

## **EXPLANATION OF OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES IN ROMA HOUSING ACTION PLAN**

Addressing Roma housing issues and all the accompanying complexity (outstanding property relations, complicated procedures for obtaining necessary permits, absence of reliable data, poor state of the existing buildings, avoiding traps of ghettoization, etc.) are “too much to bite off” even for many other societies that are more developed than that of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Apart from political will and significant funds, all stakeholders to be involved in addressing this issue need mutual understanding, tolerance, as well as synchronised action aimed at the attainment of the listed objectives.

The Roma Housing Action Plan specifies certain courses of action with the view to attaining the main objectives – ensuring the right to a home and education aimed at raising the level of housing culture.

The Action Plan has clearly defined objectives along with developed measures which need to be undertaken and which will lead to certain results. Indicators to measure the achievement made have also been provided, as well as financial parameters. The implementing and monitoring agencies have also been designated, as well as the timeframe within which the set activities are to be implemented.

### **I OBJECTIVE**

#### **Urban development of Roma settlement (settlements inhabited by Roma) and legalisation of individual housing buildings**

The fact is that the housing situation of the Roma in BiH is at a very low level and this objective is dedicated primarily to remedying the current situation, as well as to creating pre-requisites for providing housing in the future in accordance with the regulations. A series of measures need to be undertaken in order to attain this objective: starting from the development of a single database, through to regulating property relations, legalising illegally constructed buildings, setting a more favourable legislative framework, etc., thereby creating conditions for a humane and urban life of the Roma in community with others in BiH.

##### **1. Measure**

###### **Record and valorise existing buildings inhabited by Roma, and develop single database by using researches OSCE Mission in BiH conducted so far and social research by BiH Council of Roma**

This measure is important for the consideration of the current BiH Roma housing situation and is the main prerequisite for undertaking all other measures aimed at implementing this Action Plan.

##### **2. Measure**

###### **Regulate property relations, i.e. the legal status of land on which Roma inhabited buildings are situated**

Analyses have shown that most of Roma inhabited buildings are on land lots where there are unresolved property relations, and the implementation of this measure will create conditions for the legalisation of illegally constructed buildings.

### **3. Measure**

#### **Legalise illegally constructed buildings, including required project documentation and development – urban development of settlements inhabited by Roma in accordance with spatial planning documentation (drafting and amending local development and zoning plans)**

Most of Roma inhabited buildings were constructed illegally and such buildings are in most cases located in non-urbanised settlements. The fact that a large number of citizens of other nationalities live in illegal housing buildings in BiH and that this has already been recognised as a major problem in BiH, will contribute to a faster implementation of this measure.

### **4. Measure**

#### **Allocate compensatory locations in accordance with local development plans, for the purpose of providing permanent housing where re-location is necessary**

This measure concerns buildings the legalisation of which will not be possible, because they can not fit into the spatial planning documentation for objective reasons. Allocations will be made by the competent municipal services in coordination with Roma representatives from settlements to be re-located.

### **5. Measure**

#### **Construct and reconstruct infrastructure in Roma inhabited settlements in accordance with spatial planning documentation**

Significant funds have been projected for the implementation of this measure, given the fact that the presence of infrastructure in settlements inhabited by Roma is at a very low level.

### **6. Measure**

#### **Repair and reconstruct existing legally constructed and subsequently legalised buildings with the aim of improving housing conditions**

Most of the existing buildings inhabited by Roma are in a very poor condition, and their repair or reconstruction is necessary in order to improve the housing conditions.

### **7. Measure**

#### **Create a more favourable legislative framework (drafting new and amending current laws and by-laws in fields treated by this Action Plan)**

Drafting new and amending the current regulations, with a special emphasis on the Construction Land Act, is very important for the attainment of the first objective. The implementation of this measure needs to commence immediately upon the adoption of the Action Plan.

### **8. Measure**

#### **Build capacity within BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, competent entity Ministries, BiH Council of Roma, aimed at implementation of Action Plans (establishment of relevant institutions)**

The implementation of this measure will create conditions for a direct and efficient implementation of the Action Plan.

## **II OBJECTIVE**

**Training and raising society and Roma population awareness of addressing housing issues, legislation, housing culture, etc.**

A comprehensive action, through various forms of training, will enable a change of society's attitude towards the Roma population on one hand, and the Roma attitude toward their environment on the other, which will ultimately be aimed at the full integration of the Roma population in environments they have chosen to live and work in.

**1. Measure**

**Process information from databases and preparation for publishing**

It is necessary to publish the database immediately upon its establishment, thus making it available to all relevant stakeholders.

**2. Measure**

**Create, produce and release video, audio and printed reports on Roma housing issues**

The major Roma housing issues will be presented to the public through the implementation of this measure. We may as well expect positive effects as a result – change of society attitude, as well as decreased prejudice against the Roma.

**3. Measure**

**Support bi-lingual Roma magazine**

This way the Roma will be provided with information relative to all social life fields, thereby housing field as well, in their mother tongue

**4. Measure**

**Organise fora-public debates, conferences and other gatherings aimed at addressing Roma housing issues**

Organising such gatherings will create a friendlier environment to address Roma housing issues more easily.

**5. Measure**

**Establish teams of experts to support Roma associations and individuals in addressing housing issues**

Establishing these teams will see necessary trainings in certain segments and advisory assistance to Roma in addressing certain issues related to housing.

**6. Measure**

**Organise specialised seminars for:**

- a) Roma population**
- b) and other target groups.**

The expected result of this measure is the change of Roma attitude toward the obligation to apply the regulations from all fields treated by the Action Plan, as well as a significant progress toward environment protection, and an increased level of housing culture. Also, organising seminars for other target groups will see their familiarisation with the specificities of the Roma population, which will contribute to better understanding and tolerance.

**III OBJECTIVE**

**Plan and construct new housing buildings through social, donor and credit programmes**

The attainment of this objective requires significant funds, but the result will be a large number of housing units, i.e. significantly improved Roma population housing situation.

## **1. Measure**

### **Develop programmes to finance housing construction: a) social programme; b) donor funds; c) credit programme**

Housing construction funding programmes should include all forms of providing funds, both in the budgets of all levels of authority, and other forms of funding – through international organisations and donors, as well as credit lines (World Bank, Council of Europe Bank, etc.)

## **2. Measure**

### **Plan and construct collective and individual housing buildings, bearing in mind need for Roma integration in society**

This measure is the most ambitious one within the Action Plan, but it is attainable provided good-quality funding programmes and a sincere will of all relevant stakeholders to see it implemented. The result to be achieved by implementing this measure is remarkable - 6500 new housing units. In the course of planning, it is necessary to take into account that Roma in future live in settlements along with members of other nationalities, thus avoiding segregation, which is a very frequent practice.