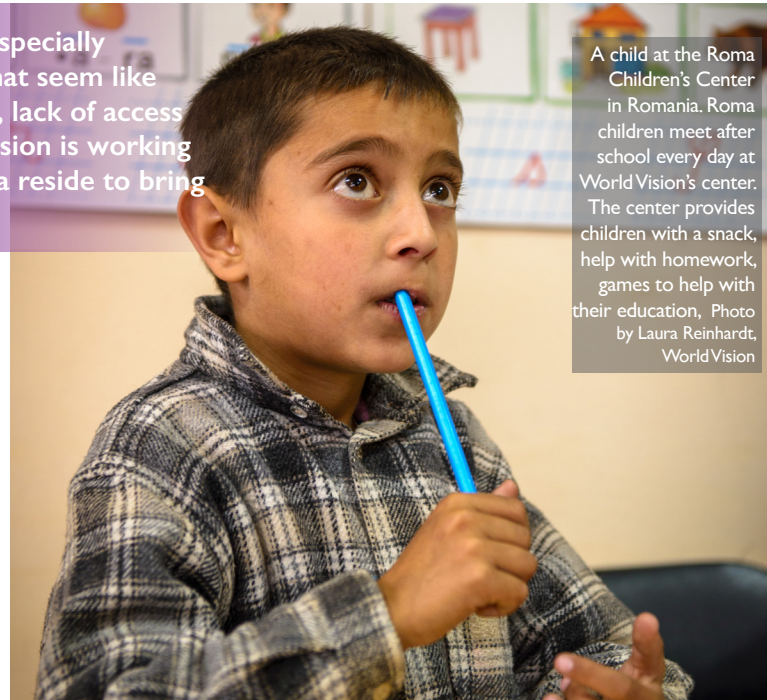


# Opening Doors for Roma Kids



Across Europe, individuals and children especially from the Roma minority are met with what seem like insurmountable obstacles: discrimination, lack of access to services, including education. World Vision is working with leaders in countries where the Roma reside to bring attention to these obstacles.



A child at the Roma Children's Center in Romania. Roma children meet after school every day at World Vision's center. The center provides children with a snack, help with homework, games to help with their education. Photo by Laura Reinhardt, World Vision

## WHAT IS HAPPENING



**Less than half of Roma youth complete primary education in Europe** compared to 97 per cent of non-Roma children. This leaves young people unable to compete in the labour market and perpetuates social exclusion. (Roma Education Fund, 2015-2020)



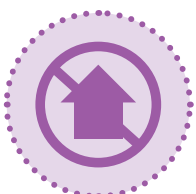
**Discrimination against Roma starts before they are born** due to lack of adequate prenatal and maternal health care. All too often, it will accompany them right through their lives. (Council of Europe, Committee on Equality and Non discrimination, 2013)



**61 per cent of Roma** say they face difficulties in the education of their children, among the obstacles is the cost of books and school items. (Centre for Economic and Social Studies, 2011)



It is estimated that **half of the Roma population in Europe** - 5 or 6 million people-- **is under 18**. This highlights the urgency to break the vicious cycle of discrimination. (UNDP, 2012)



Roma have very low access to basic social services. Some **70 per cent of Roma living in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not have a house**. (Council of Roma of the federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

## WHAT WE DO:

**Partnerships and Networking:** build connections with Roma NGOs, mediators and ministries at a national level responsible for Roma children; encouraging the Roma population to be part of the solution to their concerns.

**Public awareness campaigns:** to influence school retention, prevent HIV and TB transmission as well as encourage proper family planning and health and hygiene procedures.

**Capacity building:** for Roma parents to raise their awareness about the importance of education in their children's development.

**Service provision:** Services such as classes and mobile clinics designed to improve access to education and health.

**Information centers:** to promote the sharing of information and raise awareness of HIV and TB prevention among Roma communities. These centres also support outreach activities.

**Life Skills:** to improve communication, social skills and emotional development through recreational support for Roma children, including sports activities, art sessions and creative clubs.

**Evidence-based solutions:** created to facilitate the development of local level action plans for further promotion of the Roma Rights based on an analysis of the laws that was conducted.

# HELPING ROMA CHILDREN OVERCOME OBSTACLES

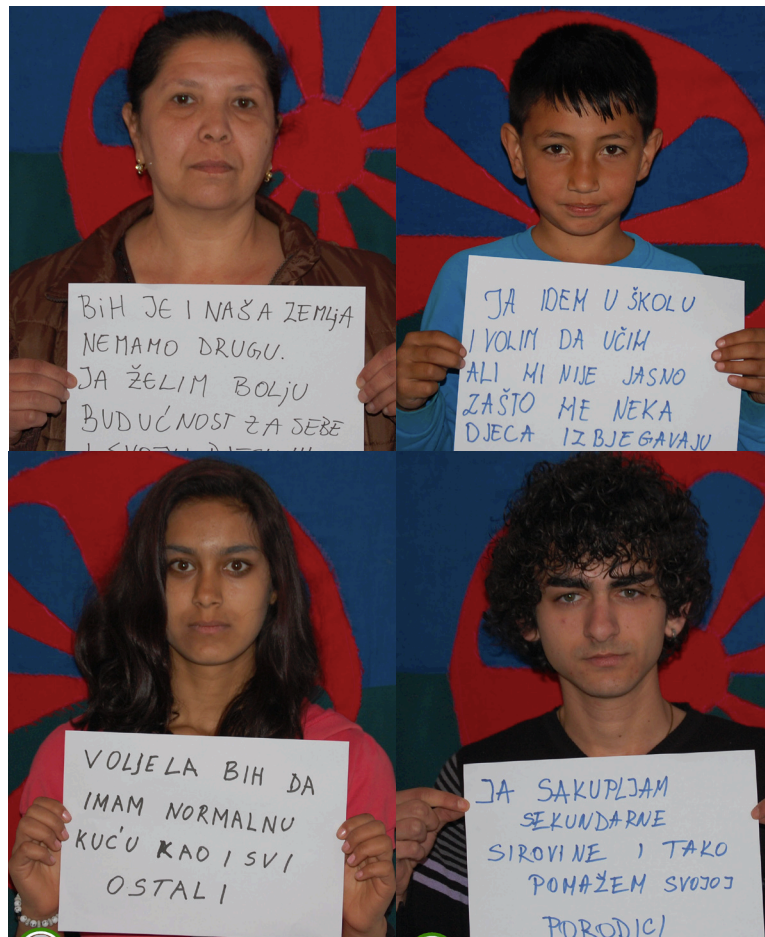
Flamur and Fabio live in Durres, Albania, about a 45-minute drive from the capital city, Tirana. They are brothers who are a part of a community made up of people from Roma and originally Egyptian ethnicities, two groups of people who are ostracized throughout Albanian society.

The boys have a hard time getting into school, finding proper work, and generating an income. Their father has been in jail for several years, and their mother has left them, forcing them to fend for themselves.

To make ends meet, Flamur and Fabio go to the dumpsters in the area and collect garbage daily. They look for plastics and bottles – anything that can be sold as recycling to local factories. Once a week, a garbage collector comes into their suburb with a truck and the local boys and girls bring out the huge bags full of plastic and glass. The operators of this truck pay Flamur and Fabio a minimal fee and then resell the garbage to their clients.

*WorldVision is working within these minority communities and also with the surrounding populations, to help people change misconceptions and prejudices in order to reduce obstacles to education, increase access to services and, in general, provide children with the hope of and access to a brighter future, where their rights are respected and their dreams can come true.*

Flamur and Fabio spend their days searching for recyclable materials in garbage cans in order to provide for their basic needs. Photo by Paul Bettings, World Vision



## THE FACE OF ROMA IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Together with its local partners, World Vision conducted a series of workshops and street campaigns where Roma people, both adults and children, were asked about their lives, their thoughts, their wishes and their dreams.

The answers given were honest and straightforward. These were thoughts of people whose voices are often unheard in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, as Roma minority still remains the most disadvantaged ethnic minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Only one third of Roma children go to school. Many are without health insurance, even ID cards.

World Vision is working with programming, advocacy and local Roma leaders to fight discrimination at every level against the Roma.

Captions for photos above (clockwise, starting top left): 1) *Bosnia and Herzegovina is our country too. We have no other. I want a better future for myself and my children.* 2) *I go to school and I like to study. But I don't understand why some children avoid me.* 3) *I help my family by collecting secondary raw materials.* 4) *I wish I had a normal house like everyone else.*

**World Vision Middle East, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Office**

e-mail: [contact\\_MEERO@wvi.org](mailto:contact_MEERO@wvi.org)  
62 Perikleous Street, 2021, Strovolos, Nicosia Cyprus  
Office: +357-22-870277 Fax: +357-22-870204

World Vision MEERO [WVMEERO](https://www.facebook.com/WVMEERO) [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/wvmeero) [youtube.com/wvmeero](https://www.youtube.com/wvmeero)  
[wvi.org/meero](http://wvi.org/meero)