



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ACTIVITY BRIEF

Roma Integration Program

USAID

Regional Services Center



Roma film festivals in the Czech Republic drew over 500 viewers and inspired young Roma in Krnov to establish an NGO to address critical local issues.

Partners:

Partners for Democratic Change (headquarters, San Francisco) and Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia Partners Centers

Geographic Targets:

The nine community sites are Bruntal, Chomutov, and Pardubice (Czech Republic); Hatvan, Ozd and Pecs (Hungary); and Kezmarok, Presov, and Rimavska Sobota (Slovakia).

Project Duration:

05/20/2003-05/19/2007

Contact Information:

Susan Kutor, CTO
Kevin Rubio, Program Manager

U.S. Agency for International
Development

Activity Background

The Roma have long been the largest, poorest and most marginalized minority in Europe. The problems they face became exacerbated following the collapse of the socialist system and include high unemployment, substandard housing, low rates of educational attainment and political participation, racial violence, a distorted image in the media, and direct and indirect discrimination. USAID seeks to reduce social and political exclusion and improve the quality of life of Roma through the Roma Integration Program (RIP), a four-year \$2.8 million program, launched in 2003 in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

Core Interventions

Cooperative Planning. The RIP supports cooperative planning with municipalities and minority representatives who seek to improve living conditions for Roma in their communities.

Conciliation Commissions: The RIP supports 9 conciliation commissions as a model for solving problems and facilitating positive relations between Roma and their communities.

National Initiatives: Through roundtables, Roma advocacy groups promote their interests with national leaders and policy makers on media, education and other issues.

Activity Results

- Over 1600 people have been trained in change and conflict management skills and regularly use them to improve relations between Roma and majority populations.

-Community projects worth over \$650,000 have improved access of over 5900 beneficiaries to education, health, employment and other services. Over two-thirds of the grantees have secured funding to continue the projects and grow their organizations.

-To date, 168 teachers and 877 students have received diversity training, with impact reaching over 5,000 students.

-National initiatives have resulted in a policy paper outlining recommendations for objective media reporting on Roma in Hungary, government support for Roma outreach professionals in Slovakia, and the establishment of a Roma advisor resource center in the Czech Ministry of Social Affairs.

- 11 Roma interns are working in major media outlets in the Czech Republic and Hungary. A new TV program portrays constructive images of Roma communities in Slovakia.