibility of good practices and of the role of the RCs in relation to municipalities (good governance) and to the Romani population. Taken into account were:

1. The RCs' unique position as figures visible in both local Romani communities and municipal government;
2. The need for the RCs to demonstrate the value of their respective positions as a condition for these positions' continued existence; and
3. The relative inexperience of many of the RCs in dealing with the media.

The expected output of this training event was that the RCs would be able to exercise effective and constructive control over presentation of their work in the media, and thus to the population at large.

Main issues of the seminar:

- Basic elements and principles of the communication process
- Introduction to public relations
- Announcements, press releases, and press conferences
- Preparing for public presentations
- TV interviews

Training 8: Public relations		
Sequence	Name of session	Description of session
1.	The communication process	Introduction to the basic principles and elements of communication, with interpersonal communication presented as a process of transmitting and receiving information between two persons.
2.	Written communications	Exercise on composing information sheets and press releases.
3.	Press conferences	Introduction to the advantages and limitations of press conferences, followed by a group simulation.
4.	Successful public appearances	Group exercise on identifying in each RC three personal qualities which make for more successful public appearances, with participants presenting themselves and a quality which makes them unique.
5.	Preparing for public appearances	Identifying appropriate media; defining target groups; researching public interest; estimating risk and possible gains; fitting key elements into a one-minute message.
6.	Interviews	Overview of different kinds of interviews and their characteristics, followed by practical tips on how to prepare for, speak, and behave in an interview, as well as a practical exercise in being interviewed by a reporter.

4. FOLLOWING UP CAPACITY-BUILDING

4.1 The importance of networking among local Romani coordinators

Following conclusion of the intensive training programme, it is important that RCs have the opportunity to meet on a regular basis for the purposes of both practical learning and moral support. Networking events allow the RCs to do at least three things important to their success on the job:

1. To reflect on achievements and failures in applying the knowledge gained from training events, learning from one another's experiences;
2. To share information relevant for the work of the RCs; and
3. To seek and provide support from/for their peers in the most similar positions.

At the networking events, the presence of professional facilitators is useful for bringing in a neutral (if sympathetic) outside perspective on the issues raised by the RCs. Where possible, it is desirable that at least some of the facilitators have had prior involvement in the training programme, allowing them also to provide the RCs with feedback on application of the knowledge gained through the training events.

4.2 Preparatory workshops: Coordinating networking with the OSCE

During the pilot in Serbia, when it became apparent that the schedule of networking events coincided fairly closely with thematic roundtables organized by the OSCE in cooperation with relevant ministries, a theme was assigned to each networking event in such a way as to allow it to serve simultaneously as a preparatory workshop for the relevant roundtable on a priority area of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. As a result, in addition to allowing the RCs to share experiences, information, and support among themselves, the networking events served as venues for solidifying the basis for systematizing the position of RC in the municipalities included in the project activities.

Overview of networking events/preparatory workshops		
Sequence	Theme	Topics covered
1.	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiating skills and conflict resolution • Action plans for promoting employment of the Romani population • Moving from national to local action plans on Romani employment • Individual plans for RCs' employment in their respective municipalities • Peer learning/experience exchange
2.	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses of the OSCE roundtable on employment • Efficient speech and audience management • Moving from national to local action plans for Romani education • Steps in preparing roundtables • Arguments and evidence • Peer learning/experience exchange
3.	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the current state of affairs in the area of Romani health at the municipal level for the purpose of developing a vision and follow-on steps in this area • Moving from national to local action plans for Romani health • Development and cultivation of teamwork and cooperation among RCs
4.	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the current state of affairs in the area of Romani housing at the municipal level for the purpose of developing a vision and follow-on steps in this area • Moving from national to local action plans for Romani housing • Development and cultivation of teamwork and cooperation among RCs

4.2.1 Networking event/preparatory workshop 1: Employment

The first networking event of the pilot had as its theme employment. In addition to being one of the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, employment was chosen as a theme in anticipation of the roundtable to be organized by the OSCE shortly after the networking event.

Expected outputs of the event were:

1. Practical learning as a result of experience exchange among the RCs;
2. Heightened morale among the RCs stemming from support among their peers; and
3. Efficient and effective performance by the RCs at the OSCE roundtable on employment.

Main issues of the event:

- Negotiating skills and conflict resolution
- Action plans for promoting employment of the Romani population
- Moving from national to local action plans on Romani employment
- Individual plans for RCs' employment in their respective municipalities
- Peer learning/experience exchange

Networking event/preparatory workshop 1: Employment		
Sequence	Name of exercise	Description of exercise
1.	Traffic jam	Game on conflict resolution in which participants are divided into two groups which must then exchange places according to a set of rules.
2.	Defining conflicts	Presentation on various ways of categorizing and defining disagreements.
3.	Barometer	Assessing statements and indicating degree of agreement/disagreement with them.
4.	Styles of conflict management	Presentation of various modes of dealing with disagreement, with emphasis on preparing negotiations to find common solutions for common problems.
5.	NAP Employment	Interactive analysis of measures outlined in NAP, with RCs indicated which are applicable in their respective municipalities.
6.	Creating a local action plan	Exploration of steps in translating NAP into local action plan: creating a database, forming working groups, setting priorities, assessing needs, establishing goals, designing measures, specifying indicators, planning monitoring, designating resources.
7.	Negotiations	Simulated negotiations with representatives of National Employment Service on establishing a programme for employing Roms.
8	Employment plans	Exercise on drafting individual plans for employment of RCs.
9	Data collection	Discussion of data necessary for RCs' planned presentations at the OSCE roundtable on employment.

4.2.2 Networking event/preparatory workshop 2: Education

The theme of the second networking event of the pilot was education. In addition to being one of the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, education was chosen as a theme in anticipation of the roundtable to be organized by the OSCE shortly after the networking event.

Expected outputs of the event were:

1. Practical learning as a result of experience exchange among the RCs;
2. Heightened morale among the RCs stemming from support among their peers; and
3. Efficient and effective performance by the RCs at the OSCE roundtable on education.

Main issues of the event:

- Analyses of the OSCE roundtable on employment
- Efficient speech and audience management
- Moving from national to local action plans for Romani education
- Steps in preparing roundtables
- Arguments and evidence
- Peer learning/experience exchange

Networking event/preparatory workshop 2: Education		
Sequence	Name of exercise	Description of exercise
1.	Name crossword	Participants connected their names as in a crossword, first presenting the meaning of their names and how they received them, then sharing with the group motivating and demotivating factors in their work as RCs.
2.	Analysis of previous roundtable	Assessment of participants' experience at roundtable on employment and drawing of lessons to help make next roundtable more successful.
3.	Motivation	Session to raise RCs' morale and to encourage RCs to continue working even in the face of uncertainty concerning their respective positions.
4.	Impression management	Review of communication skills learned in previous training event, with particular attention to non-verbal communication (appearance and behaviour) as it affects reception of verbal messages.
5.	NAP Education	Interactive analysis of measures outlined in NAP, with RCs indicated which are applicable in their respective municipalities.
6.	Creating a local action plan	Exploration of steps in translating NAP into local action plan: creating a database, forming working groups, setting priorities, assessing needs, establishing goals, designing measures, specifying indicators, planning monitoring, designating resources.
7.	Individual presentations	Participants practiced three-minute presentations on topics connected to the education of Roms, receiving constructive feedback from the facilitators.
8.	Argumentation	Discussion of standards of proof and appropriate choice of statements and arguments for making a point credibly.
9.	Event planning	Group simulation of preparing a public event.

4.2.3 Networking event/preparatory workshop 3: Health

Health was the theme of the pilot's third networking event. In addition to being one of the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, health was chosen as a theme in anticipation of the roundtable to be organized by the OSCE shortly after the networking event.

Expected outputs of the event were:

1. Practical learning as a result of experience exchange among the RCs;
2. Heightened morale among the RCs stemming from support among their peers; and
3. Efficient and effective performance by the RCs at the OSCE roundtable on health.

Main issues of the event:

- Analysis of the current state of affairs in the area of Romani health at the municipal level for the purpose of developing a vision and follow-on steps in this area
- Moving from national to local action plans for Romani health
- Development and cultivation of teamwork and cooperation among RCs

Networking event/preparatory workshop 3: Health		
Sequence	Name of exercise	Description of exercise
1.	Analysis of previous roundtable	Exchange of impressions from roundtable on education and drawing of lessons to help make next roundtable more successful.
2.	Individual presentations	RCs practiced five-minute presentations on the health situation of Roms in their respective municipalities, receiving constructive feedback from the facilitators.
3.	Secret friend	Game designed to promote close interpersonal interactions among RCs as a basis for improved teamwork, with each RC assigned a peer at random to whom he/she provides anonymous encouragement for the duration of the game (here a few days).
4.	Realizing a vision	Group exercise for specifying the desired situation with regard to Roms' health, analyzing the obstacles to realizing the vision, and identifying the steps necessary to overcome those obstacles.
5.	NAP Health	Interactive analysis of measures outlined in NAP, with RCs indicated which are applicable in their respective municipalities.
6.	Local action plans	Examination of local action plan and needs assessment report from municipality of NoviSad; analysis of progress on local action plans on health to date in RCs' respective municipalities, with identification of necessary follow-up measures.
7.	Exchanging questions	Group exercise in formulating questions in such a way as to encourage efficient transmission of relevant information.
8.	Preparing presentations	Application of problem tree technique from training event on project proposal writing to Roms' health situation, making use of the analysis in a common PowerPoint presentation for use at the upcoming OSCE roundtable on health.

4.2.4 Networking event/preparatory workshop 4: Housing

The fourth networking event of the project year had as its theme housing. In addition to being one of the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, housing was chosen as a theme in anticipation of the roundtable to be organized by the OSCE shortly after the networking event.

Expected outputs of the event were:

1. Practical learning as a result of experience exchange among the RCs;
2. Heightened morale among the RCs stemming from support among their peers; and
3. Efficient and effective performance by the RCs at the OSCE on housing.

Main themes of the event:

- Analysis of the current state of affairs in the area of Romani housing at the municipal level for the purpose of developing a vision and follow-on steps in this area
- Moving from national to local action plans for Romani housing
- Development and cultivation of teamwork and cooperation among RCs

Networking event/preparatory workshop 4: Housing		
Sequence	Name of exercise	Description of exercise
1.	Money in the middle	Group exercise on decision-making in a team, with participants pooling their individual funds, then deciding collectively how to spend them.
2.	The decision-making process	Interactive discussion of the process of reaching decisions, with attention to the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches and emphasis on link between situation, mode of decision-making, and team effectiveness.
3.	Belbin Test	Assessment of RCs' roles in a team using the technique developed by Dr Meredith Belbin. ¹⁹
4.	Local action plans	Presentation and discussion of Roms' housing situation in the RCs' respective municipalities, with analysis of progress on local action plans on housing to date and identification of necessary follow-up measures.
5.	Realizing a vision	Group exercise for specifying the desired situation with regard to Roms' housing, analyzing the obstacles to realizing the vision, and identifying the steps necessary to overcome those obstacles.
6.	Good practice	Presentation on a participatory approach to addressing Roms' housing problems in the "Bangladeš" settlement of Novi Sad.
7.	Preparing presentations	Compiling a PowerPoint presentation as a group for use at the roundtable on housing.

¹⁹ For detailed information on the technique, consult the Belbin website, at <http://www.belbin.com/belbin-team-roles.htm>.

For a sample Belbin Test questionnaire, see <http://www.csis.gvsu.edu/~adam/Teaching/CS467/belbin.pdf>.

5. RESULTS AND IMPACT

5.1 Improving capacity of local Romani coordinators and sector heads

From a quantitative standpoint, the pilot project was a considerable success. Average attendance at the eight training events organized for the thirteen RCs (eight male and five female), four training events organized for 52 relevant sector heads (equally split between women and men), and four networking events organized for the RCs was over 90 per cent.

Attendance at training events – RCs

Event theme	Attendance rate
Computer literacy	84.6%
Human rights and gender equality	100%
Decade of Roma Inclusion	100%
Proposal writing and fundraising	100%
Project	100%
Advocacy	92.3%
Advanced advocacy	84.6%
Public relations	76.9%
Overall attendance rate	92.3%

Attendance at training events – sector heads

Event theme	Attendance rate
Human rights and gender equality	84.6%
Decade of Roma Inclusion	94.2%
Proposal writing and fundraising	98.1%
Project management	96.2%
Overall attendance rate	93.3%

Attendance at networking events - RCs	
Event theme	Attendance rate
Employment	84.6%
Education	84.6%
Health	92.3%
Housing	100%
Overall attendance rate	90.4%

More important than attendance rates as such is the effect the project activities have on the capacity of the RCs and the relevant sector heads in the thirteen municipalities covered by the project to complete their tasks related to improving the situation of Roms, and how these changes have affected contacts between Romani communities and local authorities. While it is both too early and generally more difficult to provide definitive measures of the project's success in these areas, some sense can be gleaned from actions taken by the municipalities toward the RCs, as well as from statements made by stakeholders involved in the project activities.

5.2 Responses by municipalities

5.2.1 Key issues addressed by the involved municipalities

1. *Office space.* By the end of 2006, all RCs had an office either in the city hall or in another building used for the business of the municipality. At the time of the Project Team's initial visits to the municipalities in late 2005-early 2006, only five of the thirteen RCs were similarly accommodated.
2. *Funding.* By the end of the project's pilot phase, the prospects for systematization were positive in ten of the twelve municipalities in which RCs had been established through the joint initiative of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, the European Agency for Reconstruction, and the OSCE. At the project's commencement, systematization of the position of RC by securing funding for the position from the municipal budget had been discussed (and accomplished) only in Leskovac.

3. *Local action plans.* By the end of the project's pilot phase, ten of the thirteen municipalities included in the project had completed at least one local action plan, with five of the included municipalities having completed action plans in all four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. At the time of project launch, only the municipality of Valjevo had prepared a local action plan in any of the four priority areas.

5.2.2 Selected assessment statements from the municipalities on the training and its impact

“The municipality was obligated to prepare local action plans consistent with the National Action Plans adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Until the organized training, none of the employees in the local government had an idea how to start design of the action plans, or which are the elements of the action plans and what they mean. Now, we have designed action plans in all four areas integrated in the Decade of Romani Inclusion. Moreover, the training on human and minority rights contributed to the improvement of the sensitivity of the non-Roms who participated at the training.”

Municipality of Barajevo

“Thanks to [...] the trainings you organized, we successfully designed projects – the municipality of Bela Palanka applied with fourteen projects to the National Investment Plan [of the Ministry of Finance] and all fourteen projects were selected and approved.”

Municipality of Bela Palanka

“The team used the knowledge gained from the seminars to create local action plans for the Romani community for all four core areas of the Decade and they are on a list for adoption by the Municipal Council.”

Municipality of Leskovac

“With the newly gained trainings, the team successfully formed subcommittees in all four core areas (education, health, employment and housing), together with representatives of the relevant institutions which will deal with these problems until 2015.”

Municipality of Pirot

5.3 Participants' views on the training sessions

Below are statements from RCs and sector heads on the aspects of the training and networking activities which they found most useful.

"Involving the local government in solving the burning Romani issues and asking them for serious approach [...] exercises [...] continuous activity [...] participants' interactive work [...] method of work"

"Experience and exchange of good practice"

"Mastering the logic of preparation and writing key elements of a project proposal"

"My knowledge and team work is improved"

"Analysis of the National Action Plan; lots of practical examples from the municipalities, work on a local action plan"

5.4 Trainers' assessment of project impact

The statements below come from the two trainers most involved in delivering the training programme in the framework of the pilot project.

"The seminars contributed tremendously to building the Romani coordinators' capacity for sustainable work in the field. The knowledge and skills they attained during the seminars helped them to become more independent, self-initiated and self-motivated; to become aware of their potential and the context in which they work; to experience support and respect from actors of high importance for their future work (various ministries, the OSCE, Agency for Human and Minority Rights [...]). In addition, the seminars helped in building and strengthening the team of Romani coordinators, team spirit and common approach, helped in their interpersonal networking and support."

Ivana Koprivica (Građanske inicijative/Tim TRI)

"The progress of the Romani coordinators was especially visible at the trainings in which they were the only participants, as they were more relaxed, and trainers could dedicate more attention to developing the skills of each of them. [...] During the trainings, important progress is accomplished by learning about: the situation in one's own municipality as well in the other twelve; skills for designing projects and local action plans; reporting; advocacy and lobbying; PR (and especially appearance before media) [...] as well as other skills of communication, team work and negotiation. [...] The seminars visibly strengthened the Romani coordinators and sensitized the sector heads, leading to a better understanding of the situation of Roms and the roles of the Romani coordinators; and promoted their cooperation at the local level."

Mirjana Beara, (Građanske inicijative/Tim TRI)

6. SUSTAINABILITY

Notwithstanding the demonstrated need of many local Romani communities for targeted assistance from the municipalities within which they reside, the existence of the function of RC is a matter of the priorities of the municipality. With the initial establishment of RCs in twelve municipalities in Serbia, the position of RC was supported by international funding. Beyond the period in which external funding is available for the position, however, the position's continued existence depends on the integration of the position into the budget of the municipality. This in turn requires that the work of the RC be integrated into the work of the municipality as a whole. To this end, it is crucial that the RCs build coalitions within both local government and the broader community.

6.1 Integrating local Romani coordinators into the municipality

As described in Section 2.3, an RC's most relevant partners within local government are the officials in charge of sectors within which Roms' complex and multi-faceted marginalization manifests itself:

- Education;
- Employment;
- Health; and
- Housing.

In addition to directly facilitating coordination within local government to address the situation of the municipality's Romani population, building partnerships with the sector heads responsible for the priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion is key to tapping into funding earmarked at the state level for municipalities to contribute to implementation of the National Action Plans adopted in these same priority areas.

6.2 Broadening networks: Coordination with the NGO sector

No less important in many municipalities is maintaining contacts with the NGO sector, and particularly with Romani NGOs, because:

1. NGOs are potentially valuable points of liaison between local government and local Romani communities, and are likely to be receptive to the presence of an RC in local government;
2. NGOs often have more experience in addressing the issues faced by local Romani communities on a daily basis than do the municipalities within which the NGOs operate, and thus can provide accurate and up-to-date information on the situation;
3. NGOs may be engaged in initiatives which would benefit from coordinating with planned or ongoing municipal initiatives; and
4. NGOs may have information concerning funding opportunities which are relevant for the municipality.

7. BUDGETING FOR SUSTAINABLE INTEGRATION

As discussed in the preceding sections of this guide, the aim of the pilot project is to build the capacity of RCs and their most relevant non-Romani counterparts in local government in such a way as to integrate RCs into the work – and budget – of the municipality. The initial investment required for sustainable integration forms the subject of this section, which summarizes main minimum budget items as experienced in the pilot (without assigning monetary values, which can be expected to vary when the pilot is replicated elsewhere). Not included in the list below are the salaries of the RCs, which were covered by the Agency for Human and Minority Rights with funding from the European Agency for Reconstruction, administered through the OSCE Mission in Serbia.

7.1 Capacity-building and networking

The training programme described in Section 3 brings together the RCs and sector heads for several common training events, with the RCs also participating in additional training and networking events designed only for them (see Section 4). An integral part of the training programme for the RCs is receiving technical equipment which allows them to complete their tasks. The costs for these activities and associated equipment are sketched below.

- *Joint training events* (4) (RCs and sector heads)
 - Transport
 - Hotel accommodation (including meals and refreshments)
 - Per diem
 - Trainer honoraria
- *Training events* (4) (RCs only)
 - Transport
 - Hotel accommodation (including meals and refreshments)
 - Per diem
 - Trainer honoraria

- *Networking events* (4) (RCs only)
 - Transport
 - Hotel accommodation (including meals and refreshments)
 - Per diem
 - Facilitator honoraria
- *Technical equipment* - necessary to ensure that the RCs are able to complete their tasks are a desktop computer with appropriate software (Microsoft Office) and laser printer.

7.2 Training team

In order to anchor the training programme of the pilot project, a project team should be established. While the project team for the pilot was established with funding and support from international donors, the associated expenses should over time be handed over to a national team and included in the relevant national and local budgets.

ANNEX I

RESOURCE PERSONS: LOCAL ROMANI COORDINATORS

This annex consists of a brief profile of each of the RCs who participated in the pilot phase of this project. As the profiles indicate, most of the RCs have a background as Romani activists, being close to their respective communities.

Having completed a programme of eight training sessions as well as four networking events/preparatory workshops, the RCs are valuable resource persons for other municipalities considering establishing similar positions.

Aleksinac

Alit Amžić (male). Graduated from primary and secondary veterinary school in Aleksinac. Final-year student at the Faculty of Law of the University of Niš. In the course of his university studies, Mr. Amžić has been a fellowship recipient of the European Roma Rights Center (ERRC) in Budapest. He is a member of the Program Council of the Romani radio-television station “Nišava”, as well as spokesperson for the Romani NGO “Dobra volja” (Goodwill) in Aleksinac.

Barajevo

Slavica Petrović (female). Student at the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Belgrade. Ms. Petrović is active in the field of education for Romani children and adults, working in collaboration with the primary school in Barajevo and the School for Adult Education “Đuro Salaj”. Additionally, she organized and hosted the cultural manifestation “Dani Roma Barajevo” (Barajevo Romani Days) in December 2005 on the occasion of Human Rights Day.

Bela Palanka

Suzana Dinulović (female). Studied Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages at the University of Sarajevo. She has also worked on computer protocols in the central laboratory of Pirot Hospital. In the NGO sector, she participated in a project to train young Roms in blacksmithing with the purpose of preserving the blacksmithing trade. Most recently, Ms. Dinulović brokered a memorandum of cooperation between the NGO

“Vordon” and a Bulgarian counterpart to promote cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria.

Bujanovac

Zora Šerifović (female). Ms. Šerifović’s work on issues particularly affecting Roms began in Leskovac in 1983. Ms. Šerifović also completed economic-commercial and legal-secretarial school in Leskovac, taking a diploma as a business secretary. She has continued her work since moving to Bujanovac, where, in addition to her duties in the municipality, she serves as secretary of the NGO “Centre for Rom’s Progress”.

Grocka

Živorad Rakić (male). After completing primary school in Vienna, Mr. Rakić enrolled in secondary school in Bonn, where he took a diploma in management and business. He has worked to solve the problems of the Romani population in the municipality of Grocka since 1992. Mr Rakić is president of the Romani Centre “Sloboda” (Freedom).

Leskovac

Nedžip Eminović (male). A music teacher by profession, Mr. Eminović has worked for Romani emancipation and integration since 1975. After serving as a member of the executive committee of the “Sait Balić” Society in Niš and two-term president of the Society for Roms’ Culture and Education “Hisar”, he registered his own Romani NGO, the Union of Roms “Nevo Đivdipe” (New Life). In 2003, Eminović became the first RC in Serbia and Montenegro, as well a member of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Leskovac. He is also a founding member and president of the Balkan Network for Roms’ Development and Integration. Additionally, Mr. Eminović has served two terms as president of the Union of Romani Societies of the Rčinjsko-Jablanički Region, which he also played a leading role in establishing.

Negotin

Lidija Bajramović (female). Graduated from secondary school in Negotin with an emphasis on natural sciences and mathematics. Ms. Bajramović is also co-founder and secretary of the Association of Roms of Negotin.

Novi Beograd

Zorica Stanković (female). Ms. Stanković began her engagement to solve problems faced by Roms in 1999, when she served as secretary of the

Party of Romani Unity. In 2001, she was appointed president of the Romani Centre for Children's Rights. She has also worked as coordinator of the nursery school run by the Humanitarian Association "Romsko srce" (Romani Heart), and became secretary of that Association in 2004.

Pirot

Radovan Asković (male). Completed secondary school in Pirot. Mr. Asković has been active in the non-governmental sector since the year 2000. His contributions to the Romani community have been many and varied, including work with preschool-age children, primary education, social policy and education, legislation, and healthcare. He also maintains an interest in collecting historical material about Roms and their life stories in the municipality of Pirot.

Sombor

Zoran Kalanjoš (male). Student in computer science at the University of Novi Sad. Currently secretary of the Romani NGO in which he has been an active member since 1998. Kalanjoš has also coordinated many successfully realized projects in the municipality of Sombor.

Valjevo

Dragan Gračanin (male). Born in Valjevo, Mr. Gračanin took his diploma from the Higher School for Information Systems and Communication Technologies in Belgrade. In addition to completing training for young Romani leaders, he has undergone training in advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, democracy, and political studies. Mr. Gračanin has volunteered in various Romani NGOs, currently serving as programme manager in the Romani Centre for Democracy.

Vlasotince

Srba Stoilković (male). Completed primary and secondary school in Vlasotince. Mr. Stoilković's engagement for Roms' emancipation and integration began early in life. Since 2004, he has also served as president of the Association of Roms of Vlasotince, where he has been active in promoting cooperation with the Red Cross for voluntary blood donation, as well as in improving the infrastructure of Romani settlements and securing space for the work of Romani NGOs.

Vranje

Dejan Bajramović (male). Completed primary and secondary education in economics in Vranje. Currently works as an assistant in Romani-language instruction at the preschool and primary school levels. Mr. Bajramović has been an active member of the “Rom“ Society in Vranje since 1989, also co-founding the association “Romani Asvi” (Romani Teardrop) in 2004. Before serving in his current capacity as Representative of the Romani National Minority in the municipality of Vranje, Mr. Bajramović was a member of the municipal Office for the Realization and Protection of the Personal and Collective Rights of the Romani National Minority.

ANNEX II

REFERENCE POINTS FOR MUNICIPALITIES: SECTOR HEADS

The sector heads profiled on the next pages for the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (education, employment, health, and housing) were designated by their respective municipalities (usually by the president of the municipality) to take part in the activities of the ECMI pilot project on the basis of criteria supplied by ECMI. Having completed a set of four trainings together with the RCs included in the pilot, the sector heads are valuable resources for other municipalities considering establishing an RC.

Sector heads from selected municipalities			
Municipality	Sector	Representative	Position
Aleksinac	Education	Slavica Jovanović	Centre for social work officer
	Health	Slobodanka Jović	Municipal administration officer
	Housing	Iva Stanković	Head of municipal administration
	Employment	Miroslav Lazić	Municipal administration officer
Barajevo	Education	Živko Kovačević	Teacher
	Health	Zorica Gašparević	Dental assistant
	Housing	Dragana Novaković	Urban planner
	Employment	Violeta Đordijev	Expert in directorate for construction
Bela Palanka	Education	Prof. Milivoje Cvetković	President of municipal assembly
	Health	Prim. dr med. Aca Spasić	President of municipality
	Housing	Ing. Ivica Vasić	Director of preschool
	Employment	Aleksandar Živković	Deputy president of municipality
Bujanovac	Education	Nehat Aliu	Head of department of public services and social affairs
	Health	Dr Bajram Hasani	Member of municipal council
	Housing	Radovan Ristić	Municipal ombudsman
	Employment	Emrullah Lutfiu	Municipal administration officer
Grocka	Education	Gordana Marković	Director of primary school
	Health	Aleksandar Bezar	Director of hospital
	Housing	Milena Zdravković	Head of department for infrastructure and construction
	Employment	Tomislav Mitić	Director of local employment service

Municipality	Sector	Representative	Position
Leskovac	Education	Gradimir Petrović	Deputy head of department of social affairs
	Health	Milan Stojković	Specialist in emergency medicine
	Housing	Srđan Stefanović	Deputy head of department for housing
	Employment	Divna Stojanović	Municipal employment officer
Negotin	Education	Suzana Stanisavljević	Officer for governance issues in the field of civic activities
	Health	Zorica Ćirković	Project coordinator for municipal development
	Housing	Verica Crnogorac	Officer for refugees
	Employment	Dušica Milojević	Head of municipal administration
Novi Beograd	Education	Ljiljana Mitrović	Director of preschool
	Health	Dr Ljiljana Krstić - Jelenković	Member of social policy council working group
	Housing	Gordana Kosijer	Chief of housing affairs department
	Employment	Zorica Vrebac	Director of public enterprise
Piroć	Education	Sladana Božilović	Registrar
	Health	Dragana Matić	Senior health officer
	Housing	Slavica Stanisavljević	Head of sectors for child protection and housing
	Employment	Saša Jovanović	Head of municipal administration
	<i>alternate</i>	Sava Kostić	Senior officer for child benefits
	<i>alternate</i>	Marija Vasić	Special educator
Sombor	Education	Nada Putica	Independent expert for cultural affairs
	Health	Vesna Žigić	Head of finance department
	Housing	Miodrag Fišer	Secretary of municipal council
	Employment	Vera Baljak	Deputy head of municipal administration
Valjevo	Education	Gordana Matić	Educational inspector
	Health	Milojko Lazić	Director of centre for social work
	Housing	Petar Dobrivojević	Director of municipal housing agency
	Employment	Dragan Stojanović	Member of municipal council
Vlasotince	Education	Vladislav Gorunović	Member of municipal council
	Health	Viktor Stanković	Member of municipal council
	Housing	Saša Mihajlović	Member of municipal council
	Employment	Bojan Cvetković	Head of municipal administration

Municipality	Sector	Representative	Position
Vranje	Education	Predrag Mihajlović	Member of municipal council
	Health	Ivana Stamenković	Member of municipal council for health and child protection
	Housing	Tatjana Cvetković	Director of bureau for urban planning
	Employment	Zoran Antić	Member of municipal council for social affairs and employment