



Creating and Implementing Integrated Community Services to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion

Brief presentation of the project

The Ministry of Labour and Social Justice is currently developing the fiche for a pilot project regarding the setting up and development of the community integrated services, financed through the Operational Programme for Human Capital 2014-2020, Investment Priority 9.iv, specific objectives 4.5, 4.6 and 4.10.

The main objective of the project is to support the local public authorities in 139 communities, that have been previously evaluated as facing degrees 3 and 4 of marginalization (communities that combine by definition low human capital, high unemployment and inadequate housing conditions¹), through the hiring, where necessary, and training of the professionals that will form the integrated community services teams, namely: the social assistant, the community nurse and the educational counselor and/or mediator.

By design, the integrated community teams aim to:

- (i) identify the most vulnerable individuals and families by doing outreach,
- (ii) understand their needs,
- (iii) provide them with personalized guidance and support (through a case management approach), and
- (iv) help them access all available benefits and services.

The teams are supposed to first identify the eligibility of beneficiaries for the various types of social protection measures, and then check the administrative procedures that are needed for accessing these measures. In case of the referral to services, the teams check the capacity and availability of service providers that could respond to beneficiaries' needs. Depending on the beneficiaries' needs, the integrated team will refer them to different institutions: from schools, to general practitioners.

The provision of integrated community services (ICS) play a relevant role to ensure both efficiency and effectiveness on "targeting the poor" and better linking them with community services.

The project is based on a joint order of Ministers (Minister of Labour and Social Justice, Minister of Health and Minister of Education) approving the protocol-framework to implement integrated community services. The protocol-framework sets out the responsibilities of each team member and general conditions of inter-institutional collaboration between the integrated community team members.

The partnership is the following: Ministry of Labour and Social Justice – leader; partners: Ministry of Health and Ministry of National Education.

¹ See the Atlas of Rural Marginalized Areas and Local Human Development in Romania (<https://hubs.worldbank.org/docs/imagebank/pages/docprofile.aspx?nodeid=26536853>) and the Atlas of Urban Marginalized Communities (<https://hubs.worldbank.org/docs/ImageBank/Pages/DocProfile.aspx?nodeid=19556536>)



OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT:

OS 1: Strengthen the capacity of local public administration to initiate, coordinate and implement measures to prevent and combat situations of marginalization and social exclusion in 137 communities with over-average and severe marginalization, through the creation of integrated intervention community teams and the development of specific procedures, methodologies and tools

OS 2: improving the level of skills of specialists working in community-based teams from the 137 communities, thus contributing to the consolidation of the public social assistance community services network by providing social services tailored to the needs of the population

OS 3: increasing the number of people benefiting from integrated community services in the 137 communities.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- 8 workshops organized to consult the relevant social actors in setting up the mechanism of inter-institutional cooperation and in the provision of integrated community services
- An inter-institutional collaboration mechanism for SCI at the level of the community
- 40 teams of County Support and Monitoring Units (UJSM), appointed and formed to coordinate, monitor, supervise integrated intervention community teams
- Minimum 42 procedures, methodologies and integrated delivery tools of community services for the integrated intervention community teams
- An online SCI application that will be a mobile work tool for the integrated intervention community team and will facilitate the process of data collection, identification, evaluation, information and online monitoring of each case
- A Map of Community Services, integrating data from the Accredited social services map, as well as providers of educational, medical and occupational services
- 139 integrated intervention community teams created and functional
- at least 336 people trained / trained in integrated community services
- 16 roundtables organized to transfer the model of the integrated approach to public social assistance services with a minimum of 384 participants
- Administrative and legal documents proposed for approval or modification.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- ✓ 139 community services, out of which 130 services are provided in rural communities with over-average and severe marginalization type
- ✓ 42 procedures / methodologies / working tools for the provision of integrated community services, out of which:
 - 1 Collaboration and coordination mechanism for the organization of integrated community teams



- Referral procedures and inter-institutional collaboration protocols to guide community teams in different sectors (including concrete aspects of reporting responsibilities, reporting, documentation, etc.)
 - working procedures of community teams integrated with other service providers (private providers of social services, employment services, population records, specialized health services, etc.)
 - Teamwork procedures, including establishing functional relationships between integrated community teams and senior management levels to ensure professional coordination, supervision and training;
 - methodologies and tools for making a comprehensive assessment of community needs to support and guide the social worker in conducting social surveys and in making the social diagnosis of the community;
 - procedures for the participation of beneficiaries in the provision of social / community health / educational services;
 - specific social assistance procedures and tools to address the minimum packages of social assistance services (eg evaluation, intervention plan, progress reporting, impact assessment);
 - specific procedures and tools in the field of community health care addressing minimum service packages (eg evaluation, intervention plan, progress reporting, impact assessment);
 - Specific procedures and tools in the field of education aimed at minimum packages of school counseling / mediation services.
- ✓ Minimum 336 people benefiting from training and exchange of good practices:
 - a. 141 in the field of social assistance;
 - b. 143 in the medical field;
 - c. 52 in the educational field
 - ✓ Between 23,000 and 34,000 vulnerable people will benefit from this support provided by the 139 integrated community teams by applying the integrated interventions methodologies and procedures elaborated within the project