



## Romani CRISS

Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies

### Overview of the Romani CRISS activities on the Romani health mediators program

1992 – 2007

Period of time	Short description of important steps
1992 - 1996	<p>The local conflicts between the Roma and non-Roma communities in the period 1990-1997 was a big part of the activity of the Roma Ethnic Federation, and later that of Romani CRISS.</p> <p>The social mediator concept was “imported” from France, from social work organizations. REF and later Romani CRISS, began hiring local mediators in the localities affected by conflicts in the framework of the project <i>“Comprehensive local development in the localities affected by inter- ethnic conflicts: Valenii Lapusului and Mihail Kogalniceanu”</i>, project financed by the Human Rights Award given by the French Government (1991).</p> <p>1992 – seminar for local mediators that took place in Mihail Kogalniceanu, Constanta County</p> <p>1993 – Seminar made by the Project for Ethnic Relations from Targu Mures, Mures county, in March <i>“Training for conflict mediators”</i>. Among the participants there were Roma from Hadareni. They were made aware of the American concept of mediation, mediation between two persons and its techniques. The participants received diplomas for conflict mediators.</p> <p>1995 – training for school mediators in the Roma communities made by Romani CRISS in 30 December (now, 1 December), with the financial support of AIDRom.</p>
1996-1998	<p>In 1996 after a documentation visit from CCFD and Romani CRISS, a project proposal for the European Commission Phare Macro Lien was made, for occupying labour force. This project proposal wasn't approved by Phare, but the French partner maintained its promise to contribute to the programme. A pilot project of the partnership between the 2 organizations.</p> <p>The project had as main objectives the professional training of Romani women with a medium education level from the local Roma communities, that would contribute to improving the communication between the medical authorities and the Roma community.</p>

	<p>In the framework of the project 30 Roma women were included out of which 25 graduated the health mediator classes that could answer the needs of the Roma communities. They received medical caretakers certificates from <i>Equilibre Association</i>, that insured the formation of the mediators.</p>
1999-2000	<p>Romani CRISS unrolled the project "<i>Training of health mediators in the compact Roma communities</i>" financed by CCFD Paris, whose main objective was to improve the medical situation of the Romani communities by actively involving the Roma health mediators as a bridge between the local authorities and the Roma communities. The project was implemented in 5 Roma communities in Romania, meaning Stefanesti - Botosani, Temelia - Bacau, Panciu - Vrancea, Slobozia-lalomita and Sf. Gheorghe-Covasna.</p> <p>In this period of time Romani CRISS try to form, in partnership with health authorities and the Mayor's office, 7 health mediators in the Roma communities who were a part from different Roma groups. The work methodology was working with the local authorities because they wished to actively involve the authorities in solving the problems of little access to health services.</p> <p>The fact that Romani CRISS had a delegate from the Working Group of Roma Association (the body partner for the government in designing the national strategy for the improvement of the situation of Roma) in the Interministerial Sub commission for Roma was very important for this project because it has been mentioned in the strategy</p>
2000-2001	<p>We began elaborating the working methodology and the job description of the health mediator, as well as to institutionalize this job. The meetings and the debates made by Romani CRISS led to the implication of various actors of the society in supporting the institutionalization of the health mediator.</p> <p>In the time of 10-11 September 2001, Romani CRISS with financial support from OSCE/ODIHR made a public hearing concerning the access of Roma to public health services named "<i>Challenge to dialogue; invitation to innovation in the field of Roma health</i>", at the Commission for health and family inside of the Romanian Parliament. To this meeting participated representatives of the local authorities and NGOs (Roma and non-Roma) who analyzed the possibility of making a ministerial commission that could contribute to implementing the strategy for improving Roma situation– HG 430/2001 and debated the role of the health mediator in the Roma communities.</p> <p>On 12 September, as a consequence of the OSCE conference "<i>Making words into facts</i>", the Agreement of cooperation between Romani CRISS, Ministry of Health and Family in Romania and OSCE ODIHR. The document settles the collaboration between the 3 partners concerning the implementation of activities foreseen in the strategy of improving Roma situation (HG 430/2001), in the field of Health.</p> <p>The partnership promoted by Romani CRISS with the Ministry of Health facilitated the implementation of the program of health mediation, as well as the cooperation between the Roma communities and the local institutions of the Ministry. In the same time, Romani CRISS sent an address/letter to the Ministry of Labour through</p>

	<p>which it asked the inclusion of the health mediator job in COR (classification of occupations in Romania). As a consequence of this letter the Ministry of Labour gave its agreement for this solicitude. The job of “<b>health mediator</b>” is included in de base group no. 5139 “workers in service of the people” code 513902.</p> <p>In the period of time 2000-2001, 6 health mediators were hired by the local authorities (city halls and public health authorities) in Slobozia, Botosani, Stefanesti, Bacau, Panciu, Sf. Gheorghe.</p>
2002-2003	<p>In March-October 2002, in accordance with the Agreement signed on 12 October 2001, Romani CRISS trained 84 health mediators (Roma women with an average education level), with the financial support of the CCHD (Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development), who were hired by the Ministry of Public Health through the Public Health Directions, according to the Order 619 from 14 August 2002, Article 1 (It is approved the functioning of the health mediators in health units in Romania, occupation found in the Classification of Occupation in Romania of the Ministry of Labour and Family in Romania, in the code 513902).</p> <p>The Health Department of Romani CRISS drafted “<b>The Guide for the health mediator</b>”. The guide is a working instrument for the Public Health Directions in Romania, as well as for the civic organizations active in the field of access of Roma to health services. This material appeared in the context of the implementation of the project “<i>Public Health Politics for Roma, in an European Context</i>”, financed by OSCE/ODIHR- Point of Contact for Roma and Sinti</p> <p>In January-December 2003, the team coordinating the health program had as main objective, the training of more health mediators, would were after that be hired by the local health authorities, according to the Order 619/2002. Therefore, upon the request of the local health authorities, trainers from Romani CRISS went in every county mentioned trained health mediators, who than became employees of the LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITIESs. In the same time, Romani CRISS offered technical assistance for the local health authorities who encountered problems in implementing the Order given by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry allocated a budget in order to cover the travelling costs of the trainers but not for their fees, being assured by Romani CRISS.</p> <p>That period was marked by a very tight cooperation between Romani CRISS trainers and local leaders of the Roma Party, due to the Agreement signed by the Ministry of Health with the Roma Party, as well as to the recruitment of the candidates for health mediators.</p>
2004-2006	<p>In this period the process of theoretical training of the mediators continued, but we also started to elaborate a monitoring and evaluating methodology of the health mediator’s activity.</p> <p>After analyzing the mediators activity reports, we noticed that they need training in various fields of work such as: obtaining IDs, human rights concept, reproduction health, TB.</p> <p>After analyzing these aspects, the program’s coordinating team identified financial</p>

	<p>resources in order to organize continuous training for the health mediators. In the time between February – October 2004, 3 continuous trainings were made, where we trained 96 mediators in the field of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights concept necessary for the mediators to do their work (what does discrimination means and the role of the CNCD)</li> <li>• Improving the ways of working with the Roma communities.</li> <li>• How to help someone get an ID (birth certificates, ID cards, provisional ID cards).</li> </ul> <p>In the period of October – March 2005 we began monitoring and evaluating the mediators' activity. This was made by studying the activity reports of the mediators and by making field visits.</p> <p>In order to evaluate the health mediators, Romani CRISS made a letter to CCFD where they asked support to make an evaluation report of the Romani CRISS program and of the mediators activity. The final report of this evaluation was ready in 2006 and it was made by COTA Brussels, Maria Maillat was the author. The report was based on the discussions with the Romani CRISS' team members from that time and field visits.</p> <p>In March – June 2005 the Agreement with OSCE/ODIHR and the Ministry of Health was renewed by Romani CRISS.</p> <p>Romani CRISS trained 530 persons as health mediators, out of which 264 are active in the LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES of 39 counties in Romania, according to the Order 619/2002 given by the Ministry of Health.</p>
2006 - 2008	<p>As a follow-up of the evaluation report's recommendations and conclusions, Romani CRISS made another step in developing the program by making the regional centres for supporting and monitoring the mediators' activity. And also by organizing continuous training sessions to emphasize basic human rights concept, ways of obtaining ID cards, as well as improving health mediation working techniques.</p> <p>One training session was tested as a pilot in the field of reproductive rights, women rights and cultural diversity in the Roma communities.</p> <p>We continued forming Roma women as health mediators, their number now being of 475 hired in November 2007.</p> <p>We also began a process of identification and documentation of discrimination cases in what the Roma access to health is concerned, who continues in 2008 by receiving intimations from the regional centres and the local monitors.</p> <p>Publishing a guide about the right to health.</p> <p>Beginning a documentation of a possible maternity segregation.</p> <p>Training local human rights monitors and regional centres in the field of the right to health and gender equality.</p>

	<p>Drafting the Occupational Standard for the Health Mediator which was approved by the National Council of Professional Formation of Adults.</p> <p>Training of evaluators for professional competencies for the health mediator job, in the framework of a partnership with Pro- Vocation.</p> <p>Renewing the cooperation Agreement between the Ministry of Health, OSCE ODIHR and Romani CRISS until 2010.</p> <p>the proposal for modifying the Order 619/2002; the proposal were made by Romani CRISS and the regional centres (the text was negotiated in August 2008 in the ministerial commission and it will be subjected to a public debate).</p> <p>Making a representative research about the Roma access to health in a European regional program. This program is implemented in the framework of an European partnership, coordinated by the FSG, Spain.</p>
--	--

***Note: the ongoing partner of Romani CRISS through all these years is the Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development (CCFD) France***