Challenges in Social Inclusion in Serbia

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Social inclusion is ...

...a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live.
Policy basis

• Poverty Reduction Strategy and Strategy for the Accession of Serbia to the European Union
  – Complementary with MDG-s and EU Social Inclusion Agenda
  – Strategic frame for achieving social inclusion
  – Social inclusion monitored through the PRS implementation process

• Sectoral strategies
  – Social protection, employment, education, health, vulnerable groups policy documents
Integrated system of planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting

Outcome based planning at the national level – GOP methodology
  - Annual Operational Plans (GOPs) as 3-year rolling planning documents reflecting policy priorities with detailed budget for the next year
  - Strengthens operational planning capacities of ministries
  - Gradual roll out to all ministries in 2008

Introducing performance based budgeting
  - Based on GOP methodology – linking policies and resources
  - Piloted in 5 Line Ministries in 2007

Monitoring and reporting
  - Annual Report of the GoS
  - 2nd Progress Report on the PRS implementation
  - PRS, MDG and social inclusion indicators (11 Leaken indicators) as a basis for development of M&E system of the Government
Who are the vulnerable

• 8.8% of the population of Serbia was categorized as poor (2006).
• The population of non urban regions is significantly poorer. (13.3%).
• Children up to the age of 18 (Poverty index - 12%).
• Elderly persons (Poverty index - 10.0%).
• Households with the woman as the head of the household (Poverty index - 9.3%).
• Roma people (60% of Roma population unemployed, high illiteracy rate 35.5% men, 51.6% women
• People with disabilities (Employment rate around 13%)
Main challenges in process of social inclusion

• Unemployment
  – Unemployment rate still high
  – 21.6% among the group aged 15-64 (20.9% of the total population)
  – According to LFS: a slight drop by 0.2% in 2006/2005, but still high (EU rate is 7.9%)
  – 53.9% are women
  – 47% are young (300,000 people)

• Inclusion of vulnerable groups
  – Roma
  – Children
  – People with disability
Supporting employment

1) Active labor market policy measures
• In 2006, covered approximately 80% of the total number of the registered unemployed, 40% more employment than in 2005.
• The most successful measures
  – individual employment plans covered ½ of newly registered persons
  – subsidies (for employment of young, older workers and self-employment) – 100% employed
  – public works program, Transition Centers (13)

2) New employment opportunities
• Support to SME development
• Credit support through *Serbian Development Fund* - over 70 mill €
  (Credits for SMEs, for start-up, micro credits)
• Support to women entrepreneurship
• Business incubators (17 applications in 2006) and 4 clusters
• Affirmative Employment Measures for vulnerable groups - modest results
Improving status of the vulnerable

3) Support to Roma Decade
   • Implementation of Roma integration Action Plans (health, employment, education, housing)
   • Roma Health Fund -Projects implemented in Partnership Health institutions and Roma NGOs (reproductive health of Roma women, preventive health care, etc) - evaluation on going
   • Pilot projects in education- Functional Education of Adult Roma, Roma Assistant, Inclusive programs for pre-school enrolment

4) Better life for children
   • Deinstitutionalization - In 2005 and 2006 the ratio of children accommodated in foster families and children in social welfare institutions is 60% to 40% respectively (used to be 37% to 63% respectively in the previous period)
   • Implementation of local action plans for children

5) Status of people with disability
   • Two Budget Funds for people with disability
   • Social Innovation Fund
   • National Employment Service program – employing disabled persons through financial support for equipping the working post - 208 persons with disabilities were employed by end of 2006).

   Inclusion programmes are still at the level of pilots