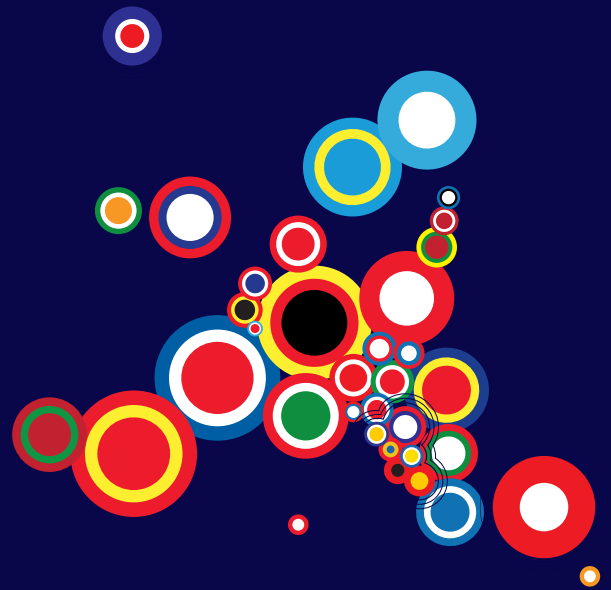




INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

Kosovo*

EU Support for the Implementation of the RAE Strategy 2– Education for integration (EU SIMRAES 2)



Action Summary

The specific objective of this Action is to ensure equitable access of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) children to pre-primary, primary and secondary education by improving enrolment, retention and attainment of children through community-based and financial support.

It has three major components: 1) Inclusion of children and improvement of learning outcomes in pre-school and compulsory education; 2) Improvement of access and retentions in upper secondary education through a scholarship program; 3) Developing capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on Education of RAE communities by providing opportunities for networking and joint activities.

The Action supports the Government of Kosovo in implementing the RAE Integration Strategy 2009-2015, and is in line with the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo 2014-2020.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Action Identification	
Programme Title	<i>2014 Annual Action Programme for Kosovo</i>
Action Title	EU Support for the Implementation of the RAE Strategy 2 -Education for Integration (EU SIMRAES 2)
Action Reference	<i>IPA 2014 /032353 /Kosovo/ EU Support for the Implementation of the RAE Strategy 2</i>
Sector Information	
IPA II Sectors	<i>Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights</i>
DAC Sector	<i>15160</i>
Budget	
Total cost (VAT excluded)¹	Total: 1.45 million EUR Kosovo Budget 0.12 million EUR; KFOS 0.03 million EUR.
EU contribution	EUR 1.3 million
Management and Implementation	
Method of implementation	<i>Direct Management</i>
<i>Direct management:</i> EU Delegation in charge	<i>European Union Office to Kosovo</i>
Implementation responsibilities	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Kosovo
Specific implementation area(s)	Different municipalities of Kosovo
Timeline	
Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement	<i>31 December 2015</i>
Contracting deadline	<i>3 years following the date of conclusion of Financing Agreement</i>
End of operational implementation period	<i>6 years following the date of conclusion of Financing Agreement</i>

¹ The total action cost should be net of VAT and/or of other taxes. Should this not be the case, clearly indicate the amount of VAT and the reasons why it is considered eligible.

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

According to the 2011 population census, 35,784 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (8,824 Roma, 15,436 Ashkali and 11,524 Egyptians) reside in Kosovo². There is also an undetermined number of community members who live as refugees or asylum seekers in other countries and may return to Kosovo in the near future.

Despite difficult economic situation, poverty, inter-ethnic tensions and various forms of discrimination, participation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in education has improved in last couple of years. Compulsory Education is attended by 80.4% of children aged 6-14 which is still far below the majority community, but situation aggravates in secondary and tertiary level. Education Statistics shows that 526 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians attend secondary education³, what constitutes only 23.2% of those aged 15-18, whereas the number of students enrolled in higher education is still negligible.

The economic perspective of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities depends considerably on their equal participation in the Education System. In this context, numerous studies give account on the advantages of pre-school education as a means to support children to success in the formal education, especially among children living in poverty, from social disadvantaged milieus and minorities' children who do not speak the language of the majority society as mother tongue and who traditionally occupy the lowest level in the education system. Through pre-school education facilitated by the action, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children will acquire the necessary language skills, at least those who use Romani as their family language, and get familiar with learning methods which will make their entry into the school system easier.

Once having entered formal education, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students are the most challenged from the aspect of inclusion, equity and quality of education services in circumstances of extreme poverty and economic crisis. Traditional patriarchal attitudes often put Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian girls at a disadvantage when it comes to access to education, whereas quality of learning remains challenge for all. In this regard, the concept of a Learning Center promoted by the action appears to be relevant to address the problem of participation in education and quality of learning. Such centers operate within existing Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community centers or schools, and use the capacity of community to improve learning outcomes of their young members.

Transition of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children from compulsory to secondary education is rather low compared to the national average, due to economic challenges their families face. Therefore, provision of scholarships, in form of cash transfers conditioned by regular school attendance of beneficiaries, is a key to improve participation in this level of Education. Experience from the Region has shown that the best results are achieved if the scholarship program is combined with mentorship provided by selected teachers or community members.

Civil society actors have provided crucial support in some municipalities by drafting local action plans and engaging in consultative processes with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities' representatives, media, and municipal officials, in order to spearhead the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan. The drafting of local action plans in several municipalities has been initiated and supported by Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), and later in a couple of municipalities by an EU supported project implemented by ODHIR "Best Practices for Roma Integration in Western Balkans – BPRI", with the involvement of local non-governmental organizations, municipal officials and community representatives.

The major beneficiaries of this action are the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Experience shows that, in last couple of years, there are almost no reservations among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members in relation to initiatives that enhance their education opportunities.

² KAS: Population Census 2011

³ MEST: Education Statistics 2012/13

The Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST) is an important actor tasked with implementing the Education Component of the Government of Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Integration Strategy, improvement of access and the quality of provision for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities being its most relevant targets. Although the Pre-University Education System in Kosovo is decentralized, it is MEST's legal obligation "to promote a non-discriminatory education system in which each person's right to education and/or training is respected and equal quality learning opportunities are available for all"⁴.

Municipalities where learning centers are going to be located are responsible to ensure access to schools to all children including those from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Through the Offices for Communities and Return and Education Directorates, municipalities liaise with the community-based organizations responsible for operation of learning centers. Also, municipalities provide school space for learning centers if deemed appropriate.

Another stakeholder group is made up of CSOs active in working for better education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Those organizations will be connected through an informal network, and have a long-lasting mutual cooperation, as well as good cooperation with central and local authorities.

International organizations, foreign government and inter-government agencies supporting the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo (EU, UNDP, OSCE, REF, etc.), constitute a stakeholder group, which, through communication with the Government and CSOs has influence on developments related to education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II STRATEGY PAPER (OR MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER) AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

This action is fully in line with Enlargement Strategy 2013. Under its Part II, section d. Fundamental rights a specific sub-section is dedicated to Roma issues indicating Roma population are very often the victims of racism, discrimination and social exclusion and live in deep poverty, lacking sufficient access to healthcare, education and training, housing and employment. Roma inclusion has to become a national priority, not just in strategy papers but in actual engagement on the ground, with measures to increase access to education. Through IPA II, the Commission will better target funds through identifying and building on best practice. Education and social inclusion projects will be prioritised.

As indicated in the Part II, Section 1 of the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo, "non-majority communities continue to face major challenges and discrimination". Also, the Strategy Paper points out weaknesses and inconsistencies in implementing the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009-2015, and its Action Plan due to "a lack of political will, ownership and insufficient budgetary allocations".

As indicated in Part IV, Sub-sector: Fundamental Rights and Minorities of the Strategy Paper, IPA will continue to support Kosovo in effectively implementing the strategy and action plan for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities with efforts focusing on education, social services, civil registration as well as their integration into the labor market.

Progress Report 2013 under its section "respect for and protection of minorities, cultural rights" makes reference to the strategy for the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities noting that more resources and greater efforts are needed to make progress in implementing the strategy and the action plan. The focus needs to be education, social services and civil registration of these communities. Furthermore under its section "education and research" the report calls for improvement of the access to quality education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students as they "have lower registration rates, higher drop-out rates, and poor levels of academic performance".

⁴ Law No. 04/L-032 on Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo

The proposed action will contribute in supporting the Government of Kosovo in developing a democratic and multiethnic society by implementing the RAE Strategy and its Action Plan. The Action is in line with the EU publication noting that Kosovo institutions should engage more deeply with relevant civil society and representatives of Kosovo Roma, Kosovo Ashkali and Kosovo Egyptian communities, seeking their genuine involvement in policy-making and implementation which affects them⁵.

The action will also contribute to the fourth target area in EUROPE 2020 Strategy, which is reducing school drop-out rates to less than 10%⁶.

SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

As stated above, the Government of Kosovo approved the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Integration Strategy 2009-2015, as well as the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy, detailing concrete measures to be taken by relevant central and local level institutions as well as a timeline and budgetary estimates for their implementation.

The discussions about post 2015 Kosovo Government Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities lead to focusing on four priority sectors: 1. Education, 2. Health, 3. Employment and 4. Housing, but this is still to be confirmed by the government decision. At the same time the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities' demand for increasing the number of sectors within the current strategy with two cross-cutting sectors, gender and antidiscrimination, which should be included into the strategy after 2015

The IPA II Strategy Paper for Kosovo⁷ indicates intention to support Kosovo in strengthening the capacity of its institutions in charge of coordinating human rights, policies and monitoring, education and awareness-raising about fundamental rights and non-discrimination, including through civil society. Further, the paper makes an explicit reference to support Kosovo in effectively implementing the strategy and action plan for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities with efforts focusing on education, social services, civil registration of these communities, as well as their integration into the labor market.

Kosovo Government has introduced the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) in Education by approving a comprehensive Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 (KESP). MEST is in charge with KESP implementation, and has taken responsibility for the annual planning cycle, which includes Donor Coordination mechanism and annual progress review. Education Component of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Integration Strategy is also addressed through this planning cycle. A sound example is funding from the MEST budget for a certain number of scholarships for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students and support to certain learning centers operating in Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. MEST is determined to formally include the Education Component of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Integration Strategy in its sector-wide plan beyond 2016.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

It is important to mention that involvement of civil society actors has been a very important element in supporting the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan. This proposal intends to keep the involvement of the CSOs at the same level in order to ensure improvement of access and retention of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in pre-school and elementary education and improvement of their capacities to benefit from secondary and tertiary education levels. Previous interventions,

⁵ EU Office to Kosovo: To engage more deeply for Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, Pristina, June 2013.

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/documents/press_corner/2010/roma_booklet_eng.pdf

⁶ EUROPE 2020 Strategy

provided both by international community and MEST, have shown that learning centers offer very good basis for socializing activities as well as adequate support for various pre-school, after-school and continues education activities for all group ages. On the other hand MEST is fully aware that the activities currently performed by learning centers should gradually be aligned to the mainstream schools in order to improve inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children and ensure long-lasting effects of this action.

There are synergies between the proposed action and the IPA 2011-funded EU/Council of Europe Project “Supporting access to education and intercultural understanding” which provides technical assistance to central and local authorities who are directly involved in improving the access and quality of education for returnee children as well as Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children who, for certain reasons, remain out of school. The Project uses mediators to facilitate school enrolment, integration and retention of the students and ensure regular communication between schools and families, and also provides training for teachers from schools attended by returnee or Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children to help them address their specific needs. This EU/CoE project is also seen as an opportunity to prepare the ground for this action mainly in assisting MEST to determine the future arrangements and activities of the Learning Centers.

An evaluation study carried out through the previous phase of this action (EU-SIMRAES phase one) looked at the impact that scholarship schemes had on the education and welfare of a representative sample of beneficiaries from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The major findings are: 1) Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian parents are fully aware of the importance of secondary education for their children and are willing to support them despite economic challenges their families face; 2) young Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian of school age are keen to pursue their education, including girls; 3) Parents, students and teachers agree that the motivation and performance of scholarship beneficiaries at school has improved. It is worth mentioning that interest for scholarships was huge - 315 secondary students applied, whereas among 200 beneficiaries 69 were female. MEST has followed up on these recommendations by setting up a scholarship program for secondary students with support from Roma Education Fund (REF) and its own budget.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To support the Kosovo government in developing democratic and multiethnic society by implementing the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy and its Action Plan (Education sector objectives 1-4)	Progress made towards meeting Copenhagen criteria and implementing anti-discrimination commitments	Government annual report of implementation of the strategy and the action plan, UNDP, OSCE, UNHCR report, EU Progress Report,	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
To ensure equitable access of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children (boys and girls) to pre-primary, primary and secondary education by improving enrolment, retention and attainment of children through community-based and financial support	<p>Rate of school (pre-school and compulsory) attendance among children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (from eight communities)</p> <p>Rate of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian student in upper secondary education</p>	<p>1) Statistics from schools</p> <p>2) MEST Statistics</p>	Government remains committed to improving the Education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>Result 1:</p> <p>Inclusion of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities from up to eight targeted communities in pre-primary, primary and secondary education and improvement of their learning outcomes</p>	<p>1.1. % of school attendance (in each community) in pre-primary and compulsory education .</p> <p>1.2. No of teachers and parents in targeted schools actively engage in fighting discrimination and biases against Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities</p> <p>1.3. % gap in performance between Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian and other children reduced</p>	<p>1.1/1.4. Statistics from local organizations</p> <p>1.2. Lists of participants, attendance certificates</p> <p>1.3.Statistics from schools</p>	<p>1/2. Children from targeted communities are equally treated in schools</p> <p>1/2. Authorities address duly all cases of potential discrimination that may discourage Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children from attending school and improve their performance</p>

<p>Result 2: Improved access and retention of children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in upper secondary education and improvement of their capacities to benefit from tertiary education</p> <p>Result 3: Organizations working on Education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities improve their capacity to offer quality services to members of their communities.</p>	<p>1.4. % of returnee children in beneficiary communities attend primary and secondary education</p> <p>2.1. % gap in the transition rate between Roma and non-Roma peers to upper secondary education reduced</p> <p>2.2. % gap in retention in upper secondary education between Roma and non-Roma peers reduced</p> <p>3.1. No of work-plans for the network approved and presented to the public</p> <p>3.2. No of entries in the network web page increased</p> <p>3.3. Network Strategy approved by all members</p> <p>3.4. No (at least 150) Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian professionals and para-professionals receive professional development</p>	<p>2.1/2.2. Statistics from schools where grant beneficiaries are enrolled</p> <p>3.1/3.3. Approval letters by all Network members</p> <p>3.2. Web statistics</p> <p>3.4. Training and mentoring records</p>	<p>3. Understanding between Network member organizations and targeted municipalities has been reached</p>
<p>ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>MEANS</p>	<p>OVERALL COST</p>	<p>ASSUMPTIONS</p>
<p>Activities to achieve Result 1:</p> <p>1.1. Identification of target group (baseline) and conducting awareness raising of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian parents to register and enroll children on time</p> <p>1.2. Provide support to children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to attend pre-primary education (escorting of children to school, provision of school supplies).</p>	<p>EU - Grant Contract with KFOS</p> <p>MEST co-financing</p> <p>KFOS co-financing</p>	<p>Total amount: €1.45 mil</p> <p>EU - €1.3 mil.</p> <p>MEST – €0.12 mil</p> <p>KFOS - €0.03 mil</p>	<p>1.2. Schools in respective areas support integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities</p> <p>1.3. Teachers and parents are willing to participate in joint activities</p> <p>1.4. Families appreciate this</p>

<p>1.3. Organize anti-bias training for teachers and parents and provide mentoring/coaching for ensuring application of acquired competencies.</p> <p>1.4. Individual mentoring and homework assistance for school-age and returnee children</p> <p>1.5. Organize local events to facilitate better integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children at school level</p> <p>Activities to achieve Result 2:</p> <p>2.1. Provide support for enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in upper secondary education (information sessions, preparatory classes, career counseling)</p> <p>2.2. Set up a scholarship program for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian upper secondary students (in total: 200 annual scholarships)</p> <p>2.3. Provide mentorship to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian scholarship beneficiaries</p> <p>Activities to achieve Result 3:</p> <p>3.1. Establish and launch an informal network of CSOs working on improvement of education opportunities for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities</p> <p>3.2. Facilitate communication among network members and dissemination of information</p> <p>3.3. Develop a cooperation strategy for the Network</p> <p>3.4. Provide professional development opportunities (training and on-site mentoring) to Network members to improve their services and advocacy skills</p>			<p>kind of service</p> <p>1.5. Majority community members participate in events</p> <p>2.1. Local authorities facilitate enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in upper secondary schools</p> <p>2.2. Coordination with donors operating scholarship schemes for secondary students is achieved</p> <p>2.3. Mentors demonstrate commitment to work with mentees</p> <p>3.1. Network members reach agreement on the Plan of Work</p> <p>3.2. There is interest for information on Network activities</p> <p>3.3. Stakeholders are willing to contribute to the Strategy planning process</p> <p>3.4. Network members are committed to improve the quality of their services</p>
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ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

This Action will focus on supporting up to eight Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian learning centers across Kosovo (result 1), setting up a scholarship and mentoring scheme for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian upper secondary students (result 2) and facilitating networking of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian civil society organizations that manage operation of learning centers and provide mentoring to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian secondary students (result 3). From the perspective of action results, three different layers of target groups can be distinguished:

Result 1: The first target group is composed of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children aged 5-15 from up to eight different localities in Kosovo. Such localities may be settlements with significant number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members, or groups of settlements located within the same municipality with smaller presence of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members. Localities still need to be determined based on relevant demographic, employment, social welfare and education participation data, as well as the need for improving participation of targeted communities in the pre-school and primary education. A series of site visits and cross-checking of data will be carried out to reach an informed decision.

Children of pre-primary age (5-6) will benefit from opportunities to acquire pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills, thus creating basic pre-conditions for a successful start of compulsory education. On the other hand, children of the compulsory school age (6-15) will benefit from opportunities to receive additional instruction and homework support either in community-based learning centers or in schools serving respective communities. To ensure regular school attendance the mediation activities between the communities and schools will be pursued. Therefore the overarching intention of this result is to systematically align the pre-school activities of the learning centers with MEST curriculum and bring the learning centers closer to the mainstream schools both for pre-school and after-school activities..

Result 2: The second target group is composed of 200 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children aged 15-18 from all over Kosovo, who constitute around 10% of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population of that age group. It is well known that most of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian families in Kosovo live below the poverty line, and children of this age need financial support to pursue their upper secondary education.

Provision of scholarships, conditioned by regular attendance, in combination with mentoring will improve access and retention of RAE children in upper secondary education, as well their chances for enrolment in tertiary education and access to labor market.

Result 3:The third target group is composed of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian organizations and personnel working on improving Education services for the communities. There is a need for a service that helps the community based organizations address challenges they face including the quality of services and organizational issues. Such service would provide professional development opportunities, peer learning and networking to personnel working for organizations active in the field. This would lead to a network of community centers active in Education which can be an important factor in advocating for improvement in the coming years.

Table below provides an overview of major risks associated to action activities, including assessment of their likelihood and impact on implementation, as well as mitigation measures.

Risk	Status	Mitigation Strategy
SO: Government not sufficiently committed to improving the Education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo	Likelihood: MED Impact: HIGH	The informal network of organizations working on improving education opportunities for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population will engage in a dialogue with the central government and raise issue related to the theme. Also, the Network will participate in broader dialogue between the Government and the Civil Society and discuss possibilities for more education opportunities for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population with donors and development partners.

Risk	Status	Mitigation Strategy
R1/2: Children from targeted communities are ill-treated in schools	Likelihood: MED Impact: MED	Anti-bias training for teachers and parents will be organized to strengthen the commitment of majority community to supporting integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in respective schools. Also, cases of ill-treatment will be reported to school and municipal authorities.
R1/2: Authorities ignore cases of discrimination that may discourage Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children from attending school and improve their performance	Likelihood: MED Impact: HIGH	The informal network of CSOs will work with local authorities to address properly and timely all cases of open or hidden discrimination against children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. If needed, issues will be brought up to the national authorities.
R1/2: RAE children from targeted groups drop out from the school	Likelihood: LOW Impact: HIGH	Learning centers will take all measures to prevent Roma Ashkali and Egyptian children dropping out from compulsory education, primarily by involving them in the homework assistance program and maintaining regular contact with their families and the school. Likewise, provision of scholarships to upper secondary students subject to regular school attendance, and combined with mentoring, will minimize their chances to drop-out.
R3: Insufficient understanding between Network member organizations and targeted municipalities	Likelihood: LOW Impact: MED	The implementing agency will conclude MoUs with targeted municipalities to ensure their support for the Action. Also, regular contacts with the municipal authorities will take place to build understanding with implementing partners.
A1.2: Schools in respective areas do not support integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities	Likelihood: MED Impact: MED	Anti-bias training for teachers and parents will be organized to strengthen the commitment of majority community to supporting integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in respective schools. Also, cases of ill-treatment will be reported to school authorities.
A2.1: Insufficient support of local authorities with enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in upper secondary schools	Likelihood: LOW Impact: MED	MoUs to be signed with local authorities will anticipate specific support with enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students in upper secondary schools. Also, those issues will be discussed in regular contacts with the local authorities.
2.3. Insufficient commitment of mentors to work with mentees	Likelihood: LOW Impact: HIGH	The action will monitor regularly the work of mentors, and also provide opportunities for exchange of experience and peer learning.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MEST is responsible for implementing the RAE strategy and its role and responsibilities are to oversee the implementation of the action as well as the development and the enforcement of policies that will help alleviate the action execution process.

Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) shall assume overall responsibility for action implementation for all parts of the activities. Its role and responsibilities are organizational issues

related to the implementation of action activities, provision of expertise as requested, and ensure reporting requirements are timely delivered to MEST and EU Office in Kosovo. KFOS will involve up to ten local non-governmental organizations in the action implementation process.

Municipalities will have advisory roles in the implementation process, providing assistance in setting up the learning centers, monitoring the operation of learning centers in cooperation with the action team, making arrangements for taking over the responsibility for operation of the respective learning centers following phasing out of the Action, as well as the provision of expertise as requested.

Coordination arrangements will be made through an Action Steering Committee that will consist of MEST – Chair, EU Office co-chair, KFOS – implementing organization, a member of inter-ministerial steering committee for the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2015, and three community representatives from the benefitting municipalities.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING

The action is proposed to be implemented, through direct grant award, by Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS). This is in line with Articles 128 and 190 (RAP) of the FR. KFOS is positioned uniquely to assume a lead role in implementing this action given its experience with the previous phase of the project (EU SIMRAES phase I, funded by the EU) and similar interventions targeting improvement of education of RAE communities and continuous cooperation with local authorities in Kosovo. KFOS is one of the major partners of the Government of Kosovo in the field of community integration and Civil Society development.

Cooperation between MEST and KFOS goes way back to 2006 when KFOS assisted MEST in drafting its Education Strategy and action plan for integration of RAE communities. Furthermore the cooperation between MEST and KFOS continued through youth summer camp for active citizenry which was organized and implemented in last four years.

In addition, since 1999 KFOS has invested more than €5.0 mil of its own funds and raised more than 2.5 mil Euros from other donors for its work on capacity building and development of RAE CSOs in as well as advocacy and inclusion of RAE children in education through catch up classes, scholarships, support to community/learning centers, promotion of culture and literature in Romani language.

In 2014 MEST in cooperation with KFOS will start drafting the administrative regulations which will set the ground for institutionalization of community/learning centers through setting quality and infrastructural criteria for community/learning centers. In this way MEST will be able to evaluate the work and the results of community/learning centers and bring them closer to Kosovo Education system.

The total budget is 1.45 million EUR. The Government of Kosovo will contribute with 0.12 million EUR, whereas KFOS with 0.03 million EUR.

The implementation duration of the action is expected to be 24 months.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Action Monitoring – In principle the overall progress in the sector and this particular action is monitored through measuring the achievement of indicators at the specific objectives level, see the indicator measurement table below. Furthermore a more action oriented comprehensive monitoring plan will be developed during the Inception Phase to procure timely information by which management can identify and solve implementation problems, and assess progress. The logical framework matrix and the action implementation plan provide the basis for monitoring. Appropriate monitoring instruments will be developed in order to collect in regular intervals information, such as:

- Which activities are underway and what progress has been made?
- At what rate are means being used and cost incurred in relation to progress in implementation?
- Are the desired results being achieved? (efficiency)
- To what extent are these results furthering the action purpose? (effectiveness)
- What changes in the action environment could occur? Do the assumptions hold true?

Implementing partners will be responsible to provide adequate information from their field of activity, whereas the Action management will be responsible to fulfill reporting requirements set by the Contract.

Relevant information will be provided to the MEST Communities Education Division, as input to regular quarterly reports which the Division submits to the respective MEST Department. The Action Steering Committee will also review the progress of the action, at least, every six months.

Action Evaluation – An independent evaluator will be hired based on the ToR approved by the Action Steering Committee, and will be offered all necessary technical and logistical support by the action team.

Following the agreed methodology, the Consultant will produce the evaluation report which will be shared with the Contracting Authority and other action stakeholders.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Description	Baseline (2012)	Last available (2013)	Milestone (2017)	Target (2020)	Source of information
<i>CSP indicator</i> Progress made towards meeting Copenhagen criteria						
SO 1 – Rate of school (pre-school and compulsory) attendance among children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (from eight communities)	Gross Enrolment ⁸ of non-Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in compulsory education is around 100%, whereas Gross Enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Children is 80.4% ⁹ .	19.6%	19.6%	15.7%	11.5%	Learning centers and public school statistics
SO 2 - Rate of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian student in upper secondary education	<i>Gross Enrolment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children in upper secondary education (grades 10-12)</i> ¹⁰	23.2%	23.2%	33.2%	40%	Public school statistics

⁸ Total enrolment in a specific level, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year.

⁹ Calculated from the KAS: Population Census 2011 & MEST: Education Statistics 2012/13

¹⁰ Same as above footnote 10

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

This action will try, to its best abilities, to address the environmental issues mainly in the field of energy efficiency in the community/learning centers and in its considerate use of the school materials.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)

Consultations on developing this Action started during the MEST-sponsored Joint Annual Review for Education Sector which took place in February 2013. MEST progress report for 2012 points out the successful performance of the EU-SIMRAES phase I lead to discussions on the necessity to expand the concept of learning centers and improve access of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to pre-university education. Close consultations were held with Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), Kosova Education Center (KEC) and numerous community-based organizations serving Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo. KFOS will formally partner with up to ten other civil society organizations working on advancing education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo, and include many more such organizations in the informal network.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Equal rights and access to education are of great relevance to achieving gender equality. They are both recognized in the Constitution of Kosovo as well as in the Gender Equality Law. Of particular importance to any school program is that law must provide equal right to education provided for all females and males. An auditing of gender issues in the educational system in Kosovo has shown the content of school textbooks and teaching materials, as well as an audit of women's position in the education system, is gender biased.¹¹

Given all circumstances, the action will work with central and local authorities as well as all providers to ensure both girls and boys have equal access. All supported professional development programs and capacity building efforts will feature the integration of gender. This will improve the awareness of all stakeholders concerning gender issues in education: in particular dimensions such as the role of gender socialisation in re-enforcing gender stereotypes and other forms of gender bias or discrimination, the pattern of differentiated treatment and expectations of boys and girls by teachers, and the need to address the gender insensitive messages contained in teaching and learning materials will be tackled. Self-reflection is a key tool in awareness building regarding gender and one's own practice. A self-assessment checklist for teachers and care providers will be developed to support this important practice.

Also, the action will make efforts to involve as many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian woman as possible in the role of tutors in learning centers and mentors for secondary students.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

The direct beneficiaries of this action are children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities which belong to both categories: minorities and vulnerable groups. The Action will also work with schools serving children from targeted communities. Teachers and parents from schools serving action beneficiaries will be given chance to acquire new competencies for dealing with minority integration issues through participation in anti-bias training.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

There are three action outputs that should be analyzed from the perspective of sustainability:

¹¹ <http://www.kgscenter.org>.

1) Learning centers have already become model for integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Kosovo Education System. They will operate within existing community centers or schools. The programs to be designed and implemented during the life time of the action are their main asset in addition to improved infrastructure, and new or renewed equipment. Also, learning facilitators and peer tutors are an asset, because they will be able to assist children from their communities beyond the life time of the action. One of the key expectations placed on Learning Centers is the increased number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian students attending school, and improvement of their school performance, what would increase their self-confidence to continue schooling. Such an outcome feeds back to sustainability of the action outputs, because those people will inevitably influence and motivate other members of the community to stay within the education system. In course of time, the need for learning centers will decrease, with schools taking over responsibility to provide additional services for students from marginalized groups, and with improvement of living conditions of students from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. However, MEST is already providing support to six learning centers established by EU SIMRAES, and is committed to support similar centers in other parts of Kosovo as required, including centers established with support from this Action.

2) Scholarship Program is expected to increase enrolment of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members in upper secondary education, thus increasing the capacity of the communities to improve their education attainment. Experience shows that scholarship programs improve participation of girls in Education. On the other hand, provision of scholarships for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian secondary students is part of the Governmental Action Plan for implementation of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Integration Strategy and has already materialized, in form of scholarships provided by MEST and municipalities. However, the need is so huge that the Government needs to mobilize significant donor funding to meet the increasing demand.

3) The informal Network of organizations working on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian education will continue to operate beyond the life-time of the action based on a medium-term strategy to be developed within this Action, and may even expand its scope of work. Regular meetings of network members require minimum costs that each member can cover from their own sources, and the same applies to updating the web page of the Network.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action.

The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the implementing partners, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

The EU Office in Kosovo has developed clear visibility guidelines and ensures that all actions which are implemented in Kosovo are fully in line with these guidelines. Action visibility is also clearly stipulated in all contractual documents whereby the contractors/implementers are obliged to adhere to all EU visibility requirements.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the guidelines developed by the EU Office in Kosovo, as well as the provisions outlined in the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External actions.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions. Visibility actions should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the EU Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

The beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectorial monitoring committees.

