



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TOGETHER FOR A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY



Goals

Establish sustainable mechanisms for community mobilization

Develop capacities of Roma communities to plan, finance, and implement solutions to their development priorities

Duration

June 2021 – June 2025

USAID Funding

\$1.43 million

Implementing Partner

Institute for Research and Policy Analysis Romalitico

in collaboration with

- Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative
- Romano Avazi
- Romaversitas

Key National Partners

- Seventeen municipal governments
- Civil society organizations
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Transport & Communications
- Ministry of Local Self-Government
- National Roma Contact Point

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BACKGROUND

The mobilization of people and resources to address priority issues consistently emerges as a pressing need in Roma communities. Roma remain the most marginalized ethnic group in North Macedonia. Many government strategies and programs aimed at addressing various Roma issues have not produced the expected positive effects on Roma lives. Roma primarily live in segregated communities often lacking the basic infrastructure for quality life, such as paved roads, electricity, water supply, and sewage systems. USAID contributes to North Macedonia's efforts to promote inclusivity, improve economic security and growth, engage youth in social and economic opportunities, and increase local governments' responsiveness and accountability to citizens. A fundamental principle for success is local ownership and amplifying local capacity to achieve results.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program is part of USAID North Macedonia's Local Works initiative through which USAID is empowering local actors to take lead in identifying and addressing development challenges in their own communities.

The overall goal of Together for a Prosperous Community is to establish sustainable systems and develop the capacities of Roma communities so they can plan, finance, and implement solutions to their own development priorities and needs. This activity supports Roma communities throughout the country to implement community actions and initiatives. A variety of local stakeholders—including citizens, private businesses, local governments, civil society organizations, local leaders, national government institutions, influential community members, Roma diaspora, youth, women, and other formal and informal citizen groups—partner to identify and prioritize these activities. Through training, mentoring, and education, the program equips community stakeholders with the knowledge and skills to plan, develop, and mobilize resources for local initiatives that improve the living standards and prosperity of Roma communities. This program is coordinated through eight regional resource offices covering 17 municipalities: Shuto Orizari, Chair, Gjorche Petrov, Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Kochani, Vinica, Berovo, Radovish, Strumica, Prilep, Bitola, Veles, Shtip, Negotino, and Kavadarci.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

- Eight Local Resource Offices (LROs) were established to serve as community centers where Roma citizens and other stakeholders (community development actors) have opportunities to get together and discuss local issues. The LROs are crucial to mobilizing people and resources for designing and carrying out community-led actions.
- One hundred priority issues and needs were compiled through consultations with Roma communities following consultations with mayors, civil society organization representatives, women, youth, and other stakeholders in 17 municipalities. Through this program, these priorities will be transformed into community-led actions.

- In collaboration with the local organizations Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative, Romaversitas, and Romano Avazi, Romalitico established networks for business, alumni, and the diaspora, respectively. The diaspora network includes participants from Germany, France, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Belgium. Network members are taking an active roll in planning, funding, and implementing community actions.
- Twenty-one individuals were equipped with knowledge and skills to support the development and implementation of locally led actions and initiatives. They were engaged to serve as consultants for the business, alumni, and diaspora networks, helping to identify community priorities, initiate stakeholder meetings, plan community actions, generate resources and implement solutions at the local level.
- During the program's first year, community members participated in and completed the following community led actions:
 - In Kumanovo, cleanup of an illegal landfill site next to a children's playground in the Roma neighborhood. Additionally, playground equipment was painted and repaired.
 - In Berovo, installation of traffic signs in Roma settlements, in cooperation with the local government.
 - In Shtip, cleanup of an illegal landfill in the Roma neighborhood and installation of three dumpsters in cooperation with local government and institutions.
 - In Shuto Orizari, horticultural landscaping around the local mosque.

