

Commissioner for minorities / Office for Minorities

- *the support for the minorities at local level*

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The Citizens' Association for the Promotion of Roma Education "Otaharin"

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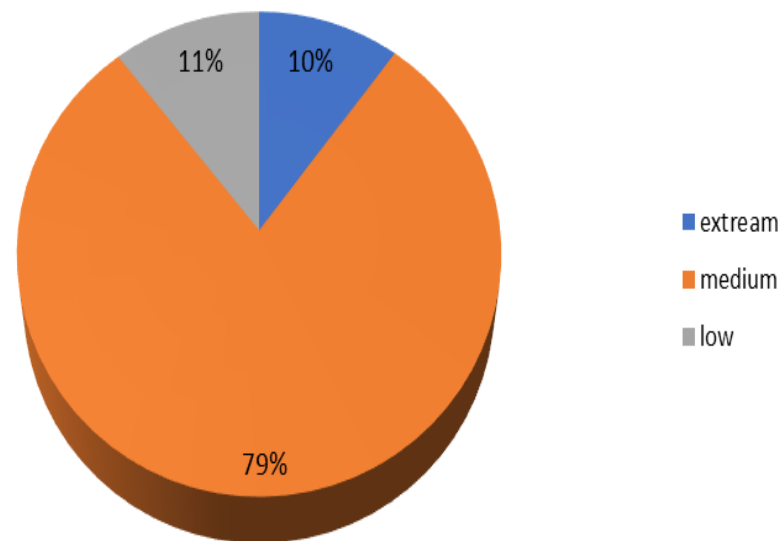
OTAHARIN

- ▶ The Citizens' Association for the Promotion of Roma Education “Otaharin” established in 2005 in Bijeljina
- ▶ Trough 16 years of existence OTAHARIN established itself as on of the most prominent CSOs engaged in protection of the Roma minority rights
- ▶ We started with the support to the equal access to education for Roma and our strategic focus evolved from suport to education to **INTEGRATIVE INCLUSION**
- ▶ one of the major counterparts in our efforts for the improvement of Roma inclusion and quality of life certainly is our local government and City Administration of Bijeljina City

ROMA COMMUNITY IN BIJELJINA

Age	Male		Female			
	#	%	#	%		
< 5	127	28.86	100	25.71		
< 18	98	22.27	57	14.65	total children: 382	
18-49	191	43.41	185	47.56		
50 i >	24	5.45	47	12.08	total adoultis 447	
Total	440	100.00	389	100.00		
					total all 829	

Vulnerability level



HOW WE COOPERATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

- ▶ Cooperation started in 2005 and MOU was signed in 2011 which additionally strengthened cooperation
- ▶ Otaharin is constantly seeking the forms of the cooperation which will improve the position of Roma men and women in City of Bijeljina through the joint projects implementation; establishing of the referral mechanism for the protection of human and children rights; participation in different working groups and development of the local policies and strategies that will contribute to the better inclusion of Roma men and women
- ▶ Establishment of **the Office for Minorities** whose one of the milestones in establishing the systematic support to the minorities in City of Bijeljina

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE FOR MINORITIES IN BIJELJINA

- ▶ **OFFICE FOR MINORITIES in Bijeljina** was established on **16.11.2017.** within the action “Minorities in Western Balkans” within regional project “Social rights of the vulnerable groups (SoRi)” implemented by GIZ with the support of FUEN, ECMI and Schleswig-Holstein administration
- ▶ Trough the Office for the Minorities systemic support is available to the national minorities
- ▶ OfM recognize the fact that Roma are the most numerous national minority and obstacles in the integration
- ▶ Activities are organized in the partnership with OTAHARIN
- ▶ continues capacity building trough the trainings and study visits (Schleswig-Holstein, Slovenia)
- ▶ Good practice transferred to Živinice / Office for Minorities is opened on 10.09.2018.

OFFICE FOR MINORITIES PRINCIPLES OF WORK



- ▶ The Office for Minorities is permanent structure within City Administration Commissioner for the Minority is appointed on the 16.11.2017.
- ▶ **VISION:** providing support to members of the minority community to exercise their rights in the city of Bijeljina and communicate effectively with the authorities.
- ▶ **MISSION:** encouraging other local governments in the country to establish similar structures and set a positive example, as well as contributing to mutual dialogue and social cooperation in BiH.
- ▶ OPEN DOOR POLICY

OTAHARIN AND OFFICE FOR MINORITIES JOINT PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

- ▶ „**Housing for Roma**”- CARITAS Swiss
- ▶ **SoRI - social rights of vulnerable groups supported** by GIZ through this project an office for national minorities was formed, you had those multisectoral trainings, the study visit lasted from 2015 to 2019
- ▶ **“Young Roma men and women for rights and inclusion”** - CARE / EIDHR - work with a young Roma trainee who was engaged in the Office for Minorities, and you were his mentor from 2017 to 2019
- ▶ **"Active Partitioning for Roma Inclusion"** implemented from 2015 to 2018 in order for Roma to be actively involved in the processes in the local community, through this project the first action plan for the inclusion of Roma men and women was developed
- ▶ **"Involvement of communities in reducing gender stereotypes and preventing violence against women and girls"** conducted by the Otaharin Citizens' Association in partnership with the XY Association, and supported by UN Women and Sweden, a member of the Local Action Group for Violence Prevention.
- ▶ **"For the promotion and preservation of Roma culture and language"** which is supported by the Czech Development Agency and CARE International in 2019

CITY OF BIJELJINA LOCAL ACTION PLAN FOR INCLUSION OF ROMA MEN AND WOMEN

- ▶ First Local action plan covered period from 2015 till 2019
- ▶ Action plan was revised and adapted as joint effort of Otaharin and Office for Minorities and with participation of all relevant institutions which took part in Working Group for LAP development
- ▶ It is adopted in December 2019 and covers period from 2019-2023
- ▶ It is first policy paper in BiH which recognized antigypsyism as major cause of the Roma exclusion and marginalization

SUPPORT FROM GIZ

- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Exchange
- ✓ Capacity building



HOUSING PROJECT

CARITAS SWISS/ CITY ADMINISTRATION / OTAHARIN

- ▶ One of the largest project in Bijeljina
- ▶ Costs of intervention are 1.5 million / Bijeljina City Administration invested 1/3 of the entire budget
- ▶ Implementation period from 2019-2023
- ▶ In total 24 most vulnerable Roma families will be get roof over their head
- ▶ In previous projects in period 2015-2019 housing was provided for 16 Roma families

HOW IT WAS



HOW IT'S GOING



CIVIL / PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

- ✓ Ongoing communication with authorities



- ✓ Ongoing communication with Roma community





Održan je niz sastanaka u cilju doprinosa unapređenju položaja Roma i Romkinja u Bijeljini, kroz integrativni pristup.



RECOMMENDATION

- ▶ Structure should appreciate the partnership between civil society and NGO
- ▶ Models of the support of the minorities should be established in the line with the specific need of local communities
- ▶ The needs of the minorities should be taken in consideration when planning and delivering actions
- ▶ The constant learning and upgrading skills should be provided
- ▶ Budgeting for actions should be available

THANK YOU FOR THE
ATTENTION!

For more info visit: www.otaharin.org