

Enhanced living conditions for Roma communities

On 23 May 2005, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the General Secretariat of the Government and the National Agency for Roma officially concluded the project “Activities of implementation and monitoring the Strategy for improving the Roma situation – 2004” at the UN House. The project directly addressed the issues of the Roma communities: poverty, unemployment, and inferior living conditions, through the development of technical and social infrastructure in the selected areas of the country. The project has been successfully implemented in 17 cities and villages with large Roma communities.



Mr. Mihai Voicu, Minister for Coordination of the General Secretariat of the Government; Ms Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative; Florin Banateanu, Head of Socio-Economic, UNDP

Mr. Mihai Voicu, Minister for Coordination of the General Secretariat of the Government, acknowledged the long terms investments made in this project and Roma involvement in the decision making process. It is a fundamental objective of the Romanian Government to improve the status of Roma, by supporting such projects in the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, gave an overview of the project. She stated, “Looking back to the implementation process, we know it hasn’t always

been easy, but as you see the efforts were worth it. Immediate access to social services and improving the living conditions were effectively addressed in a country ready to join the European family”



Representative of Roma ethnic from Galati project sharing her experience

Participants at the closing ceremony were from the Government, the Presidency, Parliament, local public authorities, Roma NGOs, Roma initiative groups and the mass media. Representatives of the World Bank, the Delegation of the European Commission, and Embassies also attended the event.

So far, around 8,000 Roma have benefited from the project’s outcome which consists of paving and asphaltation of roads in 5 towns/villages; connection of 4 towns/villages to public utilities such as electricity, gas, sewerage and drinking water; refurbishment/building of 6 social centres (kindergarten, elementary school, medical unit, socio-cultural centre); 4 production units equipped with means of production and using Roma manpower. The project also aimed at strengthening inter-ethnic relations within the communities

involved. Upon project closure, 5 Roma initiative groups registered as non-governmental organizations, while others are still undergoing the process.

An important achievement of this project is the “Study on the impact of grants and programs for the Roma communities during 1996-2004”. This impact assessment, addressed to all stakeholders involved in different Roma programs, is meant to be a hallmark for future projects for Roma communities. Final draft of this study is being prepared, and after consultations with Roma NGOs as well as other international donors, the study will be published.



High Level Officials from Government, UNDP and Mayors of the Counties

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