

Narrative report to OSF-MtM

Project Title:	<i>Preparatory Phase for Model Project: making the most of EU Fund for Sustainable Housing and Inclusion of disadvantaged Roma (explicitly but not exclusively targeted) in Cluj Metropolitan Area</i>
Expected CP Outcome(s):	<i>Enhanced capacity to implement innovative programmes for social inclusion? empowerment of vulnerable groups (CPAP Outcome 1)</i>
Expected Output(s):	<i>Strengthening area-based and national capacities for integrated housing and inclusion of disadvantaged Roma (explicitly but not exclusively targeted)</i>
Implementing Partner:	<i>Cluj Napoca Municipality</i>

Programme Period:	6 months + 5 months extension	AWP budget:	60.000 USD
Start date:	15 March 2012	Total resources required	69.000 USD
End Date	28 February 2013	Total allocated resources:	69.000 USD
PAC Meeting Date:	20 December 2011	• Regular:	5.000 USD
Management Arrangements:	NIM with CO Support	• Other:	
		OSF MtM	50.000 USD
		OSF MtM financial extension	9.000 USD
		• In-kind contribution:	
		Cluj Napoca Municipality	5.000 USD

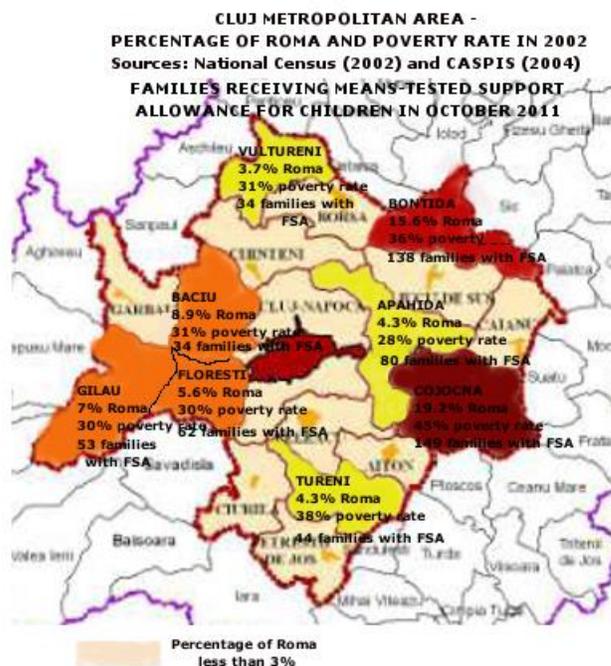
The project was instigated by the desperate living conditions of disadvantaged and segregated communities (majority of them are Roma) in Cluj Metropolitan Area. The objectives were achieved through an inclusive and integrated area-based development process comprising community development interventions to make community members capable for changes; implementation of the first, participatory based 'urgent needs' plan in 'Pata Rat', the most disadvantaged district of the Metropolitan Area; design the first pilot integrated housing project in Cluj City, including desegregation, housing, training, job creation, education and service development elements; a participatory assessment on needs and resources of the target community; building of partnerships and local stakeholder dialogue necessary for the preparation of concrete and implementable future projects and; a community led integrated inclusion strategy, covering the whole metropolitan area, prepared for the 2012-2020 period. The experience of the project provides for a virtual repository of knowledge for replication in such situations across Romania and other countries in the region through knowledge management.

Project background

Social exclusion and discrimination is often associated with limited access to public services and legal income opportunities and a prevalent situation of sub-standard housing/living conditions. Romania, as many former Eastern bloc countries, has substantial number of disadvantaged people, majority of them are Roma.

Housing deprivation in Romania is acute, for general population, far above EU levels: at 43.3% of the population compared to 20% in Bulgaria. A joint ongoing study of Habitat for Humanity and UNDP shows that the deprivation is most acute among disadvantaged Roma populations. The ongoing national and local social housing programs are not directed towards improvement of sub standard living conditions specific to property, and income conditions of the disadvantaged people. Scoring formula for social housing eligibility biases towards educated and small households with regular paying capacity. As such, disadvantaged people, families in urban settings are often not eligible for social housing incentives provided by local governments. Urban development plans, while promoting urban regeneration and economic benefits are not equipped to address housing needs of communities who do not have formal property deeds.

Cluj-Napoca, one of Romania’s most dynamic cities, is the site of a concentrated, informal settlement, where majority of people are Roma, with four distinct communities in the area of Pata-Rat in the urban periphery. The current living conditions of people in this district and the desire of authorities to set up an inclusive development process established the need to invite UDNP to provide experience to an inclusive local development process and bring together representatives of authorities and civil society in in attempt to create more integrated participatory planning with a view to put in place a sustainable housing and inclusion programme for the city of Cluj and extend it to the whole Cluj Metropolitan Area.



Source: Integrated housing and inclusion strategy Concept Note, Cluj Metropolitan Area (Rath, Cristina, 2011)

Project objectives and goals

The goal of the project was to strengthen the organizational capacity and development skills of the local stakeholders, including target Roma communities, and support them in project design and programming phase of a multi-stakeholder, integrated local development process for sustainable housing and inclusion of disadvantaged Roma in Cluj through leveraging the applicable EU wide resources made available to Romania, as well as to ensure scaling up and replication of the project results and lessons learned in Romania and other countries in the region and on EU level.

The main objectives included in the Project Document

1. Enhancing participation of the disadvantaged local Roma communities in planning and implementation of a pilot integrated housing project and the Roma inclusion strategy in Cluj Metropolitan Area
2. Facilitate the process and ensure the quality of the participatory based design of a pilot sustainable housing project and inclusion strategy for disadvantaged Roma in Cluj and to make financial resources of the EU available
3. Empower local development stakeholders and strengthen partnerships between them to ensure the success of the implementation of the first integrated housing project and the long-term inclusion strategy
4. Provide model to other similar initiatives in Romania and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, and join the Cluj programme's development network to other, existing area-based networks across national and EU borders

Methodological Principles

Participation - Real progress takes place only when the 'target group' is actively involved in local development. This project was aimed to invest in local stakeholders not simply by providing funds and expertise, but also by expanding people's knowledge, skills and ownership of the process.

Motivation and commitment - In order to ensure local participation of poor, disadvantaged people need to feel motivated and committed to goals of development and self-confidence to contribute to the implementation of them. To spur motivation and participation in the project it was needed to use external community Coaches. Two Coaches worked with the communities of the Pata Ret during the whole project period and still continue for minimum two years.

Everyone's development - Local development must be inclusive. It is for everyone in a community, and should involve everyone, including the most vulnerable. Everyone can have ideas, everyone can contribute. The mission is to create the capacity of locals to transform their perceived needs into projects. Experts should not tell people how to live, or what to do. Learning is an interaction among equals.

Strengthening communication - In order to be effective, people need to convey development knowledge to others who need it. For this purpose, the project has established a 'Local Inclusion Centre for Integrated Housing and Inclusion' function in Cluj that serves as an information and coordination hub on the local level and disseminates 'best practices' to other parts of the country and the region.

Social organization - Each community will function better if it is well organized. The level of social organization is related to the life quality and the economic potential of communities too.

Complexity - The Project offered a broad conceptual model which addressed some of the *complexities* faced by those involved in development. These complexities lie in the variety of local needs, the multiplicity of people and organizations, the complex pattern of public bodies and the fact that area-based development is both top-down and bottom-up in character, calling upon the resources of government and the energy of the people.

Area-based approach - Cluj Metropolitan Area, as the target area, was considered in the project as a social and economic whole, comprising people, nature and other resources and know-how.

Integrated development - That means that the project aimed to find a way to harness the resources and energies of relevant bodies to coherent and coordinated development actions and process.

Methodological Toolkit that UNDP implemented in Cluj

- Community coaching as tool was used to mobilize all local resources (social, institutional, economic and environmental) and empower the disadvantaged local Roma communities;
- Practice oriented research module (methodology, questionnaires and study) was designed and implemented in cooperation with the Babes-Bolyai university to clarify local needs and for providing multipliable process and cases, which consist of a comprehensive, detailed survey of all households and adults (aged 14+) living in targeted settlements in Cluj. Through coaching the communities had been prepared and understood why the survey is needed; the survey was anonymous, confidential and comprehensive with questionnaires filled-in by trained interviewers, at respondents' homes. Each questionnaire is composed of three parts:
 - o Household questionnaire, that covers the situation of the whole extended, multi-generational family sharing the same household,
 - o Household form, with synthetic information on every household member,

- Individual questionnaires at the reveal the socio/demographic profile of each person above 14 years old;
- Partnership building and networking process was implemented to increase the organization capacity, ensure the needed information flow and knowledge transfer on Cluj Metropolitan Area level
- A 'Local Inclusion Centre' function was established in the City of Cluj for providing information and coordination of resources, partners, processes and projects for inclusion by training and empowerment of the project staff. They work in close cooperation with the local municipality, NGO-s, Regional Development Agency, County Council, other stakeholders and the target disadvantaged communities.
- Community led local strategic planning process helped local stakeholders to prepare the 'Inclusive local development strategy concept note' and in organic relation to it the package of the 'Integrated local projects for inclusion' ensuring the integrated approach and sustainability and equal opportunities and the ownership of the targeted communities.
- Preparing case studies and knowledge products ensured the knowledge transfer across EU borders.

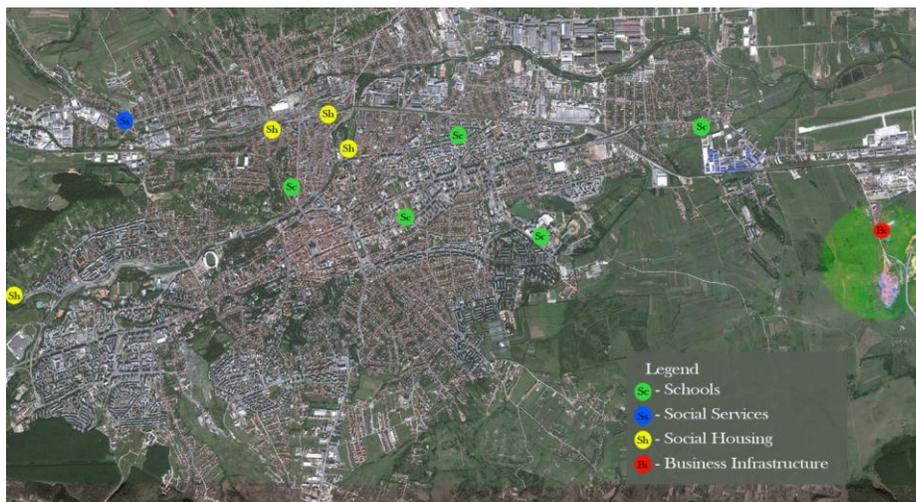
Project results

Community coaching targeting disadvantaged groups has started with group and individual meetings, voluntary thematic working groups (themes: housing, education, job opportunities, etc) have been set up and function. As 'product', based on the assessment of coaches and with participation of target communities an 'Urgent Needs Plan' for solving the most critical problems has been elaborated and partly implemented with contribution of the local self-government. In order to rebuild self-confidence, self-organization and self-help the coaches have helped target communities in implementation of small, self-initiated development actions.

The methodology and questionnaires to the local survey have been prepared and implemented. The trust, set up by coaches, contributed to the success of the local survey: people in segregated settlements were ready to give answer to questionnaires, because they were prepared for this and understood how it will help to change their life.

In the frame of the exchange between the UNDP Pecs (a project with the same aim and process in Hungary) and Cluj Project, staff participated on the regional conference „Area-based development for Inclusive Societies - Policy and practice to escape from the dependency trap at the local level”, organized by UNDP Bratislava in Pecs, Hungary in June 2012.

The necessary favorable local conditions of the first pilot integrated and inclusive housing project were set up and launched with the occasion of a high level political meeting and press conference with the participation of international, national and local stakeholders. See the map below with planned locations of construction elements of the integrated housing pilot in Cluj: schools planned to be extended in different parts of the town ensuring equal opportunities in education and desegregation of disadvantaged children; a multifunctional social service centre with a special focus on disadvantaged people will be built; buildings for inclusive housing in middle-class neighbourhoods have been identified for inclusive housing; and a business incubator will be established to provide jobs to disadvantaged people.



The map of Cluj with identified locations of the first, pilot integrated housing project for inclusion

Partnership map was created including actual and potential institutional and NGO partners, and the areas of common interest. It helps to increase the territorial organizational capacity and networking: people and organizations with interest and activities built on each other learn how to set up integrated interventions.

Cluj Metropolitan Area Inclusion Strategy Concept Note has been prepared to achieve social inclusion of vulnerable groups in Cluj Metropolitan Area. The draft 'inclusion strategy', which is rather a process than a paper is linked to social, environmental and economic development concepts and plans of the territory ensuring that the inclusive approach interweaves the whole development process in the Metropolitan Area.

The financial extension of the project and extension of the project duration was needed because of the fact that UNDP's technical assistance was needed to work out the „Integrated Housing for Inclusion” project package that was submitted by the City of Cluj to absorb approve 2,7 million Euros (European Regional Development Fund) for the implementation of the project package in the existing EU programming period.

Second project phase interventions in Cluj in frame of the UNDP BRC – OSF – MtM project (2013-2014) named „Area-Based Interventions for making the most of EU Funds for Sustainable Housing and Inclusion of disadvantaged Roma in pilot areas in Romania & across the border to Serbia, FYR Macedonia and Turkey„ will ensure sustainable results.