

**THE GOVERNMENT OFFICE
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

**THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PLENIPOTENTIARY
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SR FOR ROMA COMMUNITIES**

INFORMATION ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD BANK GRANT IDF 027319 SK

**THE PROJECT OF CAPACITY BUILDING
of the Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary of the Government
of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic, the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities and the Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary expresses its heartfelt appreciation to representatives of the World Bank.

The grant enlarged the capacities of the Secretariat in terms of human capital and material equipment as well as enabled the establishment of a regional office in Prešov.

In addition, it enabled a network of contacts, cooperation with experts, working up a strategy, influencing the media environment, and drawing on experience from abroad.

We especially thank the World Bank staff who participated in the implementation
Mr. Roger Grawe - Country Director for Central Europe and the Baltic States,
Mr. Ross Pavis - Task Team Leader of the Project Implementation Unit,
Mr. György Novotny, Procurement Specialist,
and Ms. Tünde Buzetzký, Communications and Operations Analyst.

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THE PROJECT: GOALS AND FINANCING

BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE GRANT

In 2000, the Government of the Slovak Republic received a grant from the World Bank, IDF 027319, at a value of USD 278.300 USD.

The grant intended to build the functional capacity of the Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (formerly called the Secretariat of Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Solving the Problems of the Roma National Minority).

Mr. Roger Grawe, the Country Director for Central Europe and the Baltic States, signed the Grant Agreement on March 29, 2000, and on May 5, 2000 the Grant Agreement was co-signed by Mrs. Brigita Schmögnerova, then the Minister of Finance of the Slovak Republic. Most activities were organized after September 2001. On March 29, 2000 the World Bank extended the closing date of the project to November 3, 2002. A condition of the grant reception was that the Slovak Government would co-finance the purchase of technical equipment. The Slovak Office of the Government also contributed by granting consultants offices, office supplies, telephones, and other communication tools such as e-mail and Internet access.

GOALS OF THE GRANT

The goals of the grant were to:

- Provide technical assistance in the process of expanding the functionality of the Secretariat, and the establishment of a regional office in Presov
- Enlarge the functional capacities of the Secretariat

The grant included technical support and training the goals of which were to:

- a)
Draft and elaborate the methods, and evaluation of programs which help Roma communities
- b)
Organize suitable seminars and provide training for employees of the Secretariat, for employees of ministries who work on Roma-oriented programs, for representatives of regional offices, Roma activists, and representatives of the NGO sector.
- c)
Develop capacities for informing the public about the Roma and about strategies which have been successful in other countries of Europe, try to influence the public opinion through nation-wide and regional media
- d)
Build up an information database of Roma communities and increase the capacity to analyze and evaluate projects.

DISBURSEMENT OF THE GRANT

Financial allocation was divided into three basic categories (1. Consultant Services, 2. Goods, 3. Trainings and Study Programs); and was used in compliance with the Grant Agreement. The grant was disbursed as follows:

1. CONSULTANT SERVICES

Evaluation of the Activities of the Secretariat

Long-term consultants:

1. Coordinator for the work with NGOs who was also a Project Coordinator
2. Financial coordinator who was also Project Coordination Assistant
3. Regional Coordinator of the office in Presov
4. Assistant to the Plenipotentiary who was also the Coordinator with the PHARE project unit at Government Office of the SR directed toward the Roma
5. Coordinator for Public Relations and Media Activities

Short-term consultants in the fields of:

1. Education
2. Social affairs
3. Legal consultancy
4. Health
5. Assistance in preparation of seminars and trainings
6. Documentary film portraying life of minorities in the U.S.A.
7. Summary and preparation of projects
8. Preparation of a music festival to celebrate the completion of the media campaign
9. Cooperation of Roma and non-Roma media

Other activities:

10. Communication with the public and the media
11. Evaluation of activities of the Secretariat
12. Financial audit

2. GOODS -PURCHASE OF TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

The technical equipment financed by the grant was for the Secretariat in Bratislava and the regional office in Presov.



3. TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Target groups:

1. Staff of the Secretariat
2. State and local government administrations - employees of ministries, regional and district government offices and self-governments (advisors and employees involved in Roma issues)
3. Roma activists around the country with an emphasis on building up a new generation of young Roma intellectuals
4. The non-profit sector - Roma as well as non-Roma, donors and also community centres

Strategy goals:

1. Improvement of professional skills
2. Improvement of knowledge in relation to legislation, public administration, the Roma, and international affairs
3. Establishment of closer cooperation in creation and implementation of the strategy, and PHARE programs

Financial Allocation of the Grant:

Category	Value	Sources
1. Consultant Services	186 130	100 % World Bank
2. Purchase of Technical Equipment	18 000	85 % World Bank, 15 % Slovak Republic Government Office
3. Trainings and Study Tours	74 170	100 % World Bank

THE GRANT AND ITS DISBURSEMENT

The Secretariat in Bratislava

The Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Solving the Problems of Roma National Minority was set up in 1999 in Bratislava. The office was temporarily established in the office of the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development. Its premises were minimally adequate with outdated technical equipment, which had been provided because it had been fully depreciated by its previous users. In 1999, 4 employees worked at the Secretariat. The staff grew to 19 in 2001. The evaluation of the Secretariat's activities in 2001 resulted in a new organizational structure that supported 16 employees in Bratislava and 3 in Presov. Although, by the time the Slovak Government approved this structure, there was no money budgeted for its functioning. Since the technical equipment was obsolete and staff size was increasing, new technical equipment was needed.

The Regional Office of the Secretariat in Prešov

Since most Roma live in eastern Slovakia, and it is essential to make the Secretariat more accessible to communities most in need, with the help of the World Bank, the regional office was established in Prešov in October 2001. All of the necessary technical equipment for daily operations in Prešov was financed from the grant. The geographic proximity of the office to Roma communities has enabled a more effective coordination of activities directed from the Secretariat in Bratislava.

CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

In capacities and activities of the secretariat were with the help of the World Bank grant, strengthened in these areas:

Because of the investment of the grant of the World Bank, the work and activities of the Secretariat have been significantly enhanced. The office has been empowered in a number of areas including the following:

- **Strengthening the capacities of the Secretariat** - according to the results of an evaluation, the Secretariat should have 19 full-time employees. The grant has enabled building up stronger human capacity by utilizing 5 long-term consultants. Their daily work made normal operations possible. In specific one-time activities, 17 consultants and/or organizations were used.
- **Preparation of strategies, conceptual materials, and projects** - especially during the first operating months of the Secretariat much energy was devoted to the preparation of principal materials. From this stems the long-term work of the Plenipotentiary (its status and modifications, materials submitted for government sessions for approvals, establishment of databases necessary for functioning of the Secretariat, etc.).
- **Capacity building in relation to the work with Roma communities** - the foundation of successful work in the most problematic areas of Roma communities is not only having a good strategy, but also a functioning team of people who are capable of achieving this strategy. By creating quality channels of communication, improvement of human resources and a linkage of activities with other participants, the Secretariat has accomplished many relevant activities. The grant of the World Bank enabled not only the fulfilment of information and educational events for employees of the Secretariat, its co-workers and the public, but also the acquisition of experience from abroad. The Secretariat has organized meetings to help the co-workers of the Secretariat to prepare materials of strategic importance. The materials have addressed some of the following issues: Comprehensive Development Program of Roma Settlements, Status of the Plenipotentiary, Conception of Education of Roma Children and Problems of Drug Abuse (mainly alcohol and inhalants) in Roma communities. In the course of project implementation, the Secretariat organized 24 trainings and seminars. More than 350 people participated.
- **Media activities** - the most visible part of media activities of the Secretariat was the "Čačipen-Truth" campaign, which was built upon a history of experience with media outlets, and monitored

necessary conditions for quality provision of information. Project organizers submitted this to the public, encouraging healthy working relationships with the media. It began by nurturing cooperation with journalists, through seminars, a stay of journalists in the Spiš region, a journalist competition, and cooperation of Roma and non-Roma media. As a result, journalists have had much more frequent contact with the Secretariat in their quest for obtaining relevant information.

- **Administration of the Grant** - activities inevitable for the implementation and administration of the grant (communication with representatives of the World Bank in Washington, D.C., financial follow-up, accounting, financial audit to mention just a few...).

Evaluation of the Secretariat

A basic condition for implementing this project and financing it by the grant from the World Bank was to determine and evaluate the role and activities of the Secretariat. On the basis of a tender, Non-Profit Consulting Company was selected, which started working at the beginning of 2001. It analyzed the activities of the Secretariat from the viewpoint of horizontal and vertical communication with its partners - the Slovak Office of the Government, ministries, non-government organizations and foreign partner organizations. In March 2001, on the basis of this evaluation, Non-Profit Consulting submitted a final report, which contained recommendations for the Secretariat and coordination of its activities in relation to the ministries, public administration, NGOs, and its cooperation with foreign organizations. It also had recommendations for the functioning of the Secretariat from within - organizational structure, establishment and task distribution of the regional office, and setting up of advisory bodies.

On the basis of these recommendations, Non-Profit Consulting submitted a set of measures intended to improve the quality of activities of the Secretariat. It meant a change of its status and a build-up in the area of human resources. A public tender for a new Plenipotentiary was held, and five candidates participated. In July 2001, Ms. Klára Orgovánová was named to the post of Plenipotentiary. The Secretariat began functioning according to the newly recommended organizational structure and on this basis new employees with appropriate descriptions were hired.

In September 2001, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the new status of the Secretariat, which made the position, rights and duties of the Plenipotentiary more solid. This meant establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee, common decision-making of use of financial resources from the state budget for solving issues of Roma communities, and submission of proposals of strategic importance to government sessions. In October 2001, the regional office in Prešov began operating. In December 2001, the first meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee took place. In February 2002 a meeting of the Advisory Board of the Plenipotentiary took place for the first time. Consists of qualified workers, educators, representatives of Roma political parties, non-profit organisations, and NGOs.

Human Resources:

Mr. Anton Koleno,

Coordinator of the regional office in Prešov

From September 11, 2001 till January 11, 2002 his main activity was to secure the premises of the new regional office, to develop administrative tasks, and to lead the team of the regional office. He began cooperating with the Belgian Red Cross, which is located in Prešov - Stará tehelná. He talked to visitors, and monitored selected locations with a high concentration of Roma inhabitants.

Ms. Zuzana ORAVSKÁ,

Assistant of the Plenipotentiary and a Coordinator with the PHARE project unit at the Slovak Office of Government, concerning projects intended for the Roma

Her main activities throughout the implementation of the project were coordinating programs of the Plenipotentiary, preparing materials for Slovak Government sessions, preparing materials for negotiations with partner organizations, human resources work of the Secretariat, etc.

Ms. Lýdia GABČOVÁ, Assistant of the Project Implementation Unit

She worked as an assistant in the preparation of all the events that had taken place in the months of June - October 2002. She also participated in the creation of a database of media, took care of the grant's agenda, and prepared information about other daily materials.

A picture made by the children from a special boarding primary school in Vranov nad Topľou, which was sent to the Secretariat at the occasion of the Čačipen campaign



Activities:

Courses of English Language

Date: September 2000 - October 2002

Participants: employees of the Secretariat, some employees from the Government Office of the SR and NGOs

The employees of the Secretariat have been carefully selected according to their qualifications regarding solving various Roma issues. Given the international framework of the matter, fluent knowledge of the English language is important. The courses were based upon standards that would be expected in international communications. Equal opportunity was given to some employees from the Government Office of the SR and NGOs.

Decentralization and its Impact - a lecture

Date: November 27, 2001

Participants: employees of the Secretariat, employees from the Government Office and some regional non-government organizations.

In December 2001, Slovakia held elections for people to fill positions in newly devolved regional governments. Before the elections, the Secretariat invited an expert on Decentralization, Mr. Viktor Nižňanský, the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for decentralization. During the lecture, Mr. Nižňanský familiarized 15 participants with the principles of decentralization and the importance of the process in the framework of public administration. Information acquired in this meeting was used by employees of the Secretariat also in cooperation with newly reorganized regional offices.

Study of U.S. Social System - a month-long research internship in Colorado Springs, Colorado, U.S. A.

Date: March 2002

Participant: Naďa Miklovičová, employee of the Secretariat - a coordinator for legal affairs

The goal of the research was to get acquainted with the reform of the social system in the U.S.A. During the research project, the coordinator met with three representatives of local self-governments (County Commissioners) in cities of Colorado Springs, Colorado, in Santa Fe, New Mexico and in Washington, DC. The main part of her research was spent in the Good Will Foundation - one of the partner organizations of the Department of Human Services in El Paso County (Colorado). Goodwill administers social services for the US Department of Human Services. In Washington, D.C. the coordinator met a well-known sociologist, Robert L. Woodson of the National Centre for Neighbourhood Enterprise, one of the best-known organizations in the U.S.A. specializing in the field of utilizing natural community resources.

**One week-long
training program organized
by the National Association of Roma
Organizations in Hungary - meeting with
partner institutions in Hungary**

Date: April 7 - 13, 2002

Participants: employees of the Secretariat, state administration, regional-governments, Roma activists, and representatives of non-government organizations.

The Secretariat together with Hungarian non-government organizations organized a one-week training focused on acquiring experience and knowledge of the social situation of Roma communities in Hungary and systems for solutions. The group of participants from Slovakia was received in Budapest by Deputy Chairman of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities, who is a coordinator of inter-sectoral mid-term programs solving the problems of all nationalities in Hungary. The participants were familiarized also with activities and work of Deputy Chairman of the Roma Self-Governments in Hungary and the activities of the Office of Ombudsman. They visited Roma communities in Héves, Békés, Zala a Somogy.

Training of Effective Communication and Management

Date: June 20 - 21, 2002; July 18 - 19, 2002; September 19 - 20, 2002

Participants: employees of the Secretariat and the regional office, coordinators of social field workers, and mayors of selected villages

The goal of the series of trainings was to improve the effectiveness of horizontal and vertical communication in the framework of the Secretariat, improve communication skills outward, identify individual and group motivation factors, contribute toward building up a cooperative team, more effectively manage time, and how to avoid stress.

Evaluation of Activities of the Secretariat

Date: September 6, 2002 - October 25, 2002

Mr. Michal VAŠEČKA, Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava

The goal of the report was to evaluate the priorities of the Secretariat in relation to Roma, development of the Secretariat, government programs, effectiveness of this grant, programs of political parties in Slovakia in relation to Roma, legal status of the Secretariat, and recommendations for the future.

**PREPARATION OF STRATEGIES, CONCEPTUAL MATERIALS,
AND PROJECTS**

Human Resources and Activities:

Summaries and preparation of projects

Mr. Attila SZÉP, Slovak Institute of International Studies, Bratislava

According to the recommendations of the evaluation report of Non Profit Consulting, the Secretariat was supposed to create a position of a coordinator for summary activities. For the limited financial resources of the state budget, this could not be done. The task of the coordinator was

partially supplemented
by a short-term consultant, who
created a database of approximately 130
titles of local and foreign authors of publications
with Roma and minority issues. This consultant cooperated in
the creation of some materials of the Secretariat, participated as a qualified
advisor and interpreter at negotiations of minority self-governments in Hungary.

Social Affairs

Ms. Andrea LELOVICS, Forum Institute, Šamorín

One priority of the Secretariat has been to create better conditions for the development of Roma communities that face low socio-economic status, social exclusion, problems in education, housing, and high risk health conditions. Goals and tasks to address these issues are included in the Comprehensive Development Program of Roma Settlements, which was approved by the Slovak Government on April 10, 2002. The Comprehensive Program sees a joining of three key principles - modelling, complexity, and partnership. The Consultant was the chief coordinator in gathering relevant materials, analyses, and the preparation of these materials for the government.

Mr. Karel NOVÁK, ETP Slovakia, Bratislava

The starting point of the Comprehensive Development Program of Roma Settlements is the work of social field workers. The task of the Consultant was mainly to select suitable locations and contact local authorities wanting to cooperate in the program, select social field workers, prepare conceptual materials for them, provide training, propose job descriptions for the position of the social field workers, and other materials. This includes a study tour for the social field workers to the Czech Republic. The field worker's activities are documented. They meet with mayors of the villages included in the program, and consult with coordinators of the program.

Legal Consultations

Mr. Bohumír BLÁHA, The Slovak Helsinki Committee, Bratislava;

Mr. Martin GIERTL, Charta 77 Foundation, Bratislava

In order to improve the effectiveness of the Secretariat and achieve the recommendations of the evaluation, it was necessary to change the status of the Plenipotentiary. Initial changes of the status were approved by the Slovak Government in September 2001. The changes enabled the creation of Inter-Ministerial Committee whose chairwoman is the Plenipotentiary. The members of the Committee have the authority to make common decisions as to the use of financial resources from the state budget.

A subsequent proposal, approved in September 2002, was based on current experience regarding the Secretariat's functioning and recommendations of the European Commission. Its goal was to strengthen the position of the Plenipotentiary. According to the new status, the Plenipotentiary is defined as an advisory body of the Government, which has the rights to implement a set of measures to improve the status of the Roma and integrate them into the society.

Education
Ms. Eva KONČOKOVÁ,
Wide Open School Foundation,
Žiar nad Hronom

Education has long been defined as one of the high priority areas and is the area on which the Secretariat focused its first activities. The main activity of the Consultant was to prepare and gather materials for the Plenipotentiary, analyze research data from special primary schools, meet with representatives of the section of national education of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, analyze the financing of Roma Teacher Assistants Program, and prepare the association Friends of Roma Children and Youth at the Roma Education Center.

Health

Ms. Lenka VAVRINČÍKOVÁ,

Pedagogic Faculty of the Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica

Drug abuse belongs to the most serious problems in some Roma communities, primarily in Roma communities in eastern Slovakia. The Consultant conducted research and monitoring in selected Roma settlements. The goal of the research was to obtain as much information as possible about the health conditions of the Roma population in general and in the selected Roma communities. This would serve as a starting point for mapping the situation of drug addiction among the Roma. The monitoring contains information about the current situation - types of drugs used, means of application, length of drug-use, characteristics of drug users, a variety of problems connected with drug use, and applied preventive and therapeutic activities undertaken in the Roma communities.

Other Activities:

Education of Roma children - drafting strategies and cooperation, preparation of a plan of activities - representatives of NGOs focused on education of Roma children and youth

Date: October 25 - 26, 2001 and October 21, 2002

Participants: representatives of non-government organizations who are involved in education of Roma children and youth, and donors.

In October 2001, representatives of 34 Roma and non-Roma non-government organizations, working in the field of raising and educating Roma children and youth met. The goal of this first meeting was to exchange experience and present successful projects and models that could serve as the basis a common strategy in the field of education. As part of the meeting a kindergarten for Roma children and their mothers in Žehra, as well as to a community center in Jarovnice were visited. In October 2002 - during the second meeting that was held at Roma Center Prešov (ROCEPO), representatives of nearly 40 non-government organizations agreed on the establishment of the association "Friend of Roma Children and Youth". They agreed on an organisational charter and constitutions, including a rotational system of chairmanship, as well as activities of the association at the Roma Educational Center in Prešov.

Training
of social field workers

Date: July 8 - 12, July 22 - 26, 2002

Participants: social field workers in selected Roma settlements

Since August 2002, 19 field social workers have been working in the framework of the Program of Social Field Workers, which is financed from the state budget. Before the program was launched, the social workers met at training in Dubovica, where they worked with trainers from the PDCS. They discussed the importance of multi-cultural communication in social work. They also gained general knowledge in criminal law, employment law, civic laws, human rights, policy of the labour market, and cooperation with local offices. In the second phase of the training the social workers were gaining experience in Roma communities in the Czech Republic. In cooperation with the organisation Man in Danger, Prague, they visited locations in areas of Ústí nad Labem, Sokolov, Most, Chomutov, Mimoň, Brno, and Jeseník. The purpose of this study tour was to get practical experience from their Czech counterparts who have been working in the field for several years now, and have successful case studies. The first two phases were financed from the grant of the World Bank. The planned third phase will be financed from the state budget.

**STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES TO WORK
IN ROMA COMMUNITIES**

Human Resources:

Mrs. Agnes HORVÁTHOVÁ,

**Coordinator for work with non-government organizations,
the World Bank Project Coordinator**

Her main task was to coordinate the planned activities financed from the grant and the activities focused on improving the skills of Roma activists, the Third Sector, and also to establish more intensive cooperation among non-government organizations in 3 areas - education, human rights, and community work.

Activities:

Respect and protection of human rights with an emphasis on Roma Communities

Date: November 20, 2001

Participants: representatives of 15 non-government organizations

During the seminar the Roma discussed how they experience discrimination in their every day lives, and in public institutions. Positive models of solving the discrimination were also presented. One of the hosts was Ms. Laura Laubeová from the Czech Republic, who is a pedagogue at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Charles University in Prague, at the section of inter-ethnic relations, policy of equal opportunity, and anti-discrimination practice.

**Internship
of an Advisor of the Head
of a District Office and of an employee
of the section of social affairs of a District
Office**

Date: December 16 - 20, 2001

**Participants: Mr. František Kačica, District Office Kežmarok and Peter Pollák,
Advisor of the Head of District Office for Roma communities in Spišská Nová Ves**

One of the key factors of solving the needs of Roma communities is cooperation at all levels of state administration, self-governments, non-government sector, and other relevant institutions. In December 2001, the Secretariat invited two employees of District Offices from the Prešov region for a weeklong internship at the Secretariat. The goal of the internship was to help them orient themselves on legal issues, possibilities of receiving financial resources and notions for creating regional strategies for solving the needs of Roma communities.

Seminar of Advisors of the Heads of Regional Offices

Date: January 29 - 30, 2002

Participants: advisors of the heads of regional offices and employees of district offices.

The seminar "Work of the advisors for Roma communities at the regional offices, and social workers at the district offices", was organized by the Secretariat to exchange experience in working with Roma communities. The purpose was to acquire information about successful practices in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, exchange information about the most pressing problems, and inform about competencies of the new regional government administration, which is the closest in solving the problems of Roma communities. The participants of the seminar proposed means of cooperation between the Secretariat and the regional and district offices as well as possibilities of mutual coordination of programs and projects of Ministries, NGOs and other institutions.

Community Development - seminar

Date: March 21, 2002; June 11, 2002

Participants: representatives of non-government organizations, representatives of donors

The meeting took place with the aim to prepare the second year of the media campaign Čacičen-Truth 2003 and bridge the gap between Roma and non-Roma. The campaign presented Roma in a real light, showed successful projects that have been achieved by Roma and non-Roma for the benefit and improvement of economic, social and cultural conditions of Roma in Slovakia.

English Language Course in Great Britain for Young Roma Activists from the Third Sector

Date: August 2002

**Participants: Ms. Andrea Bučková - Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia,
Ms. Dagmar Horváthová - Matičný Roma Club, Mr. Marián Balog - Association of Young Roma,
and Ms. Martina Slobodníková - Regional Association of Roma Initiatives (KARI)**

One of the most lacking elements among the Roma engaged in NGOs or in the state administration work is that only a handful of them are fluent in foreign languages. It is a problem because many

of them are in frequent contact with foreign organizations. The Secretariat organized for the young Roma activists an intensive onemonth-long English language course in England. Given the attractiveness of the course, candidates were selected on the basis of a tender where the basic selection criterion was a basic knowledge of English and active involvement in Roma communities.

Internship on Poverty Reduction Programs

Date: September 15 - October 10, 2002

Participant: Mr. Ján Hero, a member of the Advisory Board of the Plenipotentiary

Mr. Jan Hero is a member of the Advisory Board of the Secretariat and is also an external consultant in the education. In October 2002 he received practical experience in the U.S.A. in the states of Colorado and Oregon in programs aimed at poverty reduction and support of self-sufficiency in socially endangered groups of citizens. In El Paso County he participated in the Colorado Works program, which based on a decentralized system of cooperation of local self-government and more than 40 partner organizations. The program acquired popularity mainly by its self-economic effectiveness and by solving the causes of social problems, not their consequences. In Oregon, he studied the implementation of the program Full Employment, which is based on subsidized employment instead of a passively paid unemployment. In the state of Oregon, this program helped cut the long-term unemployment rate by 70 percent.

Study stay of Co-workers of the Secretariat in the U.S.A.

Date: September 28 - October 11, 2002

**Participants: Mr. Marián Balog - Association of Young Roma,
Mr. Eduard Čonka - ETP Slovakia,
Mr. Peter Pollák - Advisor of the Head of the District Office for Roma Communities
in Spišská Nová Ves, and Mr. Jozef Banyák - a cameraman**

On the basis of a tender, the group, which cooperates with the Secretariat participated in the study stay to the U.S.A. The program was prepared by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Open Society Institute of New York. Over two weeks, three Roma activists visited many non-government organizations in Hispanic and Afro-American communities in cities of New York, Washington D.C., and Baltimore. The group was also received by Mr. Martin Bútora, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the U.S.A. In cooperation with the Slovak Television, a documentary film was recorded about the study tour of the Roma activists to the U.S.A.



MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Human Resources:

Ms. Stella HANZELOVÁ, Public Relations Coordinator

In addition to PR Consultancy and the training of a consultant of the Plenipotentiary for public relations, her task was to draft the media strategy of the Secretariat including the “Čačipen-Truth” campaign, and undertake other activities focused on working with journalists and the public.

Ms. Marcela ONDEKOVÁ,

coordinator for communication with the public and the media

The Consultant provided during the period August-October 2002 a daily monitoring of the press and contributed to the preparation of press statements and information related to the Secretariat. She actively communicated with journalists and cooperated on the preparation of events for journalists such as the journalist competition “Baroro-Kamienok”, a seminar for journalists, a meeting of journalists in Spiš, and other activities.

Mr. Štefan MÓŽI,

coordinator of the Musical Festival “Between the Heavens and the Earth”

The “Čačipen-Truth” campaign, which was launched on the International Roma Day, climaxed in a two-day concert - a music festival. Both Roma and non-Roma participated in the festival. Participating musicians came not only from Bratislava, but also from other parts of Slovakia and abroad. The consultant’s task was to create a lasting impression of the multi-cultural nature of music. The event brought together respected local and international musicians and audiences of Roma and non-Roma descent. The aim of “Between the Heavens and the Earth” was to engage excellent musicians from abroad.

Mr. Jozef BANYÁK,

a cameraman and the author of a documentary film

portraying lives of minorities in the U.S.A. and the stay of Roma activists in the U.S.A.

In cooperation with the Slovak Television, the young Roma activists to the U.S.A. recorded a documentary film about their tour in the U.S.A. Since the idea was to engage television as the strongest communication tool in dissemination information about how young people gain experience. The film also presents their work and engagement in the Roma issues in Slovakia. Mr. Jozef Banyák was the author of the scenario, the cameraman, and the producer of the documentary film.

Activities:

Strategy Goals:

1.

Provision of objective information the public by civil servants (representatives of the state administration, and self-governments)

2.

Better information of the public through media - from the viewpoint of quantity (amount of information in relation to the solution of the Roma issues) and quality (quality of provided information)

3.

Media campaign “Čačipen-Truth”- inform the public about positive examples from Roma communities, and start a positive dialogue between Roma and non-Roma.

Campaign “Čačipen-Truth”

Date: April 8 - 30, 2002

The media strategy of the Secretariat is focused on increasing the results of effectiveness of communication with the public in the field of Roma problems, based on the media monitoring and public opinion polls with regard to Roma community. A breakthrough in informing the public was the oneyear-long campaign “Čačipen-Pravda”, with the subtitle “...the oda hin čačipen - ...that’s the truth too”. The campaign started on the International Roma Day. On that day, not-for-profit organizations, schools, local offices, centers for leisure activities were asked to prepare their activities and use the Secretariat so that the whole country would be informed about their activities. Nearly 150 subjects applied to participate in the campaign with many interesting activities including information on educational, cultural and sports activities. The campaign was supported by Slovak Television. Roma were included in publicity and documentary programs. The climax of the campaign was a music festival “Between the Heavens and the Earth”. Roma and non-Roma artists from Slovakia and from abroad performed. Exhibitions of paintings of Roma artists were held across Slovakia prepared by the JEKHE-TANE-TOGETHER Association. In the framework of the campaign other activities took place that were initiated by the Secretariat. Those included:

- A meeting at the premises of the of Donors’forum with aim to coordinate the activities of the campaign and establishg a long-term dialogue
- Presentation of the Report of the World Bank on *Poverty of Roma and Their Social Welfare in the Slovak Republic* which took place in Poprad, Prešov, and Bratislava.
- International seminar the goal of which was to compare analyses of Slovak and Hungarian donors in supporting and solving the Roma issues.

**Training
of Press Secretaries**

Date: January 23, 2002

**Participants: press secretaries and speakers
of Ministries and other state institutions
of the Slovak Republic**

At the beginning of 2002, the Secretariat invited press representatives of Ministries, Office of the President of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Parliament of the Slovak Republic, and other selected state institutions for the seminar *The Roma and Their Place in the Slovak Society*. The goal of the seminar was to provide these press representatives unbiased information about Roma communities. The participants of the seminar had discussed issues of human rights in practice, adequacy of some widely used terminology with regard to Roma and the history of Roma communities.

Dialogues with Chief Editors

Date: April 2002

In the framework of the "Čačipen-Truth" campaign, a team of employees and co-workers of the Secretariat headed by the Plenipotentiary carried out several meetings with the chief editors and leading journalists of daily newspapers and television stations. The purpose of those meetings was not only mutual exchange of information about activities but also an effort to build a basis for constructive work with journalists and seek common ground. The goal was to provide the real picture of Roma in the media in Slovakia. As part of the meetings, results of monitoring presented by the Slovak Helsinki Committee and a discussion about possibilities of improving the situation, took place.

Presentation of the Report *Poverty and the Roma in Slovakia*

Date: April 22, 2002 in Washington, D.C.

**Participants: Mrs. Agnes Horváthová – Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary
of the Slovak Republic's Government**

In cooperation with experts from Slovakia, The World Bank drafted a report on the position of Roma titled *Poverty of Roma in Slovakia and Their Social Welfare in Slovakia*. The goal of this seminar in Washington, D.C. was to present results of the report and present successful projects realized in Roma communities. The Deputy Prime Minister for Economics – Mr. Ivan Mikloš, the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic's Government – Ms. Klára Orgovánová, Ms. Iveta Radičová, co-author of the report, Mrs. Martina Slobodníková and Jana Luptáková, both representatives of Roma non-government organizations accepted invitations to this meeting. The trip of Mrs. Agnes Horváthová was financed from the grant of the World Bank. During the stay in Washington, D.C. discussions with the World Bank representatives focused on possibilities of further cooperation.

**Seminar
for Journalists**

Date: August 22 - 23, 2002

**Participants: Chief editors of nation-wide print
and electronic media**

According to the monitoring of relevant media, the Roma minority is characteristic for latent expressions of racism, but many media are not aware of the existence of prejudice and stereotypes about the Roma presented in their publications. At the two-day long seminar in August 2002, a group of experts from the Slovak Helsinki Committee, journalists of press agencies, televisions, radios, and the most important dailies met, and discussed the handling the problem issues in a bias-free manner and the shaping of the picture of the community in the media. Ms. Jarmila Balážová, a well-known moderator of Czech TV Nova as well as a photographer, Mr. Andrej Bán, and chief editor of Slovak news channel TA3, Mr. Zdeněk Šámal, contributed to an interesting content of the seminar.

Media in Relation to Roma – information handbook for journalists

In order to assist journalists who follow Roma issues, a collection of articles was made by experts of Roma communities. The collection of articles serves as a basic orientation for journalists. It contains not only a historical view of Roma, their history-psychology specifications, but also a view on the situation of the Roma in Slovakia and analysis of some Slovak media. It presents the most frequent mistakes when articles are published. The handbook was distributed to participants of trainings, and is available at the Secretariat.

A Series of Lectures "The Roma in Slovakia and View from a Far Away"

Date: October 14 -15, 2002

Participants: 200 university students and the public

The Secretariat prepared in cooperation with the Slovak Society for Foreign Policy, Department of Roma Culture of the Constantine the Philosopher University, and the Slovak Academic and Information Agency – A Service Center for the Third Sector (SAIA-SCTS) series of lectures. Dr. Eva Orsós Hegyesi, the state secretary of the Ministry of Health, Social Affairs, and Family of Hungary, Doc. PhDr. Milena Hübschmannová, CSc. from the Institute of Indian Studies of the Philosophy Faculty of the Charles University in Prague, and William Baker, President of the Association for Social Reform lectured at Universities in Trnava and Nitra, and in the headquarters of the Slovak Society for Foreign Policy.

Education Meeting of Journalists in Spiš

Date: October 18 - 19, 2002

Participants: journalists from nation-wide and local media

The region in Slovakia called Spiš is well-known for its Roma communities. One part of the media campaign "Čačipen-Truth" focused on giving more information to the public and reducing the barriers between Roma and non-Roma. One of the activities was an informal meeting

of journalists in the town of Spišská Nová Ves. The meeting included a visit to the Research-Educational and Consultancy Center of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Constantine the Philosopher University, the settlement of Vilčurňa, a community center in Rudňany and a kindergarten in Hrabušice. At the end of the meeting, the journalists played a football match with members of a sport club in Smižany and participated in the presentation of the Roma cuisine.

Cooperation of Roma and non-Roma media

Association JEKHEĽANE - SPOLU, Prešov; Roma Press Agency, Košice

Date: August 13 - October 25, 2002

Improved cooperation of Roma and non-Roma media, enabled to make the successful projects and Roma people who are involved in the eradication of the stereotyped perception of Roma issues more visible. The purpose of the project was to provide non-Roma media with large amount of objective information prepared by publishers of Roma media who know well the themes.

A Competition for Journalists "Baroro-Small stone"

In Slovakia people of many nationalities live side by side. Their communication is not always prejudice free. The mission of the media is to inform about current events as objectively as possible. In August 2002, the Secretariat of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities announced a competition for journalists to destroy the widely used forms of one-sided flow of information. First the competition was only for the print media. However, to accommodate the great interest of the colleagues from electronic media, from September 2002 the journalists from electronic and Internet media were also allowed to participate in the competition.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GRANT

Mrs. Agnes HORVÁTHOVÁ - a coordinator for work with non-government not-for-profit organizations and the World Bank Project Coordinator (more on page 13)

Mr. Roman AL-SAKAF - a financial coordinator and the World Bank Project Coordination Assistant

He managed the daily financial agenda in connection with the project, co-organized tenders, consulted documents connected to the conditions of the World Bank, organized trainings, seminars, and study tours, managed correspondence with the World Bank, and translated principal documents related to the project's activities and activities of the Secretariat into the English language. The coordinator was responsible for maintaining proper documentation of expenditures, cash flow, and financial operations.

Financial Audit

Deloitte and Touche, Bratislava

The organization examined the implementation of the grant according to International Accounting Standards (IAS) and International Standards of Auditing (ISA), and followed the procedures of FARAH, i.e. Financial Accounting, Reporting, and Auditing Handbook. The financial auditors examined whether all conditions of the World Bank were met in disbursement, procurement, whether all relevant steps were authorized as stipulated in the Grant Agreement.

**International Program for Development Evaluation Training
- attended by the Financial Coordinator in Canada**

Date: June 17 - 28, 2002

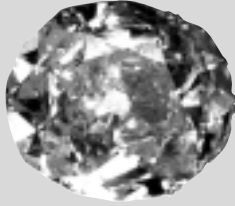
Participant: Roman, Al-Sakaff; Project Financial Coordinator of the Secretariat

The training of the International Program for Development Evaluation was held in Ottawa, Canada. It focused on qualitative and quantitative elements used in evaluating programs, projects, and sector policies, tools for poverty reduction strategies drafted on the basis of criteria of the World Bank. The exchange of experience with other participants who were coordinating projects financed by the World Bank was very useful

THE CONCLUSION

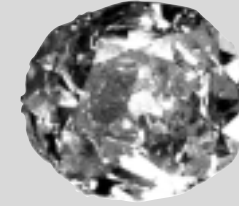
Non-government not-for-profit organizations, state administration, and the business sector are inseparable elements of the society. On the one side NGOs watch whether of democracy is respected, occasionally criticize and influence state policies. Even more, NGOs give the whole of society a helping hand in solving many social problems. In some cases, they are irreplaceable assistants of the state. This is certainly true in the case of solving some of the problems of Roma communities. NGOs are irreplaceable assistants in the process of addressing the problems of the poorest Roma who are living in isolated settlements. These organizations are the key in holding society accountable for human rights abuses. This is also true in the field of education. NGOs have been instrumental in creating alternative programs and have gained the trust of the Ministry of Education. They have found ways of involving concerned and helpful Roma assistants in the school process.

The World Bank grant enabled utilizing of the experience, information and experts from many NGO's in Slovakia.



The following is a list of NGOs in alphabetical order:

- **Association of JEKHEANE-SPOLU, Prešov**
Activities in the framework of the “Čačipen-Truth” campaign, bridging of Roma and non-Roma media
- **Association Together, Kremnica**
Cooperation in training for regional and district offices employees
- **Charta 77 Foundation, Bratislava**
Using the experience in legal affairs in the preparation of the new status of the Plenipotentiary
- **Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia, Banská Bystrica**
Presentation of positive examples in education
- **Donors’forum, Bratislava**
Cooperating in the preparation of the “Čačipen-Pravda” campaign, coordination of activities and programs with regards to supporting activities stemming from the strategies of the Plenipotentiary
- **ETP Slovakia, Bratislava**
Utilizing their accumulated experience in the field of social work, their strategies could be provided on a larger scale
- **Forum Institute, Samorín**
Utilizing knowledge in gathering materials and in the preparation of government material in the field of social work
- **Hope for Children, Banská Bystrica**
Presentation of positive examples in education
- **Information and Consultation Centre of Roma, Rimavská Sobota**
Cooperating in the preparation of a seminar on human rights
- **Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava**
Utilizing the experience that the authors of the Aggregate Report about Slovakia have. They are able to evaluate the actual societal and political situation in relation to Roma and the activities of the Secretariat
- **Non Profit Consulting, Bratislava**
Civic Association which on the basis of a tender evaluated the activities of the Secretariat and proposed the new organizational and personnel structure of the Secretariat
- **PDCS, Bratislava:**
Providing useful training for field social workers, which were realized on the basis of long-time work with the Foundation of Roma Communities



- **Roma Press Agency**
Cooperating in the preparation of a seminar for press secretaries, bridging of Roma and non-Roma media
- **Slovak Helsinki Committee, Bratislava**
Legal consultancy in preparation of a new status, using their expertise in the framework of media monitoring
- **Slovak Information and Academic Agency, Bratislava**
Cooperating in organizing of a cycle of lectures for and about Roma in Slovakia and a View from a Far Away, making use of experience with activities of students
- **Slovak Society for Foreign Policy, Bratislava**
Cooperation in organizing a cycle of lectures on Roma in Slovakia and a View From Far Away, using experience of organizing lectures by foreign experts, contribution to a network of contacts for interested community from their target group
- **Wide Open School Foundation, Žiar nad Hronom**
Making use of experience and a model of Roma assistants of teachers in schools, which has become a part of the overall strategy in the field of education

*Martina Slobodníková (first from left) at an intensive English language course in the Great Britain
Martina Slobodníková (prvá zľava) na intenzívnom kurze anglického jazyka vo Veľkej Británii*





