

Management Response and Action Plan

Name of Evaluation Report:	Evaluation of the ROMACTED Phase I Programme “Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level” Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey		
Date of Evaluation Report:	30 May 2022	Date of Action Plan:	1 August 2022

Overall management response to the evaluation:

The most essential recommendations were already anticipated towards the end of Phase I (last quarter of 2020). Furthermore, appropriate action has been already taken in the field of women’s participation, activities related to Roma identity and culture, as well as the balancing approach in the selection of partner municipalities. Although these actions were carried out in various Beneficiaries prior to publishing the evaluation report, they are included in the Action Plan and will be further developed throughout the duration of the Programme.

Some of the recommendations are under consideration due to their complexity, such as exploring a more linear structure of the Programme or applying the ROMACTED methodology and tools to a wider population in corresponding processes.

Recommendations to the EU will be duly transmitted to our counterparts in DG NEAR.

[FOR DECENTRALISED EVALUATIONS] Dissemination plan for the evaluation: please briefly explain how the report will be shared (internally, other CoE entities, donors, beneficiaries etc.), methods (email, events, website etc.), resources, timeframe and person responsible. Initially, the report was shared within the ROMACTED team and with DG NEAR, both by email and during the Second Evaluation Reference Group Meeting, composed of the evaluators, the ROMACTED team and DG NEAR. Subsequently, the report was shared with all participants of the First Regional Steering Committee Meeting held in Skopje on 23 May 2022, including representatives of governments, NGOs and other relevant local stakeholders from the seven Beneficiaries covered by ROMACTED, as well as representatives of international organisations.

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level. ⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint activities with the Joint Programme Horizontal Facility and within the campaign “Block the Hatred. Share the Love” on the topics of antigypsyism and combating hate speech Celebration of International Roma Day and raising awareness of the importance of Roma identity and culture 	n/a	June – October 2022 8 April 2022 8 April 2023 8 April 2024	Marina VASIC and ROMACTED Field Officers

¹ The management decision is in relation to the Recommendation (Accept, Partially Accept, Reject, Consider).

² For implementing accepted recommendations.

³ For recommendations that are rejected or under consideration.

⁴ For example, the “Evaluation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020”, concluded that tackling antigypsyism was a key prerequisite to effective social inclusion initiatives.

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with ERIAC – including on 8 April activities at Beneficiary and local level and other relevant Roma-related milestones. • Different capacity-building sessions organised for municipal staff and Community Action Groups members 		<p>2022 – 2024</p> <p>2022 - 2024</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2: TO THE EU: IPA grant schemes for Roma should more explicitly target ROMACTED municipalities to allow follow-up on small grants in order to scale them up and increase their outreach. This would enable target groups to further strengthen co-operation and put the programme into a broader development context.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		Transmit the recommendation to the DG NEAR	n/a		Marina VASIC

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<p>Recommendation 3: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: In order to avoid “tick-the-box” effects, the ROMACTED methodology should emphasise its flexible application and room for adaptation, for example, with regards to the development of Action Plans. The ROMACTED methodology should further emphasise its linkages to relevant national policy processes affecting the local level.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		Contribution from the local level will continue to be offered to the central-level policymakers, so that relevant strategies are aligned and reflect the reality at local level.	n/a	2022 - 2024	Marina VASIC and ROMACTED Field Officers
<p>Recommendation 4: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: The Council of Europe programme staff should explore options for a leaner and/or more flexible programme structure. In order to improve the ROMACTED Programme’s prospects of sustainability, staff should examine whether resources could be directed to the municipalities to a larger extent.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under consideration			The Programme is set to work in parallel with the two target groups – the Roma community and Local Authorities. If resources are directed to municipalities,		

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
			<p>this would contribute to the cycle of dependency from the side of the Roma community. The CoE also does not have a mandate to cover salaries of municipal staff to exclusively work on the programme. However, the current structure will be reconsidered by the end of Phase II.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 5: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE and ROMACTED municipalities: Mainstreaming should be emphasised and strengthened where possible. This includes small technical measures such as the translation of the ROMACTED Programme MoU into local languages and broader dissemination of the document to municipal staff; greater coverage of municipal staff through training measures; and support to the IWG to carry out assessments on how to promote and strengthen intersectoral co-operation between different departments.</p>					

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU available in local languages • Communication tool “ROMACTED at a Glance” will be available in local languages of each Beneficiary • Training sessions target relevant municipal officials in addition to municipal contact points (for example, Roma Responsive Budgeting workshops gather together officials from the financial directorate; Project cycle management sessions will target staff from 	n/a	2021 - 2022 2022 - 2024 2022 – 2024	Marina VASIC and ROMACTED Field Officers

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
		projects and planning directorates, etc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IWGs are set up and functioning in almost every partner municipality and promote inter-sectoral cooperation in the field of Roma-related issues. 		2022 - 2024	
<p>Recommendation 6: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Local facilitators and “key Roma contacts” should be sensitized to the possibly conflicting goals of effectively “getting things done” and involving the entire group in a genuine participatory process (which is usually slower and to some degree repetitive, as new group members get involved at different times). These issues have been picked up to some extent in the ROMED2 Guidelines and Resources for National and Local Facilitators⁵ and would benefit from thorough follow-up through training, supervision and peer-learning measures.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		Regional exchange between different Beneficiary teams will be carried out for peer learning and exchange	n/a	July 2022 – September 2024	Marina VASIC and ROMACTED Field Officers

⁵ <https://bit.ly/2j5RXiG>

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<p>Recommendation 7: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: The ROMACTED methodology should put a stronger focus on the small grants projects' follow-up and stress the outcomes of learning processes in addition to concrete benefits for the Roma communities. Systematic follow-up should be pursued, for example, by providing support to the upscaling of successful projects (as pilots), concrete support to follow-up proposal writing and donor identification, etc.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of relevant calls for projects will be carried out and presented to municipal staff in at least three Beneficiaries. • Reflection sessions will be organised with the municipal contact points, facilitators and representatives of Community Action Groups after the implementation of small grants 	n/a	September 2022 – December 2024 June 2024 – September 2024	Marina VASIC and ROMACTED Field Officers Marina VASIC, Lejla HADZIMESIC and ROMACTED Field Officers

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<p>Recommendation 8: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE EU: The ROMACTED Programme should explore how to create incentives for greater political will at the local level, such as participation in the ROMACTED Programme as an added value in relevant EU tenders or increased communication regarding the role of local levels in the Beneficiaries meeting the EU accession criteria.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under consideration			<p>According to the European Union rules and procedures, the EU cannot give preference under any specific circumstance in the application process. However, capacity- building activities for access to funds and project cycle management will be undertaken at municipal level. Furthermore, by establishing wider cooperation with</p>		

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
			relevant stakeholders, the Programme still creates incentives for greater political will.		
<p>Recommendation 9: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: With regard to a possible future expansion of the ROMACTED Programme, there should be a balance between municipalities with an already-existing basic political will (potential for sustainability orientation) and municipalities where this needs to be formed more strongly (needs orientation).</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		This was already anticipated as a recommendation towards the end of Phase I (December 2020) and applied in the municipal selection criteria of Phase II. The Programme targets 78 cities and municipalities in Phase II and will not expand further until the end of the Programme.	n/a	Done in the inception period of Phase II (January – April 2021)	ROMACTED Management

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<p>Recommendation 10: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: To prepare for future measures, the ROMACTED Programme should carry out Beneficiary-specific assessments on the extent to which the various programme tools found broader acceptance and were applied in the Beneficiaries, for example, while in Albania Roma Sensitive Budgeting was implemented effectively as a specific component of Phase I, this proved to be more difficult in Kosovo.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on feasibility of implementing future measures will be reflected among the field project staff and ROMACTED Management. 	n/a	January 2023 – January 2024	ROMACTED Team (Management and Field Officers)
<p>Recommendation 11: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE EU: An assessment should be made of the extent to which the participatory techniques introduced through ROMACTED can also be implemented in corresponding processes for involving the population as a whole, possibly as a specific component in other regional CoE/EU programmes.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under consideration			To be considered and discussed within the ROMACTED team and possibly other stakeholders.		

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<p>Recommendation 12: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: As the role of local facilitators and mediators was crucial for the achievement of the first phase of the programme, the Council of Europe should continue to leverage this form of local ownership.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitators will benefit from capacity-building activities throughout the Programme Regional peer exchange will be introduced between facilitators from different Beneficiaries 	n/a	In the duration of the Programme	ROMACTED Team (Management and Field Officers)
<p>Recommendation 13: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: The ROMACTED methodology and tools should be reviewed to strengthen systematic integration of gender mainstreaming into all four steps of the ROMACTED implementation cycle. Facilitators and target groups should receive the necessary and appropriate training on the revised methodology.</p>					

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<p>Recommendation 1: TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Thematically, the ROMACTED Programme should include in its work more activities to combat antigypsyism and strengthen Roma identity in order to support inclusion of Roma communities at the local level.⁴ In this regard the programme is able to further build on its linkages with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC) by utilising their thematic expertise and regional outreach (Belgrade office).</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new regional Handbook on Gender mainstreaming into the ROMACTED 4-step methodology will be prepared. • As a follow up, training material will be developed, and training sessions will be organised on a regional level. 	n/a	July 2022 – July 2024	Marina VASIC Lejla HADZIMESIC