

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: Joint programme for Roma and Marginalised Groups Inclusion – Programme Component: Red Cross of Serbia

1. Subject/issue	Support to the Inclusion of Roma and Other Vulnerable Groups through education and other community services
2. Sector, Country	Early childhood and education, Anti-discrimination measures Serbia
3. Background, antecedent	The Roma population living in Serbia is a relatively young population. The official statistics are showing that 15% of the whole Roma population are children of preschool age up to 6 years, while the children of elementary school age (7-14) are more than 16% of the whole Roma population in Serbia. Having in mind the estimated number of Roma that are living in Serbia, the number of children of preschool and school age could vary from 60,000 to 120,000. Latest results of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 2014) conducted by UNICEF shows that pre-school education (3-5 years of age) covers about 50.2% of the majority population children and as few as 5.7% of Roma children from Roma settlements. The coverage of majority population children by preparatory pre-school programme is 98%, while it is 63% in the case of Roma children. Elementary education is completed by 93% of majority population children and, according to estimates, 64% of Roma children. Secondary education coverage of the 15-18 age group is 89% in the case of majority population children and 22% in the case of Roma children. The estimates shows that almost 70% of Roma children are poor, and over 60% of Roma households

with children are living below the poverty line.

The second largest socially excluded group in Serbia are children and young people with disabilities. While their primary disability is a fact, people living with disabilities also suffer from a less tangible secondary “disability” generated by the society. The largest portion of people living with disabilities in Serbia lives below the poverty line. Almost all of them face discrimination due to exclusion from the education system and social life on one hand and reclusion imposed by their families and or care takers on the other. Approximately 800,000 people with disability live in Serbia.

The Red Cross of Serbia has been implementing education related activities targeting Roma and children with disabilities since 2002, supported through donation from various international donors. The activities have mainly been of a social character however supporting the integration of marginalised children in the process of education and their inclusion in society as a whole.

Project for Roma and Marginalized Groups Inclusion through Education has been implemented in 55 Red Cross branches in Serbia.

Since 2009 the Red Cross of Serbia started the first phase of the Joint programme for Roma and marginalized groups, Inclusion through education, Phase I, and has implemented activities for and with Roma and marginalised children, in this manner contributing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 2, universal primary education, in Serbia.

The specific objective of the Red Cross component of the first phase of the Joint Programme was ‘widespread delivery, testing, and further development, of sustainable models of community mobilisation which are proven to improve educational opportunities for Roma and disabled children’.

The activities implemented were targeting three main beneficiary groups

- Vulnerable Roma children
- Children and youth with disabilities
- Peers of marginalised children in elementary schools

Implementation period of the current phase III of the Joint Programme: Inclusion of Roma and Other Vulnerable Groups is from 15.06.2013 - 31.05.2017. The purpose of this third phase is to contribute to the implementation of the new National Education Development Strategy 2020 and respective

	<p>legislation and thus increase access and improve quality and diversity of preschool education programmes and services for all children, especially for children from vulnerable groups, in accordance with the specific needs of children, families and local community. Programme aims to help develop an environment of tolerance towards differences and further strengthen the overall national inclusive education system building.</p>
<p>4. Objectives</p>	<p>Overall Goal The Programme will contribute to achieving following goals in line with the National Education Development Strategy 2020:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Universal access to preschool education: by 2020 all children age 4-5.5 will be provided free of charge quality half day pre-school programmes and care and all children age 5,5 - 6,5 will be covered with PPP. 2) Further improvement of implementation of inclusive approach in education. <p>Outcome of the programme are:</p> <p>Outcome 1. Increased access to diversified, quality early childhood education and care programmes and services and improved inclusive education in targeted municipalities.</p> <p>Outcome 2. Improved regulatory and institutional framework for preschool and inclusive education.</p> <p>Outcome 3. Improved knowledge management and advocacy on preschool and inclusive education.</p>
<p>5. Current Status</p>	<p>Joint Programme for Inclusion of Roma and Other Vulnerable Groups in Education is currently in its third implementation phase until 31 May 2017. The Programme is supported by the SDC, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia and UNICEF.</p> <p>The Red Cross of Serbia is currently implementing the activities in 53 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities in their respective local communities through 3 programme components:</p> <p><i>COMPONENT 1</i> – Support to Roma children and children from vulnerable groups in education <i>COMPONENT 2</i> – Support to children and young people with disabilities <i>COMPONENT 3</i> – Promotion of human values</p>

Support to Roma children and children from vulnerable groups in education project component is implemented in 30 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities in Serbia. Activities of this project component are implemented through following areas:

1. Support activities with preschool children (age 3 to 5,5) for inclusion into preschool institutions are implemented in 21 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities with 352 Roma children and children from vulnerable groups during one educational cycle;
2. Preparation activities for inclusion of children into preparatory preschool programme intended for children aged 5,5 to 7 is implemented in 8 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities covering on average 100 children in one educational cycle. Red Cross organisations implementing this component have the agreement with a preschool institution or local self-government to implement the preparatory preschool programme.
3. Homework support activities to help the children in learning the school subjects are intended for the children attending the regular school system aged between 7 and 15. These activities are implemented by total 21 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities encompassing 630 children during one educational cycle. Activities with children of this age group aim to support the children in doing their homework and learning the critical school subjects.
4. Programme for parents is implemented in 28 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities encompassing 598 parents during one educational cycle. This programme is implemented in the form of parent – teacher meetings, thematic workshops and lectures on social and health protection;
5. Socio–inclusive activities and daily provision of snacks for children attending the Programme;
6. Distribution of food and hygiene parcels on a quarterly basis, as well as provision of shoes, clothing and school equipment.

Support to children and young people with disabilities project component is implemented in total 28 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities in Serbia through following activities:

1. Activities with children enrolled into education system include supportive activities with children in learning the school subjects and helping with their homework assignments as well as the implementation of occupational workshops. In total, 23 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities implement these activities encompassing 425 children with disabilities during one educational cycle;

	<p>2. Activities with children outside education system include the implementation of workshops that stimulate the development of life skills necessary for their independent functioning, communication skills, physical and verbal skills, and organisation of occupational workshops. These activities are implemented by 17 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities encompassing 256 children with disabilities;</p> <p>3. Socio-inclusive activities and daily provision of snacks for children attending the Programme;</p> <p>4. Activities for parents of children with disabilities are implemented as counselling services, lectures and other parent supportive workshops. These activities are implemented in 25 Red Cross organisations in the cities and municipalities encompassing 480 parents.</p> <p>5. Distribution of food and hygiene parcels on a quarterly basis, as well as provision of shoes, clothing and school equipment.</p> <p>Promotion of Human Values, as a component of the Joint Programme for Inclusion, is implemented by 26 Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities in Serbia, and organised in cooperation with 67 elementary schools, aiming at supporting the inclusion of Roma children and children with disabilities into the education system. Workshops on intercultural education, tolerance and non-discrimination are attended by 2.864 children in total, out of which 333 children belong to the vulnerable groups and 2.531 children are their peers from different elementary schools. The activities aim to develop a positive educational environment based on respect for cultural and ethnic diversity, respect of individual differences and intercultural values in schools. This is pursued by promoting participants' self-respect, respect for others, respect for different cultures and respect for the environment and the place we live in. The Promotion of Human Values programme contains different workshops divided into the following seven modules: Tolerance, Personal and cultural identity; Respect for diversity; Non-violent conflict resolution; Prevention of discrimination and stigmatization; Gender equality, Child rights, Prevention of cyber bullying.</p>
<p>6. Key-Stakeholders and their Roles / Responsibilities</p>	<p>National level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development – directs pedagogical and educational activities with children from vulnerable groups towards educational and inclusion policies and Education Strategy 2020. - Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU) – develops policies for social inclusion of vulnerable groups and enables the Programme to follow the existing directions of social inclusion of

	<p>the vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Local level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents and children – direct activities towards the needs of children and their families; - Social Welfare Centre (SWC) – cooperation regarding selection of beneficiaries and assessment of other kinds of necessary support to vulnerable families; - Education institutions – cooperation regarding selection of beneficiaries, direction of pedagogical and educational work and monitoring of the progress of children; - Local self-government – support in ensuring sustainability of the Programme by funding certain segments of the Programme, coordination of the local service providers with the aim of a greater coverage of vulnerable children by the support programme; - Civil Society organizations, associations and Roma associations – cooperation and sharing of experiences and good practices, coordination and communication with beneficiaries.
<p>7. Capacity building and Sustainability</p>	<p>The Programme is implemented by local Red Cross organizations in line with the standards for programme implementation developed by the Red Cross of Serbia, educational needs of children beneficiaries of the programme. The Programme contributes to the capacity building of the Red Cross organisations themselves, as well as the facilitators of the activities with children and their families.</p> <p>Red Cross organisations develop their capacities in the field of project and financial management, and in advocacy of interests of the Programme beneficiaries. Facilitators of activities with children develop their capacities, knowledge and competencies in the area of working with children, adolescents and families from vulnerable groups through annual educational workshops.</p> <p>The programme activities are currently being implemented in 53 Red Cross branches with 4.659 children and 1.078 parents. The work is being implemented 150 employees in the Red Cross branches, 64 staff hired per temporary service contract 559 RC volunteers, 209 teachers and 397 associates and partners from other organizations and institutions.</p> <p>The sustainability of the programme is possible through the greater involvement of the local governance and the local educational institution through implementation of certain segment of the programme and</p>

	<p>accordingly be responsible for financing and quality assurance of that segment of the work.</p> <p>The examples of sustainability of Red Cross activities within the Joint programme can be find in several municipalities, where the roles and responsibilities of different actors are very well divided and structured such as: educational institution is providing teachers and is responsible for quality assurance of the educational work with children, monitoring of the educational progress and teachers salary. The local governance is obtaining additional support for organizing social-inclusive activities and Red Cross has a coordinative role in obtaining necessary educational material, everyday snacks for children, monitoring the programme implementation and reporting.</p>
8. Institutionalization (if any)	<p>State kindergartens are funded by the municipality with participation of parents through the fees for the child-care they provide. There are significantly fewer pre-school facilities in Serbia especially in urban areas than there are children, and the network of pre-school institutions is developing very slowly. At the same time facilities in rural areas are insufficiently used.</p> <p>Through this programme the Red Cross of Serbia is responding on local needs by provision of community based services and programmes aiming to support marginalised children (Roma children and children with disabilities) socialization, preparation and enrolment in PPP and primary school, and their schooling process while in primary school, which is in accordance to the Red Cross mandate and auxiliary role to government in humanitarian activities.</p> <p>Therefore the institutionalization of the activities will depend of the very need of the local communities and will be assessed separately. However there are examples for the implementation of promotion of human values programme that is a part of the non- forma education of elementary school children and the elementary school teachers are trained for implementation of this programme.</p> <p>In some communities the support to vulnerable children has been endorsed by the schools (Palilula Red Cross branch). The activities with vulnerable children enrolled in elementary school is a part of the practical learning of student from the Teachers Faculty and Faculty of Political Science – Social Welfare department, where the participation in the Joint programme and the work with vulnerable Roma children in supporting their schooling has become an official part of the practical learning for the mentioned Faculties.</p>
9. Interfaces / Need for coordination with other key issues	Working with the majority population in institutions for preschool education and schools to stimulate inclusive environment and greater tolerance towards the children from vulnerable groups through

	implementation of the Promotion of Human Values programme component.
10. Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonisation of activities according to the needs of children and capacities of the local community; - Definition of activities and approach in line with the existing educational and inclusive policies at national level; - Coordination of service providers at local level; - Inclusion of beneficiaries in the development and implementation of activities, success evaluation and progress of children; - Planning of activities to ensure sustainability in the early phases of the programme implementation; - Thorough needs assessment of the beneficiary groups prior to their inclusion.
11. Why is this a good practice? Reflection and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RCS has a well developed network of Red Cross organizations in the cities and municipalities with a good overview of the needs of beneficiaries who are also included in other support programmes implemented by the Red Cross. - Available volunteers – RC is an organisation whose work is based on the engagement of its volunteers thus decreasing the costs of implementation of activities. - Activities adjusted to the local needs of a target group - Defined standards for implementation of activities
12. Contact and website/link	http://www.redcross.org.rs/ ~2424