

Proposal for simple good practice template

(Source: SDC policy dialogue data sheets)

The idea of this template is to gather examples of practices / ways of (or attempts in progress) dealing with selected specific issues linked to Roma inclusion from across SDC offices in the Western Balkans and New EU member states. Initially, the examples are for internal use only.

The approach should enable cases to be grouped, in order to gather a range of good practices around a particular issue. This will make it easier for staff to search for practices that are useful to them. The simplified format should be a first step – a longer template is available as a source of inspiration to complete this one if it is felt that more information is required. The idea is that there is a subject area or issue, and that examples of good practice relating to this issue can be gathered from different contexts/countries.

Case name: Dweller driven house up-grading in substandard Roma settlement in Serbia, Kosovo and Romania

1. Subject/issue	House Up-Grading in substandard Roma settlement
2. Sector, Country	Social Inclusion Project, Improvement of Housing Conditions, Serbia, Kosovo, Romania
3. Background, antecedent	<p>The Roma population often lives segregated from other ethnic communities in neighborhoods that lack basic infrastructure and minimal housing conditions. Families often live in disastrous housing conditions, namely missing minimal conditions regarding water, sanitation units and sewage.</p> <p>Roma housing settlements (mahalas) are often considered as 'informal' and are not properly integrated in the municipal spatial development plans. In addition, the housing conditions are often extremely poor.</p> <p>A dweller driven house up-grading model is developed in order to demonstrate a way for effective and cost efficient improvement of housing conditions.</p> <p>Core principle of the dweller driven approach is that the Roma themselves are responsible for the improvement of their housing situation. In this process they are supported with planning support,</p>

	<p>technical guidance, supervision and granting of construction material. The labor work has to be done respectively organized and financed by the Roma themselves except security relevant work (electricity, plumbing). Depending of the situation there are different levels of intervention: 1) Water/Sanitation and minor repairs; 2) Water/Sanitation and massive repairs; 3) New Core House (in case rehabilitation is technically not feasible).</p> <p>In addition to individual house improvement, lobbying activities at municipal and governmental level shall ensure equal access to public infrastructure such as roads, water, electricity, sewage. Another crucial issue tackled by the project is the legalization of settlements and its houses.</p>
4. Objectives	<p>Housing conditions, meaning, the public basic infrastructure and the individual houses / shelters in substandard Roma settlement are up-graded, with a main focus on running water, functioning bathroom and minimal housing conditions.</p> <p>Advocacy work shall lead to higher involment of municipal and governmental bodies for improving the public infrastructure, up-grading the housing and legalisation of Roma settlements.</p> <p>The house improving approach (self-determinded rehabilitation of existing houses/shelters shall be ankered in the national strategies (as alternative/complementary to often existing social housing programmes).</p>
5. Current Status	<p>HEKS has developed, tested and then up-scaled the dweller driven approach first in Serbia with its partner EHO. Since 2013 the approach was transferred and replicated to Kosovo (partner VoRAE) and Romania (partner FAER). So far the dweller driven house up-grading has been implemented in approx 40 Roma settlements in Serbia, Kosovo and Romania. Approx 200-250 families (800-1'000) benefit per year from this programme by up-grading their housing conditions.</p> <p>For up-scaling a crowding in strategy was successfully applied since 2013 leading to substantial (30-50% local municipal co-funding in Serbia and Romania, but not yet by the national governments. In addition the municipalities are fully financing the improvement of the basic infrastructure in the Roma settlements.</p> <p>Work in progress is advocacy for mainstreaming the approach (subsidies for improving minimal housing</p>

	<p>conditions in the respective legislation) and its funding.</p> <p>For making substantial funds available, advocacy and information is required on international level (EU and IPA funds) as well.</p>
6. Key-Stakeholders and their Roles / Responsibilities	<p>The key stakeholders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities: To provide access to public infrastructure, technical support and financial contributions to the direct investments as well as legalisation of the settlements and including in spatial planning. - Government: To provide the legal frame for state subsidies/co-funding for social, health and hygiene motivated house improvements and making according fund available and to provide the legal frame and feasible/realistic procedure for the legalisation. - International institutions/agencies: Social standards; coordinated and concerted funding programmes (e.g. EU social programmes, EU-IPA).
7. Capacity building and Sustainability	<p>On micro level: Training of the technical staff and the Roma people (on the job training)</p> <p>Information and advocacy on municipal level, offering an efficient and effective model to improve living conditions in substandard Roma settlements.</p>
8. Institutionalization (if any)	<p>Mainstreaming the approach, respectively to install the legal base and making available the according funding / subsidies for - socially, health- and hygiene-motivated - house up-grading on governmental and national level</p> <p>Advocacy for including Roma settlement in the urbanistic planning of municipalities</p> <p>Advocacy for the legalisation of Roma settlements, providing the legal base and applicable procedures</p>
9. Interfaces / Need for coordination with other key issues	<p>See 6. Key stakeholders</p>
10. Recommendations	<p>To seek for institutionalisation (via social housing strategy) and to up-scale the approach (by crowding in of different funding partners).</p>

	To seek / advocate for EU funding programmes (for member state and candidate states), allowing mass implementation.
11. Why is this a good practice? Reflection and learning	<p>It is a very effective and cost efficient approach to improve housing conditions in substandard Roma settlement.</p> <p>The Roma are heavily involved in the process and have to take over responsibility. It leads to high ownership by the Roma communities.</p> <p>The model can be implemented in due time on massive scale.</p> <p>The duty bearers have to take over their responsibility.</p> <p>The approach seeks for systemic changes</p>
12. Contact and website/link	<p>Documentations available at HEKS and partner organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guide and Toolbox - Construction Manual <p>Contact HEKS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthias Herren (Romania); Matthias.herren@heks.ch • Angela Elmiger (Serbia and Kosovo): angela.elmiger@heks.ch <p>Contact local partners: Kosovo: VoRAE Gracanica: www.vorae.org; Contact: Isak Skenderi Romania: FAER Reghin: www.faer.ro. Contact Ioan Vlasa Serbia: EHO Novo Sad: www.ehons.org, Contact: Robert Bu</p> <p>Contact SDC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCO-K: Arjan Shabani; arjan.shabani@eda.admin.ch • SCO-S: Jovana Mihajlovic; jovana.mihajlovic@sdc.net

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swiss Embassy Romania:, Thomas Stauffer; thomas.stauffer@eda.admin.ch• PMU Romania: Banica Cerasel; ceraselabanica@yahoo.com |
|--|---|