



RO  **ACTED**
*Promoting good governance
and Roma empowerment
at local level*

LOCAL PLAN FOR THE INTEGRATION OF ROMA AND EGYPTIAN MINORITIES

Municipality of Fier



Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



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by the Council of Europe



LOCAL PLAN FOR THE INTEGRATION OF ROMA AND EGYPTIAN MINORITIES 2019-2022

MUNICIPALITY OF FIER

ROMACTED Programme

Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level

Joint Programme of the European Union and the Council of Europe

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Vulnerable groups require special attention by drafting programmes to create opportunities to meet basic living needs and to enable their integration.

The Fier Municipality is committed to draft its Local Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian minorities to strengthen and integrate the members of these two minorities. The methodology used for drafting this action plan was inclusive and comprehensive.

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Armando SUBASHI

Mayor of Municipality of Fier





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I. Introduction

At the cornerstone of governance at all levels, including the local one, is the expectation of a good, transparent, and inclusive governance, as well as the assurance of sustainable development for the communities that they govern. However, good governance and sustainable development in our country are particularly challenging at the local level, where problems and challenges with the decentralisation processes and reform are added to the permanent ones. This includes, among others, continuously improving the management of all the local resources, strengthening strategic planning, enhancing administrative and professional capacities of the local administration, improving the quality of services, increasing citizen participation in the decision-making process, as well as monitoring the implementation of policies and programmes at the regional and local level, based on the principles of non-discrimination and civic engagement.

Local development plans represent an important instrument that enables good governance at the local level. They are used by the municipalities to improve some aspects of local governance in implementing development policies based on needs assessments, enabling a priority-based distribution of resources, allowing for the identification of the financial gap, so they can negotiate with other stakeholders and donor agencies to support development projects at the local level, as well as to allow for the regular monitoring of the implementation of measures and activities.

This document introduces the Local Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities of the Municipality of Fier, an instrument that will ensure that the principles of good governance are applied to enable the integration and inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minorities in this municipality for the period 2019-2022. This plan comes as a progressive development of the National Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020 as it is also in line with the Social Plan 2019-2022 of the Fier Municipality.

The Local Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022 is guided by some fundamental principles, such as: (i) promotion of social inclusion; (ii) response to difficult social and economic situations and emergencies for Roma and Egyptian minorities; (iii) respect for distinctions between the Roma and Egyptian minorities; (iv) inclusion of minorities in identifying needs and designing measures; (v) strengthening the co-operation and co-ordination among the stakeholders: the municipality and central institutions, civil society organisations,



activists, and minority groups. Below are the legal and policy frameworks, under which this plan operates, the methodology applied in drafting the plan, as well as the assessed needs and the measures designed for the priority areas: education, employment, and economic security, housing, health, and other related issues to social protection and inclusion, and equal opportunities.



II. Legal and policy framework

The legal framework guaranteeing respect for minority rights in Albania is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, international conventions and laws, including: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948-¹), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), ratified in 1991, the International Covenant for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights 1976 (1991), the European Convention for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe,² the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1980 (1996), the Employment Promotion and Protection Against Unemployment Convention (No.168 of ILO), 1988 (2006), the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Law No. 10071/2009).

The approval and ratification of international conventions after the '90's led to the Albanian government drafting and adopting primary and secondary laws and other policies,³ which created a more favourable environment for the integration of minorities in the country. On the other hand, the European integration process, which represents not only an opportunity for the country, but also a challenge in terms of implementation of structural reforms towards the EU member status, contributes to moving the integration process for minorities forward.

Some of the most important documents at the national level include:

The National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2015-2020, and sectoral policies National Strategy for Employment and Skills (NSES), the Strategy for Social Protection that focuses on (i) improving social inclusion and access to basic services for marginalised persons and groups; (ii) offering specialised

1 Approved in 1955.

2 Law No. 8496 / 1999

3 Specific laws contributing directly or indirectly include: Law on People's Advocate (8454/1999), Law on the Protection of Personal Data (9887/2008), Law on Gender Equality (9970/2008), Electoral Code (2008), the Law on Legal Aid (10039/2008), the Law on Protection from all forms of Discrimination (2010), the Law on the Rights and Protection of Minorities, as amended (Law No. 96/2017), Decision of Council of Ministers on the Education of Minority Communities in their Mother Tongue, as amended, the Law on Social Housing (Law No. 22/2018), etc. Similarly, there are a series of decisions of the Council of Ministers and policy documents, including: Decision of the Council of Ministers on the Organisation and Functioning of the State Committee for Minorities, as amended (DCM 726/12 December 2018), the National Plan for the Stabilisation Association Agreement, as amended, the National Strategy for Improving the Living Conditions of Roma Community, the National Action Plan (NAP), and the Roma Inclusion Decade 2010 – 2015, NAP for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Communities, 2016-2020.



programs to facilitate access to the labour market and increasing employment opportunities (iii) offering opportunities for attending the mandatory and secondary education for people who have reached the age for mandatory education but not completed it, (iv) Coverage of psychological services, especially in schools where there are Roma and Egyptian students who are at risk of dropping out, (v) Facilitating access to health services for vulnerable groups by providing public health services, specific health care and information packages, as well as specific programmes on access to the health system, providing support for social workers and appropriate health services, (vi) Creating integrated service systems at the regional/local level by the care standards for all vulnerable groups by improving national and local mechanisms for identifying and assessing needs for social care services in line with the standard operational procedures and harmonising the Albanian legislation with the international requirements.

The measures of **the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians** (2016-2020) are designed across six priority areas: civil registry, education and intercultural dialogue, employment and skill development, health care, housing, urban integration, and social protection. The protection of human rights, including for the Roma, and the anti-discrimination policies represent one of the five key priorities for Albania's integration in the European Union.

The main principles of the NAP for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians include: (i) the promotion of social inclusion; (ii) measures for responding to emergency situations; (iii) honouring the distinctions between and within these communities, (iv) guaranteeing inclusions of these communities in designing, implementing, and monitoring public policies, (v) encouraging the cooperation among the stakeholders (central and local government, civil society organisations, and communities).

The National Cross-Sectoral Decentralisation and Local Governance Strategy (2015-2020), the Territorial Administrative Reform (2015), the Law on Local Self-governance⁴ and the Law on the Management of Public Finances⁵ created the basis and the ground for the reform efforts of local governments and for the administrative reorganisation of the municipalities based on the new territorial configuration. The strategic goals are related to: (i) increasing the efficiency of the local government structures, (ii) strengthening local finances and fiscal decentralisation, (iii) sustainable local economic development, and (iv) good

4 Law 139/2015 on Local Self-Governance

5 Law 68/2017 On Local Finances

governance at the local level. Other key laws also include Law No. 119/2014 on the Right to Public Information, and Law No. 146/2014 on Notification and Public Consultation.

In Albania, good governance is about responsible development of public issues and management of public resources, which are part of the 12 Principles of Good Governance⁶ of the Council of Europe. These 12 principles are part of the Strategy for Good Governance and Innovation, adopted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers in 2008. They cover issues such as ethical behaviour, rule of law, efficiency and effectiveness, transparency, sound financial management and accountability.

In Albania, the activities of the Council of Europe⁷ focus primarily on addressing the obstacles that hinder minority rights, regular monitoring, legal compliance, and assistance offered in this regard. The aim of the Council of Europe⁸ concerning the protection of national minorities is the achievement of a stronger unity among its members, with a view to applying the principles and ideals that represent their shared heritage, consider preserving and further exercising of fundamental human rights and freedoms as one of the methods for achieving that goal. Based on these considerations, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has adopted the "Strasbourg Declaration,"⁹ which aims to strengthen and promote the effective participation of Roma minorities in the social, political, and civic life, including the active participation of these minorities in the processes of decision-making and social inclusion.

One of the goals of the ROMACTED programme, which builds on ROMED 2 and ROMACT programmes, is to draft local Action Plans in seven selected municipalities¹⁰ through 4 key steps: Preparing the process; assessing needs and prioritising; adopting a Joint Action Plan; and its funding and project implementation. These steps, their implementation and outputs are presented in the following sections of the document.

6 12 Principles of Good Governance and the European Ethics of Perfect Governance (ELOGE)

7 Article 4.2.4 Roma and Egyptians

8 Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities

9 Strasbourg Declaration on Roma

10 Municipalities of Elbasan, Korçë, Vlorë, Gjirokastrë, Përmet, Pogradec, and Roskovec



III. Methodology and process

The methodology and the process of drafting this action plan is designed and implemented in a comprehensive and inclusive spirit. This was enabled by ensuring that every effort taken in this framework is led by the principles of empowerment, participation, and integration. In working with communities/minorities in general, and with Roma and Egyptian (R&E) communities in particular, it is believed that empowerment, or the opportunity for individual empowerment is essential to empowering and integrating the entire community/minority. In this view, addressing the needs and problems through an inclusive model, where people's lives and needs are considered, assessed, and supported by a multidisciplinary perspective has been at the foundation of our approach. Changes, improvements, and achievements can be sustainable only by such strategies, where an integrated approach means a need for co-ordination and synergies in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, housing, and social services.

For sustainable achievements, participatory processes were encouraged and applied throughout the efforts taken. The participation of communities in all processes makes them not only more open, transparent, and interactive, but increase their chance of success and makes the results coming from them more acceptable and applicable to targeted communities. The participation of Roma and Egyptian representatives in every step of drafting this plan, ensured, among others, that the data and evidence collected to feed the drafting process were updated and appropriate. They further strengthened the feeling of ownership and accountability for the plan and its implementation.

Thus, the process for drafting the plan for the integration of Roma and Egyptian minorities at the local level went through four key steps as summarised in the table below:



Table 1. The steps of the drafting process for the action plan for the integration of Roma and Egyptian minorities, 2019

Step 1. Preparing the process	Step 2: Assessing needs and prioritising
<p>Tasks accomplished:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identification of stakeholders - answering questions like "Who is going to be involved?" "Why? What contribution would they make?" b) Guaranteeing political commitment - enabled the identification of stakeholders who are willing and committed to ensuring the implementation of the process. c) Establishment of working groups and subgroups and proving them with technical support in drafting the plan. 	<p>The assessment of the community needs went through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Data collection - sources of data were identified, as well as the techniques to be applied for collecting them, and the respective indicators. b) Identification and priority setting among problems and needs, with the community participating in the process, where problems and needs were identified, and priorities were set in addressing them, given the restrictive resources and time. c) Assessment of institutional capacities - answering questions like "Who can do what to address the identified problems/needs?"
Step 3: Adopting a Joint Action Plan	Step 4: Funding and project implementation
<p>The third step enabled the drafting and approval of a joint action plan, reflecting on and addressing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reflection - What do we know about needs assessment and priority-setting? b) What do we want to achieve? What changes do we want to bring? c) How? - short-term and midterm activities. d) Integration of Roma issues in the local plan - How? Integration as part of the whole process. Social Plans. e) Activities/interventions/ concrete projects - What? Who? When? 	<p>The fourth step paved the path toward a feasible plan, including its financing and monitoring. The following questions were answered during this step:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What % of the Local Plan shall be financed by the budget of the Local Government Unit? Is there any funding expected from the state budget? Donors? b) Is there a financial gap? What are the potential resources for financing new projects? c) What % of Local Plan expenditures are planned in the Medium Term Budgeting in 2019-2021? d) Do we have any new activities/ projects? What % of our expenses do they represent? How is their funding planned? e) Is the financial gap part of additional budget requirements and negotiations with various donors?



In order to assess the needs and inform the decision-making processes regarding the plan through data and evidence, a guideline was drafted and applied for the collecting primary and secondary data. They included various sources, summarised in the illustrative scheme below.

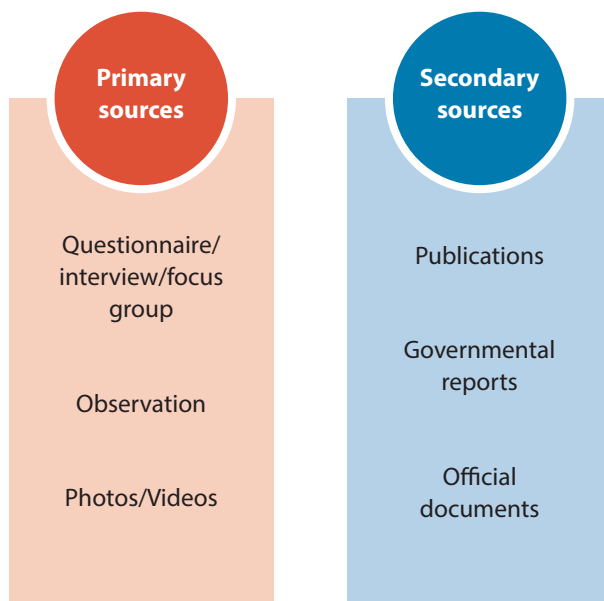


Figure 1. Primary and secondary sources of the data used

Thus, in collecting the priority data through participatory techniques, mapping of needs and resources was one of the techniques used, as well as individual interviews and focus groups (accompanied by field visits and observations), and exercises to understand problems like "Problem matrix" and "Problem tree" (for more information, see Annex 9.1). During February-March 2019, the national experts and local facilitators visited regularly all the areas inhabited by the targeted minorities (about 20 visits and meetings in total). During field visits, a series of tools for data collection were used. Thus, the facilitators and the expert (present in Levan and Mbrostar Ura) have conducted individual interviews with men, women, and young people.





Figure 2. (Unstructured) interview with beneficiaries of the housing programme (reconstruction of homes), Mbrostar

During the numerous visits in the targeted areas, meetings were held with the community both indoors, and in Roma and Egyptian settlements, outdoors.



Figure 3. Focus group on priorities identified earlier by the facilitators - Mbrostar



In order to have a more focused and deeper discussion, as well as understand the problems and needs, a focus group approach was also applied, as well as "Problem tree" and "Problem matrix" techniques.



Figure 4. "Problem Tree" Levan

Priority data was also collected by the municipality, especially with regard to its capacity for the implementation of the plan for integrating Roma and Egyptian minorities (Annex 9.2).



Figure 5. Pictures from meetings with the Institutional Working Group, Municipality of Fier



IV. Profile of Fier Municipality

The Fier municipality is bordered by the Divjaka municipality in the north, Patos and Roskovec municipalities in the East, and Vlora Municipality in the South. The town of Fier is the main centre of the Municipality.

The ancient history of the town dates back to the town of Apollonia (VI century B.C.) - an important art of the Egnatia Road. Fier continued to be an important centre of economic development in history (its name is believed to come from the word "fiera", which in Italian means fair). The town preserved the same profile even after the world wars and the beginning of the '90s, when Fier turned into the second largest economic centre in the country, following Tirana. The systemic changes of the years that follow the '90s, and the recent decades seem to have brought many challenges to sustainable development and have somewhat weakened that profile¹¹.



Today, from an important economic and industrial area, Fier suffers from high unemployment and environmental pollution, even though it covers some of the most important agricultural areas in the country and represents a significant part of the country's industry of operating in oil processing (BIRN 2015).¹² These are the challenges it faces with a population of 120,655 inhabitants according to the 2011 CENSUS, although the civil register contains 196,324 citizens. The municipality is organised into ten administrative units, which include: Fier, Cakran, Mbrostar Ura, Libofshë, Qendër, Dërmenas, Topojë, Levan, Frrakull and Portëz (in total: one city and 85 villages). More than 55% of the population lives in rural areas, but the new administrative configuration has given new opportunities not only to the agriculture and livestock industries, but also to family tourism, considering that the area has about 30 km of coastline.

¹¹ Fier Municipality <http://bashkiafier.gov.al/sq-al/Qyteti/Pages/Historia-e-Qytetit.aspx>

¹² Environment pollution seems to be from both the now closed industries and the surviving ones. Most of the pollution comes from the oil industry and the food oil refineries, which pollute the air especially during night hours. <http://pushtetivendor.reporter.al/profil-i-bashkise-fier/>



The most important economic sectors of Fier Municipality include¹³:

- Oil Extraction and Processing;
- Construction;
- Food processing: refreshments and alcoholic beverages, olive oil and cooking oil, meat, milk subproducts, bread, sugar, flour, etc;
- Import-export;
- Trade: clothes, food, appliances, etc;
- Textiles and clothing production.

The Fier Municipality has formalised its development projects for the future both in economic and social terms. Thus, the Fier municipality has drafted and approved "A Territory Development Strategy" and a "General Plan for the Local Territory Development"¹⁴ and is in the process of drafting a Plan for Social Protection 2019-2022.¹⁵ The Local Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022, in line with other development plans of the municipality, aims at bringing specific achievements for empowering and integrating these minorities based on the needs identified and presented briefly in the following sections of this document.

13 Fier municipality <http://bashkiafier.gov.al/sq-al/Qyteti/Pages/Ekonomia-dhe-tregetia-.aspx>

14 With the support of the USAID Planning and Local Governance Project (PLGP) and Co-PLAN, the Institute for Habitat Development.

15 Implemented with the support of UN.



V. Roma and Egyptian minorities in Fier Municipality and needs assessment

There is an estimated total of 3,650 Roma and Egyptian inhabitants, or about 730 households in the Fier municipality. Most of them are settled in Levan and Drizë (about 250 households in each of these areas), followed by Baltëza (100 households), Mbrostar (70 households), and Fermë "Afrim i Ri", and Sektor (about 30 households each). It is, however, difficult to have accurate and official numbers. Most of these households live in exceedingly difficult social and economic conditions and a significant segment of them do not even have the minimum living conditions (again there are no accurate figures).

Even though Roma and Egyptians were involved in the mandatory education system during the dictatorship, and employed and provided with houses throughout the city, their top-down involvement and integration proved not to be sustainable. With the drastic changes accruing in the country after the 90s, a re-segregation of these minorities was evidenced toward rural or peri-urban areas, and many of the problems of social exclusion re-emerged to their full extent. Even though almost three decades have passed since the system changed, the Roma and Egyptian minorities in Fier (as well as in many other areas in the country) face problems of economic, social, cultural, and political exclusion.

Thus, the Roma and Egyptian minorities in Fier have consistently raised their concerns about their difficult living conditions, lack of opportunities, and lack of dedicated attention to their development and integration.¹⁶ This is, on the other hand, one of the indicators of development and empowerment of the Roma and Egyptian minorities in the Fier municipality. Fier has constantly been targeted by various programmes aiming to empower and facilitate the integration process for the Roma and Egyptian communities. They have built and continue to build on some important strengths of this community, such as: preservation of cultural identity, traditions, and language over generations; hospitality and co-operation; knowledge; skills, and good tradition in agriculture, livestock, and crafts (especially in Levan and Driza); improvement of education and qualification of young people, etc.).

16 See for example parts from their activism in 2017 <https://www.rtsh.al/lajme/fier-romet-kerkojne-te-drejtat-e-tyre/>



However, as emphasised above, many of the problems and disadvantages accumulated for years remain a concern. In addition to poverty and difficult economic conditions, there are also other issues from those with the education system, qualification and employment to health care and health services or the need for reintegration following migration movements (in the country and abroad). Below are some of the current problems and needs identified for the purposes of this local plan, organised by the main areas of interest, such as: education, employment, housing, and health.

V.1. Education

While awareness about education is increasing, the level of inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minorities in the education system lags behind compared to the other parts of the community. The inclusion of children in education and care institutions starts later for the members of Roma and Egyptian minorities and is accompanied throughout the process with problems regarding school attendance, high levels of dropping out, and poor performance.

It is currently unknown what the number of Roma and Egyptian school children is in Fier. More accurate data can be obtained for the children, who are already part of the system, but not for those who are not. Thus, there are 122 children aged 3 up to 5 who attend preschool institutions (2 in Sektor Seman, 39 in Baltëz, 44 in Levan, 16 in Drizë, 9 in Fermë "Afrimi i Ri", and 12 in Mbrostar). Economic difficulties (lack of food and clothes) discourage Roma and Egyptian families from sending their children to kindergarten. Another important factor contributing to decision making of families in this regard is the distance from kindergarten and access to transport. The low level of employment (especially among Roma and Egyptian women) adds to these factors, which makes many R&E families wait for years until they send their children to these institutions.

More than 300 Roma and Egyptian children attended mandatory school during the academic year 2018-2019 in the Fier municipality. Levan represents the largest number of Roma and Egyptian students attending mandatory education among the surveyed areas: followed by Driza (80), Baltëz (75), Mbrostar (30), Fermë "Afrimi i Ri" (14) and Sektor (10). Attendance of mandatory education remains far from optimum due to economic factors, frequent migration (within and outside the country), are combined with mentality issues and other obstacles preventing Roma and Egyptian children from regularly attending school and performing well. The prevailing mentality disproportionately affects the Roma and Egyptian girls, who, due to the pressure from their families (for early marriage among



others), drop out from school at the beginning of puberty.

About 50 children aged 6 to 15 are reported to have dropped out from school during the academic year 2018-2019. That is about 15% of Roma and Egyptian children in the age of mandatory education who are currently out of the system. The distribution again is proportional even to the size of communities. There have been 20 children dropping out of school in Levan, 16 in Baltëz, 10 in Driza, 5 in Mbrostar, and 2 children in Sektor and Fermë "Afrim i Ri".

In addition to the reasons listed above, the lack of infrastructure and access of these communities in the education system are also obstacles to school attendance. While public schools usually have similar infrastructure and human resources, some of them face serious problems. Thus, "Trifon Prifti" school in Baltëz has no toilets and running water. This makes school attendance difficult for all, but especially for the younger children. Access to school in Mbrostar is limited by its distance to the community and the need for children to cross a national road to reach the school. There is a need for (sustainable) transport for children living in Mbrostar Ura for them to be able to attend school.

V.2. Employment and economic security

Despite efforts of various stakeholders to address employment issues for Roma and Egyptian minorities, they are still present and serious. Not only is the unemployment high, but most of the Roma and Egyptians lack information and the skills needed to search for jobs. This has a direct impact on their economic situation, both in terms of securing income through employment, but also for showing the necessary evidence for their efforts looking for jobs, which is a precondition for getting economic aid.

Although it is impossible for the Fier municipality to identify the real level of employment or unemployment with the available data, the Labour Office reports that there were 235 Roma and Egyptians registered job seekers in 2018, including 30 who managed to get employed (or about 13%). They were mainly employed in the clothing sector, which is the main sector for formal employment for Roma and Egyptians. Most of the members of the Roma and Egyptians minorities in Fier make their living based on production/economic activities in agriculture, livestock, trade, and construction. Given their tradition and talent, some of them are also active musicians.

Open and/or indirect discrimination in the labour market keeps the employment level for Roma and Egyptian minorities exceptionally low. This is one of the



main reasons for employment of the Roma and Egyptians in the private sector (except for self-employment) remaining quite low. Various companies/businesses hesitate to employ Roma and Egyptians, not because they lack qualifications or skills, but because a mentality that Roma and Egyptians may affect their image, and consequently, their success. Some concrete mediation experience for the employment of Roma and Egyptians demonstrate the circumstances, where members of these minorities have been selected for employment but once employed, they were dismissed because their employers noticed that they would speak Roma (which made it clear that they belonged to the Roma community).

Lack of employment opportunities and discrimination overlap problems related to lack of education and qualification, as well as lack of knowledge and skills to search for jobs. Thus, members of these communities often find it difficult to go beyond their traditional professions and they are often not motivated to get qualifications or to learn new professions, because they do not expect to be employed. Members of the needs-assessment process report that early marriages, and the fanaticism of the family men, early parenting for many children, are all additional obstacles/difficulties especially for the Roma and Egyptian women and girls to get education, qualifications, and employment.

The combination of all of the challenges and problems related with employment results in most of the members of Roma and Egyptians minorities staying in informal and unsustainable jobs, making their survival and future quite insecure. Also, this situation causes Roma and Egyptians families to be overrepresented in the economic aid scheme, or to see this as their only opportunity. About 58 Roma and Egyptian families are reported to currently benefit from Economic Aid (40 families in Driza, 12 in Levan, and 6 in Mrostar,¹⁷ while other areas have a very small number). On the other hand, there is no clear information about how this scheme works, leading to dissatisfaction and annoyance among the excluded families.

V.3. Housing

While the Roma and Egyptian families have gone through changes over time, they remain relatively large. In the Fier municipality, they consist of 5 members on average, and in most of the cases they share their house with the larger family. However, updated and accurate statistics on the number of households and their members are either lacking or difficult to obtain. One reason for that is also the lack of formal marriages and (timely) registration of their children.

17 Other areas have a much smaller number of Roma and Egyptians, which is almost insignificant. Currently, there are only 3 households in the Seman sector and none in the "Clirim" farm.



In general, the housing situation for Roma and Egyptian minorities in Fier Municipality is not good. Housing problems start from a complete lack of housing to inappropriate housing, or houses built illegally/without a construction permit. Illegally built houses are a phenomenon encountered in almost every Roma and Egyptian settlement. Thus, the Levan administrative unit has completed the procedures for 66 illegally built houses. The Qendër administrative unit, in the Drizë village has identified 350 illegally built houses and it has already completed procedures for legalising 80% of them. In the Baltëz village, such procedures are completed for about 50 houses. The Mbrostar administrative unit has completed the legalisation procedures for all its illegally built houses, which meet the legal criteria for legalisation. However, there are delays or difficulties related to the information (from the Local Immovable Property Registration Offices) and clarity of procedures to be followed, in addition to the fact that some of these houses do not qualify for registration. Certain families have problems with their houses, for which they have initiated court proceedings, but they find it difficult to follow these processes and collect the documents they need from a large number of institutions.

In addition to the problems with their houses and their registration, Roma and Egyptian families continuously face difficulties in affording the cost of necessary services such as potable water and energy. Their difficult economic situation prevents them from signing contracts and affording service costs in general. However, what could make these circumstances easier would be mediation to exempt them from paying penalties for delayed payments or enabling them to sign such contracts for these services when this is what the interested parties are seeking.

Another category of families, especially those families living in Levan, have raised a concern about their properties not having proper title deeds, which is an issue that requires commitment and legal support. Lack of evidence of ownership over the land assigned according to the Law No. 7501, 1993 has become a serious limitation for the wellbeing of these people, preventing them from further developing their properties, or even using them as an asset or collateral for potential loans.

There are three specific problems in Mbrostar which need to be addressed. First, Roma and Egyptian minority houses are located near the railway, and even though the train circulation is exceedingly rare, security issues need to be addressed. Second, some houses that have been built after the 90s in this area have caused serious pollution of the environment for some of the Roma families. These houses have no connection to sewage lines or septic tanks but let their sewage leak in



the direction of Roma houses, which have their foundations at a lower level. This requires intervention by the authorities, because families which have caused such pollution are not willing to address the problem. Third, Roma families in this area suffer from the lack of potable water. This concern has also been raised with the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination, and even though some punishment measures have been taken (including a fine imposed on the Fier municipality), the problem remains unsolved. Residents are willing to even agree on some temporary/transitory solutions until the problem is finally solved (for example temporary water supply from water distributors).

Housing programmes, which have helped (among others) with the rehabilitation of R&E housing conditions, have improved housing conditions for a significant number of residents. However, there are still enormous needs not yet addressed, where the biggest problem is the impossibility to intervene in unstable residences (barracks) and the illegal ones, which are the most vulnerable ones. Besides, the R&E families find it almost impossible to benefit from the housing programmes, which offer opportunities for soft loans, as their employment is informal, and in most cases, it is impossible for them to get documentation proving their income.

Most of the settlements of R&E families have access to asphalted roads (not always in good conditions), but some are difficult to cross in the winter. Likewise, most of the internal roads in areas of R&E concentration are not asphalted. Also, all areas with R&E residents require intervention in the sewage system. The drinking water, though accessible, is not used for these needs. And while this is a problem affecting all citizens, it becomes more of an issue for poor families and their health. Public transportation is accessible and, to some extent, affordable.

V.4. Health

Several concentrations of R&E minorities are not far from health centres, but these centres are not always well-equipped. Almost all of the health care facilities lack in equipment, such as: blood pressure equipment for children and adults; stethoscopes; oximeters (necessary both for doctors and nurses); scales and equipment to measure height of children and the adults; laptops/desktops (to enter recommendations online); heating/cooling; showers (water heaters); spatulas; and otoscopes.

Sporadically, the Roma and Egyptian communities have been targeted by various civil society organisations' initiatives to raise their awareness about good health and access to health services. In general, members of R&E minorities are registered with a family doctor, and most of them are equipped with health cards. Despite



this, access to health care services is relatively low due to their lack of contribution in the health insurance scheme (related also to their low level of employment), as well as the poor economic situation of many of the R&E families.

Children and pregnant women seem to be the most vulnerable members of this community when it comes to health services. Thus, unregistered children are automatically left in unfavourable positions to receive health service. Providing them access to these services is a must, especially in terms of their vaccination. It is necessary for children to be equipped even with vaccination cards and have health cards, despite their civil and economic situation. Similarly, not all pregnant women have access to health services. They also need information and awareness about mother and child health. In this direction, there is significant room for a more proactive role for all the relevant stakeholders.

V.5. Other issues: migration and returned migrants

In recent decades, migration has significantly affected the Albanian society by bringing dynamic social and economic demographic changes. Roma and Egyptian families have not been an exception. In fact, about 30% of R&E families from Fier have left the country in the past five years alone, mainly as asylum seekers in Germany and France. Especially in recent years, R&E minorities in the Fier municipality are viewing migration or even asylum as a first solution to ensuring a better life.

The main reasons the R&E families migrate are economic and social, especially lack of employment opportunities. On the other hand, it must be emphasised that a good part of the R&E families, who emigrated have returned. The problems faced by returning migrants need to be assessed and addressed. The most pressing problems are related to the returned children and include issues such as: registration of children who were born abroad; assessment of the health situation and their vaccination (which remains unknown as a consequence of lack of relevant documentation); as well as reintegration of children into the educational system after their absence for migration reasons. For most, these processes are exceedingly difficult and force them back to re-emigration/asylum.

In recent years, there also seems to be a shift towards seasonal emigration mainly in the summer months, towards Italy and Greece. That income, along with occasional work, is used to meet needs throughout the rest of the year. These types of dynamics are hard to harmonise with social support and protection programmes and schemes. The latter must reflect a degree of flexibility that addresses the lives of people that they are supposed to support and protect.



VI. Vision and goals of the local plan

VI.1. Vision

The municipality of Fier provides equal opportunities to its citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, and works to promote inclusion, multiculturalism, and the integration of Roma and Egyptian minorities in the society with full and equal rights towards a full economic, social, cultural, and political integration, while respecting their unique characteristics and preserving their cultural identity.

VI.2. Strategic objectives

Improve the educational situation of Roma and Egyptian minorities in the Fier municipality.

Ensure economic empowerment of Roma and Egyptians in the Fier municipality through integration and harmonisation of interventions for qualification, employment, and social protection programmes.

Improve the status of housing of Roma and Egyptian minorities in the Fier municipality through sustainable interventions.

Improve health and access to health services for members of Roma and Egyptian minorities in the Fier municipality.

Reintegrate the Roma and Egyptian families returning from migration.



VII. Action Plan

1. Area of intervention – EDUCATION						
Strategic objective: Improve the situation of education for Roma and Egyptian minorities in Fier Municipality						
Measure/activity	Stakeholders	Indicators	Data sources	Deadlines	Funds/Financing (ALL)	Monitoring
1.1 Specific objective: Facilitate access to educational services						
1.1.1 Provide financial support (such as scholarships, exemption from taxes and payment for books and school supplies) for children from R&E minorities living in families with economic difficulties (at all levels of education).	Fier Municipality Roma Education Fund Murialdo	Number of supported children Number of children integrated in a sustainable manner	Fier municipality Regional Education Directorate (RED) Directorates of specific schools	Every academic year for the period of this Plan 2019–2022	Fier municipality 7,440,000	Fier Municipality Regional Education Directorate (RED) CSOs
1.1.2 Improve school infrastructure - construction of toilets for "Trifon Prifti" school, Baltez.	Fier municipality	Planned project Documentation data of the implemented project Number of children and beneficiary staff	Fier municipality Regional Education Directorate (RED) Directorate of "Trifon Prifti" School	2019–2020	Fier municipality Donors 1,500,000	Fier Municipality Regional Education Directorate (RED) CSOs



<p>1.1.3 Establish transport for children attending school in the Driza area, Mbrostar Ura</p>	<p>Regional Education Directorate (RED) Fier FIER Municipality</p>	<p>Number of beneficiary children Service duration</p>	<p>Regional Education Directorate (RED)</p>	<p>Every academic year for the period of this Plan 2019-2022</p>	<p>Regional Education Directorate (RED) FIER Municipality CSOs 6,600,000</p>	<p>FIER Municipality CSOs</p>
<p>1.1.4 Construct an overpass at: a. Mbrostar Ura area; b. for "Dino Ismaili" school, Levan.</p>	<p>MEI/ARSH FIER municipality</p>	<p>Planned project Documentation data of the implemented project Number of beneficiary residents and children</p>	<p>FIER municipality</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>MEI/ARSH FIER municipality 37,500,000</p>	<p>FIER Municipality</p>
<p>1.1.5 Assign support teachers to children with special needs from R&E minorities (including those returned from migration).</p>	<p>MES/RED</p>	<p>Number of beneficiary schools Number of engaged teachers Number of beneficiary children Service duration</p>	<p>RED Beneficiary school directorates</p>	<p>Every academic year for the period of this Plan 2019-2022</p>	<p>Regional Education Directorate (RED) FIER municipality 30,312,000</p>	<p>FIER Municipality RED CSOs</p>



1.1.6 Create support classes for children aged 10-12, who have gaps in their educational background, and who may not join elementary classes.	MES/RED	Number of beneficiary schools	RED	Every academic year for the period of this Plan 2019-2022	Regional Education Directorate (RED)	FIER Municipality
		Number of classes	Beneficiary school directorates		FIER municipality	CSOs
		Number of beneficiary children			Donors	
		Service duration			6,820,200	

2. Area of intervention – employment and economic empowerment

Strategic objective: Ensure economic empowerment of Roma and Egyptians in Fier municipality through integration and harmonisation of interventions for qualification, employment, and social protection programmes

Measure/activity	Stakeholders	Indicators	Data sources	Deadlines	Funds/Financing (ALL)	Monitoring
2.1 Specific objective: Raise awareness and facilitate access to employment and labour market services						
2.1.1 Awareness raising campaigns and activities for employment opportunities and services	Fier Employment Office (FEO)	Number of campaigns undertaken.	EOF	2019 onwards	Employment and Professional Training Office	Fier municipality
	CSOs	Number of activities implemented.	CSOs involved			CSOs
	FIER municipality	Number of participants	FIER Municipality		FIER municipality	
		Number of new applications			10,000,000	
		Number of successful applications				



<p>2.1.2 Awareness raising activities/ with employers/ active businesses in Fier Municipality</p>	<p>Fier Employment Office (FEO) CSOs FIER municipality</p>	<p>Number of activities implemented Number of participants</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office CSOs involved FIER Municipality</p>	<p>2019 onwards</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office FIER municipality 1,200,000</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>
<p>2.1.3 Ensure personalised support for job application to minority R&E members who have vocational school/qualification</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office CSOs FIER municipality</p>	<p>Number of staff engaged in such support Number of supported cases Number of job applications Number of successful cases Number of sustainable employment cases (with contracts, more than 6 months)</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office CSOs involved FIER municipality</p>	<p>2019 onwards</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office FIER municipality CSOs 1,000,000</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>
<p>2.1.4 Training and assistance in using the website http://www.puna.gov.al/Default.aspx</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office CSOs FIER municipality</p>	<p>Number of training courses Number of beneficiaries Level of skill development Number of successful cases through the use of the portal</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office CSOs involved FIER municipality</p>	<p>2019 onwards</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office FIER municipality CSOs 1,800,000</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>



<p>2.1.5 Ensure support with applications for grant schemes for agricultural/livestock activity</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>	<p>Number of applications Number of awarded grants Number of direct and indirect beneficiaries</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>	<p>2019 onwards</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs 2,400,000</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>
<p>2.2 Specific objective: Increase employment of Roma and Egyptian minorities through promotional mechanisms for employers and formalisation of production activities</p>						
<p>2.2.1 Introduce promotional mechanisms for businesses that adopt quotas/employ members of R&E minorities (e.g., local tax facilitation, etc.)</p>	<p>FIER municipality EOF</p>	<p>Number of initiatives undertaken, and types of promotional mechanisms introduced Number and content of relevant decisions Number of participating businesses Number of beneficiary R&E</p>	<p>FIER municipality Employment and Professional Training Office</p>	<p>2020 onwards</p>	<p>FIER municipality 369.600</p>	<p>Employment and Professional Training Office CSOs</p>
<p>2.2 Support registration procedures of members of the R&E minority (with the aim of enabling social/health insurance, access to loans etc) Holding informative/awareness meetings with the Local Tax Office</p>	<p>FIER municipality NBC Fier</p>	<p>Number of activities implemented Number of participants Number of identified economic activities Number of formalised (registered) economic activities Number of employees in registered/formalised activities</p>	<p>FIER municipality NBC Fier</p>	<p>2020 onwards</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs 240.000</p>	<p>FIER municipality CSOs</p>



2.3 Specific Objective: Integrate Roma and Egyptian minorities into qualification programmes and increase their vocational capacities						
2.3.1 Assess needs for training and vocational qualification	CSOs	Number of initiatives undertaken	CSOs	2019 onwards	Employment and Professional Training Office	FIER Municipality CSOs
	Employment and Professional Training Office	Assessment report/findings	Employment and Professional Training Office		Professional Training Office Donors/CSOs	1,200,000
2.3.2 Identify needs and people who are willing to get vocational training/qualification	Employment and Professional Training Office	Number of identified cases	Employment and Professional Training Office	2019 onwards	Professional Training Office Donors/CSOs	FIER Municipality CSOs
	CSOs	Number of people registered in training/qualification courses	CSOs		5,600,000	
2.3 Co-ordinate/mediate between training/qualification providers and employers	Employment and Professional Training Office	Number of people, who successfully finished courses	Employment and Professional Training Office	2019 onwards	Professional Training Office	FIER municipality
	CSOs	Number of those employed/have started an economic activity	CSOs		FIER municipality	1,500,000
2.3 Co-ordinate/mediate between training/qualification providers and employers	Employment and Professional Training Office	Established partnerships	Employment and Professional Training Office	2019 onwards	Professional Training Office	FIER municipality
	CSOs	Number of people employed through them	CSOs		FIER municipality	1,500,000



3. Area of intervention – Housing						
Strategic objective: Improve the housing situation for Roma and Egyptian minorities in the Fier municipality through sustainable interventions.						
Measure/activity	Stakeholders	Indicators	Data sources	Deadlines	Funds/Financing (ALL)	Monitoring
3.1 Specific objective: Improve conditions in existing Roma and Egyptian houses in Fier municipality						
3.1.1 Assess housing needs and areas for intervention	FIER municipality CSOs	Number of identified houses Indicators on their status	FIER municipality CSOs	Annually 2019-2022	FIER Municipality Donors 1,431,360	FIER Municipality CSOs
3.1.2 Enable (re)signing of supply contracts for potable water and electricity for families in need (exemption from interest rate for delays, when possible)	MEI/ OS-HEE FIER municipality	Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2020	MEI/ OS-HEE 720.000	FIER municipality CSOs
3.1.3 Rehabilitate and upgrade sewage system in areas with R&E population	FIER municipality	Number of implemented projects Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2019	FIER municipality 19,000,000	CSOs FIER municipality
3.1.4 Solve the situation of environmental pollution caused by sewage of newly settled inhabitants of Mbrostar	FIER municipality	Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2019	FIER municipality 10,000,000	CSOs FIER municipality



3.1.5 Install restrictions in inhabited area where the railway passes	MEI	Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2019	MEI/Fier municipality 500,000	FIER municipality CSOs
3.1.6 Asphalt/plants/streetlights	FIER municipality	Number of implemented projects Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2019 onwards	FIER municipality 24,000,000	FIER municipality CSOs
3.1.7 Provide water supply via mobile water containers – Mbrostar	FIER municipality	Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries		2019	FIER municipality 2,400,000	CSOs
3.2 Specific objective: Increase access to housing by formalising existing homes and providing social housing						
3.2.1 Identify cases requiring formalisation (registration) of illegally built houses	FIER municipality CSOs	Number of identified cases	FIER municipality OSCs	2019	FIER municipality CSOs 59,640	CSOs FIER municipality
3.2 Facilitate the criteria imposed by the State Cadastre Agency (ASHK) for the registration of unstable housing	ASHK FIER municipality	Number of applications Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2020	ASHK FIER municipality 152,000	FIER municipality CSOs



3.2.3 Provide legal support for members of the R&E minorities, who have problems with documentation/ registration/ judicial process	FIER municipality CSOs	Number of supported people Number of successfully closed cases	FIER municipality CSOs	Ongoing 2019-2022	FIER municipality CSOs 3,000,000	CSOs Fier municipality
3.2.4 Construct social houses (% dedicated to R&E minorities)	MFE FIER Municipality	Number of projects Number of beneficiaries	FIER Municipality CSOs	2020	MFE FIER Municipality Donors 12,500,000	FIER Municipality CSOs
3.2.5 Reconstruction and adjustment of public buildings that are not in use to serve as houses. a. Levan - Military Unit b. Drizé – Military Unit and former Oil Refinery offices	Defence Ministry (MM) FIER municipality	Number of projects Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality CSOs	2020	MM FIER municipality Donors 15,000,000	FIER municipality CSOs
3.2.6 Support homeless families with lease payments and placing them on priority lists for employment schemes	FIER municipality Employment and Professional Training Office	Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries Allocated budget	FIER municipality CSOs	2019	FIER municipality Employment and Professional Training Office Donors 800,000	CSOs FIER municipality
3.2.7 Reconstruct timber and mud houses - Seman	FIER municipality	Number of beneficiary families Number of beneficiaries Allocated budget	FIER municipality CSOs	2019	FIER municipality Donors 4,800,000	CSOs FIER municipality



4. Area of Intervention: Health						
Strategic objective: Improve access to health services for members of Roma and Egyptian minorities in Fier municipality						
Measure/activity	Stakeholders	Indicators	Data sources	Deadlines	Funds/Financing (ALL)	Monitoring
4.1 Specific objective: Increase awareness and access to health services for members of Roma and Egyptian minorities						
4.1.1 Facilitate registration of unregistered children in healthcare services and access to such services	Fier municipality, Child Protection Unit CSOs	Number of identified cases Number of initiatives undertaken Number of beneficiaries	Fier municipality RED Directorate of Public Health (DPH)	2019 onwards	Fier municipality CSOs 444,800	CSOs Fier Municipality CSOs
4.1.2 Enable vaccination of all children (even unregistered ones)	DPH Fier municipality, Child Protection Unit	Number of identified cases Number of addressed cases	DPH Fier municipality, Child Protection Unit	2019 onwards	DPH 800,000	Fier Municipality CSOs
4.1.3 Provide children with health cards and vaccination cards	DPH Fier municipality, Child Protection Unit	Number of identified cases Number of addressed cases	DPH Fier municipality	2019 onwards	DPH 44,000	Fier Municipality CSOs



4.1.4 Enable all pregnant women to get health services	DPH	Number of identified cases	DPH	2019 onwards	DPH	FIER Municipality CSOs
	FIER municipality	Number of addressed cases	FIER municipality		1,600,000	
4.1.5 Carry out awareness campaigns for the importance of health care, and mother and child health	DPH	Number of initiatives undertaken	DPH	2019 onwards	DPH	FIER Municipality CSOs
	FIER municipality, Child Protection Unit CSOs	Number of targeted persons	FIER municipality		4,684,800	
4.2 Specific objective: Improve the quality of health services available for members of the Roma and Egyptian minorities						
4.2.1 Assess needs of health centres for equipment	MHSP	Number of assessed centres	MHSP	2020	MHSP	FIER Municipality CSOs
	FIER municipality	Reported status (specific indicators)	FIER municipality		184,500	
4.2.2 Interventions to improve health centres infrastructure	MHSP	Number of projects	MHSP	2020 onwards	MHSP	FIER Municipality CSOs
	FIER municipality	Number of beneficiaries	FIER municipality		11,100,000	



5. Area of Intervention: Others – Migration						
Strategic objective: Reintegration of Roma and Egyptian families returned from migration.						
Measure/activity	Stakeholders	Indicators	Data sources	Deadlines	Funds/Financing (ALL)	Monitoring
5.1 Specific objective: Facilitate re-integration processes for Roma and Egyptian families returned from migration.						
5.1.1 Identify Roma and Egyptian families returned from migration	Fier municipality, Child Protection Unit Employment and Professional Training Office	Number of identified families	FIER municipality Employment and Professional Training Office	2019 onwards	Fier municipality CSOs 533,760	FIER Municipality CSOs
5.1.2 Assess Needs of Roma and Egyptian families returned from migration	FIER municipality OSCs	Number of assessments made Reports	FIER municipality CSOs	2019 onwards	FIER municipality OSCs 1,067,20	FIER Municipality CSOs
5.1.3 Identification of returned Roma and Egyptian children who need support in their re-integration in school	Fier municipality, Child Protection Unit RED	Number of identified children Number of assisted children Number of re-integrated children	FIER municipality RED	2019 onwards	RED FIER municipality 266,880	FIER Municipality CSOs
5.1.4 Provide children who have spent part of their lives elsewhere with health and vaccination cards (see the Health field).	DPH FIER municipality	Number of identified cases Number of addressed cases	DPH FIER municipality	2019 onwards	DPH FIER municipality 293,568	FIER Municipality CSOs



VIII. Monitoring and evaluation

The Local Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities is a policy and development document of the Fier Municipality for targeted communities and should not stop with its approval by the mayor and the Municipal Council. Regular monitoring of the local plan at certain time intervals, collection of data for measurable indicators, and evaluation of the impact on the improvement of the access to public services provided to the community and the publication of the results of the implementation of these measures is an institutional responsibility of the municipality, which is based on the principles of accountability of local governments, non-discrimination, citizen participation, and public information.

Monitoring and assessment results will contribute to orienting new policies and allocation of local-level resources under strategic planning and the local decision-making process. The monitoring reports will also provide valid and quality information under the ROMALB system report conducted twice a year by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

At a high level, the monitoring report will facilitate informed decision making by the Integrated Policy Management Team, which is also responsible for monitoring other development plans approved by the municipality, the General Local Plan, the Mid-Term Budget Program, and the annual budget. The monitoring results on the progress of implementation of the measures/activities of the Fier Municipality Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian minorities shall be periodically presented (at least once or twice a year).

On the operational level, the Social Service Directorate and the Community Coordinator be part of this directorate, will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Local Action Plan for Roma and Egyptian Integration in Fier municipality. The Social Service Directorate is responsible for collecting quantitative and qualitative data from all municipal structures according to the relevant sectors, as well as all other public institutions. The Social Service Directorate in the municipality has a co-ordination role in the performance and implementation of the plan. The action plan envisions publishing annual progress reports and support for the monitoring reports of civil society.

The challenge for the full functioning of the monitoring framework remains due to limited municipal staff capacities, improvement of the degree of accountability of other municipal structures, as well as the co-operation and interaction with other local-level structures under central institutions.



The process of self-declaration as Roma or Egyptian is not standardised, and some local-level structures are reluctant to collect these data for fear of violating privacy rights. There is a need to increase the capacity to make sure that all relevant public offices can collect the data needed for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan, while also defending the privacy rights of Roma and Egyptians. Specific data on the Egyptian situation is missing.¹⁸

At the level of priority sectors and strategic objectives, monitoring will be conducted through the assessment mechanisms based on results through measurable indicators, as well as observation on the quality and access to public services of Roma and Egyptians. These annual surveys must be undertaken by the municipality in co-operation with community organisations and CSOs. The survey results should be published on the municipality website.

With the limited municipal staff resources, the existing workload and limited professional capacity, monitoring of the plan for Roma and Egyptian integration shall be supported by external expertise from donor agency projects, which together with monitoring, will also help develop know-how and improve local administration capacities in the direction of monitoring and reporting.

The municipality regularly updates the online electronic system "ROMALB" for registration and updating data for the indicators of the NAPIRE Action Plan 2016-2020, while the MHSP offers technical support and training for the system users in the municipality.

The main basis of the Monitoring Framework of the Local Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities will be the set of indicators according to areas, activities, and deadlines.

Recommendations for the municipality:

- Establish an Integrated Policy Management Group (or local officials that will be responsible for high-level co-ordination and monitoring of implementation of the action plan).
- Assign local officials responsible for following up and monitoring the Local Plan (e.g., Officers from the Directorate of Social Services.)
- Strengthen co-operation with community organisations and CSOs targeting Roma and Egyptians in municipalities, as well as with facilitators or contact points.
- Ensure co-operation with projects financed by donor agencies for external support and expertise.

¹⁸ The National Action Plan for the Integration of Rome and Egyptians (NAPIRE) 2016-2020



IX. Annex

IX.1 Methods and techniques for the collection of primary data, with community participation

Focus-group discussions

Assembling the focus groups is recommended if you think there is a need for additional information from members of the community (mainly homogenous but under-represented groups such as women or youth). A focus group is recommended to be held with 8 to 15 participants. The facilitator presents the context in which the focus group is organised, its purpose, and the way the data generated through the focus group will be used. It later facilitates group discussion, showing caution not to lead the conversation and to include as many participants in the discussions as possible. Concrete steps include:

- Inviting participants from under-represented groups to help inform alternative data collection methods.
- Introducing the group to questions similar to those of the Matrix.
- Register all the answers anonymously and send them to the relevant experts.

Root Cause analysis

This method can also be used in a large group or once in smaller groups and then it can be agreed to be used in a larger group. The facilitator shall invite the participants to discuss and draw diagrams of the causes leading to certain situations/problems. This exercise serves very well to explore community perceptions of the causes of the problems and the reasons why they persist.

The problem trees are a technique that can facilitate this process. It presents the causes of the problem in a visual and summarised manner as the roots of the tree: the problem being analysed as the trunk; and the consequences, or its effects, as the leaves and the fruits of the tree.



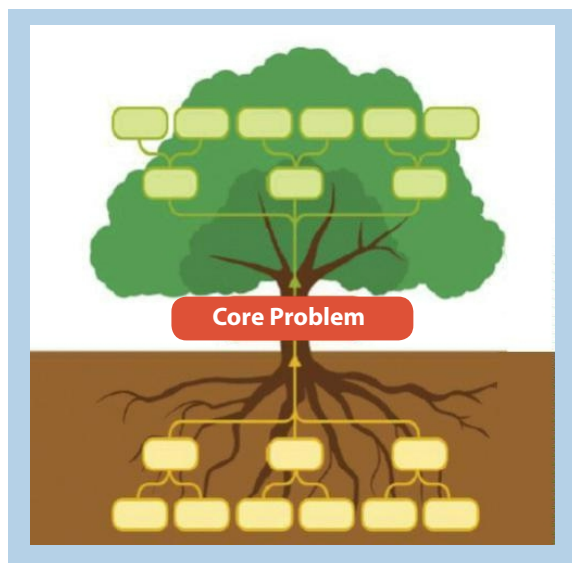


Figure 6. The Problem Tree

The problem matrix and how they are addressed.

Building the matrix of stakeholders is an exercise, which can be used both with the members of the community, and in meetings with representatives of the institutions. It aims at identifying the key issues for any area of interest, the specific needs of the community, the obstacles faced, the responsible actors, and the possibility of addressing the respective problems/needs.

The exercise can be facilitated by a local facilitator with the large group or could be done in smaller groups before it is agreed to be performed in the large group. A second option is that the facilitator invites the group to be divided into several smaller groups (a suggested division could be based on their interests or what they represent) and each group appoints a facilitator and representative for the work. At the end of the process, each group summarises its discussions on a flipchart, using a table like the one illustrated below.

The main facilitator, having heard the presentations of the tables from each small group, asks the large group to discuss them and agree on a summary table approved as final by the entire group. This process helps build a consensus regarding all the elements that the table contains.



Table2. Model for the matrix of main problems and their solution.

Area	What are the main issues?	Who is affected?	What are the needs/demands of the Roma community?	What obstacles do they encounter?	Who is responsible?	What proposals do we have?
Education						
Health						
Etc.						



IX.2 Questionnaire for municipality capacity assessment

In addition to the needs identified for the Roma and Egyptian minorities, we also need to assess the capacity level of the municipalities in relation to their area of interest. The assessment data can be organised with the help of the ROMACTED Handbook. Below are the assessment areas of the municipality capacities and the guiding questions for each component.

Table3. Assessment of municipal capacities in the field of education (including pre-school system)

EDUCATION	Has the municipality conducted any infrastructure improvement project in the past 3 years?	Yes/No	
	<i>If so, were any of them with a considerable number of Roma children?</i>	Yes/No	
	<i>If so, was that also with EU funds?</i>	Yes/No	
	Has the Municipality conducted any training for teachers in the last 3 years? (e.g., in collaboration with RED, etc.)	Yes/No	
	<i>If so, was that also EU funded?</i>	Yes/No	
	Are there any active school mediators in Roma communities?	Give a number	
	Does the Municipality finance any other support programme for Roma children?	Yes/No	
	Which municipal departments/services are responsible/competent in this area?	List them.	
	Can education-related issues be addressed at the local level?	Yes/No	
	Does the municipality have the capacity to draft and implement projects in the field of education?	High/ medium/ low capacity	
	What are the municipal needs in this direction? (education in general, including Roma children in particular)	Specify	
	What is the approved investment fund for constructing new kindergartens and/or reconstructing existing kindergartens versus the local budget for the reporting year (in %)	_%	



Referring to the question above, have there been kindergartens/nurseries attended by children of the Roma community?	v.2019 (forecast in Mid/Term Budget)	
Local investment fund for the construction of new schools and/or reconstruction of existing schools vs the local budget approved in the reporting year (in %)	___%	
Referring to the question above, have there been well-maintained/or reconstructed schools attended by a significant number of Roma children?		
Other issues		

Table 4. Municipal capacity assessment in the field of employment

EMPLOYMENT	Has the municipality conducted any project aimed at improving skills and employment in the past 3 years?	Yes/No	
	<i>If yes:</i> Was that also with EU funds?	Yes/No	
	Was there any funding from donors?	Yes/No	
	Who implemented/is implementing the project?		
	Were there Roma participants? How many?	Give a (rough) figure	
	Which municipal departments/services are responsible in this area?	List them.	
	Can issues in this area be addressed at the local level?	Yes/No	
	Does the municipality have the capacity to draft and implement projects in the employment area?	High/medium/ low capacity	
Has the Municipality supported Roma youth with vocational education and training in line with labor market needs (in co-operation with RED and the Labor Office)? How many?	Yes/No (Approximate) Number		



Are there unemployed R&E who receive economic assistance, and who are financially supported by the municipality with vocational education and training? How many?	Yes/No (Approximate) Number	
Any other issues of importance to note?	Note	

Table 5. Municipal capacity assessment in the field of housing

HOUSING	Has the municipality implemented any projects in the housing area in the past 3 years?	Yes/No How many? _____	
	Was any of them focused on the Roma households/community?	Yes/No How many? _____	
	<i>If so:</i>		
	<i>Was there any application for funds?</i>	Yes/No	
	<i>Were there any funds received from the EU?</i>	Yes/No	
	<i>What about other donors?</i>	Yes/No	
	<i>Who implemented/is implementing the project?</i>		
	<i>Were there Roma participants? How many?</i>	Give a (rough) figure	
	Which municipal departments/services are responsible in this area?	List them.	
	Can issues in this area be addressed at the local level?	Yes/No	
Does the municipality have capacities to design and implement projects in the housing area?	High/ medium/low capacity		
Percentage (%) of social housing cases for Roma community			
Any other issues of importance to note?	Note		



Table 6. Municipal capacity assessment in healthcare field

HEALTH CARE	Has the municipality implemented any health care projects for the Roma community in the past 3 years?		Yes/No	
	<i>If so:</i>	<i>Was that also with EU funds?</i>	Yes/No	
		<i>Was there any funding from donors?</i>	Yes/No	
		<i>Who implemented/is implementing the project?</i>		
		<i>Were there Roma participants? How many?</i>	Give a (rough) figure	
		How many healthcare mediators are active in Roma communities?	Put a number.	
		Which municipal departments/services are responsible/competent in this area?	List them.	
		Can issues in this area be addressed at the local level?	Yes/No	
	Does the municipality have capacities to draft and implement projects in the field of health care?	High/medium/low capacity		

Table 7. Assessment of municipal capacities in the field of equality and social inclusion

INCLUSION	Has the municipality implemented any projects to promote equality and social inclusion in the past 3 years?		Yes/No	
	<i>If so:</i>	<i>Was that also with EU funds?</i>	Yes/No	
		<i>Was there any funding from donors?</i>	Yes/No	
		Which municipal departments/services are responsible/competent in this area?	List them.	
		Can issues in this area be addressed at the local level?	Yes/No	
	Does the municipality have the capacity to draft and implement social inclusion projects?	High/medium/low capacity		



The table below reflects an intersectoral and inter-ethnic issue, that of financing and raising funds for financing various projects. This section serves specifically to assess and obtain as much information and data as possible on the capacities and opportunities of the municipality to draft projects, raise funds, and implement projects funded by the EU, national and international donors, etc.

Table 9. Municipal capacity assessment in the area of project writing and fundraising

FINANCING	Does the municipality have the capacity to apply for and use EU funds or other donors' money, including national funds?	High/medium/low capacity	
	Can the municipality apply for other donors' funds (SDC/Swiss, EEA/Norwegian, and others, such as IPA cross-border projects, ADRION, MED, BALLKANS-MEDITERRENIAN)?	Yes/No	
	Which municipal departments/services are responsible/competent in this area?	List them.	
	Has the municipality supported CSOs promoting social-economic integration of the Roma community with grants?		
	Any other issues of importance to note?	Note	

Increase transparency at the local level: The number of recommendations by members of the Roma and Egyptian minorities and CSOs reflected in the mid-term budget planning document vs the total number of recommendations from this community/or interest group. The most specific questions to be addressed in this direction are:

- Have Roma and Egyptian minorities, or the civil society organisation that support these communities in the process of annual or mid-term budget planning consultations given any recommendations?
- If so, how many recommendations were reflected in 2018?



Other aspects of the municipal capacity and other local-level institutions

The last table is dedicated to information regarding several other aspects of the municipal capacity assessment and other institutions at the local level.

Table 10. Other aspects of Municipal capacity assessment and other local-level institutions

	Human Resources Capacity/ Development	Yes	No	Explanation
1	If you have a job description, are everyone's roles and tasks clearly defined as per the job description? Is the work description compiled using by a specific template/ model (e.g., the template approved by the Department of Public Administration)?			
2	Is there an effective communication system in terms of resolving problems, performing tasks/ functions in the Municipal Council and/or with the head of the institution?			
3	Is there regular communication with, and/or regular participation of Roma and Egyptians in the joint and regular meetings of the City Council, and/or other institutions (which are responsible for the provision of services for specific issues concerning the community)?			
4	Do you have sufficient access to development of skills (training) to perform quality work (service)?			
5	How many employees have been trained for the past 2 years? Note the main fields.			
6	Do you have sufficient skills to perform your role in the public service you belong to?			
7	Specify up to three areas, where you need to grow your skills in the future:			
8	What are the three (3) most important improvements in terms of providing municipal services in the last two years?			
9	What are the three (3) remaining weaknesses in providing services in your municipality?			



IX.3 Members of Multi Task Force Group, Municipality of Fier

Enkelejda Peshkëpia	Nënkryetare Bashkisë Fier
Agron Margilaj	Director, Directorate of Social Services, Municipality of Fier
Irma Alushaj	Specialist, Directorate of Territorial Planning and Development, Municipality of Fier
Cristina Casado	Coordinator of Social Affairs, Murialdo Social Center
Kleo Muhmetaj	Director, State Agency of Cadastre
Albert Lena	Specialist, Regional Directorate of State Social Service Fier
Edlira Doko	Head of Sector on Programmes and Services, Regional Directorate of State Social Service Fier
Nevila Cala	Director, Directorate of Economy and Finance, Municipality of Fier
Marsa Delibashi	Head of Legal and Co-Governance Sectors, State Agency of Cadastre
Jora Dylgjeri	Specialist on Communities and Third Age, Directorate of Social Services, Municipality of Fier
Evrinomi Zhezhi	Head of Sector of Directorate of Economy and Finance, Municipality of Fier
Latif Kazanxhiu	Alderman, Baltëz
Shire Kazanxhiu	CAG Sektor Seman
Faslli Karafili	CAG Sektor
Armend Koci	CAG Baltëz
Aleks Kazanxhiu	CAG Baltëz
Panajot Alushi	CAG Drizë
Lulëzim Ymeri	CAG Mbrostar
Viola Selimaj	CAG Levan



IX.4 Decision of Approval by Fier Local Council

(in original language)



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISË
KESHILLI I BASHKISË FIER

Nr. 5419/1 prot.

Fier, më 18.06 .2019

VENDIM

Nr. 73 datë 18.06 .2019

PËR

MIRATIMIN E PLANIT VENDOR PËR INTEGRIMIN E ROMËVE DHE EGJIPTIANËVE 2019-2022, BASHKIA FIER

Në bazë të materialit të paraqitur nga Drejtoria e Shërbimit Social, Bashkia Fier, dhe në konsultim me përfaqësues të institucioneve vendore dhe të shoqërisë civile, me mbështetjen teknike të programit "ROMACTED", dhe në vijueshmëri të programeve "ROMED 2" dhe "ROMACT", bazuar në Ligjin nr. 139/2015 "Për Vetëqeverisjen Vendore" neni 24, dhe Ligjit nr. 121/2016 "Për shërbimet e kujdesit shoqëror në Republikën e Shqipërisë" neni 36; Strategjisë Kombëtare për zhvillim dhe integrim (SKZHI) 2015-2020; Planit Kombëtar të Veprimit për Integrimin e Romëve dhe Egjiptianëve (2016-2020); dhe Strategjisë Kombëtare Ndërsëktoriale për Decentralizimin dhe Qeverisjen Vendore (2015-2020),

VENDOSI

- I. Miratimin e Miratimin e "Planit Vendor Për Integrimin e Romëve dhe Egjiptianëve 2019-2022", Bashkia Fier.
- II. Për zbatimin e këtij Vendimi ngarkohet Drejtoria e Shërbimit Social.
- III. Vendimi u shpall më datë / /2019.
- IV. Vendimi hyn në fuqi 10 dite pas shpalljes.

KRYETARI I KESHILLIT TË BASHKISË

E VISËMA



Lagjia: "Kastriot", Rruga: "Ramiz Arapllasi", Nr. 25, Tel: 00955 34 41 06 22, Website: www.bashkiafier.gov.al

ROMA ACTED

*Promoting good governance
and Roma empowerment
at local level*

ENG

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