

Biennial Programmatic Report (2020-21)

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 is **an independent Serbian-registered organization of civil society**. It is linked with the global ADRA network in two ways. First, the ADRA network ensures ADRA Serbia adheres to the highest professional standards for relief and development organizations. Second, it provides a support base in terms of expertise, consultations and fundraising to ADRA Serbia for its local programs and activities. The global ADRA network has 118 country and regional offices members. 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 **Health (including Mental Health)**, and **Emergency Management**. The subsector of *Women, Girls and Gender* is mainstreamed across all programs. Also, programmatically, regardless of the sector, ADRA utilizes the Comprehensive Support approach, in two senses. First, through pursuing wide partnerships with all willing actors from the public, private and civil sectors. Second, through designing holistic support approaches, from relief, to developmental support, including advocacy, built on a human-rights-based approach. The ongoing strategic investment in resources is in expanding the advocacy-based results in local communities and on the national level.

Expertise utilized in the Comprehensive Support approach (2020-21):

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

ADRA Serbia's team of skilled and competent staff (see the box on the right) design, manage, and implement its programs in line with the ADRA's policies, international standards and donor requests. ADRA's **technical team** includes, among others, social workers and advocates, 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.

Highlights for 2020-21

The outbreak of the Covid-pandemic marked this period. Programs-wise, this resulted in intensifying some activities (related to the homeless), primarily related to health, and adapting others (support to Roma population and refugees/migrants. ADRA established new partnerships in

this period (with SlovakAid, USAID), and continued emphasizing the advocacy component in the areas of homelessness. This report will focus on the reporting period but will be viewing it from the standpoint of multi-year nature of the programs described. This report also presents the expertise ADRA used and further developed in relevant areas.

Results and 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 Roma children population in city of Belgrade, the nation's capital. Roma in Serbia are the largest national minority (experts' estimates there 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 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 2019-2023, **250 Roma children of primary and 50 of secondary school** will have progressed to the next



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



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.

levels of education, increasing 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 different Roma communities, conduct activities and raise awareness on the importance of education. Support to parents entails enrolment into programs for adults in completing their primary education too.

Importantly, in October 2019, 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 and adapted the approach for working with 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 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 grows out of 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. In 2020 and 2021 **110 direct and 360 indirect beneficiaries**



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.

benefited from it. Tailored vocational trainings follow mapping of skills and interest. Some beneficiaries opt for self-employment and receive micro-grants to start a company while others are assisted in getting employed. Experienced business 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 (water, sanitation, health) - 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. In 2020 and 2021, total of **2,005 homeless** were served and **510 regularly**, while the program was adapted to the Covid-19 context.

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



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 and fundraising in the community.

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.

Also, responding to the new “**refugee/migrant**” reality escalating in 2015 but extending beyond it has further developed its know-how (see more under Education and Gender program).

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. One of the foci was preventing gender-based violence and responding to it in a culturally appropriate way, with referrals. Elements of women empowerment are present in the Livelihood component in working with Roma women. In 2020 and 2021 **450 women** directly benefited from the activities. (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 (SlovakAid, USAID, Swiss Development and Cooperation Office in Serbia), UN agencies (UNICEF), local governments (City of Belgrade), had operational partnership with government ministries and departments, and educational and research institutions to deliver development programs to communities throughout the country. It has further invested in communication with local communities through social networks, YouTube channel, media, and domestic crowdfunding platforms (donacije.rs), for building its community of supporters, being accountable to them as well. Private donations saw an increase in contributions from the private sector too (in-kind donations – Skroz dobra pekara, Maxi, Spasimo hranu initiative) and financial (SBB fondacija, IT companies). These collaborations have also been 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.

ADRA has been active participants on different platforms:

- Members of the multisectoral **Coalition against Child Marriages**.
- ADRA has initiated a **Group for Fighting Homelessness**, comprised of 6 civil society organizations, to be turned into official national **Network for Fighting Homelessness**, with multisectoral advisory body.
- ADRA`s membership in the **Working group for Social and Economic Rights** is in the pipeline, within the initiative of the Belgrade Center for Human Rights
- Regular members of the **Child protection Working group** administered by UNICEF.

ADRA has invested in **partnerships with media**. It served ADRA`s plan to be continually accountable to the community, build and expand its multi-sectoral support in the community, inform and educate, fundraise and build its position for successful advocacy efforts. In 2021 only, continual presence in media garnered \$45,000 only of private donations ADRA has not tapped into previously.

These are selections of media coverages in media (cable, national broadcasters, regional – like Al Jazeera, and international outlets, like Associated Press, BBC, and others):

[Homeless Program in media](#), [Floods 2021 in media](#), [Livelihoods in Media](#), [Education in Media](#), [Empowerment of Young Roma](#), [Refugees in media](#), and [Community work in Media](#).

Past Performance (selection)

Donor Award Amount Duration	Project Title	Targeted Areas and No. of Beneficiaries (2020-21)	Project Interventions (2020-21)
SlovakAid/USAID, City of Belgrade ADRA network, private donations	Comprehensive support to Homeless in Belgrade	Belgrade city area, 2005 direct beneficiaries, 4000 indirect (out of	Providing WASH, healthcare, psycho-social, social integration support, with continual community mobilization and advocacy efforts for more

(donacije.rs, etc.) - \$190,000 annually; 2017-ongoing		estimated 10,000 homeless in the area)	comprehensive prevention and adequate response mechanisms to homelessness in Serbia (all adapted to the Covid-19 setting). 2,005 individuals assisted, and 510 regularly, total of 255 individual cases were resolved through advocacy efforts with local authorities.
Swiss Development and Cooperation Office, \$ 50,000 Jan-June 2021	Recovery of flood-affected households in Eastern and Southern Serbia	Pirot, Vlasotince, Dimitrovgrad, Babušnica, 434 direct beneficiaries	180 households dehumidified, 434 individuals assisted, and equipped with essential household items through cash-vouchers, benefiting the local vendors
ADRA International, \$100,000 Nov `19 - Oct `20	School on Wheels	Belgrade city area 155 direct and 300 indirect beneficiaries	155 children from socially vulnerable families (Romani) are continually assisted in education, transit into next level of education, are prepared for the labor market
ADRA International, Latter day Saints Charities, \$90,000, Sep `21 – Aug `22	Responding to the health issues related to Covid-19 in the Western Balkans	Albania, Bulgaria, Serbia, 4800 direct and 15,000 indirect beneficiaries (for the whole implementation period)	Health prevention and health services were made available for 4,800 Roma from substandard settlements in Bulgaria, homeless and Roma in Serbia, and Roma and elderly from remote areas.
UNICEF, ADRA International \$ 497,000 Feb `18 -Dec `21	Women center for refugees	Belgrade region (ADRA Community Center), Bogovada and Šid Asylum Centers, 450 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, 110 direct and 360 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 through focused business mentorship and support

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 refuges- government officers
ADRA Germany \$ 9,000	Christmass Parcels.	Total of 9,100 children from socially vulnerable families assisted through school material.	53 local partners in that many local communities in Serbia distributed

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