

January 2020

ROMACTED at a glance: NORTH MACEDONIA

The legacy of the previously implemented ROMED1 and ROMED2 Programmes (2011-2017) created positive conditions for the introduction of the ROMACTED methodology in North Macedonia.

“Roma Democratic Development Association Sonce” from Tetovo is the implementing beneficiary partner of the ROMACTED Programme. The action is coordinated by the Council of Europe Programme Office in Skopje. Local interventions have been carried out by a team of facilitators and experts.

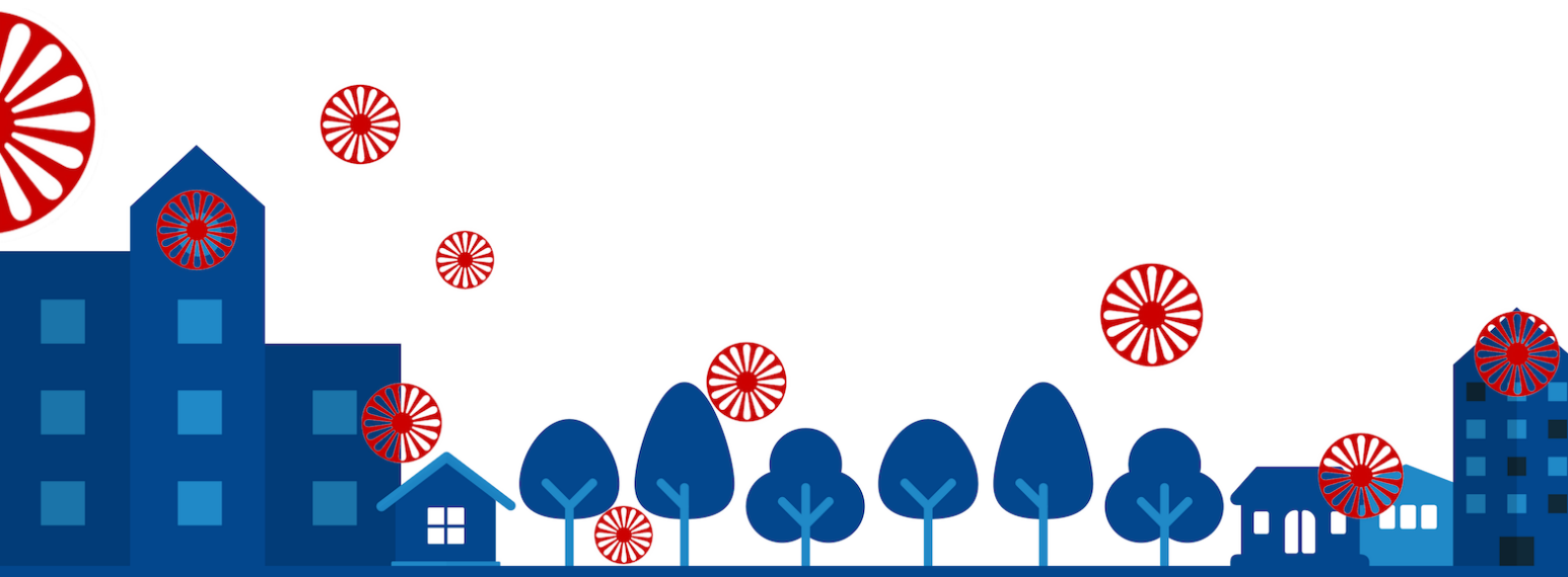
The official launch of the ROMACTED Programme took place on 19 March 2018. A tripartite framework of partnership for the implementation of the Programme was signed between the Council of Europe (Strasbourg), the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and representatives of the local authorities from the 12 target municipalities: Berovo, Bitola, Debar, Gostivar, Kičevo, Kočani, Prilep, Strumica, Štip, Tetovo, Veles and Vinica in the presence of the European Union Delegation and the Minister without Portfolio responsible for the implementation of the National Strategy for the improvement of the situation of Roma.

The launching conference was followed by national training on Participatory Local Strategic Planning, organised on 20 March 2018 in Skopje, focusing on the ROMACTED methodological steps that will be implemented during the participatory planning processes in the 12 municipalities.

The First Advisory Group meeting took place on 5 February 2019 in Skopje. The second meeting is foreseen for March 2020.

Various national training workshops have been organised with the participation of the main stakeholders of the programme on issues such as Roma-sensitive budgeting, project development and Roma women's political participation.

Due to the upcoming legislative elections to be held in April 2020, the intensity of local interventions will decrease and will be at a more discreet pace. Thus, the focus will be placed on the implementation of the small grants in the 12 municipalities.



Step

01

PREPARING THE PROCESS

The Community Action Groups (CAG) and Institutional Working Groups (IWG) were officially set up and established, almost simultaneously, in all 12 localities during the first six months of 2018. The interventions benefited from the dynamic established by the ROMED2 Programme and the experience of the support organisation and national team in using a similar methodological approach. The average number of Roma community members participating in the CAG is 9 (2-3 women on average).

The mayors of the 12 participating municipalities delegated municipal contact points for the programme's implementation. The Municipal Taskforce Groups (MTG) (a joint group composed of CAG and IWG representatives) were set up at the same time. Also, in this context the legacy of ROMED2 contributed to the emergence of these working parties within a short timeframe within the new programme.

Step

02

ASSESSING NEEDS AND PRIORITISING

The Community Needs Assessments have been carried out and completed during 2018.

Joint Action Plans have been developed in 12 municipalities: Berovo, Bitola, Debar, Gostivar, Kičevo, Kočani, Prilep, Strumica, Štip, Tetovo, Veles and Vinica.

Local Action Plans for Roma Integration have been prepared in five municipalities: Debar, Kičevo, Kočani (for education only), Strumica and Veles.

Step

03

ADOPTING A JOINT ACTION PLAN

Municipal Taskforce Group meetings take place once per trimester. On average, 4-5 CAG members are actively taking part in the meetings (two women on average).

Joint Action Plans have been adopted by the Local Municipal Councils in: Debar, Kičevo, Kočani, Štip and Tetovo (10 million MKD for the implementation). Local Action Plans have been adopted by the Local Municipal Councils in: Debar, Kičevo, Kočani (for education only) and Veles.

- Concrete actions have been prepared for the celebration of International Roma Day (2019) in close co-operation with ten municipalities;
- Environmental action for clearing the illegal landfill and placement of garbage containers in several Roma settlements was carried out with the participation of the Community Action Group members and local authority representatives in Štip;
- Following the joint intervention of the CAG and authorities in Berovo, three Roma families were given social housing;
- Five Roma children went back to pre-school education in 2018 and the municipality of Berovo covered the related cost;
- The Local Municipal Council of Berovo adopted a decision to exempt vulnerable groups from paying for water consumption (up to 10m3). This was one of the community needs and priorities identified by the CAG in 2018;
- The river "Dabnicka", the landfill at "Erduvan Sabanovski" and the illegal dumps in "Trizla" were cleaned in Prilep.

Step

04

FINANCING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Ministry of Local Self-Governance allocated funds in the amount of 3 million MKD in 2018 and 2019 for the implementation of the Local Action Plans for Roma. In 2018, seven ROMACTED municipalities benefited from this funding followed by eleven in 2019.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications allocated 20 million MKD (2019) for the implementation of the Strategy for the Roma in Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 in seven municipalities, five of which were implementing the ROMACTED Programme.

Veles and Vinica benefited from the IPA II 2017 call for grantees, worth 1 million EUR for "Facilitating Social Inclusion of Roma".

The Municipality of Strumica allocated funds from the local budget to reconstruct "Betovenova" street. The Municipality of Vinica paved "Ivo Lola Ribar" street with funds from the local budget.

All 12 participating municipalities have applied for, and are implementing, local projects under the ROMACTED Small Grants Scheme.

Synergies and Cooperation

■ The Minister without Portfolio provided support to the infrastructural priorities of the Roma community and assigned allocation of financial resources to six ROMACTED beneficiary municipalities in 2018 and five in 2019;

■ Strategic cooperation and coordination developed among the Ministry Without Portfolio responsible for the implementation of the National Strategy for the improvement of the situation of Roma, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Roma Resource Center, Roma Lawyers Association and Open Society Foundations Skopje, to establish access to legal aid and empowerment. As of January 2019, three CAG members have been involved as mediators in eight municipalities;

■ One educational mediator was employed in Strumica and Veles within the framework of the Ministry of Education and Science, from the pool of certified mediators trained under the ROMED Programme;

■ The celebration of International Roma Day 2019 was organised in close cooperation with the local authorities and Roma community. The Municipality of Tetovo allocated funds to support several events in this regard. In addition to the local authorities, the events in Strumica and Veles were organised in collaboration with Romaversitas and the Institute for Research and Policy Analysis-Romalitico;

■ In co-operation with the Regional Cooperation Council's Roma Integration 2020, the workshop on "Roma Sensitive Budgeting" was delivered to municipal representatives and members of the Community Action Group in October 2019;

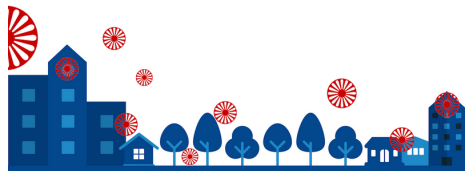
■ A consultative meeting was held with UN Habitat Skopje, CELIM Milano and Roma Resource Center on the IPA II 2017 call for grantees on "Facilitating Social Inclusion of Roma";

■ A strategic partnership was formed with the Ministry of Local Self-Governance to grant financial support to the municipalities of Debar, Kicevo and Veles, which adopted the Local and Joint Action Plans within the ROMACTED framework;

■ In partnership with the Association of Educationists for Protection of Women and Children's Rights (LIL NGO), the Council of Europe funded a first national training course to foster the political participation of Roma women. This training focused mostly on the women from the communities in which the ROMACTED Programme is active.

■ The Mayor of the Municipality of Prilep was awarded the prize of Most Roma friendly Mayor from North Macedonia in 2018 as part of the EU Award for Roma integration.

Small grants for municipalities



VINICA

Installation of external sewage system for 25 families living on Vanco Prke Street to improve the living and health conditions of those families

BEROVO

Construction of a water supply line for 32 families living on Prohor Pcinski street to improve the living standards and quality of life

KOČANI

Reconstruction of two branches of Stamen Manov street

TETOVO

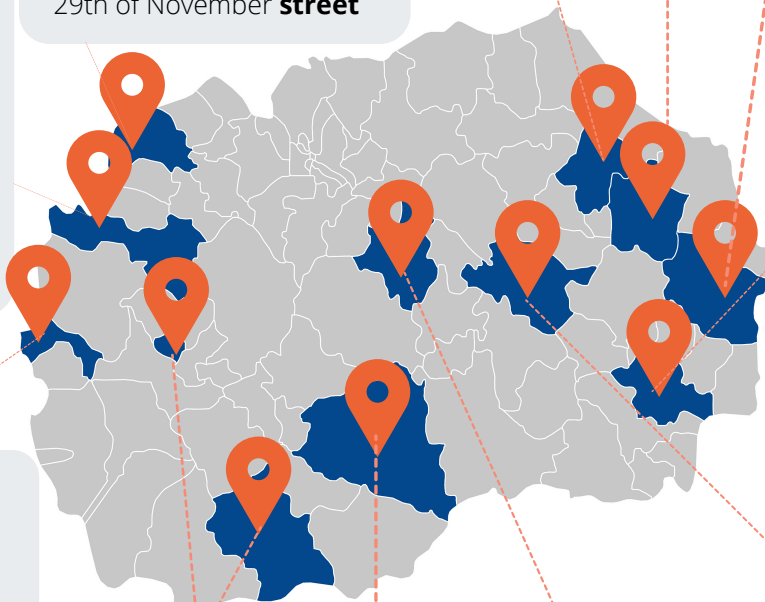
Improving conditions on 29th of November **street**

STRUMICA

Installation of street lighting to improve the infrastructure in the Roma settlements and to build upon the capacities of the Roma community on their rights.

GOSTIVAR

Improving the quality of life of the Roma community living in the settlement "Grudajca" through **reconstruction of a street** and installation of recycling containers



ŠTIP

Improving the quality of life and living conditions of the Roma community in Sveta Nedela settlement.

The project will **improve communal infrastructure** for about 100 Roma families through the concreting of a 210m long section in the area

DEBAR

Improving infrastructural facilities for sport and recreation at Said Najdeni elementary school (**reconstruction of a playground and sports field, purchase of equipment and toys**)

VELES

Reconstruction (plumbing, tile replacement, roof repairs, sinks, etc.) **of the toilets** in the cloakrooms of the sports hall in Panko Brasnar primary school which 215 Roma children attend.

KIČEVO

Construction of a playground in Roma neighbourhood

BITOLA

Improving social and cultural life of Roma community and **provide a safe space for leisure** time of families through **renovation of the park/children's playground and provision of sports equipment** in the settlement of Bair

PRILEP

Reconstruction of pavement along Trizla street with concrete slabs to improve infrastructure, safer walking, quality of life, etc.