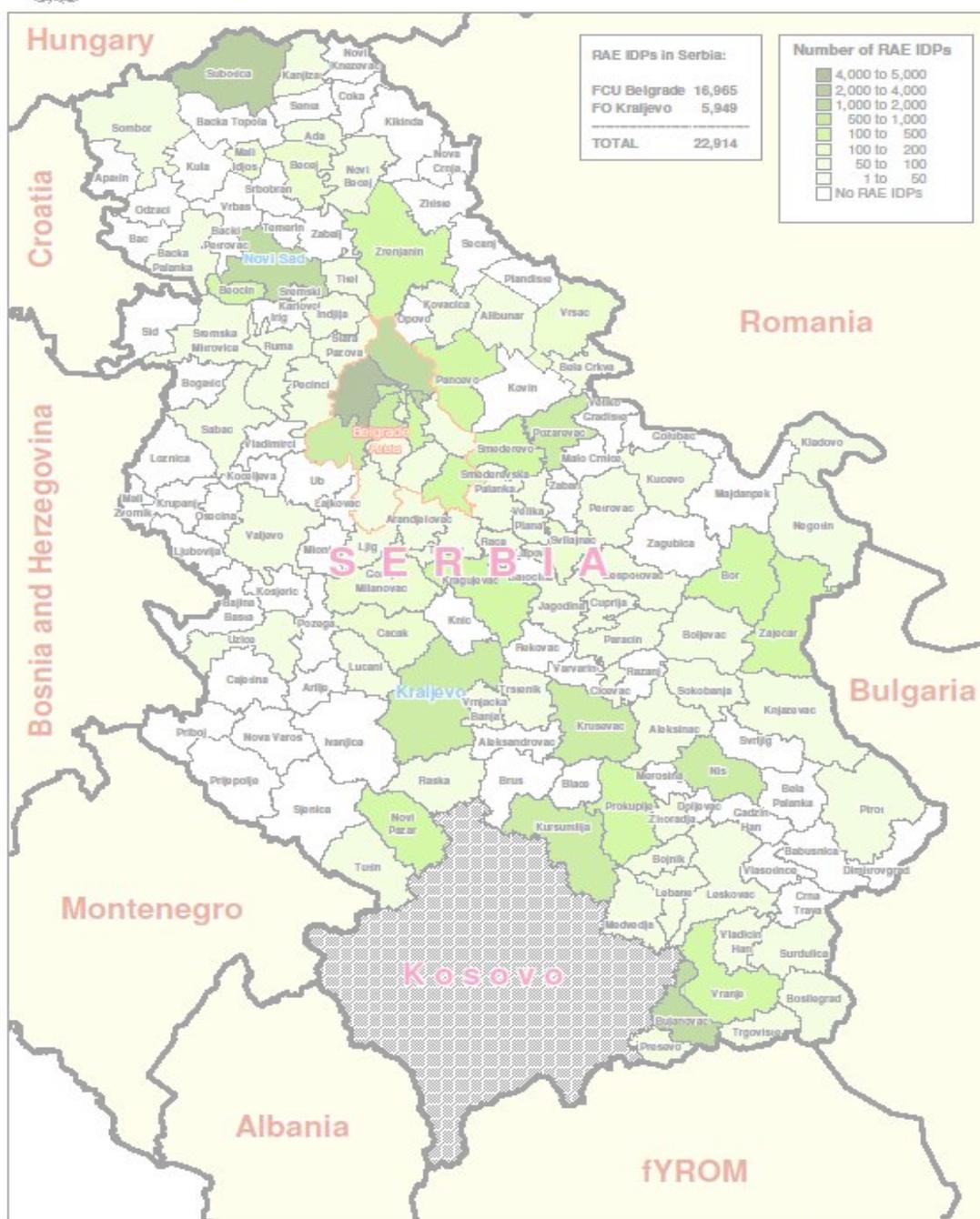




Roma/Ashkali/Egyptian (RAE) IDPs in Serbia (except Kosovo) as of 1st February 2009



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. February 2009, UNHCR Representation in Serbia

ROMA IDP PROFILING - SERBIA
Desk Review Report

Final version – May 2014

1. Preface

The Roma occupy an unenviable place in Serbian society, as the most disadvantaged and marginalized national minority. Key information, which is required to ensure that informed and targeted interventions provide protection, assistance and durable solutions, is severely lacking. While many surveys have been conducted, primarily *IDPs Needs Assessment (2011)*¹, they vary in quality, detail and type of information collected.

At the beginning of 2014 UNHCR Representation in Serbia agreed on the need to collect and analyse Roma IDP-related information, in order to obtain a clearer picture of the situation of Roma IDPs in Serbia with special focus on recommendations for feasible durable solutions to their problems. The profiling exercise is intended as a part of UNHCR's Seeds for Solutions initiative. The basic concept has been agreed to by the Programme and Protection Units.

1. The context of displacement in Serbia

1.1 General background of displacement:

After the NATO intervention in 1999, a large number of non-Albanians left Kosovo and settled in other parts of Serbia. Unilateral independence declared by Kosovo nine years later, did not contribute to the improvement of the situation of IDPs, but further increased uncertainty in terms of finding long-lasting solutions. Today, most of 97,000 IDPs in displacement related needs (as per *IDP Needs Assessment*) live in private accommodation, while 1,016 IDPs are accommodated in 14 collective centres (February 2014).

1.2 Overall Situation of Roma in Serbia:

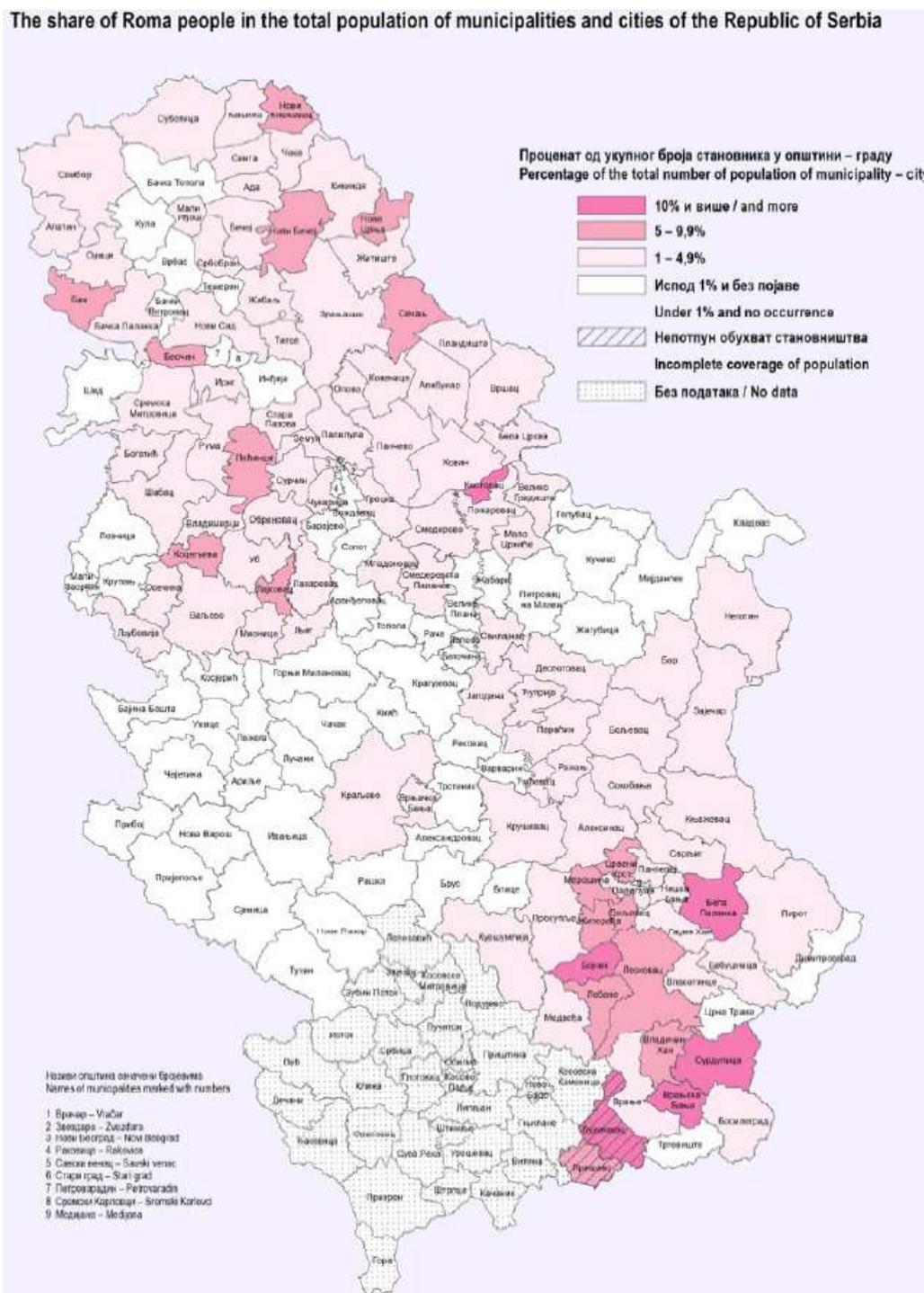
According to the 2011 Population Census there are 147,604 Roma in Serbia, although Roma leaders continue insisting that the numbers are much larger (from 250,000 to 800,000), but are not reflected in the Census due to fear of many Roma of discrimination.

Roma statistics indicate that 93% of Roma are amongst the poorest 40% of the population in Serbia; that 60.5% of the Roma live in extreme poverty; that, if employed, 85% work as skilled labourers and that 19% of Roma are illiterate and 70% are functionally illiterate. Near half of Roma have six or more family members. They also have a low level of education, because only 7% of Roma completed high school or more, while Roma children less attend primary school (67.2%) and drastically less secondary school (16.8%).²

¹ The Republic Statistical Office (RSO) collected data for the UNHCR and the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migrations (SCRM) in the period October - November 2010. The sample included 2,006 households and 8,335 individuals. The aim of the research was to identify the main problems of IDPs, to identify the vulnerable groups among them and to point out the courses of action for improving their position.

² *Roma in Census*, RSO

1.3 Geographic distribution:



1.4 Roma IDPs in Serbia:

Roma IDPs are faced with double discrimination, i.e. on account of their ethnicity and displacement and are probably the last segment of the displaced population that will be able to access durable solutions if left competing with the total displaced population in Serbia. The *IDPs Needs Assessment* indicates that 74% of Roma IDPs in Serbia are with displacement related needs and without a durable solution.

2. Stakeholders

The profiling will be conducted in close cooperation and coordination with other NGOs focused on the implementation of the Roma National Strategy, as well as the survey expert from the University of Belgrade. The exercise planning will also be performed in cooperation with the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS).

3. Available information on targeted populations

UNHCR Serbia, as a first step, agreed on the need to conduct a full desk review of existing data in order to take stock of information already available, to review the gaps that need particular attention and later focus a separate profiling exercise on those areas. The desk review and the actual profiling exercise are thus to be considered as complementary activities.

Relevant surveys and reports have been collected and analysed, enabling mapping out the existing information and identification of gaps. While focus has been given in collecting documents produced in the last three years, a relevant National Strategy produced in 2009 was taken into consideration as well:

2013: *Contribution to Social Inclusion and Combat against Discrimination of Marginalised Population in Serbia*, PRAXIS

[http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Contribution to Social Inclusion and Combat against Discrimination of Marginalised Population in Serbia.pdf](http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Contribution_to_Social_Inclusion_and_Combat_against_Discrimination_of_Marginalised_Population_in_Serbia.pdf)

2013: *Analysis of the Main Problems and Obstacles in Access of Roma to the Rights to Work and Employment*, PRAXIS.

[http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Analysis of the Main Problems and Obstacles in Access of Roma to the Rights to Work and Employment.pdf](http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Analysis_of_the_Main_Problems_and_Obstacles_in_Access_of_Roma_to_the_Rights_to_Work_and_Employment.pdf)

2013: *Access to Social Protection and Health Care for Vulnerable Groups in South Serbia*, PRAXIS

[http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Access to Social Protection and Health Care for Vulnerable Groups in South Serbia.pdf](http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Access_to_Social_Protection_and_Health_Care_for_Vulnerable_Groups_in_South_Serbia.pdf)

2013: *Analysis of the Main Obstacles and Problems in Access of Roma to the Right to Adequate Housing*, PRAXIS

[http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Report right to adequate housing.pdf](http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Report_right_to_adequate_housing.pdf)

2012: *The Health Situation in Roma Communities*, UNDP

http://issuu.com/undp_in_europe_cis/docs/health_web

2011: *Analysis of the Main Problems and Obstacles in Access of Roma in Serbia to the Right to Education*, PRAXIS http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/praxis-analysis-of-the-main-problems-and-obstacles-in-access-of-roma-in-serbia-to-the-right-to-education.pdf

2011: *Analysis of the Main Obstacles and Problems in Access of Roma to Rights to Health and Health Care*, PRAXIS http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/praxis-analysis-of-the-main-obstacles-and-problems-in-access-of-roma-to-rights-to-health-and-health-care.pdf

2011: *IDPs Needs Assessment*, SCRМ/UNHCR http://www.unhcr.rs/media/IDP_Needs_AssessmentENGLISH.pdf

2011: *Access to Rights and Integration of Returnees on the Basis of the Readmission Agreements*, PRAXIS [http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Access to Rights and Integration of Returnees on the Basis of the Readmission Agreements.pdf](http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/Access_to_Rights_and_Integration_of_Returnees_on_the_Basis_of_the_Readmission_Agreements.pdf)

2011: *Analysis of the Main Obstacles and Problems in Access of Roma to the Right to Social Protection*, PRAXIS http://praxis.rs/images/praxis_downloads/praxis-analysis-of-the-main-obstacles-and-problems-in-access-of-roma-to-the-right-to-social-protection.pdf

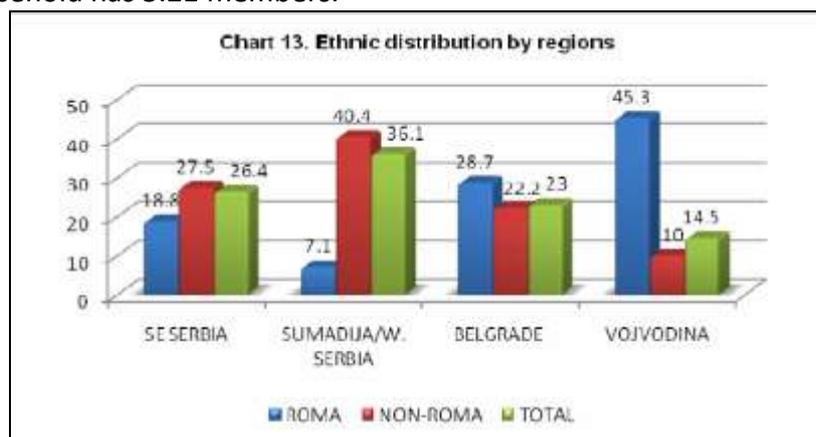
2010: *Serbia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*, UNICEF http://www.childinfo.org/files/MICS4_Serbia_FinalReport_Eng.pdf

2010: *Romi u popisu [Roma in Census]*, RSO <http://media.popis2011.stat.rs/2011/07/Romi-u-popisu.pdf> (Only in Serbian)

2009: *Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia*, Government of Serbia <http://www.inkluzija.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Strategija-EN-web-FINAL.pdf>

3.1 Information about IDPs

Demographic information: According to the SCRМ/UNHCR *IDP Needs Assessment*, there are 97,286 IDPs in displacement related needs. Roma make up 17.1% of households in need, or 16,639 individuals. The ethnic distribution by region shows the different directions of the settlement of Roma IDPs. In Vojvodina, 45.3% of IDPs are Roma, while their number in the most populated region of western Serbia and Sumadija is smallest, amounting to only 7.1%. This may be explained by a greater potential for traditional activities in areas such as Novi Sad, where 27.4% of Roma have settled, Belgrade (28.7%) and Zrenjanin (9.1%). An average Roma IDP household has 5.21 members.



Location and residence information: Serbia has nearly 780 Roma settlements; 170 of these settlements are located in Belgrade. The majority of settlements are clearly inhabited by a mixed caseload: Roma returnees from the EU, Roma IDPs from Kosovo and local Roma. All settlements are easily accessible in terms of security conditions, restrictions and remoteness.

It is important to stress that the majority of Roma settlements is actually a slum (favela), officially classified as an “unhygienic settlement”, without communal infrastructure (roads, running water, sewage, electricity). Living conditions are appalling and below any acceptable standards. Houses are mostly made from cardboard or other non-building materials, like plywood or nylon bags, between the piles of garbage and feces-infested ponds of dirty water.

Displacement patterns: Most IDPs from Kosovo settled in central and southern Serbia, while a small number, mostly Roma, went to Vojvodina. There were several migratory waves. An average IDP household moved three more times after the displacement from Kosovo. The second wave of migration took place mainly from smaller to larger towns. Population movement is a common and often “normal” feature of Roma.

Access to basic services: Information on presence and access to basic services is often available. Information on type of food usually consumed, type of shelter, access to water and sanitation, to education and health services is provided by various surveys, but sometimes on general terms.

Livelihoods and coping mechanisms: Quite general information is available on type of coping mechanisms, similar for almost all Roma: mainly casual labour, petty trade, garbage collection, sometimes begging. Other type of information, such as type and level of expenditures, wealth/poverty indicators, are scarce.

Protection issues: Many available reports from local NGO indicate various protection risks: SGBV, child labour, eviction threats, discrimination against minorities and others, indicating the need for deeper analysis.

4. Information analysis

Analysing available information contributed to clearly point out how complex and diversified the displacement situation is and specifically to identify/visualize main gaps.

4.1 Analysis of gaps in information

- The biggest information gaps relate to the Roma IDPs’ intentions for the durable solutions on the local/municipal level.
- A deeper analysis would be beneficial in terms of understanding which coping mechanisms were put in place by the displaced and if an actual integration has really occurred.

- Lack of information that describes individual, household and community characteristics and circumstances.
- While the *IDPs Needs Assessment* has identified that Roma are more vulnerable than the rest of the displaced, it has not identified the specific protection concerns that the Roma IDPs are faced with in Serbia and their specific needs.
- There are no available data on unemployment rate among the Roma population. The only available data is that of unemployed Roma citizens who are registered with the National Employment Service.
- Limited accurate estimates on the total number of people living in a specific settlement/location, and specifically limited disaggregated estimates on the number of Roma IDPs compared to other vulnerable groups sharing the same location (locals, Roma non-IDPs, returnees from EU).
- Lack of disaggregated data per age and gender.
- Limited information on protection risks and related analysis. Specifically, age/gender/diversity analysis has been quite limited.
- Lack of information on the area where the Roma IDP settlements are located and lack of integrated analysis which could allow understanding the location-related impact on the risk level.
- Limited analysis has been so far conducted trying to understand how protracted Roma IDPs do cope with the situation compared to newly displaced (returnees from EU).
- No specific information was provided on multiple displacement patterns (for example: Kosovo > Serbia > EU > Serbia or several forced evictions within Serbia).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Decision for profiling

The IDP profiling is first of all a protection tool. The primary goal of the profiling is to produce a comprehensive analytical report on the social profile of Roma IDPs in several municipalities in Serbia, disaggregated by age and gender and their locations, as well as a comprehensive overview of their specific protection concerns, needs and possible durable solutions.

The specific objectives are the following:

- Improving the knowledge on the extent and pattern of displacement in Serbia, understanding the different levels and situations of displacement.
- Updating current and establishing new baseline information, crucial for UNHCR's planning and assistance purposes.
- Increasing the scope of available and relevant information.
- Contributing to the design and piloting of durable solutions programmes.

Specifically, the Serbia IDP profiling initiative aims at gaining a better understanding over the following issues:

- Pattern of displacement.
- Main protection risks.
- Living conditions of the Roma IDP community and their interactions with the hosting community.
- Available and feasible options for durable solutions.
- Roma IDPs community dynamics and better targeting of shelter and self-reliance assistance.
- Locally available capacity to protect and assist.

The results of the research will be used for developing and adjusting Government policies on Roma IDPs, as a specific segment of the IDP population in Serbia and as an instrument of advocacy for improving protection and assistance interventions, finding a durable solution for them and tailoring assistance projects to the identified specific needs of this segment of the IDPs.

Due to its marginalized position the Roma IDPs represent the last segment of the IDP population that would benefit from a comprehensive Government program for achieving durable solutions. The results of the Profiling will focus on the specific needs/solutions of the Roma IDPs and will be concretely inserted into the Government plans for developing a durable solutions policy for IDPs. Due to the extremely limited funding capacities of the Government, UNHCR will assist the Government in approaching the international donor community seeking funds for concrete projects benefiting IDPs, whereas the results of the Profiling will provide a basis for projects/programs that are tailored to the specific needs of Roma IDPs which will be used in seeking funding for these needs. The final impact will be a larger focus on the marginalized Roma IDPs and concrete durable solutions for them.

5.2 Profiling methodology

The exercise will take approximately 6 months (June 2014 – November 2014), subject to coordination and operational delays. The Profiling should be conducted on a representative sample of 800 Roma IDPs throughout Serbia (without Kosovo) at the household and individual levels and on representative sample of 400 local Roma (control group). The data will be collected in face to face interviews in 10 municipalities/towns throughout Serbia that have high concentration of Roma IDPs population: Beograd, Novi Sad, Subotica, Zrenjanin, Pozarevac, Bor, Kraljevo, Novi Pazar, Prokuplje and Vranje. Roma interviewers will be included in the interviewing process and a system of control will be established. The data on local Roma will be collected in the same 3-5 municipalities/towns.

The profiling should be complemented by 6 focus group discussions conducted in 3 cities with different levels of economic development and structure of economy and different cultural backgrounds. Three FGDs will be organized with local Roma IDPs and 3 with 'old settled' local Roma.

During the field profiling exercise, specific attention will be given in gathering as accurate as possible data on IDPs, disaggregated per age and gender. At the same time, an important conclusion of the discussion within UNHCR Serbia is that the Roma IDP profiling needs to go beyond counting, beyond numbers, trying to tackle and analyse Roma IDP existing vulnerabilities and future intentions, which will be targeted by survey instrument and enriched through focus group discussions.

The profiling should help to understand, amongst other, which are the main protection risks Roma IDPs face, which groups (age/gender/diversity) are more exposed/vulnerable, what are their existing coping mechanisms and what are their options and wishes for the longer-term durable solution. In doing so, the profiling will avoid general considerations and will go deeper into the root causes of their vulnerabilities.

The level of access is the main element in any assessment. It goes beyond the physical access, it means gaining enough trust and confidence enabling discussion on a deeper level. The amount of mistrust and fear associated with any form of registration among the Roma population should not be underestimated. The entry point to any settlement is represented by persons who have already established good relations with the Roma IDP community, usually because they are already working inside the settlements, they are respected and have established a certain level of trust. For that purpose, UNHCR will engage Romani-speaking surveyors. In addition, it will facilitate gathering of information from Roma who don't speak Serbian.

Relevant data will be collected by using standardized questionnaire containing dimensions and indicators needed for valid conclusions about the problem under concern. In preparation of the questionnaire previous researches on this topic should be taken into account. The final version of the questionnaire has to be produced in close cooperation with UNHCR and external experts. Besides that, a FGD guide will be used to organize discussions with Roma IDP families and other Roma families on their coping mechanisms.

The analytical report should achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the social profile of Roma IDPs.
2. To identify their needs and protection concerns.
3. To establish the multi-dimensionality of their problems and needs and specific combinations of exclusion factors.
4. Focusing on 10 municipalities/cities densely populated with Roma IDPs, UNHCR may obtain detailed information which will help develop specific solutions in cooperation with NGOs and Roma experts/representatives, thus ensuring participatory approach.
5. To specify the courses of action for improving their position through sustainable durable solutions tailored to their tradition and needs. It will help UNHCR and its Partners to develop/pilot solutions which can serve as examples of best practice for the Government and development actors, based on its experience with refugees and IDPs.