

Capacity Statement - ADRA Serbia

Introduction

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is a global humanitarian organization with a mission to work with people in poverty and distress to create just and positive change. ADRA Serbia belongs to the worldwide ADRA network, comprised of over 120 country and regional offices. ADRA's five core sectors include Food Security; Health; Economic Growth; Education; and Emergency Management.

ADRA Serbia has developed its expertise in some of these sectors and in various respective subsectors, particularly in Education (Children); Economic Opportunity, WASH (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene), and Emergency Management. The subsectors of *Women, Girls and Gender*, and *Mental Health* are mainstreamed in all programs. Also, programmatically, regardless of the sector, ADRA utilizes Comprehensive Support approach, in two senses. First, through wide partnerships with all willing actors from the public, private and civil sectors. Second, through designing holistic support, from relief, to developmental support, including advocacy, built on human-rights based approach.

Expertise utilized in the Comprehensive Support approach:

- Social workers
- Medical doctors and nurses
- Pedagogysts/ Licensed teachers
- Child protection specialists
- Gender specialists
- Educational psychologists
- Interpreters/cultural mediators for Farsi, Arabic, Pashto
- Recovery after floods

ADRA Serbia`s team of experienced staff (see the box on the right) design, manage, and implement its programs in accordance with ADRA`s policies, international standards and donor requests. ADRA's **technical team** includes, among others, social workers, educators, medical personnel, specialists in child protection and gender issues. The **administrative and managerial team** includes the country/ programs director, finance director, human resource manager and 2 project managers. Also, standards-wise, ADRA Serbia holds ADRA International`s **License and Accreditation status**, confirming its alignment with the Core Humanitarian Standard standards. It is a holder of ADRA`s Licence Certificate since 2020.

Technical Expertise

Education

ADRA in Serbia has been fully involved in Education since 2013, building on previous 10 years of continual community building projects in several local communities nationwide. Fully developed Education programs started in 2015, focusing on the Romani children population in city of Belgrade, the nation`s capital. Roma in Serbia are the largest national minority (experts` estimates are: 600,000 Roma in Serbia) and by far the most socially vulnerable in Europe due to social exclusion for decades. The root causes of their social exclusion are manifold, including inadequate housing, children`s **absence from pre-school and formal education** and/or **early drop-outs**, inadequate housing, low labor qualifications, and discrimination. The final consequence is social



Up to 100 children from socially vulnerable families in Belgrade city area progress through school and complete their primary and secondary education.

exclusion from participation in all institutions and the social life, and deepening poverty. ADRA focuses on the educational factor. It partners with families, public schools and specialized organizations of civil societies (OCS), to work with young Roma families. Comprehensive support to families entails working with families to **enroll** children in primary schools, build their Serbian language skills, support them through **assistance in learning, doing homework**. In the period 2019-2023 **250 Roma children of primary and 50 of secondary school** age level will progress to the next levels of education, increased their general and functional knowledge. Also, the program will prepare them for the labour market. Key asset in the process, in addition to the expert team, is ADRA`s **Community Center**. It is easily approachable to all from the targeted communities, is unique one-stop-shop kind of facility in the Western Balkans region ([video on ADRA`s Community Center](#)). Also, ADRA`s [School on Wheels](#) (adapted trailer) enables ADRA teachers to enter Roma communities and conduct activities there too and raises awareness on the importance of education. Support to parents entails enrolment into programs for adults in completing their primary education too.



Located in the local community in the settlement of Borča (Belgrade), ADRA`s Community Center entails 660m2 of equipped indoor and 1,200 m2 outdoor spaces - classrooms, women`s center, occupational and recreational spaces - unique resource for play, socializing, educating and preparing for labour market to the most vulnerable families from the community.

Importantly, beginning in October, ADRA launched initiative to **respond to a gap in teaching assistants for children from vulnerable families**. This is the largest gap on the way to their social inclusion, especially poignant during the distant schooling era imposed by Covid-19. Namely, these children often lack technical resources (tablets, internet), skills to use them, and finally someone to tutor them in learning and mastering school homework. ADRA is fundraising for the material resources. Teaching assistants are though greater obstacle. The number of state sponsored pedagogical assistants is reduced due to budget restriction reasons while the needs are even greater. ADRA`s initiative is to create a basis of volunteers from the general population, students, retired persons, who will be engaged as volunteer online tutors through supervised video calls. While assisting to these children they will be helping parents to build their own assisting skills (registration page, in Serbian: <https://uskoli.rs>). The whole process is led by ADRA professionals, and in cooperation with the parents and school administration. This model is being tested as potentially effective and cost-effective response to a growing need.

ADRA used the same approach for children with other migrant status, like those coming from the refugee population in the period 2015-2018.

Livelihood

Investing in occupational and business skills, assistance in



Mr Memišević, being a family man, is one of the beneficiaries who after getting training in exterior vehicle bodywork and a certificate, and a small grant, successfully started his own shop.

accessing the labor market and remaining on it is critical for empowerment of all groups ADRA is working with, especially vulnerable families of Romani nationality. This sector also naturally fits with the Education program. ADRA works with the youth and young adults (including young parents) coming from these three groups to find a best match between their occupational interests, present skills, available vocational courses and the job market demands. (Vocational courses may include auto mechanics, painters, hairdressers, recyclers; make up artists, construction workers, and others.) Total of **750** beneficiaries, young parents with large families, managed to **increase their employability and got employed** since 2016. Mapping of skills and interests is followed by tailored vocational trainings. Some beneficiaries opt for self-employment and receive micro-grants to start a company while others are assisted in getting employed. Experienced mentors are supporting them expertise provides support throughout the process. Once training is completed, support extends to building their skills in competing at the job market, from job interviews, work ethics, etc. Those trainings have also simultaneous positive effect on their mental health, social skills and the level of social inclusion. Important asset in all these endeavors (Education, Economy) is the ADRA`s Community Center.

WASH & Health, Psycho-social support

ADRA is the only civil sector actor in Serbia running comprehensive program of support to homeless who number 3-5,000 individual in Belgrade city only. The focus is on Belgrade. **WASH** services - mobile and stationary, are accompanied by field outreach **healthcare services**, and **psycho-social support** (including full social integration, when possible). The mobile WASH services include use of specially adapted vehicle (bus) - Drumodom/ RoadHome, with showers, toilets, service of laundry, haircutting and counseling. The WASH



intervention is a platform both for long-term support toward full social re/integration to as many homeless as possible, and **public raising awareness** campaign,

community mobilization (through volunteer, fundraising, involvement of all societal actors) and an **advocacy** aiming at improvement of social policies and their implementation. Technically speaking, the program for homeless around Drumodom also belongs to the Comprehensive Support paradigm. Presently, **1,000 homeless** are served and the program is adapted to the Covid-19 context.

Drumodom, a bus turned into mobile WASH unit provides WASH and healthcare services on the streets of Belgrade. They restore dignity, improve health and enable mid-term and long-term support. Being visible and visually attractive, it draws public and media attention, important for advocacy efforts.

Emergency Management

ADRA Serbia acquired important experience in early response to emergencies and in early recovery since the 1990s. Key know-how was acquired in the late 2000s (regional floods), and especially in **2014 during the massive floods in May, regional in January 2021**, and in the response to the **refugee crisis affecting south-east Europe since 2015**. Its unique resource is the surge capacity of

the around 5,000 experts in the ADRA network, globally. ADRA Serbia has specifically built its own resources in emergency management since 2014.

Its present capacities in responding to future floods is in **120 dehumidifiers** for drying flooded objects, as well as know-how in **recovering flooded households** (650 households recovered in towns of Krupanj and Paraćin in central Serbia in 2014-5), but also in [psycho-social support](#) to survivors through expert and self-help groups, all tailored in and for the Serbian context. Also, a series of responses to cross-continental movements of people since 2015, adapting to ever changing circumstances and types of migrations, brought deep know-how across humanitarian sectors ready to be used in likely migrations in the future.

Gender program

In the 2000s and early 2010s ADRA participated in founding two safe houses for survivors of gender-based violence in Serbia. Since 2017, its focus is on providing prevention of gender-based violence and responding to it in the context of asylum and reception centers in Serbia. Since 2018, more than **1,000 adolescent girls and women** from the refugee/migrant community have been prepared for a life in European context, and their livelihood and intercultural skills improved. (Voices of refugee girls and women are given space to in ADRA Serbia`s publication [Room for Women](#)).

Partnerships and Participation

ADRA Serbia has partnered with several development agencies, government ministries and departments, and educational and research institutions to deliver development programs to communities throughout the country. These collaborations are a cost-effective and time-saving means for implementing projects, sharing lessons, and combining technical experience and expertise for maximum project impact. ADRA has developed lasting relationships with both international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in Serbia.

Past Performance (selection)

Donor Award Amount Duration	Project Title	Targeted Areas and No. of Beneficiaries	Project Interventions
SlovakAid/USAID, ADRA network, private donations - €120,000 annually 2017-ongoing	Comprehensive support to Homeless in Belgrade	Belgrade city area, 10,000 homeless	Providing WASH, healthcare, psycho-social, social integration support, with continual community mobilization and advocacy efforts for more comprehensive prevention and adequate response mechanisms to homelessness in Serbia (all adapted to the Covid-19 setting)
Swiss Development and Cooperation	Recovery of flood-affected households in	Pirot, Vlasotince, Dimitrovgrad, Babušnica	180 households dehumidified, and equipped with essential household items through cash-

Office, CHF 50,000	Eastern and Souther Serbia		vouchers, benefiting the local vendors
ADRA International, \$100,000 Nov `19 - Oct `20	School on Wheels	Belgrade city area 150 beneficiaries	150 children from socially vulnerable families (Romani) are assisted in education, transit into next level of education, are prepared for the labor market
UNICEF, ADRA International \$ 497,000 Feb `18 -Dec `21	Women center for refugees	Belgrade region (ADRA Community Center), Bogovađa and Šid Asylum Centers, 1300 beneficiaries, Adolescent girls and women from refugee community	Regular programs of Women`s center in ADRA`s Community center - prevention of and response to gender-based violence; occupational, recreational, vocational activities
German Foreign Office, \$ 1,367,000 Sep `16- Dec `23	Strengthening Young Roma Families	Belgrade and Novi Sad regions, 750 direct and 2500 indirect beneficiaries	Completion of primary and secondary education for children/youth, business literacy for youth/parents, vocational trainings, grants for tools, employment and keeping employment
Swiss Solidarity/ ADRA Switzerland \$ 753,000 May `17 -Apr `19	Knowledge and skills for unaccompanied minors and separated children	Belgrade region (ADRA Community Center), 330 beneficiaries	Unaccompanied minors among refugees are successfully integrated in the formal education, and their vocational trainings to raise their job competitiveness
Swiss Solidarity \$ 250,000 + UNHCR \$ 430,000 Nov `15 -Dec `16	Protection services for residents of Preševo Reception Center	Preševo Reception Center (south Serbia), 6,000 + 4,500 beneficiaries	Mobile teams offering daily legal and PSS aid, escort, referral to refugees accommodated, and daily assistance in communication refugees-government officers

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