

Report

Project Title: Empowerment of Roma Youth and Social Inclusion through Employment

Implementing Organization: Institute of Roma Culture in Albania (IRCA)

Supporting Agency: State Agency for the Support of Civil Society in Albania (AMSHC)

Implementation Period: 1.5.2013-31.10.2013

Overview: The "Empowerment of Roma Youth and Social Inclusion through Employment" project, supported by AMSHC, aimed to enhance the social and economic inclusion of Roma youth in Elbasan. Particular attention was given to supporting potential and actual trafficking victims, addressing the severe vulnerabilities faced by this group. Through targeted interventions, the project facilitated the registration of 100 beneficiaries with state employment offices and successfully enabled employment opportunities for 30 individuals. The initiative emphasized gender equality, prioritizing the inclusion of girls and women to tackle economic disparities and vulnerabilities related to trafficking.

Key Objectives:

1. Empower Roma youth, with a specific focus on potential and actual trafficking victims, by providing access to employment opportunities and enhancing social inclusion.
2. Promote gender equality in employment initiatives, addressing systemic inequalities impacting Roma girls and women.
3. Build sustainable pathways for stable employment and social integration for Roma youth.

Activities and Interventions:

1. Identification and Outreach:

- Collaborated with local social services to identify 100 Roma youth, including trafficking victims and those at risk.
- Conducted community outreach activities to raise awareness about available support mechanisms.

2. Employment Registration:

- Supported beneficiaries in registering with state employment offices, ensuring access to formal job opportunities and employment services.

3. Skill Development and Training:

- Organized tailored training programs to equip beneficiaries with skills aligned with market demands.
- Ensured training curricula incorporated gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches to address the specific needs of trafficking survivors.

4. Employment Facilitation:

- Partnered with local businesses to create job placements for 30 beneficiaries, emphasizing stable and secure employment.
- Focused on industries that provided sustainable income and growth opportunities for Roma youth.

5. Gender Equality Initiatives:

- Designed gender-sensitive selection criteria to prioritize girls and women in all project activities.
- Addressed economic vulnerabilities through targeted support for Roma women, particularly those affected by trafficking.

Results and Achievements:

• Support for Trafficking Victims:

- Provided direct support to 100 Roma youth, including trafficking victims and individuals at risk, ensuring their access to employment services and psycho-social support.
- Implemented tailored interventions that addressed the immediate and long-term needs of trafficking survivors, focusing on rehabilitation and reintegration.

• Employment Outcomes:

- Facilitated the employment of 30 beneficiaries in stable positions, contributing to their economic independence and social inclusion.

• Gender Equality Impact:

- Ensured significant participation of girls and women, addressing gender disparities and promoting their economic empowerment.
- **Social Inclusion:**
 - Strengthened the connection between Roma youth and state services, fostering trust and collaboration.
 - Promoted awareness within local communities about the importance of supporting trafficking victims and at-risk individuals.

Challenges and Lessons Learned:

- **Challenges:**
 - Limited trust in state institutions among Roma youth posed initial barriers to engagement.
 - Addressing the complex needs of trafficking survivors required multi-disciplinary and trauma-informed approaches.
- **Lessons Learned:**
 - Collaborating with local social services and businesses was crucial in building sustainable employment pathways.
 - A gender-sensitive, intersectional approach significantly enhanced the project's impact, ensuring that the needs of marginalized groups were adequately addressed.

Sustainability and Recommendations:

- Strengthen partnerships with local social services, businesses, and employment offices to ensure continued support for Roma youth.
- Expand gender-sensitive and trauma-informed training programs to further address the needs of trafficking survivors.
- Advocate for policy-level reforms to enhance employment opportunities and social protection mechanisms for Roma communities.

Indicators:

- 100 trafficking victims and at-risk individuals supported through employment registration and psycho-social assistance.
- 30 beneficiaries placed in stable employment opportunities.
- Increased participation of Roma girls and women in employment initiatives.

Conclusion: The "Empowerment of Roma Youth and Social Inclusion through Employment" project demonstrated the transformative impact of targeted, intersectional interventions in addressing the vulnerabilities of trafficking victims and promoting the economic empowerment of Roma youth. By focusing on gender equality and sustainable employment, the initiative not only met immediate needs but also laid the foundation for long-term social inclusion and economic independence for the beneficiaries.