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**“ROMA INTEGRATION PROGRAM FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY AND SLOVAKIA”
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Case Studies

[Hungarian National Conciliation Commission Meeting](#)

[NGO Kľuč](#)

[Czech “Be Aware” Campaign](#)

[‘Tolerance Camp’](#)

[Chomutov International Conciliation Commission Meeting](#)

SUMMARY

In 2003, Partners for Democratic Change (Partners), a U.S.-based international nonprofit organization, in cooperation with Partners Czech, Partners Hungary Foundation (Partners Hungary) and Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia (PDCS), also referred to as Centers, launched the regional Roma Integration program (RIP) in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. This complex and comprehensive program was based on Partners' and the Centers' past experience implementing ethnic integration projects in Central and Eastern Europe.

Over the course of the four year program, Partners launched interventions at the local (in nine target communities, three in each country), national and regional levels. The program sought to approach Roma integration from several perspectives, all focused on involving Roma in creating solutions to issues affecting their communities. Eight program components, from media work to a small grants program - the results of which are outlined in this report - formed the backbone of the RIP. Throughout, Partners tried to inculcate innovative programs at the community level and use lessons learned to inform policy discussions at the national and regional levels. In sum, the program achieved many important successes while also facing some difficult challenges.

With the accession of these countries to the EU and the launch of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (an initiative supported by national governments in Central and Eastern Europe) during the past four years, there are new opportunities for Roma civil society organizations to advance Roma integration efforts in Central Europe. However, there is much work to be done. Roma still face discrimination, particularly in the workplace and in school settings. Many lack access to adequate housing and healthcare. Political participation by Roma is still low. The Roma Integration Program was an ambitious initiative that had wide reaching impact, but there are many Roma communities across Europe who have yet to benefit from Roma integration programs.

Key Achievements

- [Trainings](#) for 430 people in the nine RIP target communities in skills such as conflict resolution, mediation, facilitation, communication, cooperative planning, advocacy, and specialized trainings for journalists. The trainings developed essential skills in each community and became the foundation of the program and its successes.
- [Cooperative planning processes](#) in the nine RIP communities involving 160 people in total. Groups of diverse stakeholders identified barriers to Roma integration and developed concrete recommendations for solutions, which led to the development of community small grant projects.
- The distribution of over \$750,000 in [small grant](#) funds, supporting 106 community projects. The projects addressed the lack of Roma access to social services, quality education, healthcare, and proper housing. Over 15,000 people were directly impacted as a result of these projects and thousands more benefited from increased Roma-majority cooperation. The key achievement of the RIP small grants was the development of Roma civil society in communities where Roma populations are often isolated. Through multiple grant rounds in each country and community, new and existing organizations improved project development and management skills, which in a majority of cases translated to new grants (from the EU, national government, foundations, and businesses) that will allow these organizations to continue projects into the future.

- The establishment of nine multiethnic [Conciliation Commissions](#), one in each RIP community. The Commissions, each composed of approximately ten people, addressed inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic community disputes, such as employment and family conflicts. While Partners does not expect every Commission to sustain itself beyond the RIP, three have registered as NGOs and two others have integrated themselves into existing NGO structures, meaning the skills they developed during the RIP will continue to be employed in those communities.
- [Trainings for 200 teachers and 900 students](#) in multicultural curricula and conflict management. The school training program increased appreciation of diversity and formed the basis for accredited teacher tolerance training programs in Hungary and Slovakia, which both Partners Hungary and PDCS were involved in developing.
- Facilitation of eleven national [roundtables](#), which addressed key Roma integration issues and impacted public policy debates. In Hungary, journalists and the Hungarian government developed recommendations during one roundtable, which formed the basis of a [green paper](#) on media diversity and fair reporting of Roma issues. The green paper was published with official support from the Ministry of Equal Opportunities. In Slovakia, key stakeholders addressed the issue of “Field Social Workers,” which serve to bring Roma greater access to social services. Following a roundtable, the Ministry of Social Affairs agreed to give formal support to the position, and the Finance Ministry approved \$10 million to fund the social workers. And in the Czech Republic, the position of Roma Regional Coordinators serving in the Czech Republic’s fourteen regions was formalized by the government following discussions at a Partners Czech-facilitated roundtable.
- The support of eleven [media interns](#) in the Czech Republic and Hungary, eight of which have subsequently been hired. The Hungarian Ministry of Equal Opportunities has agreed to continue support for the internship program based in part on the success of the RIP initiative.
- The facilitation of multi-sectoral planning processes to create new strategies for Roma integration by Partners Hungary in Hatvan and PDCS in the Prešov and Banská Bystrica regions. Both organizations were explicitly requested to facilitate these planning sessions by local and regional government officials.
- A [media campaign](#) in the Czech Republic promoting tolerance and encouraging Czechs to “Be Aware” of their prejudices. The campaign reached hundreds of thousands of people around the country through cinema spots, posters, a web site, and primetime TV broadcasts of a public service message.
- The sharing of best practices for Roma integration at the local and national level during three annual Regional Beneficiary Meetings, one in each of the RIP countries, semi-annual Regional Planning Meetings, an international Conciliation Commission meeting in the Czech Republic, and informally through the Partners for Democratic Change International network of Centers, including Partners, Partners Czech, Partners Hungary and PDCS.
- The development of the *Roma Integration Program: Success Stories* booklet, a collection of case studies representing the best work of the Roma Integration Program. Hundreds of booklet copies (in English, Czech, Hungarian, and Slovak) were distributed at final RIP conferences in each target country and through the mail. Thousands more were reprinted by the Center for Political Analysis in Prague, an EU-funded organization, and distributed at a conference looking at Roma integration best practices.

Main Challenges

- Real change occurs at a slow pace. The Roma Integration Program was highly ambitious and achieved many notable successes. However, it is unrealistic to expect that deeply held feelings of mistrust and intolerance between different ethnic communities will quickly disappear.
- Frequent changes to local and national government administrations (and/or political impasses) made it difficult to cultivate consistent government support for policy recommendations, reforms and program activities.
- Program funding did not enable a Partners program coordinator to be located in the region on a consistent basis. To overcome this challenge, representatives from Partners' U.S. offices and a RIP regional coordinator were based in the region - however these were not long-term assignments. The distance between Partners program managers in the U.S. and its implementing partners in the target countries impacted Partners' ability to monitor and evaluate the program and verify data collected by local staff.
- More time should have been budgeted to complete monitoring and evaluation of program outcomes. A contractor specializing in monitoring and evaluation systems would have been beneficial as they could have collected more useful statistical data, particularly data informing the yearly indicator reports to the funder.
- Partners would have liked to build on regional networking and information sharing in the program, with more emphasis on advocacy at the European level, but this was beyond the scope of the program. In the future, such programs should make this a more explicit goal with time allocated to support these activities.

The following report describes the major achievements of the Roma Integration Program while also discussing challenges and lessons that should be considered in subsequent Roma integration initiatives.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Partners for Democratic Change is an international non-governmental organization based in the United States. Since its founding in 1989, Partners has worked to build sustainable local capacity to advance civil society and a culture of change and conflict management worldwide. Partners' initiatives promote good governance, citizen participation and the empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Partners also builds the capacity of local institutions to promote democratic, participatory change and develops autonomous, locally staffed and managed Centers for Change and Conflict Management (or Centers), including Partners Czech, Partners Hungary and PDCS. Fourteen Centers in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Latin America, along with Partners, form the Partners for Democratic Change International network. The network facilitates information sharing, promotes regional partnerships and enables members to share expertise and resources.

Partners Czech (www.partnersczech.cz), Partners Hungary (www.partnershungary.hu) and PDCS (www.pdcs.sk) were founded in the early 1990's to support democratic developments in Central Europe. The organizations provide dispute resolution skills and services, advance the development of civil society and facilitate dialogue among local governments, NGOs, businesses and other community stakeholders for cooperative local development. Both the Centers and Partners had previous experience developing Roma and other ethnic minority integration programs that worked to foster inter-ethnic dialogue, improve access to public services and strengthen representation in decision-making.

Based on this past experience, Partners launched the Roma Integration Program in 2003 with support from the United States government. The program was managed from Partners' San Francisco headquarters by a program management team that was responsible for creating implementation strategies, developing and monitoring budgets, evaluating program progress, liaising with the donor, and reporting impacts and outcomes. At the beginning of the program, a Partners' program coordinator was located in the region to help manage program start-up. In 2005, a Roma regional coordinator was brought on to manage outreach efforts, develop the regional aspect of the program and assist U.S.-based program staff with monitoring and evaluation.

Center program staffs, consisting of program managers, grant managers, trainers, and finance specialists, were responsible for national and local-level program implementation and monitoring. The Centers were aided in these efforts by local coordinators who coordinated community activities, monitored projects, conducted needs assessments, and promoted the program in the target localities. RIP Advisory Boards were also formed in each country to give guidance and expertise to the design and development of country programs. Well respected representatives from Roma organizations, NGOs and the media were recruited and brought a wealth of expertise and legitimacy to the program.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The key to Partners' Roma integration approach was the outcome of community-level RIP initiatives, which were designed to achieve change, test certain strategies and ultimately inform activities at the national and regional levels. Broadly, RIP community initiatives were designed to

mitigate conflict, promote tolerance, increase Roma access to social services, and support political developments. Through trainings and a small grants program, the RIP also sought to build human capacity to manage conflict and encourage interethnic cooperation, and to develop civil society capable of advancing Roma integration. The main community initiatives included:

- Trainings for Roma and non-Roma government, civil society and community leaders in effective communication, conflict management, advocacy, negotiation and mediation, facilitation, cooperative planning, and public relations.
- Cooperative planning processes to build consensus around key development issues affecting Roma integration in each community.
- Conciliation Commissions, diverse community mediating bodies capable of impartially addressing the sources of and resulting inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic disputes.
- Small grants to community-based organizations working to promote interethnic cooperation and more effective delivery of services to isolated Roma communities.

During the first months of the program in 2003, Partners and the Centers developed criteria for selecting target communities in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Through site visits and discussions with NGOs, local officials and Roma groups, the Centers assessed community needs and began to build support for the Roma Integration Program. Among the data gathered during these site visits was demographic information about Roma, assessments of Roma access to social services, community change and conflict management skills, and information about the level of cooperation between Roma and non-Roma.



Partners and the Centers' goal was to choose sites representing the range of Roma issues in the region, to select communities both big and small with a variety of challenges and opportunities. Using the data gathered during site visits, communities were judged based on a series of criteria, including: the size of the Roma population; support for the program from within the community; the chances for replicability; and the ability to combine RIP activities with other existing initiatives.

By the end of October 2003, an initial Community Needs Assessment Report was submitted to USAID suggesting nine communities for intervention. Within the first six months of the program, seven of the nine target communities had been selected. Later, Rimavská Sobota, Slovakia and Bruntál in the Czech Republic would be added. These nine diverse communities each faced their own set of challenges:

Bruntál/Krnov, Czech Republic: Bruntál was the final RIP target community to be chosen and thus program activities got a later start here. However, this small town of 18,000 benefited from established NGOs and a supportive local government. Krnov is a nearby town with a significant Roma population.

Chomutov, Czech Republic: Roma make up over 10 percent of the population in this mid-sized city in the Czech Republic. Large numbers of Roma immigrated to Chomutov, straining interethnic

tensions and social services delivery. High unemployment was and is still a huge problem (for both Roma and non-Roma) in the north-western region of the Czech Republic near the German border where Chomutov is located.

Pardubice, Czech Republic: A large city in central Czech Republic, Pardubice has a small Roma population as a proportion of the overall city population (around 94,000 people), but they are concentrated in overcrowded settlements. During the needs assessment, Partners Czech identified conflict within the Roma community as a serious concern. Pardubice had not been a target of past Roma integration work.

Hatvan, Hungary: This small city near Budapest was initially seen as among the most challenging communities in which to work due to a number of high profile conflicts between the Roma and non-Roma population. The relationship between the police and Roma in Hatvan was identified as an important issue during the initial needs assessment. However, the local government was very supportive of the program and of Roma integration efforts.

Ózd, Hungary: Ózd has one of the highest proportions of Roma in Hungary, around 30 percent. Roma are isolated in settlements around the city. Tensions between Roma NGOs working in the city were also a serious concern. Partners Hungary had done extensive training and field work in Ózd before the RIP, and for this reason, the Roma community and the local government were supportive of the program.

Pécs, Hungary: The largest of the RIP target communities in terms of overall population (170,000), Pécs Roma live in villages outside of the city center. The Roma population is relatively well educated and there are some Roma from Pécs participating in local and national politics. Partners Hungary had worked in Pécs before the RIP.

Kežmarok, Slovakia: A large Roma population lives in poor conditions in buildings within the city or in scattered settlements. Living conditions for Roma were and still are bad – many lack water, electricity and proper sanitation services. The city also forced some Roma to relocate outside of historical old residential buildings in the city center. PDCS had experience training Field Social Workers and was known among the NGO community in Kežmarok.

Prešov, Slovakia: Prešov, a city of 93,000 in eastern Slovakia, had largely been ignored by international and national development initiatives despite a large Roma population, poor living conditions and ethnic segregation issues. Intra-ethnic tensions existed between wealthier Roma and poorer Roma segregated to settlements. PDCS established a Conciliation Commission in Prešov in 2002, but its focus was on community disputes rather than a specific interethnic conflict resolution focus.

Rimavská Sobota, Slovakia: Located in the relatively underdeveloped Banská Bystrica region of Slovakia, the city faced many challenges, including low levels of education and high levels of unemployment. Roma, estimated at approximately one quarter of the population, were not politically engaged, according to the initial needs assessment.

After identifying the communities, the Centers hired local coordinators in each community. These positions were responsible for working with the Centers to coordinate local initiatives, conducting assessments of local needs, assisting in participant selection, and providing ongoing support to all

program elements. In practice, the experience with the local coordinators was mixed. Most were highly engaged in the initial activities, including program outreach, selecting participants, linking with stakeholders, and ensuring success. However, when it came to monitoring of local-level program activities, some, though not all, coordinators became less reliable as time went on.

The Centers then held multiple meetings in each community to introduce the Roma Integration Program and identify and recruit participants for the training program, cooperative planning process and Conciliation Commissions. In addition, each Center further assessed training needs and key community issues in preparation for implementation of community initiatives.

TRAINING PROGRAM

In the original series of trainings held for project participants during the first years of the Roma Integration Program, over 430 people were taught effective communication, facilitation, conflict management, and negotiation skills. In addition, follow-up trainings were provided by each Center to enhance the skills of Conciliation Commissions and other community-level RIP participants, including sub-grant beneficiaries. In addition to these core skills, the subsequent trainings were designed to increase local organizations' capacity to effectively market their services and programs and manage effective development projects. These additional trainings were based on participant demand for experience they recognized as necessary to enhance their capacity in the future to advance Roma integration in their communities.

IMPACT

Eighty-six percent of program participants surveyed in 2007 responded 'yes' when asked whether they "used the knowledge and skills gained through training program(s) in your work and/or in your community."

Besides the inherent benefit of learning these necessary conflict management and cooperative skills, RIP training participants formed a solid core of community-based Roma integration leaders. In each community, approximately 30 to 40 people participated in multiple program initiatives, starting with the training program. Some sub-grant beneficiaries, Conciliation Commission members and even media program participants were first introduced to the program and to each other through the training initiative, resulting in:

- The development of joint small grant projects, which reflected the priorities identified during the cooperative planning process.
- The formation of working groups to address priority issues, such as education, housing or unemployment, on a regular basis.
- Participation with the Conciliation Commissions (i.e. utilizing its services).

In sum, training seminars were a highly effective means by which to develop a cadre of skilled, engaged citizens in each RIP target community. These core groups put their training into practice, moving beyond training for training's sake.

- More field social workers
- Improved Roma interaction with the municipality
- New affordable housing

A summary of the results from each community can be found below:

Czech Republic

Bruntál: Fifteen people participated in the cooperative planning trainings and sessions in Bruntál during 2005. Over the course of the six trainings and the separate planning process, participants identified several important issues in the community, in particular the Dlouha Street area, considered a Roma “ghetto” in the area. Four micro grant round proposals were submitted as a result of the

cooperative planning process, focused on working with youth and unemployment, impacting nearly 400 people.

SUSTAINABILITY

Ninety (90) percent of the people who were trained by Partners Czech in cooperative planning report being active in community planning processes in their towns and cities. Cooperative planning is an officially recognized process in Pardubice as of 2006 and has the support of funding from the European Union. In Chomutov, a “People in Crisis” working group includes many of the original cooperative planning participants. And in Bruntál, the municipal Social Department officially supports the cooperative planning group.

Chomutov: The cooperative planning process in Bruntál was conducted between February 2004 and March 2005 and involved 26 people, including Roma and NGO leaders, teachers, social workers and, importantly, local government representatives. The group identified housing, education and employment and formed working groups to further analyze and address the education and unemployment topics.

Chomutov is a good example of the significant outcomes that can be achieved by the cooperative planning process when supported by local government. As a result of the Chomutov authorities’ involvement in the process:

- At the suggestion of Partners Czech, a Commission on Ethnic Minorities and Roma was formed and a Roma Advisory Board created to give input to the Commission.
- Representatives from the local government agreed to attend a roundtable organized by Roma organizations on the poor standard of living in the Dukelska Roma settlement. The Chomutov government agreed to improve conditions there.
- A greater number of Roma attended public meetings and took a more active role in decision-making processes.

In addition, six micro grant projects were implemented in the locality during the first round, the most in the Czech Republic, impacting nearly 1,200 people.

Pardubice: Prior to the cooperative planning process in Pardubice, little interaction occurred between older and younger generations of Roma, let alone Roma and non-Roma residents. As a result of planning meetings, attended by 23 people in Pardubice, Roma began to cooperate more with each other and non-Roma groups and citizens. The planning process in Pardubice involved Roma NGOs, the municipal government, the local employment office, and, uniquely, the Pardubice Police. Lines of communication between the police and the Roma community were started as a

result. Five micro grant projects were implemented during the first grant round in Pardubice as a result of the cooperative planning process, focused primarily on youth education and health.

Hungary

Hatvan: The cooperative planning process was conducted in this community during 2004. The Deputy Mayor of Hatvan was highly supportive of the RIP activities in the community (even agreeing to co-fund three days of initial trainings) and was an invaluable resource for Partners Hungary in identifying stakeholders. Hatvan has faced a series of challenges, including poor cooperation among Roma groups and between Roma, the local government and the police. It therefore should be considered a significant development that the RIP was able to bring these parties together in a cooperative process. Four small grant projects were implemented in the community during the community grants round. In preparation for the second Euroregions grant round, Partners Hungary conducted additional trainings and held consultative meetings in Hatvan.

Believing in the value of the cooperative planning approach and the impact it had in Hatvan on majority-minority relations, a mayor from a nearby village (the mayor had participated in the Partners Hungary facilitated process) held similar planning meetings in his community. Participants included local government officials, educators, social service providers, and the Roma Minority Self-Government (RMSG).

Pécs: Following the initial trainings in Pécs, Roma participants were asked to recruit at least one non-Roma stakeholder who could contribute to the Roma Integration Program. The effect was not only to build a group of Pécs officials and residents supportive of the program, but also to increase dialogue between Roma and non-Roma, which had already been relatively strong there. On average, thirty people participated in the cooperative planning process in Pécs and the subsequent workshops. As a notable success, more organizations and individuals participated in each subsequent meeting. Six projects were approved in the first Community grant round in the community.

FUTURE PROJECTS

The CEE Trust has provided funding to PDCS to implement cooperative planning processes in seven communities around Slovakia. The focus of this effort will be on improving affordable housing.

Ózd: Trainings were held in Ózd in 2004 and into 2005 on cooperative planning and project management skills. Fifteen people took part in workshops as part of the ongoing skills development in the community prior to the launch of the second grant round in Hungary. The RMSG in Ózd participated in these processes. The Ózd group cited health as the most serious issue confronting Roma in the community and encouraged the development of preventative health programs. Two projects were approved in the community as part of the first Community grant round.

Slovakia

Kežmarok: The Kežmarok local coordinator recruited 25 people to participate in the cooperative planning process there, which began at the end of 2003. The group included teachers, field social

workers and representatives from the local government. With help from PDCS, the participants developed questionnaires to be distributed in their neighborhoods, asking community members about the most pressing needs in the community and soliciting ideas for future developments. The priority areas, including children's education, unemployment and housing, were later to become the focus of most of Kežmarok's 28 small grant projects, including the 11 micro grant projects developed following the cooperative planning process. An important result of the cooperative planning process in this community was the decision by 12 of the group to join the Kežmarok Conciliation Commission, demonstrating the impact RIP initiatives had on developing human capacity at the local level to support cooperative decision-making, conflict management and ethnic integration.

Prešov: The cooperative planning process was conducted between September 2004 and January 2005 in Prešov involving 20 people from NGOs, schools, the police, healthcare institutions and social services agencies. Poor access to housing was identified as the most serious concern in the community surveys distributed in Prešov. Crime and the Roma community's lack of knowledge about human rights and the law were also cited as problems. Only two projects during the micro grants round followed these discussions, but the number of projects increased with each subsequent grant round.

SUSTAINABILITY

Three of the Conciliation Commissions were registered as NGOs, while two integrated into already existing NGOs or organizations in the community.

Based on its past experience and the cooperative planning processes it held as part of the RIP, PDCS was approached by the Prešov Regional Government in the fall of 2005 to facilitate a similar process involving a steering group responsible for developing the Regional Strategy for Social and Economic Integration of Roma in Prešov. Five meetings of the steering group were held involving 20 people from the government and non-governmental sector. The strategic plan was presented to the Roma Minority Self Government, which gave its approval of the plan. Its impact is not yet certain, as it

will not be implemented until 2008, but the cooperative nature of the plan's development was significant because for the first time Roma were involved in such discussions. PDCS also worked in Banská Bystrica at the request of the Plenipotentiary Office for Roma Communities to facilitate a similar regional planning process involving both government and civil society stakeholders to create new strategies for Roma integration. As in Prešov, the Banská Bystrica Roma integration plan became part of a wider strategic plan for development in the region.

Rimavská Sobota: Twenty cooperative planning participants completed the process during the same time period as the Prešov group. Access to education and employment were identified as the most important Roma priorities. In November 2005, nine micro grant projects were approved in this community.

CONCILIATION COMMISSIONS

Among the most innovative program components, Conciliation Commissions (CCs) were also one of the most challenging to implement and sustain. Considerable effort is required to build mediation

skills and trust between the Conciliation Commission and the community it serves, though when done correctly there is great potential for long-term impact.

The nine multiethnic commissions, one in each RIP target community, were created and trained to manage community disputes, particularly interethnic conflicts. Each CC required a great deal of assistance in addition to the training that was provided as part of the program. Due to a lack of experience, many members were not confident in their ability to take cases, which presented a challenge during the early days of their operation. In addition, many of the communities had no experience with such mediating bodies and no concept of the value of their work so the CC's found it difficult to generate cases. Finally, a lingering distrust of voluntary organizations due to these countries' experiences with "forced volunteerism" under the Communist system also proved challenging.

Despite the challenges, there were a number of notable successes. Three of the Conciliation Commissions were registered as NGOs and two integrated into existing NGOs or NGO networks. Every commission took at least one case and in total the commissions reported working on 65 cases during the RIP, over 87 percent of which were resolved successfully. A list of all cases the Conciliation Commissions reported taking during the course of the program can be found in [Appendix 4](#). The resolution of these disputes, from family arguments to disagreements over property boundaries and land ownership, in many cases led to a de-escalation of violence or prevented violence altogether. In addition to taking cases, commissions implemented community development projects, provided trainings for educators and local government officials, convened roundtables, and worked on economic development issues.

IMPACT

Of program participants surveyed in 2007, 72 percent said that they felt the program contributed to improved inter-group relations in their community, while only eight percent said that it did not.

The initial trainings of the Conciliation Commission members took place in 2004 and early 2005. After going through a selection process, which scrutinized potential members' conflict management background and willingness to participate in multiethnic projects, commissioners were trained in good communication, conflict management, mediation, and facilitation skills. Many of these members were also involved in the initial community trainings and the cooperative planning process.

Following trainings, the commissions usually met on a monthly basis. The Centers provided periodic training refresher courses, monitored the CC's progress during the monthly meetings and also co-mediated some early disputes. In addition, the [public relations consultants](#) and the Centers worked with members of the Conciliation Commissions on outreach and marketing. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia (www.cornixartifex.com/zr/zrs) websites were created to market the commissions' services, and in nearly all communities fliers were distributed at city halls and municipal offices to promote the Conciliation Commissions' work. More detailed information about each Conciliation Commission can be found below.

Smířčí rada se sídlem v Bruntále

Něco o nás ...

- založena v srpnu 2005
- průběžně členi smířčí rady provádějí organizace Partners Czech – odborná zařízení všech členů
- Smířčí rady existují mimo jiné ve městech Chomutov, Brno, Praha, Vsetín, Pardubice a nyní i v obci Bruntál

Co je úkolem Smířčí rady?

- ukoleno Smířčí rady je prostřednictvím mimosoudního jednání umožnit všem stranám společné jednání na neutrální půdě
- řeší konflikty pomocí mediace. Je účinným nástrojem pro zmiřování již existujících sporů v obci a okolí. Napomáhá stranám při jejich řešení a to tak, aby si účastníci sporu získali vzájemně rozumět a aby našli řešení přijatelné pro všechny strany sporu.

Jaké situace řešíme?

- sousedské nedorozumění jakéhokoli charakteru
- spory mezi jednotlivcem a skupinou (např. občan x úřad, nájemník x majitel domu)
- občanské spory (např. firma x firma)
- pracovní spory (např. nadřízený x podřízený, spolupracovníci)
- drobné přestupky (např. proti domovnímu řádu)
- spory mezi skupinami (např. diskriminace pohlaví, rasy, vyznání)

Kdo je mediátor?

Mediátor je odborník na etické vyjednávání. Vede jednání, pomáhá stranám hledat řešení, dospět k vzájemné dohodě. Na rozdíl od soudce nebo arbitra nerozhoduje. Strany samy spoluvytvářejí dohodu a záleží na jejich rozhodnutí, jak bude vypadat a zda jí přijmou.

Jaké jsou výhody mediace?

- je důvěrná - neveřejná
- je dobrovolná - nikdo netisk k mediaci nutí
- je rychlá, bez dlouhých čekacích lhůt
- je bezplatná

Jak nás kontaktovat?

P. O. Box 9, 792 01 Bruntál, tel.: 775 096 725
email: smirci.rada@atlas.cz
http://www.smircirada.cz

Bruntál: As the selection of Bruntál as a target community happened later than the other communities, the Conciliation Commission there was the final one to be established. Trainings for its members concluded at the end of 2005. But this delayed start did not mean that the CC could not achieve significant results. An initial grant of \$1,200 by the Bruntál municipality to the commission was a huge boost. With these resources, the Bruntál Conciliation Commission led efforts to develop information fliers (*left*) and a website for Czech Conciliation Commissions, which can be found at www.smircirada.cz.

In total the Bruntál Conciliation Commission took eight cases, all of which were successfully resolved. In one, Roma and non-Roma at a Bruntál housing shelter often argued, sometimes leading to violence. The commission brought the two parties together to work out their differences and to promote more effective communication. The parties agreed to a series of solutions to mitigate the conflicts and prevent violence.

Unfortunately, of an initial group of 12, only six Conciliation Commission members remain. However, it officially became part of the NGO Neor in Krnov in 2007, which will provide the commission with financial backing and much-needed administrative resources. While the Bruntál/Krnov group faces many of the same challenges as do nearly all the Conciliation Commissions, chiefly building its reputation in the community to attract more cases, the prospects of sustained activity in the future are good.

Chomutov: In addition to serving Chomutov, the commission served surrounding towns and villages following completion of its training in April 2005. Immediately after signing their charter, the Chomutov Conciliation Commissioners began work in four locations around the city. Over the course of the next two years the CC in Chomutov would become a prime example of the successes of the Conciliation Commission model.

In total, CC members mediated nine disputes during the RIP, eight of which were successfully resolved. In addition, the Conciliation Commission hosted the International Conciliation Commission meeting in 2006 (please see the [case study](#)). During monthly meetings, members developed marketing materials, discussed cases and received additional training from Partners Czech. Through these trainings, the CC members gained confidence in their roles within the Chomutov community and began to confront challenges to Roma integration there. For example, in March 2006 a newspaper in the city published an article that suggested Roma spread avian flu. Clearly biased and not based on reliable information, the article was damaging to efforts to increase cross-cultural dialogue in Chomutov. The Conciliation Commission met with the newspaper editor who admitted he saw no harm in the article. When the commissioners explained the long-term consequences of such careless reporting the editor recognized the damage done and in the end

became quite interested in the Conciliation Commission's work as part of the Roma Integration Program.

The chances that the Chomutov Conciliation Commission will remain a viable institution in the community are strong. In the spring of 2007 the CC formally applied to become an NGO with the Czech government and was approved. Partners Czech estimates that a core group of nine CC members will remain committed to its work.

Pardubice: The key to the success of the Conciliation Commission model is the commitment of its members. The model has been shown to work in different country contexts (in Bulgaria for example as part of Partners Bulgaria's pioneering work establishing Conciliation Commissions there), but largely depends on finding the right people to take part in activities. Established in late 2004, the Pardubice Conciliation Commission achieved some notable success, including the successful resolution of four cases. However, its members were reluctant and or unable to take on more and complex cases. In addition, some members, including the leader of the Conciliation Commission, left the group. Throughout the second half of 2006, Partners Czech attempted to engage with CC members in Pardubice and revive the organization. In January 2007, the Partners Czech program manager met with six members of the group to discuss their future plans. Six people resolved to continue the CC's activities however no Roma were part of this group. Since that time the Pardubice Conciliation Commission has partnered with NGO "Civic Consulting Room." They did not formally join the NGO but use space in its office for meetings. The chances that the Pardubice Conciliation Commission will continue to operate are uncertain. It was not the most successful of the commissions but Partners Czech was able to engage with this core group who seem motivated to continue to offer services to the community. It is possible that that a final attempt to register with the municipality as an NGO will succeed though it is not clear if this will ensure the organization's sustainability.

Hungary

Hatvan: Following the completion of their training in early 2005, Hatvan Conciliation Commission members immediately set out to register the organization as an NGO and to market its services. The group decided to revive an existing NGO called Zhutinas that had been inactive for some time, a decision that saved them time and smoothed the registration process. Out of Zhutinas came the Zhutinas Conflict Management Organization. In 2006, Zhutinas was also given space in the Megoldlak center for mediation and monthly meetings.

Zhutinas did an excellent job promoting its services in early on. They held informational meetings with educators, social service providers and local government authorities to introduce the idea of community mediation and the Conciliation Commissions' particular focus on ethnic disputes. A brochure was also developed by its members.

During the RIP, the Conciliation Commission only mediated three cases successfully but one in particular had wide-reaching impact. In that case, a Roma family approached Zhutinas about a local

"In the past I would have used aggressive behavior to solve (Roma) issues. During the Partners mediation training I learned that this does not lead anywhere constructive."

– Hungarian Conciliation
Commission member

kindergarten's application process. On a survey conducted by a local counseling agency for the kindergarten, one question asked whether the child was Roma. The Roma family complained of feeling unfairly singled out and feared the question could lead to discrimination. After the commission approached the school and the counseling agency the question was removed from the evaluation forms.

CASE STUDY: HUNGARIAN NATIONAL CONCILIATION COMMISSION MEETING

The Hungarian National Conciliation Commission Meeting in September 2006 was organized by United Way, the Civil Society Development Foundation and Partners Hungary to connect the Conciliation Commissions with potential funders. Commission members attended informal networking sessions and workshops on fundraising and marketing.

On the second day of the conference, a trainer from the Civil Society Development Foundation held a fundraising and proposal writing workshop for the Conciliation Commission members. The commissioners presented their fundraising strategies to the trainer for critiques. He then helped each organization refine its strategy. As a result, the Conciliation Commissions learned how to market themselves to potential clients more effectively.

The final meeting of the conference took place between all Conciliation Commissions and representatives from the Hungarian Civil Fund and the Vodafone Foundation. These funders talked with the Conciliation Commissions about their work and their strategies and possible future partnerships.

In addition to the training seminars and the meeting with potential new funders, the Conciliation Commissions were able to create an informal network, establishing an email mailing list to stay connected and share ideas and information in the future.

Ózd: The Ózd Conciliation Commission registered itself as an NGO called the Northern Hungary Mediation Association, serving communities around Ózd such as Arló and Borsodbóta. The group also did a good job marketing its services to the community and, importantly, had a good relationship with the Ózd Police, which provided the CC with cases to mediate from the local schools. In total, the Conciliation Commission successfully mediated five out of six cases it received during the RIP. The Mediation Association will continue to look for new cases, market its services, and also work on other projects to address Roma integration issues and Roma access to health and social services and new jobs. In late 2006 the Civil House in Ózd rented an office space to the Mediation Association for a symbolic sum of \$1 per month.

Pécs: The Pécs Conciliation Commission had the biggest problems of the RIP commissions. Its membership changed often, necessitating new trainings and interrupting outreach efforts. Partners Hungary did its best to encourage new, dedicated members to join only to have their efforts spoiled by internal arguments and poor leadership on the part of the Conciliation Commission. In 2006, the president of the group moved away from Pécs leaving the commission without a leader. The chances that the Pécs Conciliation Commission will sustain itself are very small – essentially the group ceased to exist in 2007, though some RIP trainees have expressed interest in mediating cases in the city. This case highlights the importance of having dedicated volunteers led by a strong and

visionary leader. The group spent a lot of time trying to register as an NGO rather than mediating cases or promoting its work. And in the end, it was not able to withstand repeated changes to its membership.

Slovakia

Kežmarok: CC Kežmarok, the name Conciliation Commission members gave to their NGO, took on and resolved by far the most cases of any commission in the three RIP target countries. In total 26 cases were mediated, only six unsuccessfully, ranging from family and property disputes to arguments between students and their teachers. In one such case, the father of a student threatened to physically harm the child's teacher. The child had lied, telling his father that the teacher struck him. During mediation, both sides were able to tell their version of the truth and it emerged that the boy was lying, averting a potentially violent confrontation.

In addition to mediation, the Kežmarok Conciliation Commission also received a small grant to expand its work in Kežmarok and focus on specific needs in the community. With grant funds the commission trained over 15 teachers and over 200 students in alternative dispute resolution and worked with the municipal government to conduct trainings for officials in mediation and conflict resolution. A local school gave the CC a grant to provide additional trainings there. More information about the completed small grant project can be found in [Appendix 3](#). CC Kežmarok is very likely to continue to make a significant impact in the community with additional Roma integration projects and as its members further develop their mediation skills.

Prešov: One of the great successes of the Prešov Conciliation Commission was its work on housing issues in Stará Tehelna, demonstrating the range of issues and initiatives the CCs can work on. The Prešov group organized a roundtable to review the situation of a large number of poor Roma families who faced eviction from their publicly owned apartments in the Stará Tehelna neighborhood. In partnership with PDCS and the Plenipotentiary Office for Roma Communities in Prešov the roundtable was organized to discuss possible solutions to the problem. Participants agreed that the best course of action was to implement the "institute of special receiver," which allows the Prešov Municipality to deduct small amounts of money from social benefits to cover housing costs, including rent and utilities. Over 100 families have been put on this program, which restricts some freedom to spend the benefits but ensures that these families will not face homelessness or cutoffs to their utilities.

In addition, the Prešov Conciliation Commission successfully resolved every one of the six cases it received, including other disputes relating to housing evictions. In one, over 50 people who had been recently evicted were able to return to their homes. A dozen people remain active in the Prešov Conciliation Commission.

Rimavská Sobota: The Rimavská Conciliation Commission group numbered 15 following completion of trainings in late 2005. The group met regularly and focused much of its time on developing a strategic plan and honing its skills. Two cases were successfully mediated by the Conciliation Commission, including one between neighbors and problems between a business and a customer. The work of the Conciliation Commission received good press coverage from regional media.

SMALL GRANTS

Roma Integration Program small grants were given in each community in support of initiatives that promote Roma integration. Key to the success of the small grant component of the program was the role of community stakeholders in determining community needs. The cooperative planning processes in the target communities allowed stakeholders, including NGO, government, business, Roma, and non-Roma representatives, to determine priorities that were to become the focus of the sub grant program (for example, education and job creation). This strategy is based on Partners' community-driven approach and the experiences of Partners for Democratic Change International member organizations such as Partners-Bulgaria.¹

While the communities set the specific priorities for their grant projects, Partners and the Centers set the established guidelines for the grant program according to the goals of the Roma Integration Program and to the specific country context:

In the Czech Republic two separate grant rounds were held, funding projects with “micro,” “small” and “moderate” grants. The first “micro” grants round provided \$2,000-\$3,000 for six to 12 month periods to small start-up civil society organizations. The second “small/moderate” grants rounds in each community provided small, \$3,000-\$8,000, and moderate, \$8,000-\$20,000, grants, including to organizations that had participated in the micro grants round.

Partners Hungary's strategy differed significantly from both that of Partners Czech and PDCS. An initial round of “community” grants, \$7,500-\$10,000, was held in Hungary followed by a “Euroregions” grant round. This round linked the three target communities to their larger Euroregions, the administrative districts created by the Hungarian government and connected to EU funding. Participants in the target communities were thus required to partner with other community-based groups in their region. A third grants round dropped the Euroregions requirement and focused again on organizations in the RIP target communities.

PDCS decided to contract small grants management out to the NGO Ekopolis (www.ekopolis.com). This approach was chosen because of ethical and legal considerations in Slovakia, which discourage organizations from managing a program and giving grants to program beneficiaries at the same time. Ekopolis has extensive experience managing USAID grants programs throughout Slovakia and was responsible for the administration of the grants program, including issuing requests for applications, collecting applications, working with PDCS to develop grants panels, and implementing the monitoring and evaluation plan with grantees, including collecting program and financial reports. As in the Czech Republic, PDCS decided to separate its grants into micro, \$300-\$1,100, and small,

SUSTAINABILITY

Out of 106 completed small grant projects, 59, or nearly 56 percent, received a new grant from funders such as the European Union and/or the national government.

¹ Partners-Bulgaria, like Partners Czech, Partners Hungary and PDCS, is a member of the Partners for Democratic Change International network of Centers. The organization developed its community-based approach to ethnic integration as part of the USAID-funded Ethnic Integration Program.

\$2,500-\$10,500, categories. But unlike the Czech Republic, three grant rounds (two for small grants) were held in Slovakia.

In addition, approximately \$30,000 in each country was set aside to fund national-level media activities, including the internship programs in the Czech Republic and Hungary and the [*So Vakeres?*](#) program in Slovakia.

Selection committees in each target country were composed of three to eight people, both Roma and non-Roma, who had experience working with NGOs or in the social services sector. Partners and the Centers were not involved in the selection process but Partners retained the right to overrule projects approved by the committee that did not meet program goals. Projects were chosen if they promoted Roma integration, demonstrated the potential for sustainability beyond the grant period, involved NGO and/or cross-sector partnerships, and were developed from the cooperative planning process.

Over the four year program, 106 projects were completed out of 110 approved, worth \$751,324.96. In total, nearly 16,000 people directly benefited from project activities with thousands more indirectly impacted. For the sake of reporting, Partners separated project beneficiaries into eight categories: youth (not including participants in education programs); education; infrastructure (project beneficiaries of new playgrounds and city beautification); employment; housing; Roma culture; and media (not including participants in national media programs listed above). While it is nearly impossible to summarize such a large and diverse sub grant program, the purpose of the eight categories is to give a broad picture of how sub grant funds were put to use (i.e. for what benefit).

In addition to the number of beneficiaries, an important indicator of success of these projects was the number of organizations receiving new funding following completion of RIP-supported projects. As was previously mentioned, one goal of the small grant program was to increase the capacity of civil society organizations in the target communities to develop and effectively manage new programs. While results varied by community, overall more than half (nearly 56 percent) of sub grant beneficiaries received funds from a new donor (not including organizations that received a second or third RIP grant). Additionally many sub grant beneficiaries continued RIP-sponsored project activities without receiving new funds, for example by using equipment purchased as part of a RIP project (sports supplies or a community playground) and utilizing volunteer workers. Additionally, some RIP sub grant projects offered trainings in skills that will continue to have an impact beyond the duration of the RIP. However, there is much work still to be done to increase the capacity of small organizations operating in rural villages or small towns to develop effective grant proposals and manage new grants. A statistical summary of the completed sub grant projects and some project highlights are included below. Final small grants project reports from the final six months of the program can be found in Appendices [1](#), [2](#) and [3](#).

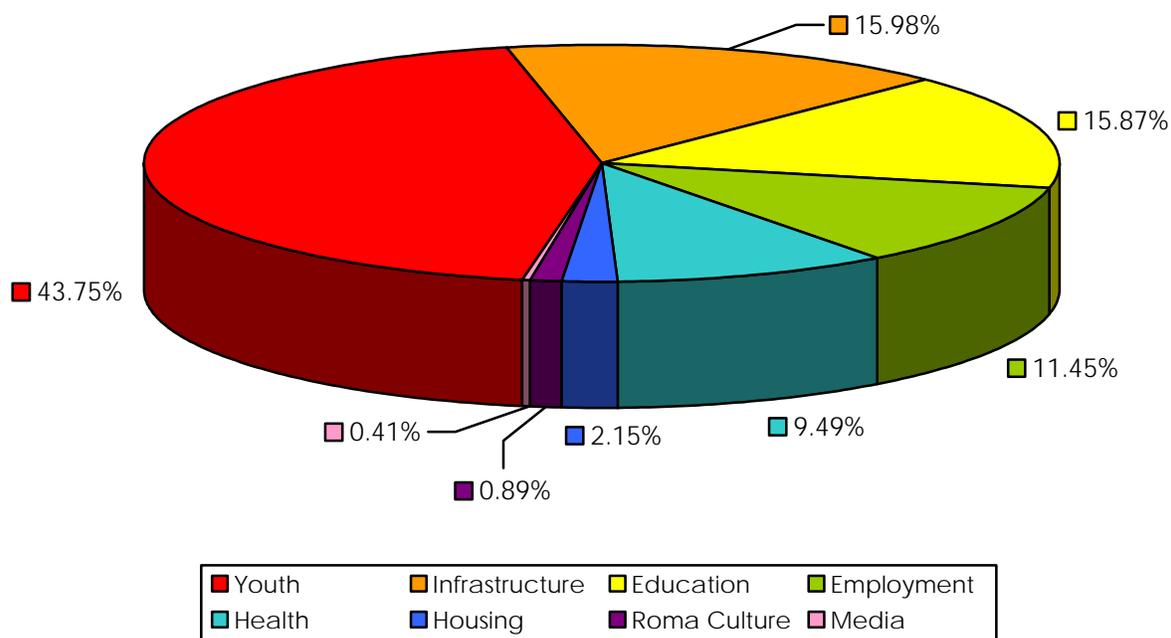
Statistical Summaries

Total Completed Grants

Community/Round	Amount \$	Number of Projects	Percent Receiving New Funding	Project Beneficiaries
Bruntál	54,211.00	7	71.43%	599
Chomutov	103,070.00	12	66.67%	3,939
Pardubice	93,185.00	10	70.00%	640
CZECH REPUBLIC TOTAL	250,466.00	29	68.97%	5,178
Community	106,210.00	11	36.36%	3,464
Euroregions	82,472.00	5	60.00%	276
Third	54,560.00	4	25.00%	712
HUNGARY TOTAL	243,242.00	20	40.00%	4,452
Kežmarok	124,078.70	28	46.43%	4,120
Prešov	72,167.50	12	66.66%	915
Rimavská Sobota	61,390.76	17	64.71%	1,318
SLOVAKIA TOTAL	257,636.96	57	54.24%	6,353
TOTAL	751,324.96	106	55.66%	15,983

Total Project Beneficiaries

Youth	Infrastructure	Education	Employment	Health	Housing	Roma Culture	Media
6,993	2,554	2,537	1,830	1,517	344	142	66

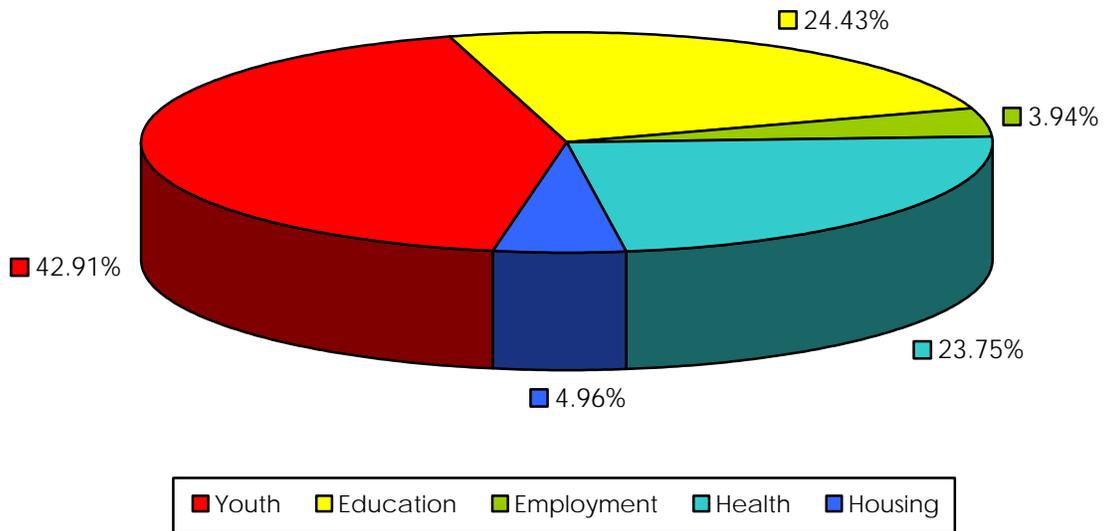


Czech Republic Completed Grants

Community/Round	Amount US\$	Number of Projects	Percent Receiving New Funding	Project Beneficiaries
Bruntál Micro	10,733.00	4	75.00%	393
Bruntál Small	43,478.00	3	66.67%	206
BRUNTÁL TOTAL	54,211.00	7	71.43%	599
Chomutov Micro	14,446.00	6	66.67%	1,199
Chomutov Small	88,624.00	6	66.67%	2,740
CHOMUTOV TOTAL	103,070.00	12	66.67%	3,939
Pardubice Micro	10,844.00	5	80.00%	196
Pardubice Small	82,341.00	5	60.00%	444
PARDUBICE TOTAL	93,185.00	10	70.00%	640
TOTAL	250,466.00	29	68.97%	5,178

Czech Project Beneficiaries

Youth	Education	Employment	Health	Housing
2,222	1,265	204	1,230	257

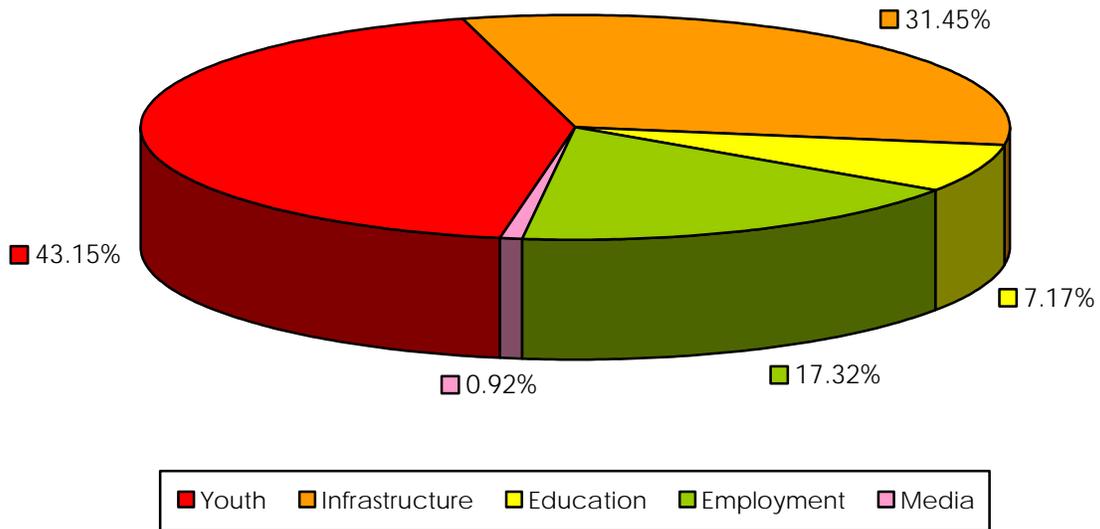


Hungary Completed Grants

Round	Amount US\$	Number of Projects	Percent Receiving New Funding	Project Beneficiaries
Community	106,210.00	11	36.36%	3,464
Euroregions	82,472.00	5	60.00%	276
Third	54,560.00	4	25.00%	712
TOTAL	243,242.00	20	36.36%	4,452

Hungarian Project Beneficiaries

Youth	Infrastructure	Education	Employment	Media
1,921	1,400	319	771	41

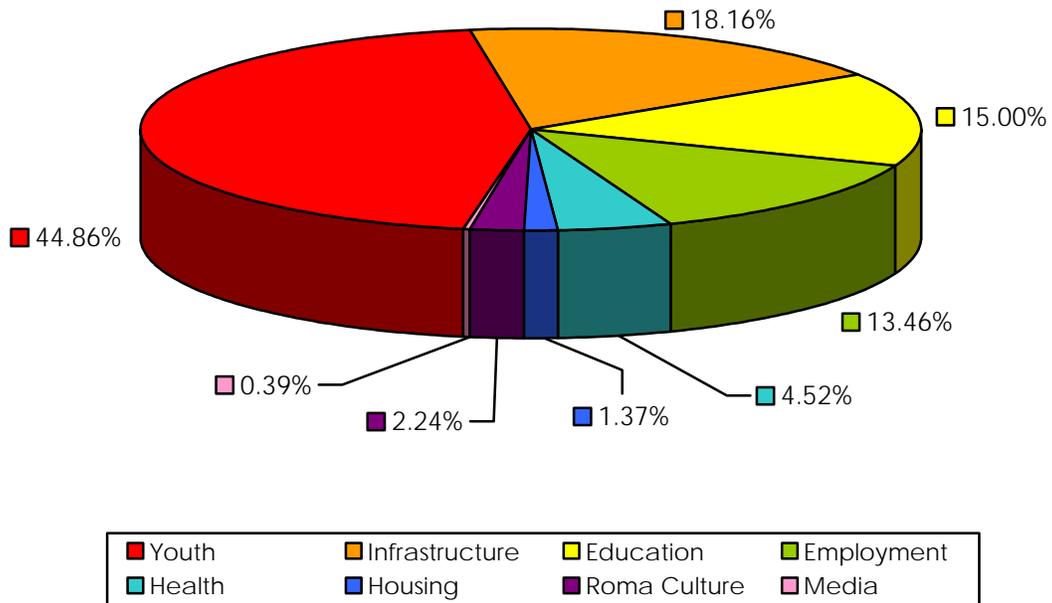


Slovakia Completed Grants

Community/Round	Amount US\$	Number of Projects	Percent Receiving New Funding	Project Beneficiaries
Kežmarok Micro	7,691.00	11	27.27%	966
Kežmarok Small	31,673.00	6	50.00%	1,000
Kežmarok Moderate	84,444.70	11	63.63%	2,154
KEŽMAROK TOTAL	124,078.70	28	46.43%	4,120
Prešov Micro	1,602.00	2	50.00%	40
Prešov Small	22,902.00	4	75.00%	409
Prešov Moderate	47,663.50	6	66.66%	466
PREŠOV TOTAL	72,167.50	12	61.54%	915
Rimavská Sobota Micro	7,591.00	9	66.67%	609
Rimavská Sobota Small	27,049.76	3	66.67%	256
Rimavská Sobota Moderate	26,750.00	5	60.00%	453
RIMAVSKÁ SOBOTA TOTAL	61,390.76	17	64.71%	1,318
TOTAL	257,636.96	57	54.24%	6,353

Slovak Project Beneficiaries

Youth	Infrastructure	Education	Employment	Health	Housing	Roma Culture	Media
6,993	2,554	2,537	1,830	1,517	344	142	66



Project Highlights

Charity Krnov restores the Center for Free-Time Activities: Charity Krnov repaired the Center for Free-Time Activities with a micro grant from the first round of the RIP small grants program in Bruntál. Tutoring services, free-time activities and arts classes were held for children in the town. Children improved their test scores and school work and the Center was made into a more hospitable environment for after-school activities. In the second grant round, the organization received a small grant to continue with education-oriented activities and help reduce the high failure rate of Roma children within the education system. With support from the second grant round, the Center again offered tutoring services to help with exam preparation and also held free-time activities and field trips for the students. Improved grades were rewarded with extra activities and field trips, motivating students when such encouragement had previously been lacking. Two children who had previously failed their school exams retook the test after receiving help from the Center's tutors and successfully passed. Overall improved school marks were achieved by all the children while their cultural knowledge was also increased through visits to historical landmarks and reading and film groups. The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Krnov Municipality contributed \$12,000 to the charity to continue the Center for Free-Time Activities program.

Field Social Work in Prunéřov: The Romano Rat NGO was established by a Roma RIP trainee, Milena Adamová, specifically to improve the lives of Roma in Prunéřov, a Roma settlement outside of Chomutov. An initial investment in the form of a RIP micro grant was given to Romano Rat to implement a project to increase Roma access to social services. Approximately 50 people were counseled by field social workers, addressing issues such as outstanding debts, housing issues, refused social benefits, and unemployment. As a result of its achievements, Romano Rat quickly built a good reputation in the community. The municipality invited Romano Rat to participate in its community planning process and has agreed to provide space for the NGO to establish a community center in Prunéřov, indicating a greater acceptance of field social work. A second RIP grant was given to Romano Rat in July 2005 to scale up its field social work activities. Ninety-six adults and 85 children participated in the social discussions and lectures, and 32 children received tutoring from student volunteers resulting in improved school work. Thirty run-down flats were repaired and three women found jobs as a result of the project. A new rate for the water utility in the

“After attending the (RIP) training, (I was) encouraged to create a new NGO in Chomutov. It was a great opportunity to found a new initiative to support marginalized Roma communities.”

– Milena Adamová

community was also negotiated for the first time in 15 years. Romano Rat is continuing its field social work activities with support from the municipality and has been discussing a possible partnership with another NGO in the Chomutov area. Milena Adamová's hard work and enterprising spirit will continue to bring benefit to this community and is an example of the impact of Partners' community-based approach, which combined training programs, cooperative planning and small grants to build social capital and promote positive community change.

Turning the tide on Roma isolation in Pardubice: The NGO Darjav (“Ocean” in Romany) was formed only in 2002, but with support from two Roma Integration Program small grants, it has become an increasingly important part of the Husová community, a neighborhood in Pardubice with a large Roma population. With sub-grant funds, Darjav organized free time activities for children

and built a local gym. The NGO has organized computer training courses, tutoring sessions and sports and fitness activities. As a result, the surrounding area has seen a drop in the number of youths committing petty crimes and the children have become more self-confident and are doing better in school. The Darjav Center also provided space for Roma and non-Roma children to interact, improving inter-ethnic relations and supporting a culture of tolerance among Czech youth in Pardubice. The NGO also worked with the Municipal Employment office to find jobs for unemployed young Roma. In 2006, Darjav received funding from the Regional Office in Pardubice, the municipal government, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Nadation Via and Nadation of Czech Bank to continue project activities. “Thanks to the Roma Integration Program and the work of Partners Czech work, Darjav has been able to develop and strengthen its activities during these years.” Darjav Director Vera Horvathová said. “Without it we would not be able today to provide the services we do in the Husová locality.”

“E-learning” program in Ózd to improve children’s education: E-learning techniques were promoted in primary schools to increase the level of education and employability of youth in Borsodbóta as part of this project run by the Borsodbóta Roma Minority Self-Government. Using RIP grant funds, the Borsodbóta Primary School hired the Graf-Get Ltd. company to train fifteen teachers in the use of e-learning computer programs in their classrooms, to develop an e-learning curriculum and to produce training materials for future e-learning seminars. As a result, 80 students (over half of which were Roma) became more computer literate, which will boost their chances of finding work in the future. As a result of the program, eight Borsodbóta students, including two Roma, were admitted to top Hungarian secondary schools, a small number, but a significant increase over past years. In addition, teachers noted improved performance in school and increased motivation to participate in classroom activities as a result of the e-learning program. This success has inspired educators in Borsodbóta to develop new computer-assisted curricula for their classes, thereby multiplying the program’s impact. The European Union also approved funding for a new computer lab at the Borsodbóta School and various book publishers approached the school to produce electronic curricula.

“Closing Gaps” in Pécs: The participation of non-Roma villagers in Roma cultural activities rarely occurred before the implementation of the “Hand in Hand – Together for Roma Integration” project by the Vajszló Cultural Association. Informational lectures and presentations on Roma culture, healthcare and environmental protection, clubs for youth and parents, a Roma TV Magazine, and community activities such as Roma Day, Artisan’s Day and the Day in Remembrance of the Roma Holocaust were organized for the village. 1,800 Roma and non-Roma community members participated in the various clubs, lectures, cultural events and other program activities. As a result, inter-ethnic relationships improved. Based on the success of the “Hand in Hand” project, the Association received an additional RIP grant to tackle another barrier to Roma integration: unemployment.

As part of the “Possibility to Close Gaps” project, the Association offered job skills training for unemployed Roma in the Pécs region. Fifteen people participated in sewing classes and an additional 40 received employment counseling services and attended employment counseling seminars. Long-term unemployed people were able to acquire new job skills as a result, but for many the most positive impact of this project was a boost in their motivation and self-confidence. All 15 participants of the sewing class were employed by a new tailoring business that was started as a result of the program. In cooperation with the new business, the Association will provide skills

trainings for an additional 65 people in the future. The Association also has a commitment from its partner schools to continue these preparatory training courses in the future.

CASE STUDY: NGO KEUČ

The Civic Association Kľuč (Key) participated in all three Roma Integration Program grant rounds in Slovakia, using the funds to provide educational and free-time activities for youth and expand the scope of its work in the Kežmarok community. Over the course of the three grant rounds, Kľuč established an Integration Center for Children, serving approximately 650 children and parents in the community, and managed an early childhood learning program for 100 children from low-income Roma and non-Roma families.

As a result of these projects, children improved their school performance, learned to interact with members of different ethnicities, received tutoring help from parents and volunteers, learned to use the computer, and benefited from free-time activities, such as sports and arts and crafts programs. Kľuč's efforts addressed the low level of education in the Roma community and the disinterest many Roma parents exhibit in their children's education.

The tremendous impact of the organization's Roma Integration Program-sponsored projects caught the attention of U.S. Ambassador Rodolphe M. Vallee, the mayor of Kežmarok and members of the local parliament. During a visit to the Kľuč programs, the Ambassador and mayor praised Civic Association Kľuč's accomplishments and good work implementing Roma integration projects.

The interest from local government officials and the Ambassador resulted in a grant award of \$18,600 from the local parliament to Kľuč for reconstruction of their premises. With this grant money and the experience gained from managing the Roma Integration Program small grant projects, the Civic Association is well positioned to continue its community youth programs and further expand its activities in Kežmarok.

Studying Roma settlements in Prešov: This project aimed to define and understand the phenomenon of a city "ghetto," using the Stará Tehelna Roma settlement as a case study, assist decision makers in resolving some of the issues that exist as a result of the settlements and prevent the future creation of "ghettos." The final 248 page report was a compilation of articles produced by twenty experts with significant input from the Roma living in the settlement. Recommendations for improving Stará Tehelna were directed to all the relevant people including social workers, NGOs, and the municipality. The book was also distributed throughout Slovakia to municipalities facing similar settlement development issues. It was marketed at academic meetings and the housing roundtable organized by PDCS. Feedback has been encouraging and suggests that policy makers will benefit from a better understanding of Roma settlement development issues. The results of this project are likely to have a positive impact on Roma inhabitants living in Prešov and similar areas.

Addressing high levels of unemployment among Roma in Rimavská Sobota: The Information and Counseling Center for Roma (ICCR) in Rimavská Sobota received a small grant to train unemployed Roma in tailoring and marketing skills. Ultimately 80 unemployed Roma were trained, after starting

with only 5 participants. All were involved in the selection and purchase of the sewing equipment, textiles and the manufacture of clothing. As a result of this program, 11 people found new work, 27 others became involved in “activation work” (completing jobs for the municipality such as street cleaning in return for a stipend to augment state benefits). Two of the newly employed Roma produce clothing for municipal workers, which have been marketed to the new mayor of Rimavská Sobota and surrounding villages. Slovak TV, TASR and Radio Regina all did stories about the ICCR and the RIP-supported activities. Because of their good work and the publicity, the ICCR received additional grants covering a period of at least two years. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family accredited the Civic Association as a job counseling service provider.

LESSONS LEARNED: COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

- The training program was effective at developing a core group of community participants and served to promote the Roma Integration Program in each target community. In each community, approximately 30 to 40 people, many of them training seminar participants, were involved in nearly all community-level activities, from trainings to the small grants program.
- The cooperative planning process is unknown to many in this region, from government officials to average citizens. The process was most successful if followed by efforts to draw in a diverse group of stakeholders and particularly when backed by local government officials.
- In the best circumstances, Conciliation Commissions and other community mediation services, require time to build trust in the community and hone their skills. If properly done, this initial investment of time will result in potentially significant long-term impact.
- Partners intended for the small grants strategy to come out of community planning processes and for the grants projects to approach Roma integration from many different perspectives, from housing to healthcare to education. In the future, Partners would put an even greater emphasis on linking these efforts and funding programs that demonstrate potential impact across many fronts, i.e. projects that recognize the complex relationships between high Roma unemployment rates, the lack of Roma access to quality education, poor healthcare, etc.

MEDIA INITIATIVES

Partners and the Centers designed the media initiatives to promote objective coverage of Roma issues in the mainstream media, challenge stereotypes, encourage Roma participation in media production, and affect majority perceptions of minority groups in these countries. Improving Roma and non-Roma access to reliable information contributes to more informed debate and compliments overall Roma integration activities.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Partners Czech has received two new grants from the European Union to continue media-related anti-discrimination work. The first grant was given to replicate the media campaign as part of the European Year for Equal Opportunities (2007). A second grant was given to produce six documentaries about Czech minorities. Teaching manuals will be created and teachers trained as part of a school tolerance program based on the documentaries.

The Roma Integration Program can claim a number of successes from its media initiatives. Public information campaigns promoting tolerance and news magazine television shows dedicated to Roma issues reached hundreds of

thousands of audience members. Trainings and RIP-sponsored internships for Roma journalists contributed to building accomplished Roma journalists and supported more diverse newsrooms in the region's premier media organizations. Film festivals drew hundreds to see documentaries and films about Roma culture and activists. And resulting from a national roundtable hosted by Partners Hungary, a green paper on the fair depiction of Roma in the media was published with official support from the national government, the first such green paper published in Europe.

RIP media activities reached far greater numbers of people than any other community or national-level initiative. In addition to promoting more fair and objective media, the campaigns also served to raise awareness about the work of the program, the program implementers and the donor. In 2006, public relations consultants were also hired in each country to work with program support staff and community organizations to better utilize marketing and public outreach techniques to further their work. The consultants became invaluable members of the program team, helping Conciliation Commissions prepare websites, small grantees market themselves to donors, monitor media-related activities, and improve RIP outreach efforts. The consultants helped generate press about the program from some of the top newspapers, radio and television stations in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

Internships

Eleven Roma interns were supported by the RIP, five in Hungary and initially six in the Czech Republic, to support the inclusion of Roma in major national news organizations. The interns learned valuable reporting, editing, writing, and production skills, joined editorial meetings and networked with experienced professional journalists. As a result, four of the five Hungarian media interns were hired by Hungarian State Television (MTV) and four of the six original Czech interns received jobs with media organizations. While the number of people ultimately involved was small compared to other program initiatives, the training and hiring of these interns has contributed to greater diversity of viewpoints in newsrooms in both countries, which may have a significant long-term impact.



In Hungary, MTV interns began work with the station at the beginning of 2006. They were able to rotate through various desks and production teams to gain maximum exposure to different equipment and techniques, such as video editing and reporting. From time-to-time Partners Hungary held team building exercises for the group, monitored their work and addressed any challenges that might have arisen. For example, when Partners Hungary discovered that the interns were not interacting, they held ice-breaker exercises in order to build group cohesion and foster cooperation and support. Additionally, the interns were involved in many other aspects of the program – the 2006 Regional Beneficiaries Meeting, for example.

In 2007, the Hungarian Ministry of Social Affairs announced it would support three new interns for a full year at MTV.

In the Czech Republic, five of the original six participants completed their internships at prominent broadcast media organizations *Czech TV* and *Czech Radio* and the national newspaper *Mlada Fronta Dnes*. All Czech interns were also involved in other RIP activities, from community projects to national meetings and conferences.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Hungarian Ministry of Social Affairs agreed to support three new interns at Hungarian State Television.

Interns were responsible for producing reports for programs such as *Kosmopolis* on minority issues, writing articles, conducting interviews, and preparing news items for the radio. They were also taught to edit video or tape for broadcasts. As a result of their work, four of the Czech

interns found new work and one is continuing an internship with the music TV station *Ocko* supported by her University.

So Vakeres?

PDCS and the Roma Regional Coordinator Orhan Galjus worked to promote the idea of a twice-monthly Roma TV magazine on *Slovak TV*. After talks with Partners-Slovakia, the Roma Press Agency agreed to transform the *Romale* program, produced by non-Roma journalists for Roma, into *So Vakeres*, a program produced by Roma for a wider Roma and non-Roma audience.

In total, the RIP financed 10 episodes of the show, which attracted over 3.1 million viewers, including Roma (estimated at 60-70 percent of the audience) and non-Roma. The shows featured (and continue to feature) segments on Roma news, in-depth reports on Roma issues such as unemployment and housing, and Roma culture. According to viewer surveys, the show was successful at improving non-Roma views of Roma and increasing Roma access to objective news about relating to politics and culture. According to the survey:

- Roma appreciated the use of the Romany language, which promotes the idea that Roma should not be ashamed of using the language. Respondents said they have increased their ability to communicate in Romany and improved their vocabulary.
- Non-Roma said they have a new sense of Roma life. They learned that not all Roma live in settlements, and they were affected by images of Roma who are hard working and resourceful. The reaction of non-Roma viewers contradicted some assertions that non-Roma viewers will reject non-stereotypical depictions of Roma on TV.
- Roma liked the educated and “enlightened” reports about Roma social problems.
- Viewers said the positive portrayal of Roma is becoming more the norm rather than the exception.

So Vakeres continues to air on *Slovak TV* as the station has agreed to pick up the show. The latest episodes from 2007 and an archive of shows from 2006 can be found on the Roma Press Agency website at <http://www.rpa.sk/rpa.php?lang=SK&m=GAL&id=ROMA>.

Hungarian Green Paper on the Portrayal of Roma in the Media

The green paper on the portrayal of Roma in the media was developed following [a roundtable dialogue on media](#) organized by Partners Hungary in 2004 and subsequent working group meetings supported by the RIP and the Hungarian government. Media professionals developed a series of recommendations for commercial and public media on fair and objective coverage of Roma issues, such as:

- Consider the audience and the social and political context before writing/reporting on a story.
- Ask yourself if identifying a source as Roma is necessary.
- Treat Roma culture as both a part of and unique from the Hungarian national culture.
- Journalism students should learn a culturally sensitive approach.
- Use Roma experts and professionals as sources when applicable to encourage a diverse set of viewpoints.

In February 2007, the Hungarian Ministry of Social Affairs gave its official support for the document after months of talks between Partners Hungary and Ministry representatives. USAID played an important role convincing the Ministry to end its delays publishing the paper. A press conference was held in April 2007 by the Ministry to officially announce its launch. The green paper on the portrayal of Roma in Hungarian media was the first of its kind published in Europe.

Trainings

Partners Czech and PDCS all held trainings for journalists focused on work in the field. Trainees were able to practice preparing stories, addressing challenges, and finding creative solutions to problems that arose. This was not a particularly large initiative and the time and resources devoted to media trainings could perhaps have been better used to support additional interns. It seems that for most aspiring journalists work experience is considered more valuable than additional trainings. In the Czech Republic, fifteen people were trained as part of the journalism training project. One, Vera Hervathová, became a RIP-sponsored intern.

PDCS and the Roma Press Agency held advanced trainings for Roma journalists to increase their professional skills and ability to reach a broader audience. Journalists participated in practical skills development exercises. In total 18 trainings were held, averaging 5-15 attendees each, all around the Slovak Republic.

CASE STUDY: CZECH “BE AWARE” CAMPAIGN

In October 2006, Partners-Czech launched the ‘Be Aware of Your Prejudices’ (“Be Aware”) country-wide media campaign. The centerpiece of the campaign was a thirty second public service announcement (PSA), which aired on two major *Czech TV* stations over 60 times for a month, including 8 primetime broadcasts. Partners-Czech collaborated with advertising experts to develop the PSA with the goal of challenging traditional stereotypes of Roma and other ethnic and religious minorities, such as Vietnamese and Muslims, in Czech society.

At the core of the campaign was a TV spot targeted towards non-Roma young adults – the goal being to teach them to question assumptions about Roma and other ethnic minorities. The thirty second commercial depicted a non-Roma male on a Prague tram who, realizing his wallet is missing, blames an innocent Roma youth sitting nearby. In the end, the man realizes he had dropped the wallet upon boarding the tram car. In the final frame, a slogan in Czech reminds viewers to “Beware not just of your possessions, but also of your prejudices.” According to *Mediaresearch* statistics, the spot received a 30.53 percent share - the percentage of viewers watching TV at that time who viewed the PSA.



In addition to airing the television spot, a longer version appeared in cinemas around the country and was viewed by approximately 100,000 people. Eight-thousand printed posters also appeared at bus stops and public transportation terminals throughout the Czech Republic, including major cities such as Brno and Ostrava. Fourteen regional governments participated in disseminating the posters. And over four-thousand were posted in the Prague Metro alone. Finally, a website (www.predsudky.cz) was launched to complement the other ‘Be Aware’ campaign activities. In addition to free downloadable posters and video and an explanation of the campaign, visitors were encouraged to participate in moderated online discussions about tolerance and inter-ethnic relations in the Czech Republic.

The campaign succeeded in reaching a large audience and bringing new and positive attention to the Roma Integration Program. As a result of its success producing the campaign, Partners Czech received a grant from the European Union to implement a similar initiative in 2007.

Film Festivals and Documentaries

Four film festivals were held, three in the Czech Republic and one in Slovakia, during the Roma Integration Program. Documentaries were shown about Roma leaders, organizations and Roma integration initiatives. The festivals were meant to inspire debate within the Roma community and also to promote cross-cultural dialogue and present a positive view of Roma life that does not always reach the non-Roma majority.

In total over 550 people attended the three Czech events (one in each target community). In Chomutov, Roma activists and local government representatives participated in a moderated discussion following the film showing. The second film festival was held in Krnov – a shuttle service was provided between Krnov and Bruntál – and drew a capacity crowd. The Deputy Mayors of Bruntál and Krnov both spoke at the event, which drew good media coverage. A group of Roma approached Partners Czech after the film showing to discuss starting their own NGO in the community. The group created a community center in a local school, serving 40 local children. This story demonstrates the result of effective public outreach efforts.

A final film festival was held in Pardubice in 2006. The crowd was considerably smaller than at previous events (in part due to an election campaign running at the same time), though it was very engaged in constructive conversations about Roma-non-Roma relations.

In Slovakia, one small film festival was held in Rimavská Sobota in late 2006, drawing about 50 people, who later participated in a facilitated discussion. The festival showed the four PDCS-supported documentaries about Roma leaders, organizations and activists. The documentaries were meant to motivate discussions about Roma issues in Slovakia. The films were sent to universities, film festivals and NGOs working on Roma issues. A guide was also created for organizations or individuals wishing to moderate roundtables or question and answer sessions after the film. It was intended that the documentaries would be shown on *Slovak TV*, but due to supposed scheduling conflicts, that did not occur.

LESSONS LEARNED: MEDIA INITIATIVES

- The public relations consultants were an invaluable resource for the Centers and Roma Integration Program beneficiaries. In future projects, Partners' would have at least one person responsible for public relations and marketing (including trainings in these skills) in each country.
- Public information campaigns such as the Czech "Be Aware" initiative are effective at drawing attention to the program and reaching a large audience with messages of tolerance and multiculturalism. However, efforts to challenge majority perceptions of ethnic minorities will not see quick results. Sustained public awareness initiatives combined with programs to encourage more accurate reporting of minority issues and greater minority representation in newsroom staffs will slowly encourage such changes to take place.
- The keys to the success of the Czech media campaign were its range of delivery methods (on TV, through cinemas, on posters, and over the Internet), Partners Czech's marketing efforts and effective partnerships with experienced content producers (such as web designers and video production companies), who provided in-kind donations.
- The creative, inter-sectoral, and multi-media activities of the Media Initiatives capitalized more effectively on Partners' strategic advantages and were thus far more successful than the program's media training initiatives. Partners would let others who focus on media development take the lead on media training in future programs.

NATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY

Through national level Roma Integration Program efforts, Partners sought to encourage open debate about issues affecting Roma, promote tolerance and an understanding of Roma culture and prepare Roma organizations to generate effective cooperative advocacy strategies. The RIP approach frequently involved national government, national and international NGOs, educators, healthcare workers, and other Roma advocates in discussions about lessons learned at the community level, building support for replication of effective models and initiatives. As a result, Roma activists and NGOs are better positioned to impact national policy relating to ethnic integration, the public is better informed about issues affecting the Roma community and teachers can lead classroom discussions and exercises based on multiculturalism curricula.

National-level activities were ramped up in the final years of the RIP after community Roma integration models were implemented and evaluated. In total 11 national roundtables were held, over 1,000 students and teachers were trained in new multicultural curricula, and national-level meetings of beneficiaries were organized. For example, in summer 2005 Partners Czech held a national beneficiaries meeting in Prague for RIP community beneficiaries. As the community cooperative planning processes had ended and the initial small grants round was underway, Partners Czech felt such a meeting would be an effective forum in which to share ideas and cultivate new relationships. Several joint projects were launched as a result, including a project run by the NGO Darjav from Pardubice and Romano Rat, a Chomutov organization, and financed by the Kadaň municipality. Forty children traveled from Pardubice to Chomutov to learn from emergency services officers about being responsible citizens – the aim of the project being to promote trust between Roma and

the police and other emergency service workers. This project is but one instance of RIP national level initiatives having an impact on local level efforts and vice versa.

ROUNDTABLES

The cooperation of national government and civil society leaders on Roma integration policies is of vital importance to Roma political and social advancement in the three target countries. The Roma Integration Program gathered key stakeholders from community and national levels at national roundtables to ensure that national policies and their implementation reflect the real needs on the ground. Bringing together these groups across distinct sectors generates lasting effects, including new partnerships, transformed attitudes, and more informed decision-making. As a result, a number of important national policy decisions were made for the benefit of Roma in the region. For example:

- The Slovak government agreed to provide \$10 million to support the role of Roma field social workers throughout the country. Field social workers help Roma gain access to social services.
- The Hungarian government published a green paper, developed following a RIP media roundtable, on objective media reporting of minorities. The green paper was the first of its kind published in Europe.
- Key Czech Ministries agreed to provide greater support for Roma Regional Coordinators, which serve as liaisons between communities in their regions and the national government.

More detailed summaries of all 11 national roundtables can be found below.

Czech Republic

Education Roundtable: In the fall of 2004 community roundtables were held in preparation for a national roundtable on education in the Czech Republic. The national roundtable would address Roma education issues at the local level, and more specifically the role of community-level non-governmental organizations as links between government and schools. Partners believes the community dialogues, involving municipal officials, teachers and educators, were a valuable first step for program participants. When the national roundtable took place a month later, participants were better prepared, had more developed ideas and a more refined message. In addition, the community dialogues demonstrate how lessons learned at the local level can inform national level program initiatives.

As a result of the October 2004 national education roundtable participants recommended increasing the number of Roma teaching assistants and Roma-language classrooms. The Czech Ministry of Education had the funds available to pay for new assistant positions. However, follow-up research done by Partners Czech in 2005 found that only 300 Roma teaching assistants were employed in the entire Czech education system. Despite its best efforts to initiate new dialogue around the issue, the Ministry of Education, a national roundtable participant, would not move on the recommendations. But a more positive outcome of the roundtable was bridging the communication divide between the Ministry and local level educators and NGOs. While recommendations from these groups did not

make their way into Czech government policy, the Ministry nonetheless recognized the value of consulting with community-based organizations and educators.

Roma Regional Coordinators Roundtable: Roma Regional Coordinators work with Czech regional governments and Roma advisors in communities located throughout the Republic's 14 administrative regions on Roma integration issues. A national roundtable was organized in 2005 by Partners Czech to formalize the role of these coordinators and increase their access to state resources. Representatives from the Ministries of Labor and Social Affairs, the Interior and Education, and Roma Regional Coordinators attended the facilitated discussion. Based on the roundtable, the government approved a plan to create Regional Coordinator Centers, which provide the coordinators with resources and information about state laws and institutions and serve as a meeting place for the exchange of ideas and best practices. Before the plan was approved, disagreements between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs threatened to undo many of the roundtable's gains. Partners Czech effectively kept dialogue open between the two Ministries, resulting in a compromise agreement on support for the Regional Coordinator Centers.

Roundtable on Effective Government Funding Programs for Roma NGOs: A Czech government plan to create an organization to manage government EU Structural Fund grants to Roma NGOs served as the basis for the third Czech national roundtable. Attendees of the July 2006 meeting included the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the U.S. Embassy, USAID, and Czech NGOs. Participants reviewed a draft of the government plan to create the agency and during working group sessions created a series of recommendations to improve it, for example increasing the body's independence from the government and the development of better methods of oversight and more clearly defined goals.

Partners Czech delivered these recommendations to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, which has agreed to take them into account when preparing the tender for formation of the organization. In addition the Ministry also agreed to support a separate body solely in charge of grant evaluation. This should lead to more effective mechanisms for distributing EU Structural Funds to Czech NGOs working in the area of Roma integration.

'New School Law' Roundtable: Partners Czech followed the 2004 education roundtable with another focused on Roma education, specifically the new school law, which came into effect throughout the country in early 2005. Like the previous roundtable, the 2007 meeting was preceded by a series of community roundtable dialogues, the goal being to involve stakeholders at both the community and national levels in assessing the new school law and to develop a series of recommendations based on two years under the law.

The new school law made "special schools" illegal – the goal being to increase ethnic integration in Czech schools. Yet two years after passage, it remained unclear what effect, if any, the new law was having. To prepare for the roundtable, Partners Czech held discussions with educators and members of important national ministries, including the Ministry of Education. Three community roundtables were also organized to determine local level perceptions of the new law and changes that should be made to increase its effectiveness (or more generally, to promote greater school integration). Recommendations formed as a result of these roundtables formed the basis of the January 2007 national roundtable discussion, and included the following proposals:

- Greater cooperation between government agencies in implementing the new legislation.

- Emphasis on multicultural education.
- Reduction in class sizes and an increase in spending per student.
- Further tolerance training for teachers.
- Informational seminars for Roma parents on topics such as completing a school registration form on time.
- Greater cooperation between schools, parents and social workers.

Twenty-eight participants, including representatives of the Czech Ministry of Education, the Government Council for Roma Affairs, USAID, the U.S. Embassy, NGOs, and Czech schools attended the January 2007 roundtable held in Prague. The topics participants covered included: recommendations from the community roundtables; “special” schools and the use of the term “special” or “socially excluded”; continued Roma segregation; Romany-language instruction; and pre-school education. There was some disagreement as to the extent of the new law’s positive impact, but participants did agree on some recommendations for improving the law and Roma access to quality education in general, including:

- The Ministry should be required to finance any Roma teaching assistants. Under the current law, Czech Regional Governments can establish the position but are not required to pay for it. This arrangement is confusing and it should be clarified who is paying for the position.
- A curriculum should be developed for the teaching assistants.

While immediate action to change the law was not undertaken by the Ministry, the roundtable will hopefully impact future decisions, or at least contribute to more informed policy makers, as the topic of Roma access to education will remain an important topic in the Czech Republic.

Hungary

Media Roundtable: An October 2004 roundtable organized by Partners Hungary led to one of the RIP’s greatest outcomes, and serves as an example of the progress that can be achieved as a result of increased dialogue between key stakeholders. In this case, key government officials, an ombudsman in charge of minority issues and media professionals focused their conversations during the roundtable on promoting more objective coverage of Roma in the media. Though participants struggled with the balance between maintaining freedom of the press and protecting minorities from subjective or hateful reporting, in the end they suggested creating a code of ethics, supported by the government, to guide news organizations when covering Roma issues. In addition, participants recommended initiatives to diversify the newsrooms of major Hungarian media organizations.

As a result of these constructive discussions, Partners Hungary continued to facilitate small group forums composed of academics, journalists and politicians, to expand upon themes raised during the national roundtable. As some academics and professionals felt a “code of ethics” would not be effective, Partners Hungary decided to work with the Hungarian Ministry of Equal Opportunities and journalists to draft a green paper (more information about the green paper is provided in the [Media](#) section of this report) on the fair portrayal of Roma in the media, which would incorporate suggestions from the national roundtable.

Despite delays, the green paper was published with full government support in February 2007. This was a significant event, not only because the RIP-supported green paper was the first officially

supported document of its kind published in Europe. The preamble and executive summaries are available in English and Romany, while the entire green paper was published in Hungarian and has been widely distributed. A press conference was held by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities to officially announce its publication in April 2007. Partners expects the paper to have lasting impact on the way journalists and the media approach Roma issues and on diversity in newsrooms across the country.

Health Roundtable: The October 2004 roundtable, which was co-sponsored by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities and co-facilitated by Andor Ürmös, then-Director for Roma Integration at the Ministry, focused on Roma access to proper healthcare. Among the issues discussed were: the impact of the geographical isolation of Roma communities; discrimination and cultural insensitivity demonstrated by doctors; loans for doctors to move to less developed regions of Hungary; and the lack of Roma doctors. The roundtable improved the exchange of information among health institutions about the accessibility of health services to Roma. As a follow-up, Partners Hungary also organized working groups, including health care workers, to review certain discussion topics, including the issues of geographic isolation, doctor discrimination and preventative health services.

Multicultural Education in Secondary Schools: In an attempt to draw together organizations from across Hungary that run inter-ethnic tolerance programs like the RIP Schools Program, Partners Hungary organized a roundtable in October 2006 for the Program for a Cohesive Society and the Sulinova organization. While the roundtable was useful from the perspective of opening the door for future collaboration, the participants found it difficult to reach a common ground on promoting wider acceptance of tolerance and multicultural curricula in Hungarian schools. In addition, the roundtable suffered from a lack of participation. Turnout should have been higher, which, if anything, would have allowed for greater networking. Partners Hungary did speak with the Kurt Lewin Foundation, which was invited to but did not attend the roundtable, and the two agreed to work jointly on future projects to develop school tolerance curricula.

Slovakia

Institutionalizing Field Social Workers: In June 2004, PDCS organized the first RIP national roundtable in Slovakia and, with Partners, chose Field Social Workers as the topic. Field social workers provide isolated communities with information about social benefits, thus working to increase their access to these services. During conversations between key government and civil society representatives, it was agreed that the Field Social Worker position would receive official government support through the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family. PDCS worked directly with the State Secretary of the Ministry and other key roundtable participants to reach an agreement on funding and mobilizing the social workers. As a result of this dialogue, the Ministry agreed to support 200 Community Social Workers (up from 50 before the conference), the new official title, and 400 of their assistants, 80 percent of which are Roma. In addition, the Ministry funded trainings and education programs facilitated by PDCS for the social workers and assistants. This was arguably the most significant outcome of the roundtable held in Slovakia, and set the tone for the other roundtables to come.

Education Roundtable: In the winter of 2004, PDCS began to recruit education experts, policymakers and practitioners to participate in working group discussions to share information about existing Roma education initiatives and to develop recommendations for public policy

interventions. Working groups were also organized for the later roundtables and proved to be an effective and successful model for gathering information at the local level to inform national level public policy dialogue. In addition, at the time the Slovak government did not display a willingness to engage with civil society organizations to gather input on a draft education law. The formation of working groups allowed NGOs and others to organize their ideas and come up with joint recommendations, putting weight behind their proposals, for the government to consider.

During the roundtable, participants developed further proposals for improving Roma access to education, with particular emphasis on the issue of “special schools” and the draft education legislation. These ideas were presented to the Education Minister, but due to changes within the ministry (the Minister resigned his post), implementation of any of the recommendations was delayed. However, in late 2006 the Ministry showed renewed interest and has promised to address many of the issues raised by roundtable participants, such as:

- Changes to the utilization of “special schools,” which make it easier for Roma to integrate into traditional or “mainstream” schools. The evaluation procedures that are used to determine whether children are placed in special schools also now consider socioeconomic factors because of their impact on levels of education.
- Free Kindergarten for all students for one year, as part of efforts to better prepare young children for primary school.

Additionally, multicultural education for teachers was adopted as part of the national human rights education plan. The trainings for teachers will include sections on Roma history and language. And the government approved anti-segregation rules and created a department of education for national minorities.

Housing Roundtable: As with previous roundtables, PDCS organized working group meetings in preparation for the national roundtable on housing held in February 2007. The groups reviewed pilot affordable housing designs made from environmentally sustainable materials (straw balls). The houses were completed in summer 2007 – not in time for the roundtable – after significant delays in the town of Spiske Podhradie, whose mayor was convinced the model would become the standard for future affordable housing throughout Slovakia. During working group meetings in 2006, the topics for the February roundtable were assigned. Roundtable participants reviewed the pilot housing design (unfortunately without the physical structure as a reference) and made recommendations for expanding affordable housing to Roma communities. PDCS has received a grant from the CEE Trust to continue working on the issue of Roma access to housing.



Health Roundtable: In April 2005 PDCS recruited a group of health experts and practitioners and policymakers to form a working group on Roma and Health. Over the course of several meetings, participants discussed the role of field healthcare workers in Roma communities and

prepared the agenda for the roundtable. An October 2006 roundtable focused on the “Health Support Program for Disadvantaged Communities in Slovakia 2007-2015” plan developed by the Public Healthcare Office of Slovakia (ÚVZ SR). Roundtable participants emphasized the need for the government to adopt field healthcare assistants as part of Slovakia’s wider plan for Roma integration and, in particular, the proposed “Health Support Program.” The ÚVZ SR agreed to implement all recommendations from the roundtable, including the field healthcare assistant position. In addition, the Public Healthcare Office agreed to support trainings for the assistants through the Ministries of Education and Health.

COOPERATIVE ADVOCACY

The “cooperative advocacy” component was a relatively small portion of the Roma Integration Program. However, the goal was to train beneficiaries to advocate for issues more effectively, build coalitions and mobilize important skills and experts to influence public policy. In 2006, Partners Czech held cooperative advocacy trainings for 19 Roma leaders interested in improving their coalition-building, outreach, presentation and mobilization skills in order to increase their influence on public policies in the Czech Republic. Speakers from the Czech NGO People in Need and the Committee for Compensation for the Roma Holocaust joined Partners Czech in giving presentations to the trainees. Following the Cooperative Advocacy training, participant Laco Trncik used the lessons he learned in his home town of Orlove. When Mr. Trncik learned that the town had decided against creating a Committee for Roma – a body that would be responsible for representing Orlove’s Roma and advocating on their behalf – he presented a legal argument to the local government explaining that the Committee for Roma was legally meant to be formed.

Partners-Hungary held a series of meetings during the RIP for Roma organizations about the Hungarian government’s action plan as part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. As a result, these organizations were more informed about the strategic plan’s development and thus had an opportunity to give their input. The Action Plan was much delayed and there was evidence that there was a lack of information available to Roma activists and NGOs about the action plan and the Roma Decade in general.

LESSONS LEARNED: NATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY

- It is important to involve local level stakeholders in national-level policy discussions. In many cases it is beneficial to work with them prior to national roundtables, as PDCS and Partners Czech did with working groups, to ensure that their knowledge and suggestions will have maximum impact.
- Unfortunately, during the past four years there were multiple instances of politicians using anti-Roma messages to gain support or get elected. This had the effect of legitimizing the politicians’ intolerant positions, i.e. stereotypes certain politicians reinforced during their campaigns were confirmed in the eyes of the public through the election of the candidate. In future programs, support for advocacy campaigns designed to encourage political candidates to articulate their positions on Roma integration policies and then subsequently hold them accountable to their own statements could potentially have great impact.

SCHOOL TOLERANCE TRAINING

Three hundred teachers and nearly 900 students were trained during the Roma integration program to respect diversity in the classroom and the multicultural heritage of their countries. Teachers were taught to use new multicultural training curricula and students and teachers were trained in conflict management, cultural appreciation and communication. According to the Centers' calculations, approximately 5,300 have been impacted as a result of these trainings (i.e. students and teachers benefiting from the increased knowledge and experiences their trained colleagues and teachers).

The impact of the trainings was to promote cooperation between students and critical thinking about diversity and multiculturalism. In many cases it was the teachers rather than the students who were challenged the most by what to some were new ideas. Partners Hungary in particular found that some teachers were inflexible in their teaching style. But teachers have reported positive changes to their teaching style and their personal attitudes as a result of the RIP tolerance trainings, such as:

- Monitoring group dynamics and spotting negative attitudes such as scapegoating more effectively.
- Using more open ended questions to encourage constructive classroom discussions.
- Managing conflicts and identifying parties' interests.
- Employing more interactive small group work activities rather than the lecture style.

Over the course of the program Partners-Czech trained 50 teachers in Chomutov and Bruntál. The Center had some trouble in Pardubice finding interested schools and teachers and therefore did not hold a successful training in that community. In addition, Partners Czech attempted to create a lessons learned document based on their tolerance training experience and surveys sent to teachers who had participated in the trainings. While the teachers' responses were positive, they were not enough to develop case studies or collection of best practices.

Partners Hungary and PDCS did develop tolerance training curricula that were nationally accredited for use in teacher training programs. In Hungary, a handbook for teachers was prepared and

approved by the National Accreditation Board, making it a part of the national school curricula. The Center created the handbook based on its experience training students and teachers as part of the RIP. Partners Hungary held trainings in four schools around the country for 150 students and a dozen teachers. It also started a crime prevention program in one Budapest school, training an additional 14 teachers. Partners Hungary learned a series of valuable lessons about the school training program based on its work under the RIP. For example, the Center said that it would more closely monitor in-classroom activity, hold more case study discussions for teachers, and make more presentations in the schools with other teachers present.

“My colleagues don't know what multicultural education is, so I'm demonstrating concrete activities that might be of use for the other teachers. Now all of the other teachers know how to use this in my school. It is now very important because we're incorporating this into the new operational scheme of the school.”

– Jarmila Hellebrandová, Primary School Teacher in Bruntál

PDCS trained hundreds of students and teachers over the course of the Roma Integration Program. But its greatest success was the creation of teacher

training manual that is now being used by eight “Methodological Centers” – teacher training centers. The manual included games and exercises, information about multiculturalism and diversity and case studies for teachers to learn about and practice good teaching techniques. In addition to developing the manuals, PDCS also held trainings for the Methodological Centers in its multicultural curricula. Before being released, the manual was extensively tested around the country to make sure it was easy to use and the exercises were effective.

CASE STUDY: ‘TOLERANCE CAMP’

In 2006 PDCS organized a week-long summer camp near Prešov for 21 Roma and non-Roma children (12 to 15 years old) in partnership with NGO Zivica. The camp elaborated upon the techniques employed during Partners-Slovakia’s school tolerance training program. Roma and non-Roma Campers interacted during a series of teambuilding exercises and games to encourage them to work together and become comfortable interacting socially. At the end of the day participants met to discuss their achievements and talk about their prejudices. The discussions were very open and participants said they recognized a noticeable difference in their attitudes towards members of the opposite ethnicity by the end of the camp.

A video was produced at the camp and will be presented to NGOs interested in this initiative at national education seminars, including the Great Fair of Education Program and the Great Exchange of Experience, among others. The video emphasizes the importance of experimental education techniques in tolerance training for school children. In addition, lessons learned from the camp were integrated into the PDCS school tolerance training manual (detailed above).

REGIONAL NETWORKING

Significant changes to the regional political context occurred during the course of the Roma Integration Program, the most significant of which was accession to the EU by the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary in 2004. In 2005, the Decade of Roma Inclusion was launched by governments in Central and Eastern Europe to improve Roma living conditions and increase access to education, healthcare and employment. These events created good opportunities to affect national level policies on ethnic minorities, promote Roma integration programs across Europe and network with funders and civil society organizations through regional forums and meetings.



In July 2005 a Roma Integration Program Regional Coordinator was hired by Partners to strengthen the regional aspect of the program. The Regional

Coordinator was particularly effective in developing the RIP's media programs. The *So Vakeres?* program was due in part to his work networking with journalists and Roma in Slovakia. The coordinator also created other media opportunities, fostered links between local and national media covering Roma, facilitated the sharing of best practices between Partners and the Centers and the program and national and regional Roma and government representatives.

CASE STUDY: CHOMUTOV INTERNATIONAL CONCILIATION COMMISSION MEETING

Roma and non-Roma Conciliation Commission members from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary met in Chomutov, Czech Republic in May 2005 to exchange information about their visions of the commissions. Members enthusiastically discussed best practices in fostering inter-ethnic cooperation and other issues critical to the sustainability of vibrant Conciliation Commissions.

Participants engaged in lively discussions, exchanging impressions and experiences from their localities and conferred about best practices and challenges they encountered in developing the Commissions. After breaking into separate working groups, conference attendees brainstormed creative strategies for generating cases, talked about the advantages of different statutes and organizational legitimization and the sustainability of their organizations.

Each Conciliation Commission took away different things from this meeting. Some were influenced by discussions about legitimizing the Commission and other found suggestions for generating new cases to be very helpful.

But the most important part of the meeting was the strengthening of bonds between the Conciliation Commissions across the region and the sharing of local level experiences with this bigger group. "For me, the crucial finding was that all other Conciliation Commissions are dealing with the same issues. We can find much more effective ways of their solution, if we all share our experience and ideas."

Three Regional Beneficiaries Meetings were held during the course of the program for Partners, the Centers and program beneficiaries. Roma and non-Roma representatives from national governments, schools, social service providers, media, and international donors met over multi-day conferences to discuss community-level best practices, RIP national initiatives and to focus on developing strategies for further Roma integration projects during working group sessions. In addition, semi-annual regional planning meetings between Partners U.S.-staff, Roma Integration Program staff from the Centers and the Regional Coordinator were held to coordinate activities, share lessons learned and develop yearly implementation plans.

In 2007 a "Roma Integration Program: Best Practices" booklet was developed by Partners. The booklet, a collection of case studies from various program components and representing the collective best efforts of Partners and the Centers, was marketed to multilateral and bilateral donors, Roma NGOs and activists, and international NGOs. The booklets were distributed during the final conferences of the program (national level final conferences were held in Hungary and the Czech

Republic and three local final conferences were held in Slovakia) and through the mail. In addition, the Prague-based Center for Policy Analysis reprinted thousands of copies of the booklet for distribution at a conference held in spring 2007. The booklet and the Roma Integration Program were used to highlight best practices on Roma integration.

CONCLUSION

The Roma Integration Program significantly advanced Roma integration efforts in several important areas. From conflict management trainings to small grant investments in budding Roma civil society organizations, national policy roundtable discussions to new school curricula promoting interethnic tolerance and multiculturalism, the program has left a positive legacy in the region. Most importantly, the RIP demonstrated that Roma communities can play a big role in solving problems when invested with new skills and opportunities. The RIP leaves behind stronger organizations, a more vibrant Roma civil society, better public policies, more educated stakeholders, and a public that is better equipped to advance meaningful change. And while Roma still face serious challenges in the Central Europe and beyond, there are indications that Roma Integration Program initiatives will continue to have impact.

Partners for Democratic Change, Partners Czech, Partners Hungary Foundation, and Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia would like to thank the United States Agency for International Development for its generous support during the past four years. Partners would also like to thank partner organizations, including the NGO Ekopolis in Slovakia, government representatives and other program supporters, and especially Roma Integration Program participants, without which this program would not have succeeded.

Appendix 1: Czech Republic Small Grants Completed

NOTE: The small grant reports included in Appendices 1 through 3 are for the final six months of the program only. The other small grant final reports can be found in previous Partners' semi-annual program reports.

[Bruntál Small/Moderate Grant Round Final Report](#)

[Chomutov Small/Moderate Grant Round Final Report](#)

[Pardubice Small/Moderate Grant Round Final Report](#)

Final Grant Reports: Bruntál, CZ
February 2007

Three projects under the small/medium grants round of the Roma Integration Program in Pardubice, Czech Republic and surrounding villages were completed by February 2007. Below is a summary of the three completed projects.

1. Chance For Us

Grantee: NGO Liga
Amount: \$17,391
Grant Period: 02.2006 – 02/2007

Description: This project provided employment training for 14 students to increase personal marketing skills and help them access employment opportunities. The activities included student recruitment and selection, the creation of professional plans for each student, trainings in applicable professional skills. The program brought students and their parents together regularly to discuss their experiences.

Results: The recruitment process resulted in the selection of 14 project participants, out of a possible 34, who were chosen based on their skills and their ability to meet the project goals. Meetings with the students and their parents took place and five courses were organized, including business ethnics, psychology, employment law, and communication skills. Students learned how to effectively prepare for job interviews which, while helping them in a future professional capacity, will also help them with university entrance exams. The local press ran stories about the program and many new students have expressed interest in participating in future projects. Some of the participants now volunteer with Liga.

Beneficiaries: 14 students from Bruntál.

Plans for the Future: Liga has not yet received new financial support, but the project coordinator continues to work with the project participants, giving them guidance and talking with them about their plans for the future. Some of the participants have volunteered with the NGO.

2. Zvidalek-Center For Free Time Activities for Children in Krnov

Grantee: Charity Krnov
Amount: \$8,696
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 02/2007

Description: To prepare Roma and non-Roma youth for mainstream education, the project offered tutoring help, exam preparation, free time activities, and field trips for students. Pre-school children participated in free-time activities to improve their social skills and Czech language proficiency. Primary school-aged children concentrated on educational activities and took part in field trips. Parents helped organize the field trips in cooperation with *Charity Krnov*.

Results: On average, 30 children attended tutoring classes every day. Tutors offered help with homework and individual subjects the students were struggling in, with an emphasis during the school exam period on test preparation. Children were rewarded for good grades with extra game time and field trips. Two of the children who had previously failed their school exams retook the tests after participating in the project and passed. The other children also achieved better marks on school assignments. Twenty-five children participated in the field trips, which brought the children to historical landmarks. Reading and film groups and games were also organized.

Beneficiaries: 30 Roma children regularly took part in the project and twelve more participated on a less regular basis.

Plans for the Future: *Charity Krnov* has received US\$12,000 from the Ministry of Social Affairs and from the Krnov Municipality to continue this project, which has run since 1999. They are also awaiting news from the Ministry of Education regarding submitted proposals.

3. For the Children of Bruntál

Grantee: Open House
Amount: \$17,391
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 02/2007

Description: In an effort to decrease criminal activity, drug addiction and anti-social behavior, the project worked with children from the Dlouha Street area to provide them with constructive and safe activities in which to spend their free time. The project also worked with the children to prepare them for starting school, build their self-confidence and improve relations between Roma and non-Roma (through free time activities.) The project supported new social workers, who organized activities such as park cleaning and painting projects, and increased the number of beneficiaries. The social workers also met with children who have gotten in trouble in school or in the community and provided one-on-one counseling sessions.

Results: Roma and non-Roma children benefited from sports activities followed by discussions on racism for participants. Weekly cleaning projects and community beautification projects fixed up a skateboard park and decorated sidewalks with chalk drawings. A trip to the zoo was organized for some children as an education activity. On International Roma Day (April 8), games were organized for 60 children. Parents also participated in these activities, which were covered by the local press. “Feast Day” celebrations included games, seminars and competitions. Tutors also worked with approximately 7 children two or three times per week, resulting in improved school work. 8 children also participated in a snow competition and 20 in a football tournament. The children that the social workers met with regularly demonstrated an increased ability to manage their time in a constructive manner.

Beneficiaries: Approximately 150 Roma and non-Roma children between the ages of 6 and 14 years participated in these activities, with over 30 of these participating on a regular basis.

Plans for the Future: *Open House* received funding to continue to provide tutoring services for area students.

Final Grant Reports: Chomutov, CZ December 2006

Six projects worth \$88,624 under the small/medium grants round of the Roma Integration Program in Chomutov, Czech Republic and surrounding villages were completed by December, 2006. Below is a summary of the six completed projects.

1. We Want to Feel At Home

Grantee: Amaro-Suno Civic Association
Amount: \$17,778
Grant Period: 07/2005–12/2006

Description: This project established a community center in Vejprty to offer educational activities for Roma residents and to act as a meeting point for children, young people and parents. The focus of the community center was to prepare young children for elementary school; tutor students; organize computer, dancing, music and art clubs; and offer informational talks for parents on topics such as substance abuse prevention, parental responsibility, social counseling, job opportunities, housing, and Roma culture.

Results: Approximately 20 children took part in free-time activities, including computer and dancing classes, sports activities and needlework. On average, 20-30 school children took advantage of daily after school tutoring. Twice a week pre-school children participated in activities to prepare them for entry to basic school. These activities also included their parents. Lectures were organized on various topics, including anti-drug use, parenting, and briefings with a social workers on law and social benefits. Two Roma men were hired to make structural repairs to the Community Center and one job was created (the head of the Community Center.) The level of daycare has increased for parents and their children in the community. As the project progressed, greater numbers of community members took part in its activities. The local press published articles and photos highlighting the association's work.

Beneficiaries: 120 children and parents benefited from the project. Three jobs, one permanent, were created.

Plans for the Future: The project is currently ongoing and additional funding has been received. They are also awaiting results of a second funding proposal.

2. Domino

Grantee: NGO Mania
Amount: \$17,778
Grant Period: 07/2005–12/2006

Description: This program expanded services originally initiated under "Little Sun" a project previously funded with a RIP micro grant. Three organizations coordinated programs and activities designed to bridge the gaps in Roma education, improve job prospects for Roma and address crime and social problems in the community. These included multicultural pre-school classes and after-school tutoring programs for children, seminars and counseling for parents, and cultural events, including trips to the cinema and art classes for children.

Results: Sixty children of all ages from underprivileged backgrounds and 35 parents participated in the project. Six people were employed to run the programs altogether, but only three of them were paid from RIP (one was full time, 2 were part time). Ten primary school children improved their school results since participating in the project. Four of 5 of last year's students who were not accepted for elementary school

have now been accepted. New equipment in the playroom has also attracted more children to visit it on a regular basis improving their social interaction. As well as improved studying skills children have developed a sense of schedule and responsibility due to the regularity of courses. Parents participated in several seminars on the topics of domestic violence, healthy nutrition, drug prevention and they were continuously being taught how to tutor their kids. Also, social counseling was available to the adults.

Beneficiaries: 6 participants were employed in the project, and 60 children and 35 adults participated in the trainings. Overall there were 1,617 participants in all events. This large number includes visitors to all the different public events that were held (musical events, Christmas and Eastern parties, International Roma Day celebrations etc.)

Plans for the Future: These projects will continue thanks to funding from the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, the Tereza Maxová Foundation and the Northern Czech Coalmine firm.

3. Work is Our Future

Grantee: Novum
Amount: \$8,887
Grant Period: 07/2005-06/2006

Description: This project targeted long-term unemployed residents of the Dukelská Roma settlement. Participants benefited from trainings in communication skills, administration, CV writing and interviewing skills. The project also built partnerships with selected companies to identify and fill positions with project participants. A Roma assistant was trained to organize motivational courses and also provide job-related counseling. The assistant publishes information on vacancies and retraining courses for participants.

Results: 32 unemployed Roma took part in the program and 10 have been employed. Other participants are providing community service in areas such as unemployment, human rights, and housing. All those who participated can now write and produce their own CVs and have significantly improved their public speaking and interviewing skills. They also learned about employment law and ethics, and increased their self-esteem.

Beneficiaries: 32 participants of which 10 are now gainfully employed.

Plans for the Future: The project is ongoing, having received funds from private donors in Chomutov. The NGO has requested money from the Employment Bureau in Chomutov and is awaiting a reply.

4. Field Social Work, Pruněřov

Grantee: Romano Rat
Amount: \$17,771
Grant Period: 07/2005–12/2006

Description: This project was aimed at improving Roma access to health and social services and was a continuation of the field social work program established by *Romano Rat* under the micro grants round. Families in need of social services were organized to connect to these services or advocate for them when unavailable. Services focused on drug abuse, legal aid, social counseling and educational programs. Children received tutoring and extracurricular classes were organized in dancing, arts and music. The project also provided solutions to housing shortages.

Results: 96 adults and 85 children participated in the social discussions and lectures, and 32 children received tutoring from student volunteers. School results have improved as a result. There were 80 participants in each

of the four social and cultural events, including art and dancing, which increased the self-confidence and communication skills of all participants. Thirty run-down flats were repaired in the community. A new rate for the water utility in the community was also negotiated, the first time such an adjustment had been made in 15 years. Three women found jobs as a result of the project.

Beneficiaries: 293 people participated in the program.

Plans for the Future: Field social work in Pruněrov is ongoing. *Romano Rat* is looking at organizing a joint project with another NGO.

5. Shelter House Accommodation 2005

Grantee: Civic Association CÍL Chomutov
Amount: \$18,182
Grant Period: 07/2005–12/2006

Description: This program expanded the services already offered to homeless families from a successful RIP micro grant. It provided temporary accommodation and social services for families and also young people who had no families. Participants also received employment and education training.

Results: Fifty-five families were accommodated in an intermediate housing facility. Thirteen families got their own flats and another 35 families were accommodated in different ways. Seven young people received accommodation in youth shelters – of those, one found his own apartment. Eleven people were employed as a result of the project, 9 men as street cleaners, one woman as a cleaning lady and one man in a private firm in the neighboring town of Decin. Others were also able to find temporary work on ships or in the forests. All participants participated in education, housing and employment training programs.

Beneficiaries: 55 families (193 people) were accommodated in the housing facility, their own flat or in a shelter. 14 young people were accommodated and 11 people gained full-time employment.

Plans for the Future: This project has had to finish as no additional support was received from the local municipality or from the national government. The overhead costs of running the Association were too high for them to continue without a substantial grant.

6. Open School

Grantee: Special School Chomutov
Amount: \$8,228
Grant Period: 10/2005-9/2006

Description: This program organized free-time activities, trips and summer camps for Roma and non-Roma children to help improve their communication and social skills. The project helped build tolerance between the children and improve Roma and non-Roma relations. PC and literary courses and trips highlighting the history of the Czech Republic improved the children's educational skills, confidence and self-esteem

Results: 359 school pupils participated in the activities, which took place weekly. These included PC courses, ceramics, music lessons, cooking, needlework, a tourist club, painting, theater (both visiting and performing), German language courses, and a literary course. Sports games included football, table tennis, volleyball and wrestling. Activities and celebrations were organized for Christmas, two summer camps were took place during the summer and a treasure hunt was also organized for the children. Parents also integrated more with the school.

Beneficiaries: 359 students, 60% of whom were Roma.

Plans for the Future: All the activities are still going on, financed by the school, so children can visit all free time activities after the project has ended. Teachers and employees participate in these activities for free and they intend to write new project proposals in near future. The school also cooperates with other local Roma NGOs.

Final Grant Reports: Pardubice, CZ February 2007

Five projects worth \$82,341 under the small/medium grants round of the Roma Integration Program in Pardubice, Czech Republic and surrounding villages were completed by February 2007. Below is a summary of the five completed projects.

1. Free-Time Activities with Pedagogical and Parental Assistance

Grantee: Elementary and Practical School Pardubice (Zvláštní a praktická škola)
Amount: \$16,667
Grant Period: 09/2005 – 01/2007

Description: This project organized after-school and weekend activities for Roma and non-Roma students from special and vocational schools and their families, building relationships between Roma and non-Roma and providing them with safe and productive free-time activities. Tutoring classes were also organized for the students to improve their schoolwork and enhance learning.

Results: The participants participated in traffic education, photography, cooking, and needlework courses. They also benefited from regular tutoring and participated in nature and historical trips, which benefited their education and improved social skills and physical fitness. The children also participated in sports games and evening dancing and music lessons, which increased their self-confidence and improved their communication and team working skills. Articles about the project appeared regularly in *Pružina*, the school magazine read by children in basic school, their teachers and their parents.

Beneficiaries: 118 Roma and non-Roma children participated in the project. Parents and teachers were also involved in the after-school activities.

Plans for the Future: The Project is still going on with financial help from the Regional office of the Pardubice Region and also the Program of Criminality Prevention of the Pardubice town. They have also submitted proposals to the Ministry of Education and are awaiting results.

2. Primary Prevention and Harm Reduction in the Roma Community

Grantee: Sdružení pardubických Romů/ Roma Pardubice Association
Amount: \$16,663
Grant Period: 10/2005 – 03/2007

Description: This project aimed to identify the number of Roma drug users in the locality and provide trained social workers, help and advice to them. It also worked with other NGOs and families in the Roma community educating and training them about drug prevention for members at risk in the community.

Results: Activities included the training of field social workers on topics of: recognition of addictive substance and drugs; simulation of real actions; communication with clients; field social work in Roma community. Social workers worked directly with clients on the field salvaging used needles and changing new ones. Seminars were held for NGOs working with the Roma community about drug prevention and social work was also carried out with Roma families in this area. Publicity materials for the 'Say No to drugs, and YES to life' campaign were prepared, printed and distributed.

Clients cooperated with social workers and connections were formed between them and their families. Field social workers also worked also with local public institutions and with the Policy of Czech Republic.

Beneficiaries: The NGO worked with:

- 3 children aged 14 who were trying hard drugs, and their parents
- 25 children of 12 years of age who were smoking marijuana, and their parents
- 8 long-term clients who are addicted to hard drugs

Plans for the Future: The NGO will continue to work on these issues in the future.

3. Tutorial Classes for Roma Children from Socio-Culturally Disadvantaged Backgrounds

Grantee: SKP-Centrum (Center for Christian Help)
Amount: \$16,652
Grant Period: 09/2005 – 01/2007

Description: The aim of this project was to help integrate Roma children from disadvantaged backgrounds into primary school. The NGO works with women and children living in the *Asylum House Paprsek*. Pre-school education courses were organized, including arts, sports and dancing classes, coupled with regular tutoring for the children. Parents were also involved in the activities to help assist with their own preparation for the transition from pre-school to primary school.

Results: 10 regularly participated in education courses. 11 children regularly took part in free time activities. Of the 10 children who took advantage of the pre-school education and tutoring help, seven were accepted to the first grade. The children also learned good social skills, including communication skills. Art works were displayed for the community to see.

Beneficiaries: 21 children per day and their parents.

Plans for the Future: The project will continue and the NGO has sought financial support from the Ministry of Education, though they are still waiting for approval. In the meantime, *SKP-Centrum* has applied for accreditation from the Ministry of Social Affairs for in the “Social and Law Prevention Project.”

4. Free-Time Activities for Roma Children

Grantee: NGO Darjav
Amount: \$16,667
Grant Period: 09/2005 – 01/2007

Description: The NGO arranged free-time activities and after-school education programs for children from 3 to 18 years of age in their center. The activities, in addition to lectures and tutoring help, included cooking, knitting, art, dancing, theater and sports. A Roma debate league, children’s discos, criminality prevention classes, and PC courses were also established. The fitness center in Hušova was renovated and equipped for the Roma population.

Results: More than 250 people took part in this project with, on average, 20 children visiting the center daily. On average, 10 Roma visit the gym daily during the week and 20 on the weekends. 25 – 30 students regularly attended tutoring and 11 have shown a good improvement in their grades. All participants have increased their self-confidence and have an outlet through which to divert their free-time and energy. The sports center has had a particularly positive impact on the people in the area and Roma and non-Roma friendships have been formed.

Beneficiaries: 250 Roma and non-Roma (90 children)

Plans for the Future: The project is ongoing. *Darjav* received funding from the Regional Office in Pardubice, from the municipal government, the Ministry of Social Affairs and *Nadation Via* and *Nadation* of Czech Bank. They are also exploring new funding possibilities.

5. Kukadla - Jakhora

Grantee: Babášek
Amount: \$15,692
Grant Period: 09/2005 – 01/2007

Description: This project aimed to integrate pre-school children into elementary school through social work with the Roma families and their pre-school children. It also focused on integrating Roma children into majority kindergartens and educated parents from both majority and Roma schools about the importance of education and inclusion. A social worker and a Roma assistant were pivotal to the success of the program.

Results: All pre-school children that participated in this project successfully entered the first class of basic school. The Roma assistant helped the children link their pre-school education with entry into basic school. Through visits from the social worker to the Roma families, parents began to send their children more frequently to kindergartens and dedicated more time to school preparation for the children. The kindergarten teachers have highlighted that the Roma children in kindergartens have had no problems integrating with their peers. Teachers gained new skills working with the Roma youth and their parents

Appendix 2: Hungary Small Grants Completed

[Euroregions Grant Round Final Report](#)

[Third Grant Round Final Report](#)

Final Grant Reports: Hungary Euroregions Round April 2007

Five projects under the Euroregions grant round of the Roma Integration Program in Hungary were completed by April 2007. The Euroregion funding intended to prepare organizations for project calls from EU sources through collaboratively drafting project proposals, building consortiums and executing a high level proficiency in project implementation, including complying with narrative and financial reporting procedures that larger grants would require. These skills will prepare these NGOs to implement successful EU-funded projects. Below are summaries of the five completed projects and a description of one grant project that was cancelled.

1. Opportunity from Disadvantage

Grantee: "Tale-Castle" Kindergarten Vasarosdombo
Other Partners: School and Kindergarten Gödre and Csokonai Vitez Mihaly Primary School, Pécs
Amount: \$10,792
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 10/2006

Description: This project introduced the "Step by Step" method into the Vasarosdombo Kindergarten. The kindergarten teachers received basic training from the Pécs school and observed the program in practice through visits to the Godre Kindergarten. The kindergarten purchased games and toys that assist in the development of coordination, vocabulary, and physical skills of the children. In addition, the school shifted focus towards equipment and techniques designed to prevent the development of learning disorders such as dyslexia and to encourage the development of logical thinking skills.

Results: The RIP small grant was used to pay for training the kindergarten teachers in the "Step by Step" teaching methodology and to purchase the necessary classroom materials. The school director was so impressed with the improvements he witnessed in the kindergarten classrooms that he requested the "Step by Step" methodology be implemented in the first grade classes as well. One first grade teacher has since been trained, and the school plans to create "Step by Step" classrooms up through the forth grade.

Beneficiaries: Fifty-seven children.

Plans for the Future: The grantee received EU funds to continue activities.

2. For Youth

Grantee: Keszü Association of Roma and Disadvantaged People
Other Partners: "Faag" Friends Circle Association and Keszü and Environs Roma Association
Amount: \$14,790
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 03/2007

Description: This program created a youth club in Keszü for youth between 10-25 years of age living in Keszü or the nearby village, Gorcsony. Youth club programs included a drama club which staged a play in both Hungarian and Romani, lectures on drugs, alcohol and domestic violence, lessons in Roma handicrafts, and excursions to build group cohesion.

Results: The youth program involved 30 to 40 youths in the production of handicrafts, teambuilding exercises, sex education sessions, acting programs and group excursions. It was difficult to attract children to the program at first, but the program leaders were able to overcome this problem by going out into the community and informing Roma families of their program. Despite the fact that some activities were scaled

back due to limited funds, this project was a success and the youth club will continue to operate beyond the USAID funding period with the support of program leaders.

Beneficiaries: Approximately thirty youth benefited from the project.

Plans for the Future: The Association will continue to run the youth club.

3. Don't Complain, Cooperate!

Grantee: RMSG Cun
Other Partners: Ormansag Micro-Regional Youth Assistance Service and the Together for the Children of Kemes Region Foundation
Amount: \$11,890
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 10/2006

Description: The grantee visited fifteen to twenty potential participating villages and talked to the RMSGs or other local Roma organizations and recruited Roma youth who showed an interest in learning about and eventually managing community programs. Twenty-six people were recruited to participate in the five-month training program where they were trained in the following: basics of youth work, team building, issues of rural youth, project management and proposal writing, local democracy, legal background of youth work, rights of minorities, programs building tolerance and decreasing racism, and planning future community work.

Results: RMSG successfully implemented their original plan. They organized camps and trained twenty-six Roma and non Roma youth during the summer. Participants were exposed to teambuilding activities, democracy building lessons, role play, anti-bias training, and a proposal writing course. Five young men from varied backgrounds formulated this project during their free time. Ultimately, this project succeeded in mobilizing youth, which is the first step towards empowering them with the skills and motivation to invest in further schooling and successful employment.

Beneficiaries: Twenty-six children.

Plans for the Future: The grantee received EU funds to continue activities.

4. We Will Only Succeed Together

Grantee: Órhegy Association – Adolescent Parliament
Other Partners: “Bükk Hegyhát” Rural Development Municipal Association, Borsodbóta
Amount: \$15,000
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 02/2007

Description: This project led community-development trainings for youth from the participating communities. These trainings included team-building at municipal and micro-regional levels, the development of skills to organize and implement projects in the community, and a discussion of what it takes to cohesively form a true community. Upon completion of the training, the participants developed joint projects and implemented them locally with the supervision of the Association. Many of the projects had an environmental focus, such as cleaning up walking paths, planting, and creating parks.

Results: This program successfully integrated Roma and non Roma participants. The program was implemented in North East Hungary which is one of the poorest regions of the country. The Association was able to form an Adolescent Parliament which is a unique youth initiative and a particularly significant accomplishment for this region of Hungary. One of the projects was approved as an international youth

project. The Association was able to gain the support from local governments for the trainings and resulting projects.

Beneficiaries: One-hundred twenty students benefited from the project.

Plans for the Future: The grantee received EU funds to continue activities.

5. Four Seasons in Health

Grantee: Generacio (Generations) Association
Other Partners: "Bükk Hegyhát" Rural Development Municipal Association, Borsodbóta
Amount: \$15,000
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 02/2007

Results: In late 2006, Partners Hungary determined that Generation Association was not fulfilling its commitments as a RIP sub grantee and under the work plan for the grant. Due to delays in their reporting and other deliverables, Partners Hungary decided to cancel the remainder of the grant and took back \$5,200 for work not completed. As a result, a final report of project activities is not available for this grant,

6. Cooperation for Programs Enhancing the Integration of Roma Children

Grantee: Association for the EU Accession of Bosta
Other Partners: Primary School of Kemes, Primary School of Nagyharsány, the Municipalities of Cun, Dravapiski, Szaporca, Tesenfa, and the RMSGs of Kemes, Cun, Czaporca, and Tesenfa
Amount: \$15,000
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 03/2007

Description: This program introduced an educational model program into the school of Kemes that was based on the system used by the school of Nagyharsány. This new model was developed within the 'Sulinova' government program (a government agency that deals with curriculum change in basic education, and focuses on integration of Roma children). The model is focused on teaching children with special needs. The program included the creation of a student-friendly classroom that focuses on interactivity, equality and the sharing of experiences on a peer-to-peer level; project-based history teaching which focuses on using the students initiative to explore history through individual projects; inter-cultural education about Roma culture, customs, language, music and dancing; and the creation of a student government. This educational model invited families to actively participate in their children's education and get involved in multiple education excursions arranged by the school. The larger objective of this program is to develop regional magnet schools which function as centers of curriculum development and teacher training focused on Roma integration. These magnet schools are intended to attract students, but they will also serve as training centers for other schools in the region.

Results: As a result of this project, children have shown progress in school achievement and have demonstrated an improved attitude towards school. The Association successfully created a classroom environment that encouraged integration and were able to provide every classroom with internet. One hundred children from surrounding villages participated in the "Traveling in Time and Place" program. During these project days, children developed their knowledge of history, biology and math through a variety of games, and engaged in teambuilding activities. The Association also organized Boyash afternoons to teach children the traditions of the Roma from Southern Hungary. Forty to fifty children participated in language courses, played music, and learnt about Roma customs. This program also organized two excursions for fifty children to the Budapest Parliament and to Szeged.

Beneficiaries: One-hundred twenty students benefited from the project.

Plans for the Future: The association did not receive additional funds to continue offering these services.

Final Grant Reports: Hungary Third Round April 2007

Four projects under the third grant round of the Roma Integration Program in Hungary were completed by April 2007. Below is a summary of the four completed projects.

1. Let's Move Together for our Environment

Grantee: RMSG Sajóivánka (Ózd)
Other Partners: Local Government of Sajóivánka, Kindergarten of Sajóivánka
Amount: \$11,680
Grant Period: 06/2006 – 03/2007

Description: This project encouraged both Roma and non-Roma villagers to work together on city beautification projects. A park was restored, flowers planted and a fountain installed for everyone in the neighborhood to enjoy. The park has become a community meeting place. Kindergarten children were trained in environmental awareness.

Results: The Roma portion of the village was noticeably improved. Twelve Roma families regularly took part in beautification and maintenance projects. Twenty-one children in the local kindergarten were taught to be more environmentally friendly. Perhaps the greatest success of the project was its impact on Roma and non-Roma relations. As a result of the project, a group of non-Roma villagers offered to work with the Roma participants on a new project (similar to this one) in the future. The community group has begun preparation to develop a project proposal.

Beneficiaries: Two-hundred people benefited from the project.

Plans for the Future: The group of Roma who worked on the village beautification projects will work together with a group of non-Roma villagers on a similar project in the future. The group has begun preparing to develop a new project proposal.

2. Let's Work Together for the Integration of Roma, Training and Employment

Grantee: National Association of Roma Community Developers
Other Partners: RMSG of Kisköre
Amount: \$14,321
Grant Period: 06/2006 – 04/2007

Description: This project supported unemployed Roma in three villages east of Hatvan. The grantee developed contacts with educational institutions, employers, rehabilitation centers and the local unemployment offices. Trainings in practical job skills, such as metallurgy and appliance maintenance were organized. Workshops were also held to advise participants in writing CVs, preparing for interviews and searching for jobs.

Results: The sub grantee did an excellent job publicizing its work in the region. As a result, they were able to reach out to nearly 400 unemployed people who, with help from the Association, registered officially as unemployed. In addition, of the 18 training program participants, 16 were able to find work.

Beneficiaries: Four-hundred fifteen people in Kisköre, Tiszanana, and Komlo benefited from the project.

Plans for the Future: The Association has continued to offer these services and plans to continue working with the unemployed in this area.

3. Link

Grantee: Együttélés Association (Living Together)
Other Partners: Grassalkovich Foundation Vocational School, Zhutinas Conflict Management Association (Hatvan Conciliation Commission)
Grant Amount: \$14,150
Grant Period: 06/2006 – 03/2007

Description: Five Roma women were trained as teaching assistants and employed at an after school children's center (a building provided by the Association). The Local Employment Center supported their salaries. They organized weekend activities, helped the children with homework, recited poetry, organized theatre programs, and taught the children dance. In addition, the Hatvan Conciliation Commission trained the children in conflict management and promoted the project throughout the county.

Results: The women were employed and developed the skills necessary to provide assistance to the children. Twenty-five students regularly took part in the after school activities, while an additional 12 regularly took part in the weekend activities. The Association experienced some problems with the financial management of the project, due to an issue with staffing. The budget for the project was not properly designed and therefore had to be redone. Despite this the sub grantee was able to complete all proposed project activities.

Beneficiaries: Forty-two people benefited from this project.

Plans for the Future: The Association would like to continue with project activities and is seeking a grant from the EU. To date they have not received additional funding.

4. Possibility to Close Gaps

Grantee: Vajszlo and Area Cultural Association (Pécs)
Other Partners: Vajszlo Kodolanyi Janos Primary School and Vocational School
Amount: \$14,409
Grant Period: 06/2006 – 03/2007

Description: The project assisted unemployed Roma in Ormansag (Southern Baranya County) in cooperation with the state-funded Local Employment Center by providing them with practical job skills training. Sewing classes were organized for 15 people and an additional 40 people received employment counseling services and attended seminars.

Results: As a result of the sewing class, all 15 participants were employed by a new tailoring business. The business was started as a result of the program. In cooperation with the new business, the Association will provide skills trainings for an additional 65 people in the future. A closing ceremony was organized and attended by 150 people, including the American Ambassador April H. Foley

Beneficiaries: Fifty-five people benefited from project activities.

Plans for the Future: In partnership with the new tailoring business, the Association will continue to offer employment services in the future.

Appendix 3: Slovakia Small Grants Completed

[Kežmarok Medium Grant Round Final Report](#)

[Prešov Medium Grant Round Final Report](#)

[Rimavská Sobota Small Grant Round Final Report](#)

[Rimavská Sobota Medium Grant Round Final Report](#)

Final Medium Grant Reports: Kežmarok, SK
January 2007

Twelve projects under the medium (third) grant round of the Roma Integration Program in Kežmarok, Slovakia and surrounding villages were completed by January 2007. Below is a summary of the twelve completed projects.

1. We are not giving up!

Grantee: Civic Association Come by Slovakia
Amount: \$7,500
Grant Period: 05/2006 – 12/2006

Description: The grantee provided welding courses for Roma students, increasing the skills needed to secure employment. This was the first time such a course had been offered in the community. A training institution was contracted to conduct the courses and offered all necessary equipment, materials and tools.

Results: All 19 students completed the course. The participants are currently enrolled in high school and will begin to search for jobs following completion of their school work in June 2007. Some of the students have already received promises of job offers after completion of their high school studies from companies around the region. Four have also been approached by the training institution about the possibility of starting their own blacksmithing business.

Beneficiaries: 19 young men completed the course.

Plans for the Future: Companies from the Kenmare region have offered financial support to offer these courses again in the future.

2. “I am Tom Sawyer, who are you?”

Grantee: Special Basic School Kežmarok
Amount: \$6,250
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006

Description: The project assisted Roma students with behavioral disorders or emotional problems. The school established a bibliotherapy room and held regular therapeutic sessions with these children. Some Special Basic School students suffer from depression, Attention Deficit Disorder and/or are mentally disabled.

Results: With project funds, the school established a bibliotherapy room and purchased necessary equipment. Forty-five children received counseling and therapy at this center. Teachers and therapists were able to address issues such as irregular attendance, depression, aggressive behavior, and suicidal tendencies. A survey of the school’s students was conducted before and after implementation of this project. The results show that children learned to resolve their conflicts in a less violent and more constructive manner:

- Fifty-five percent of those surveyed before project implementation said that they would physically harm another student who angered them. After project implementation, only five percent of those surveyed said they would.
- Seventy-five percent of the students surveyed after program implementation said they would choose to solve a problem in a peaceful way, compared with only 35 percent of those surveyed at the beginning of the project.

Beneficiaries: 45 Roma children.

Plans for the Future: The school will focus on the long-term needs of these students and has received funding from the state to continue its work.

3. Open Air Sculpturing: Building a Playground Together

Grantee: Private High School in Kenmare, Branch Office
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$5,625

Description: The project trained students in woodworking skills, sculpting and built a playground for the school. Students helped construct the playground structures and prepared artwork to be displayed at the playground site.

Results: Originally, 10 students were chosen to be involved in the construction of the sculptures and artwork. But all the school's students became interested in the project once they learned about its activities. The artwork was completed in the fall and was formally shown to the public in the spring of 2007. U.S. Ambassador Rodolphe M. Vallee visited the project, which greatly motivated project participants. Students became more self-confident and were motivated by the fact that their artwork would be displayed to the community.

Beneficiaries: Approximately 500 Roma and non-Roma were impacted, by producing the artwork, building the playground and/or enjoying its benefits.

Plans for the Future: The playground will continue to be used by the community and the school.

4. Give Us a Chance (K3-05)

Grantee: Civic Association Tolerance in Velka Lomnica
Grant Period: 01/2006 – 01/2007
Amount: \$8,063

Update: This project has been successfully implemented but due to internal issues within the NGO (the director has moved on and the deputy has been unreachable due to a death in the family) the report is outstanding has not yet been received.

5. Spending Free Time Together

Grantee: Center for Free Time Activities
Grant Period: 01/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$2,500

Description: This program gave Roma children with no financial means of doing so otherwise the opportunity to join a bicycle club and take part in extra-circular activities. Each child participated twice a week and they were also able to use small motorcars and motorcycles in the local traffic playground for children. Cycling excursions to the surrounding areas were also planned once a month. When the weather did not permit cycling excursions, the children used the computer room to learn basic skills, such as internet use.

Results: Thirty-two Roma children took part in the project. 12 bicycles and 8 helmets were bought with the funds. The grantee also used funds to purchase sports equipment, which was used by project participants.

The Center offers the children a safe and fun environment to spend free time and both Roma and non-Roma mix together during these activities, improving their social skills and inter-ethnic relations.

Beneficiaries: 32 children took part in the project.

Plans for the Future: The Center is continuing these free-time activities with support from the state budget and other donors.

6. Amaro Dživipen – Our Life

Grantee: Civic Association Kežmarský Hlas (Kežmarok Voice)
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 01/2007
Amount: \$9,375

Description: This project selected talented youth from 5 Roma communities in the area (Kežmarok, Stráne pod Tatraní, Jurské, Výborna, Slovenska Ves, Rakúsy, Podhorany, and Krížova Ves) and trained them in traditional dance (mostly Romany) techniques in preparation for international dance performances. The project was linked to the Amaro CD project, which produced a CD of traditional Roma music performed by children and young adults.

Results: The dance troop traveled to Paris and Bretagne, France and an international Roma festival in Prague, Czech Republic and also danced in the local music festival “Akana Me,” which was organized by program participants from Kežmarok, Stráne pod Tatraní and Podhorany. The dancers also performed at a festival in Bratislava commemorating the Roma and Jewish Holocaust. This event was attended by the President and Prime Minister of Slovakia. As a result, the President, Ivan Gašparovič, made a financial contribution to Civic Association Kežmarský Hlas.

Community members were mobilized to participate in this and other projects run by the Civic Association. Roma children were able to spend their time engaged in constructive activities. The project implementer said the children involved in this project now behave differently (more confidently) than other children in the settlements. The project also helped the Civic Association gain new members and reach out to new parts of the Roma community in and around Kežmarok.

Beneficiaries: Approximately 100 children from the settlements were involved with this project. 4 Roma trainers worked with them on a regular basis and 3 more on a part-time basis.

Plans for the Future: The group has already managed to secure a spot at several international performances and well-known festivals in 2007. The Civic Association will also participate in an international project entitled “Monitoring the Roma Education Situation in Central and Eastern European Countries,” supported by the French Foreign Ministry. They have received financial support from private donors, including the President of Slovakia. Additionally, they are continuing to write new grant proposals and hope that the French Ministry will offer support in the future.

7. Let’s Shoot Documentaries

Grantee: Otto Quelle Company
Grant Period: 05/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$9,375

Description: This program produced a number of documentaries which were shown on local TV to present more positive images of the Roma community. The production and coordination of the documentaries involved partnerships and cross-sector cooperation between Roma, non-Roma and NGOs.

Results: Five documentaries and 2 interviews were recorded. Subjects covered include:

- "Children's center štvorlístok" demonstrated the cooperation of parents in the creation of a new community centre and also a new drawing and music group.
- "Dancing Group Kesaj" documented the formation of the ensemble group "Kesaj" and highlighted financial and space problems faced by the group.
- "How to Employ Roma" documented the struggles faced by students who have finished their schooling in Kežmarok but are now unable to find employment.
- "School in Nature" followed children from different settlements in Rakusy on trips throughout Slovakia and documented their experiences outside of the settlement.
- "The Heart of the Bell" focused on two schools in Kežmarok and Rakusy and their efforts to use alternative ways to solve local conflicts.

The documentaries, two of which have already been shown on local TV, were also used in a special public presentation in Kežmarok. As a result, community interest in Roma projects and awareness of issues faced by Roma in the region community increased.

Beneficiaries: A total of 25 people took part in the production of these documentaries which involved 8 local Roma NGOS. They were broadcast on local TV stations in the localities of Kexmarok, Spisska Nova Ves and Poprad.

Plans for the Future: The producers of the documentaries are currently in negotiation with Slovak TV about broadcasting the documentaries' on a national level.

8. Trainings in Car Mechanics Skills

Grantee: Middle School for Agriculture, Kežmarok
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 01/2007
Amount: \$9,375

Description: This project trained Roma and non-Roma students in car maintenance through a 10-month apprenticeship. With the provision of new equipment and training, the course prepared them for securing future employment as car mechanics.

Results: Eighty students took part in the apprenticeship. They designed and built their own workspace and learned how to operate the new machinery. The quality of teaching also improved due to the availability of higher quality equipment. There is evidence of an increased interest among students to become car mechanics and school attendance among participants improved. Children from the basic school are also showing an interest in continuing their studies at the vocational school.

Beneficiaries: Eighty students participated in the program.

Plans for the Future: The course has been marketed to future beneficiaries (including basic school children) and also basic school directors and continues fundraising activities. The new equipment should attract new Roma students.

9. Broadening the Activities of the Conciliation Commission in Kežmarok

Grantee: Kežmarok Conciliation Commission
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$6,875

Description: The 12 members of the Conciliation Commission, who were involved in solving local conflicts between families and neighbors, expanded their work to focus on various types of civic problems in the community. The members received training to enhance their knowledge of effective communication, mediation and conflict resolution methods. In turn, Conciliation Commission members conducted trainings for teachers and youth in Kežmarok on alternative dispute resolution.

Results: 15 teachers from various schools in Kežmarok took part in a two-day training course, which all teachers reported as being very helpful in their work with students. Based on the success of the course, one school paid for additional training sessions for its teachers. 211 young people from a village and a settlement in Kežmarok, Rakusy and Lendak were trained in communication and conflict resolution methods. The training of teachers and young people has integrated conflict resolution mechanisms into the educational system, thus acting as a preventative measure to interethnic and other conflicts in the community.

A website about the Conciliation Commission was created at <http://www.cornixartifex.com/zr/zrs>.

Beneficiaries: Twelve Conciliation Commission members, 15 teachers and 211 young people.

Plans for the Future: Commission members intend to continue their work with youth to promote conflict management skills in Kežmarok. The Conciliation Commission has received funds from a local school to conduct further trainings and hopes to receive more of such business in the future.

10. We are getting to know the beauty of Slovakia

Grantee: Basic School with Kindergarten in Rakusy
Grant Period: 04/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$7,813

Description: This program organized fieldtrips for Roma and non-Roma children throughout Slovakia to increase their awareness of the world outside of their settlement. Most of the children had never been away from the settlement and these trips gave them the opportunity to enhance their social skills by meeting diverse people in different settings. It provided them with educational and free time opportunities, cultural experiences and opened their eyes to the prospects of the wider world.

Results:

- In May, 35 children visited the Castle of Bojnice and the largest zoo in Slovakia.
- At the end of May, students visited the city of Martin and an ethnographic museum, an old village museum and the Slovak Museum of Literature.
- In June, a six-day "School in Nature" was organized and 30 children (Roma and non-Roma) between the ages of 6 and 13 participated. This was the first time the children had ever spent a night away from the settlement. The children cooperated with one another and made new friendships.
- The trip to Bojnice was repeated in June.
- In September, trips were organized to the castle of Star Lubovna and the old monastery Červený Kláštor.
- At the end of September there was a trip to the Castle of Beliar and Dobsina Cave.
- In October there was a trip to Špiš Castle and to the UNESCO city of Banská Štiavnica and Levoca which included the Gold Mine Museum and the Planetarium.
- The last trip was to the city of Košice and to the puppet theatre.

As the interest in these trips was so high, participants were chosen based on their school achievements. This incentive led to increased motivation among the children to improve both their studies and their behavior.

Beneficiaries: Approximately 300 children participated in the trips along with all the teachers and local community workers.

Plans for the Future: The municipality has formally agreed to offer its financial support to future field trips.

11. Quatrefoil (Four Leaf Clover)

Grantee: Civic Association (Kľuč)
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$9,375

Description: This program provided education and free time activities for Roma youth, children and their parents to enhance their social skills development and education.

Results: Through the establishment of a youth orientated integration centre, children and parents used their free time working on different courses. Teachers provided tutoring services in math and science to the children and helped them prepare for school and complete their homework. As a result, the students' schoolwork improved. Parents also became more interested in their children's coursework. Both children and parents were able to learn musical instruments such as the keyboard, guitar and flute, and were able to partake in art education and literary/drama courses. Children were also able to learn about job opportunities and future first class children met with professionals from pedagogical-psychological advisory and received advice for school preparation. These activities will ease the integration of pre-school children into mainstream society club activities. Parents also had the opportunity to attend lectures on their choice of profession. The Civic Association worked in cooperation with the Basic School Nižná Brána in Kežmarok and the Art School and Center for Free Time Activity in Kežmarok. The project activities were marketed on the local TV and in newspapers.

Beneficiaries: 650 Roma children and parents

Plans for the Future: The organization is currently negotiating with the municipality and continuing to write grant proposals.

12. Activities of Community Center Huncovce

Grantee: Civic Association Khere (Home)
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006
Amount: \$3,125

Description: To enhance the communication skills of Roma children, a number of activities were arranged including organized fieldtrips for children and their parents, PC courses, hippotherapy for mentally handicapped children and counseling for children who have experienced communication and emotional problems at school.

Results: Over 200 children and parents have participated in four organized trips to areas such as the High Tatras, surrounding historical towns and the local countryside. The organization of the trips involved the collaboration of parents, social workers, community center workers and older brothers and sisters of the children. 17 children and 10 adults participated in English lessons every Wednesday. Both Roma and non-Roma participated and new friendships were created through these classes. From March to November, 15 children took part in speech therapy sessions. A speech therapist and the children's parents were involved in this process. Prior to the speech therapy program, 3 of the children were in a special school and one child did not communicate at all. Following the classes all four children have been accepted at the normal basic school.

Over 100 children participated in the hippotherapy (therapeutic horseback riding) sessions. Often over 40, not all handicapped, children attended the horse-riding sessions as it proved a hugely popular extracurricular activity. The original plan was to have sessions twice weekly but due to popularity this was increased to 5 times a week.

Beneficiaries: 120 children and 45 parents (both Roma and non-Roma) took part in these activities.

Plans for the Future: The NGO is receiving funding from the municipality and is also expecting to receive funds from the state budget.

Final Medium Grant Reports: Prešov, SK February 2007

Seven projects under the medium grants (third) round of the Roma Integration Program in Prešov, Slovakia and surrounding villages were completed by February 2007. Below is a summary of the seven completed projects.

1. We Are All Equal

Grantee: 124th Team of Roma Scouts
Amount: \$9, 375
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 12/2006

Description: This project supported a number of free-time activities for Roma scouts and their instructors, including arts and crafts and health classes, tutoring and sports games. Drawing, sewing, painting, dancing, singing, and animation courses were organized. During the health courses, instructors discussed good hygiene and other personal healthcare topics. Sports activities, including soccer and gym, brought the kids together and provided them with safe environments in which to spend their free time. The Scouts also participated in weekend trips, club meetings, bike tours, barbeques and summer camps.

Results:

- Of the 70 participants, 38 were identified as having below-average grades. With help from tutors, all improved their test results. Two underperforming girls were able to complete secondary business school.
- 17 young people took part in dancing, singing, sewing and drawing courses, which improved their social skills and helped them open up and discuss issues and problems that they were facing.
- Ten singing and dancing course participants performed at *ZŠ Matica Slovenská* and *Home for Seniors* events. The group also is working with the *Orion* group, expanding their friendships with non-Roma peers.
- Thirteen young people were involved in animation courses. Trainings focused on improving communication skills through group work, including the creation of brochures for the “bees” and “cubs” (scout categories).
- Sixty young people between the ages of 5 and 25 participated in the health phase of the program and learned about personal hygiene and other health topics related to their age group.
- Forty children participated regularly in the sporting activities. Gym space was rented for gym activities. Volunteers helped the children improve their routines and spend their free time constructively. They also formed new friendships and improved their social and communication skills. Parents attended many of the sporting activities with their children.
- Scout instructors were trained to implement similar projects and to set up free time activities for their scouts.

Beneficiaries: 70 young people and children participated in the activities with assistance from 13 local volunteers and 8 social work students.

Plans for the Future: The organization continues to actively seek fundraising through proposals. As they are a well-established organization, the chances are good that they will receive funding.

2. Stará Tehelna – Possibilities for Solutions

Grantee: Regional Center for Roma Issues (RCfRI)

Amount: \$8,281
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006

Description: The aim of the project was to define and understand the phenomenon of a city “ghetto,” using the Stará Tehelna Roma settlement as a case study. The study was written and published by 20 experts from different subject areas. Recommendations were made for improving Stará Tehelna.

Results: Twenty experts produced 20 articles, amounting to a 248 page report. Experts were drawn from the following fields: sociology, ethnography, psychology, human rights, economics, and education, among others. Roma living in the settlement gave significant input. The book was distributed throughout Slovakia to municipalities facing similar settlement development issues. It was marketed at academic meetings and the housing roundtable organized by PDCS. Feedback has been very positive thus far and suggests that the document will be very influential in Prešov and beyond.

Beneficiaries: 20 state officials, activists and academics participated in the academic debates and the production of material for the book. Policy makers will benefit from a better understanding of Roma settlement development issues, which will positively impact Roma inhabitants living in these areas.

Plans for the Future: Copies of the report were distributed to all the relevant people including social workers, NGOs, and the municipality. The NGO who published the book is currently seeking sources of funding to produce a second edition.

3. Promoting Roma and non-Roma Culture in Schools (P3-06)

Grantee: Secondary Art School
Amount: \$9,375 USD
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 06/2006

Explanation: Following the first installment of the grant (for a total of \$7,600) the grantee did not produce the required report, hence a second installment was not sent to them. The current situation is that contact has not been made with the grantee as they are not answering calls or reacting to letters. Efforts to contact them are ongoing.

4. Extra-curricular activities for children and youth from the segregated Roma community in Stará Tehelna

Grantee: Basic School Matice Slovenskej, Prešov
Amount: \$4,875
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 01/2007

Description: Music, dance and soccer activities were organized for Roma and non-Roma children as part of this project. Participants were encouraged to interact and build better relationships with one another.

Results: Fourteen children regularly attended the music classes, while 23 took part in the dance group. 4 teachers were responsible for the music club and 2 for the dance club. The children performed in public and were well received at performances on Children’s Day and Christmas. The regional press (including the radio) promoted their activities. The soccer team consisted of Roma and non-Roma team members. This inter-ethnic interaction built stronger relationships and reduced prejudices. Non-Roma children have also expressed interest in joining the song and dance clubs.

Beneficiaries: Seventy-four Roma and non-Roma youth. Four teachers were responsible for the music club, while 2 supervised the dance club.

Plans for the Future: The school has become very successful in their fundraising and has obtained a large grant from the EU. The partnership with the community center is very strong has positively impacted the relationship between the basic school and the municipality. The school will continue to use the equipment purchased with the project funds and continues to seek further cooperation with local donors and NGOs.

5. Our Future is in our Hands

Grantee: Basic School Matice Slovenskij, Prešov
Amount: \$7,594
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006

Description: This program offered additional education courses for Roma children attending the basic school. Woodworking and crafts workshops were organized four times a week for the students and lecturers were trained. The crafts were displayed in the community center.

Results: 81 children were involved in the workshops and worked in four groups. Participants learned good work habits and became technically proficient in basic woodworking and in working with plastics. Parents also took part in the activities with their children. The students took field trips to trade schools and some expressed interest in continuing their education in the carpentry trade. The children learned the importance of finishing basic school in order to find employment later in life. The involvement of both Roma and non-Roma children allowed for interaction and improved relations. Interviews were published in the local newspaper *Korsar*, the largest in Presov, and *Regina Radio*, a national broadcaster.

Beneficiaries: 81 Roma and non-Roma children completed the courses.

Plans for the Future: School officials will support the workshops in the future after witnessing the positive impact on students.

6. Overcoming Learning Disabilities

Grantee: Basic School Matice Slovenskij, Prešov
Amount: \$4,313
Grant Period: 05/2006 – 12/2006

Description: The program supported the activities of the *Counseling Diagnosis Therapeutic Center* (The Center), which works with Roma students at the school who have learning disabilities. Supported activities included testing and therapy sessions to overcome reading, writing and other learning disabilities.

Results: The children improved their reading, writing and arithmetic abilities and achieved better grades. Ninety children from 6-10 years of age participated in the various phases of the project, while 10 children from 11-12 years of age also participated. Fifty-two parents also participated. The students learned good reading skills, critical thinking skills, and benefited from writing and arithmetic help. The project was showcased at the Stará Tehelna Community Center and community social workers also worked to market the project in Prešov. Results were discussed among teachers in the school and various basic schools from the Prešov region visited them to discuss their projects.

Beneficiaries: 100 Roma children benefited from the project activities.

Plans for the Future: The program will receive future support from the Ministry of Education, parents (through “education cards” as part of the Slovak tax system) and individual sponsors. The Municipal Education Office and the Methodical Center in Prešov are also potential future partners.

7. Let's Play and Live Healthy Lives

Grantee: Civic Association Tobias
Amount: \$8,438
Grant Period: 02/2006 – 08/2006

Description: This program provided a number of services for parents and children living in the Solivar settlement. A cafeteria was created in the kindergarten and meals were provided to the students. Study aides and a tutor were provided for students at the basic school. The civic association met with parents in the settlement to emphasize the importance of children's education. A club for Roma parents was expanded. The club acts as a forum for parents to discuss pressing issues and participate in seminars about education.

Results: Fifty-eight kindergarteners receive warm healthy food every day in the new cafeteria. The new study aids and tutoring sessions helped certain students with learning disabilities and improved the motivation and attitudes of participants. Parents became involved in the project activities through the parents' club.

Beneficiaries: 56 Roma children and 38 Roma parents took part in the project.

Plans for the Future: Based on the results of the project, the kindergarten in Solivar was recognized by the Slovak government and will be funded by the state.

Final Small Grant Reports: Rimavská Sobota, SK January 2007

Three projects under the small grants (second) round of the Roma Integration Program in Rimavská Sobota, Slovakia and surrounding villages were completed by January 2007. Below is a summary of the three completed projects.

1. Growing Potatoes: Enhancing Agricultural Capacity

Grantee: Civic Association Duha – Rainbow Šimonovce
Amount: \$9,220.50
Grant Period: 11/2005 – 08/2006

Description: This program trained 30 local Roma families to cultivate potatoes. The participants also contributed in part to fuel for a tractor and hired a driver to plough the fields.

Results: Thirty families participated in the project, which sought to address high levels of unemployment and low skill level among the Roma community in Šimonovce. Families were selected to participate by a committee consisting of a social worker and NGO representatives; selection was based on economic status. All participants owned or rented a minimum area of land suitable for the project and already possessed basic farming or gardening skills. Potatoes and other vegetables (to avoid dependence on one crop) were planted. Eco-friendly fertilizers were used. As a result, on average each family produced 300kg of potatoes. Twenty-six families donated 20 kilos of potatoes for seeding the next year's crop. Roma participants were better able to grow crops and as a result, earn income and produce food.

Beneficiaries: 30 Roma families, making up approximately 90 people who worked on the project. One person was employed to drive the tractor.

Plans for the Future: The donated potatoes will be used to make this an ongoing project. The municipality will donate funds to purchase fertilizer. New families will be selected to participate in the next harvest, which will increase the scope of this project.

2. We Can Build and Create

Grantee: Civic Association Roma House in Hostice
Amount: \$9,198
Grant Period: 02/2007 – 12/2006

Description: This program restored 12 social housing units that had been built by a private contractor for the government. The contractor did not do a good job and in some cases did not even complete the work. Roma inhabitants suffered from poor quality housing.

Results: Seven skilled Roma workers were hired as part of the project (three masons, three assistants and a driver). They purchased the best priced materials and tools and completed work on the houses. The Hostice mayor and a building engineer oversaw the project. The 12 Roma houses were prevented from possible collapse. The workers gained valuable work experience that will help them in finding a job in the future.

Beneficiaries: Seven Roma workers and 40 inhabitants of the houses.

Plans for the Future: Mayors from towns surrounding Hostice have approached the team of workers about renovating other social housing in their communities. They are currently doing so, working on individual houses as well as social housing. Three of the workers have stable, long-term employment as bricklayers.

3. Tailoring Workshop

Grantee: Civic Association Information Counseling Center for Roma (ICCR)
Amount: \$8,631.26
Grant Period: 12/2005 – 08/2006

Description: In this program, a professional lecturer trained unemployed Roma in tailoring and marketing skills to generate, promote and sell products.

Results: Initially, five apprentices completed the training course. The participants were involved in the selection and purchase of equipment, textiles (including final negotiation of the price). Of the initial group, two were able to find full-time employment as tailors. A further 75 people were trained during the project duration, of which 9 found jobs in Hungary. Twenty-seven of the trainees were chosen for “activation work” – community work (such as street cleaning) for the unemployed as part of their social benefits. They receive a stipend in addition to their social benefits for their work. The project was promoted on Slovak TV, TASR and Radio Regina.

Beneficiaries: 80 unemployed Roma received training, 27 clients were involved in activation work, 2 were employed in the Center and 9 received jobs in Hungary.

Plans for the Future: Those employed by the ICCR produce clothing for municipal workers, which is being marketed to the new mayor of Rimavská Sobota and mayors in surrounding towns and villages. The ICCR has received additional grants and has guaranteed operating funds for the next two years. During the course of this project, the civic association received accreditation from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family to provide job counseling services.

Final Medium Grant Reports: Rimavská Sobota, SK January 2007

Five projects under the medium grants (third) round of the Roma Integration Program in Rimavská Sobota, Slovakia and surrounding villages were completed by January 2007. Below is a summary of the five completed projects.

1. Try It Together

Grantee: ROMARIM, Civic Association at Elementary School in Rimavská Seč
Amount: \$1,563
Grant Period: 04/2006 – 11/2006

Description: The program increased Roma interaction and integration with non-Roma, also providing them with better access to educational services. It concentrated on Roma children from socially excluded families, arranging summer camps, activities and trips for the children between 6 and 10 years of age from the basic school. It addressed the issue of non-Roma children leaving this school in favor of one with less Roma children.

Results: Children from Roma and non-Roma families were brought on trips to old towns and castles outside the village, many for the first time. Prior to leaving on the trips, they learned about the history of the areas that they were going to visit. New friendships were forged and the children interacted in new environments. There was also a nature trip to Čierny Balog where the children strengthened their new relationships and learned about their local clothing manufacturers. A sports day was also organized involving children and their parents. Teachers said the programs positively impacted the children and reported an improvement in their behavior.

Beneficiaries: 150 children took part in the activities, 30 parents and also 10 teachers were involved in the organization of trips and activities.

Plans for the Future: The NGO is continuing fundraising activities and there is a possibility that it will receive funding from the municipality budget.

2. Together We Can Achieve More

Grantee: Civic Association Serpentina
Amount: \$6,031
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006

Description: The main objective of this program was to continue activities already started in the RIP-funded 'Together towards Tolerance' program. The project provided education, including computer courses, and free-time activities to children, enabling them to make more effective use of their free time and promote better relationships between Roma and non-Roma children.

Results: The children's club was equipped with computers and educational software. The PC's were made available for free time activities and after-school education courses. Children, some of whom had not used to computer before, learned to use the technology, which will help them as they pursue future education and employment opportunities. Regular interaction between the children of Ozďany increased their ability to cooperate and interact on joint projects and activities. For example, a sports day attracted over 100 participants. The children also put on a theatrical show entitled *Hurikán*, which was shown at retirement

homes. There was a huge increase in the number of interested families. Due to the small space available at the club, the basic school in Ozďany has donated space.

Beneficiaries: 100 children took part in the activities.

Plans for the Future: The civic association has brought in new volunteers, potential private donors and receives greater support from the municipality as a result of its work with the RIP. The local basic school has donated space to allow the free-time activities to continue.

3. Thorough Education to Prosperity and Social Integration

Grantee: Civic Association Serpentina

Amount: \$3,750

Grant Period: 04/2006 – 12/2006

Description: This program addressed the problem of unemployment faced by Roma and non-Roma women in Ozďany. Florist/job search courses were held and the civic association provided advice on preparing for interviews and writing CVs.

Results: Of the 22 unemployed women who participated, to date eight have found a job as a result of this project. The florist/job search course was implemented in cooperation with the Academy of Education and three external trainers. The topics covered included:

- Self-motivation
- Techniques for effective job searching
- CV writing
- References
- Networking
- Interviewing techniques
- Preparing floral arrangements

Participants prepared a final examination and received certificates in floral arrangement once they passed. Participants were motivated to expand their knowledge of job-search strategies following completion of these professional development courses.

Beneficiaries: 22 women took part in the course, eight of which are now employed.

Plans for the Future: The civic association received a license from the state Unemployment Agency to continue these courses in the future. With the license, services can now be offered to the state office for payment. The NGO also continues to write proposals for additional funding.

4. Breeding Rabbits for the Socially Excluded

Grantee: Civic Association Lúč, Šimonovce

Amount: \$8,750

Grant Period: 02/2006 – 01/2007

Description: This project gave individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds rabbits for breeding, enabling them to balance their diets and improve their health. A representative from each of the thirty families involved was given training on rabbit breeding, including proper health care and methods of constructing rabbit hutches. The Hutches were built and equipped with winter-feeders and water dispensers. Veterinarians treated and vaccinated the rabbits and breeders were given hay for feed.

Results: 30 families participated in the project and received five rabbits each (150 total). The rabbit population now exceeds 500. Over 250 rabbits were kept to be bred, thus sustaining the rabbit population. The remaining rabbits were used as food. The socially excluded population in Šimonovce was better able to integrate into the village community as a result of this project.

Beneficiaries: 30 families were involved in the project, representing 155 people from the settlement.

Plans for the Future: Beneficiaries have begun selling the rabbits they bred and the civic association has claimed some of the bred rabbits to be given to new participants. Potential participants have been selected for a new round of this project.

5. Roma Settlement 'Baránička'

Grantee: Community Center Bellcanto
Amount: \$6,656
Grant Period: 03/2006 – 12/2006

Description: The project consisted of two main activities. The first was a beautification project in the Roma settlement. Garbage was collected and a 2.4km footpath was constructed connecting the settlement with the nearby village. The settlement's well was also cleaned and 8 wooden latrines were built. The second was tutoring work with Roma children in the settlement. Educational activities and tutors were made available to prepare these children for entering basic school.

Results: Roma and non-Roma worked together to build the 2.4 km footpath. The footpath has provided a safe and dry route (especially in the winter) for Roma in the settlement and non-Roma who travel the route. One-and-a-half hectares were cleared of rubbish, which was then transported to the community dump. Volunteers also created a metal scrap collection bin in the settlement. A carpenter helped construct the outhouses, which will improve health in the settlement by protecting the source of drinking water from sewage.

Fourteen children regularly attended educational activities five times a week (twice in the afternoon and three times in the morning). Two volunteer teachers and six Roma mother watched the children and provided tutoring services. These took part Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. 2 voluntary teachers and 6 Roma mothers have been supervising the children. Their activities included:

- Drying fruits
- Sports
- Drawing, painting, arts and crafts
- Basic music, singing and dancing
- Traffic safety and riding the bus
- Hygiene

The teachers reported that the children interacted better with each other as a result of the project. The free time and education activities encouraged positive social behavior and increased communication between the children.

Beneficiaries: Fourteen children and eight adults took part in the children's program. The construction of the latrines and footpath and the collection of garbage benefited the entire settlement of 64 people (eight families).

Plans for the Future: The organization has received a grant from the Social Development Fund and also raises money from the production of “eco-toilets.” The municipality works closely with *Belcanto* and the *Civic Association Sosna* has approached them about working together in the future on more joint projects.

Appendix 4: List of Conciliation Cases Mediated

Czech Republic

Dispute	# Impacted	Resolved?
Bruntál		
Neighbors arguing.	2	Yes
Family arguments arising over the abuse of alcohol by one member of the family. The family was able to reconcile and the person found help at a substance abuse clinic.	No Data	Y
Conflict at a housing shelter between inhabitants sometimes turned violent. CC brought the parties together to have an open dialogue. Many issues were resolved and they agreed not to use violence.	2	Y
Neighbor dispute.	ND	Y
Neighbor dispute.	ND	Y
Family members in conflict.	ND	Y
Apartment complex tenants argued over cleaning duties of common areas. Housing board agreed to hire a cleaner and tenants agreed to clean their spaces.	ND	Y
Neighbor disagreement.	ND	Y
Chomutov		
Neighbors complained of noise.	ND	Y
Roma and majority tenants argued over cleaning duties of shared common space in building. Some tenants also complained that Roma inhabitants were destroying the landscaping in front of the building. Both sides verbally abusive to the others.	ND	Y
Poor behavior of children.	ND	Y
A newspaper published a report that said Roma spread avian flu. The CC met with the editor of the paper to explain the problems of such spurious reports. The editor admitted his mistake and agreed to work with the CC on more objective coverage of Roma issues.	The community	Y
Parents of kindergarteners arguing.	2	Y
Unclean common areas in a building led all inhabitants (divided exactly in half by ethnicity) to argue. A cleaning calendar was agreed upon, ending the dispute.	Approx. 10	Y
Roma student afraid of their teacher. The boy felt he was being unfairly singled out. The teacher complained of poor hygiene. As a result of the successful resolution of this dispute, the boy's attendance increased.	2	Y
Landlord, housing commission and non-Roma tenants had dispute with Roma occupants. Parties decided that mediation would not work for them.	---	No
Neighbor dispute.	ND	Y
Pardubice		
Women in Asylum House and their children argued with each other. Lack of communication led to conflict. CC able to manage conflict.	ND	Y
Asylum House occupant arguments.	ND	Y
Asylum House dispute.	ND	Y
Asylum House dispute.	ND	Y

Hungary

Dispute	# Impacted	Resolved?
Hatvan		
Family dispute.	ND	Y
Family dispute.	ND	Y
A culturally insensitive question on a school application form singled out Roma. The	3, plus future	Y

CC worked with the school and a counseling service and got them to agree to remove the question from the form.	school applicants	
Ózd		
Neighbors complained that nearby children were too loud when playing outside and listening to music. The CC got the children to agree not to play near residences and instead move to a nearby playground.	ND	Y
Student complained to his teacher about the Roma in class. Mediators discussed the child's anger with his parents. The teacher agreed to pay closer attention to the student. Child was sent to a psychologist.	4	Y
A mother was given custody of her child following a divorce, but the father would not give up his son. The boy was suffering because he could not reach school from his father's house. Father agreed to send child to a new school and allow the mother to see her boy.	3	Y
Violent conflict in the town of Arlo involving multiple families and 12 people. The CC members could not help the situation as it was too volatile. The local government would not help. The violence subsided, but the parties would not enter mediation.	---	N
Family dispute related to domestic violence and a divorce. The husband and wife reconciled and the husband agreed to stop striking his wife.	2	Y
Domestic dispute between a mother and her son.	2	Y
Pécs		
Dispute over land ownership rights. A Roma family and three non-Roma could not agree on the extent of each others property. Mediation produced a satisfactory outcome for all.	6	Y

Slovakia

Dispute	# Impacted	Resolved?
Kežmarok		
Employee/employer related to activation work	2	Y
Strained relationship between NGO employees	1	Y
When one student broke the nose of another student, their mothers met later and began arguing and striking each other. The CC brought the two parties together after meeting with them individually and reached an agreement.	4	Y
Teachers disagreeing with school management	1	Y
Neighbor relations	---	N
Debtor/creditor case. The parties had already been to court, but the Conciliation Commission was able to help them reach an agreement.	1	Y
Within a city, one neighborhood had problems with the municipality over the sewage system.	---	N
Hereditary issue	2	N
Arguments between a family and their daughter in law	1	Y
Family dispute	4	Y
Employer and an employee	2	Y
Disagreement between parents and a teacher in nearby Rakusy.	5	Y
Disagreement between one parent and their child's teacher in Rakusy. A teacher hit a child for being undisciplined and the child's father responded by attacking the teacher. After meeting with the CC, the child admitted the teacher hadn't harmed him and the parent and teacher reached an agreement.	3	Y
A student stole the shoes of another student. When it seemed as if the father of the theft victim would attack the parents of the thief, the CC intervened and prevented any violence.	4	Y
Poor treatment of a Roma girl by non-Roma classmates	1	Y
Marital problems	2	Y

The mayor of a village near Kežmarok asked for confidential information about the client of a community social worker without permission from the social worker.	2	Y
Related to the above situation, the social worker had a dispute with a police officer.	---	N
Family dispute	3	Y
Between a girl and her grandparents over foster care. The case became an example to the rest of the community of the need to find help early to mediate these types of disputes.	---	N
Parents and a school	4	Y
Student and their teacher	2	Y
Marital dispute related to financial management of the family's assets.	2	Y
Forced relocation of Roma families in Kežmarok to Velky Krtis, a town over 200km away. In the end the Conciliation Commission was only able to talk with the families about their rights. The CC also reached out the local government but was not able to find common ground.	---	N
Household chores. Family agreed to create a time schedule for daily tasks.	2	Y
Neighbors complained of litter in the shared backyard area. The parties agreed to clean the mess and purchase new garbage bins.	4	Y
<i>Prešov</i>		
Eviction from housing due to unpaid rent. Family was able to return.	4	Y
A local Roma policeman was abusive to his wife and setting a bad example for other residents of the settlement. He often did not wear his uniform while on duty, and this also strained relations with the community. The police would not intervene, so the Conciliation Commission met with him and the man agreed to resign.	1 man and a community of 2,500	Y
A woman had been requesting placement in "social flats," government housing, for 15 years. The CC became involved in the case and the woman got her flat.	1	Y
Roundtable organized to discuss the "institute of special receiver," a mechanism to help low-income Slovaks cover housing and utility payments.	120	Y
A related case involved the eviction of 9 families from Stara Tehlena. The CC helped reach a different solution and the families were able to find housing.	50	Y
A non-payer from Stara Tehlena. The CC worked with the family's lawyer on the case.	10	Y
<i>Rimavská Sobota</i>		
Neighbors complained about the smell of a smokehouse. The owner agreed to replace the smokehouse.	4	Y
A building company did not complete the work properly. The owners complained. After intervention by the CC, the company signed a document agreeing to complete necessary repairs.	4	Y