

Societal change by bringing people together - the proposals of Bagazs on a local Roma strategy

Summary and dissemination of the *Different Bag* project
2021.



Introduction	3
About the 'Different Bag' project	3
Problem analysis	4
The approach of Bagazs	10
Possible answers and solutions	11
About Bag	15
Bag - stakeholder analysis	16
'Fáklya Group' - the voice of the Roma in the settlement	18
Actions and achievements of the Fáklya Group during the 'Different Bag' project	19
Summary of the project and the future of the Fáklya Group	22

Introduction

BAGáz's Public Benefit Association was founded in January 2011 by 13 volunteers. Our aim was to support the people living in the local Roma settlement in Bag to avoid the typical forced path. In 2017, we also launched our development programmes in the settlement of Dány.

Our programme structure is adapted to local needs and requirements, and in line with a holistic approach, we offer individual support for those committed to change and development, in addition to group and community programmes. Our work is based not on donations, which perpetuate dependency, but on giving people the chance to change.

Over the past ten years, we have gained a lot of experience not only in how to help and motivate people living in the settlement, but also in how to make community members believe that they can make a difference.

The following document contains a summary of the project Civic Europe - A different Bag, implemented in 2021: after a short project summary, a general exploration of the problem and the solutions and methodologies proposed by Bagáz's, a presentation of the local specificities of the town of Bag, an analysis of the stakeholders, and the methodology and project results of the local advocacy group, the so-called 'Fáklya Group', set up in the last year.

About the 'Different Bag' project

The aim of our projects was to bring together locals with different backgrounds, who would work in groups towards common goals (such as crime and littering), and create a long-term local Roma strategy, leading the village towards an inclusive, democratic, active community.

The location of our project is Bag, a large village located 40 km from Budapest with 4000 inhabitants, out of which 400 are Roma, living at a segregated neighbourhood.

The social tension between the minority and the majority in the village has become more and more acute over the years. The peaceful coexistence that took place earlier has been increasingly overturned since 2000, due to growing social differences: while the majority population of Bag is a highly traditional, religious community, the designer drugs have appeared in the already poor settlement, leading to increasing crime, tension, and brought more conflicts and even more growing poverty.

Our project reflected on this societal challenge by bringing together locals with very different backgrounds and working together towards common goals.

The expected results of "A different Bag" project were diversified. Months before starting the project, Roma and non-Roma locals identified together three topics to address: crime and drug usage, public waste, and stray dogs. During the program, we set up working groups (which included all stakeholders: Roma, non-Roma and Bagazs staff) for these three projects. On the other, these three selected projects were meant to be a tool for learning more about each other, developing intercultural communication channels and for capacity building.

The main goal of the program was not only to implement these projects within 1 year, but to jointly develop a local Roma strategy - together with the local government, the care system (ie the village itself) and the local Roma and non-Roma inhabitants.

Unfortunately, this strategy has not been finalized within the project period. Even though we have been working together with the local government municipality over the last year, our cooperation proved to be slower and heavier than anticipated.

The conclusions and results of these conversations however helped us to outline the first draft of this document - which still requires some adjustment to ensure its acceptable for all parties, absolutely including habitants of the settlement.

At the beginning of the project period, the municipality of Bag has already had a Local Equal Opportunities Program document in place, which we (the team of Bagazs) have started to renew with our data and to comment on possible ways of improvement. Despite our regular and very frequent meetings and workshops, we found that the village and the local government is still having an approach where they believe the Roma strategy should focus on changing Roma people - while our focus is more on making the environment more inclusive.

We recognized that to be on the same page and to be able to create a strategy on common ground will require some more time.

Therefore, sadly, we were not able to move forward with finalizing the documentation and the implementation - so in this document, we present the results of this specific project, as well as the analysis of the situation and the proposals (possible solutions, methodology) of the team of Bagazs.

The most significant change of our year-long project is that all the stakeholders are now recognizing that these problems are complex and require cooperation to be mitigated. Although not all stakeholders have the same resources, information and motivation to do so, we are confident that anyone can contribute to the desired change - but we also see that no one can alone change long-existing and complex societal problems, therefore we need to join forces.

Problem analysis

Like in the other slums, the people living in the settlements of Bag and Dány are hampered in their progress by a network of social problems. These obstacles, according to well-established social science research data, include low educational attainment, low employment in the open labour market since the change of regime, irregular casual employment, public employment and the resulting unpredictable income situation, debts, early childbearing, poor health, severe housing problems and spatial inequalities.

These problems are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing, pointing to deeper crises that ultimately lead to the complete "dislocation" and exclusion of the people living there. The 'symptoms' of each crisis manifest themselves in very different ways in the lives of individuals and families. Given the volume and depth of the problems, real solutions that are visible to the

outside observer often take a long time to find, which is understandable given that many of the problems go back decades.

While it is worth thinking about each problem at different levels, the problems at different levels are obviously interrelated:

- At the level of the **INDIVIDUAL**: gaps in attitudes, skills and knowledge.
- At the **FAMILY** level: dysfunctions in the family system that affect the individual's potential. Theories such as transgenerational trauma theory can provide a framework for understanding dysfunctions, such as stressors in family life, parenting patterns, or the recognition and understanding of family communication.
- At the level of the **COMMUNITY**: characteristics linked to physical, cultural and social segregation and exclusion that hinder the development of the individual and the family or even their integration.
- From the point of view of **STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY**: the problems arising from prejudice and exclusion of the Roma as a social group living in the settlement. The latter include both ethnicity (Roma) and living in the settlement (geographical discrimination) and, in the case of women, multiple or intersectional disadvantages.

Structural inequalities are worth looking at from several angles:

- **LOCAL (MEZZO)**: local inequalities, which are reflected both in the attitudes of the community (how exclusionary the local non-Roma community is) and in the local institutions (school, doctor, police, municipality, etc.). Although segregations are also largely ethnic/cultural boundary markers, making cultural integration or coexistence more difficult, the manifestation of inequalities can vary greatly from one settlement to another. Examples include the different approaches to local taxes or subsidies (equality or equity), the issue of inequalities in schools, but there may also be local variations in whether the police go to the scene when a Roma person reports an incident, how child protection rules are handled (whether Roma children are removed from their family unduly or the contrary whether no real action and measures are taken).
- **NATIONAL (MACRO)**: inequalities resulting from welfare systems, which also affect the Roma group living in settlements. These problems are not only a barrier for Roma in some places, but fundamentally for all disadvantaged people (e.g. legislation that ultimately reinforces exclusion/segregation, e.g. free school choice, redistribution in favour of the middle class, etc.).

The question that rightly arises from the above is: if in most cases the barriers are co-existing and exclusion seems inevitable, what is an effective and efficient way to intervene? We believe that trying to do everything at once: a systemic and holistic approach to tackling individual problems, to support individual help in a multifaceted and multi-dimensional way, requires first of all involving the family, and then building up in a circular way, the systems around the family, from the small community to the local level, to the macro level, to facilitate change.

An example of what happens when someone wants to leave the settlement may illustrate the above. What aspects are worth considering in terms of options. If a family/individual decides to move out, it must also leave behind a supportive environment, as it is clear that the settlement as a community harbours not only disadvantages but also many supportive forces and resources. The question is whether he can and wants to stay in the village. What is the attitude of the municipality towards Roma moving from the settlement to the village? If they move to another settlement, will they take them in, sell them or rent them a house or a flat? Are there jobs available in the vicinity of affordable apartments or houses? Is there a chance that he/she will be able to benefit from some of the support provided by the state (e.g. tax credits)?

Based on the above, we have tried to collect an inventory of problems related to the different levels and to add an interpretative, explanatory framework which, according to our experience, may appear in the case of a particular Roma settlement.

	Social characteristics: problems/"symptoms" visible to the majority of society	Reasons and explanations behind symptoms - require long-term action
Individual side	<p>children with behavioural and school problems - poor academic results</p> <p>frequent illnesses, poor health - many certified absences</p> <p>early school leaving/low educational attainment</p> <p>school absences - unjustified absences</p> <p>unemployment, rapid job attrition</p> <p>low/insecure income</p> <p>criminal/offending lifestyle</p> <p>communication difficulties</p> <p>addiction</p> <p>missing documents, unresolved official business</p> <p>debt accumulation</p> <p>having children at a young age</p> <p>difficulties in starting independent living</p>	<p><u>Competences</u></p> <p>Low self-esteem, lack of confidence, communication difficulties, mobility difficulties, conflict management problems, lack of empathy, work-socialisation problems, lack of parenting skills, money management difficulties, lack of financial awareness, difficulties in expressing emotions, lack of ability of delayed gratification</p> <p><u>Knowledge/patterns/standards/habits</u></p> <p>Lack of knowledge of generally accepted patterns and habits (in schools, offices, workplaces)</p> <p>functional or digital illiteracy</p> <p>lack of knowledge of the administrative process (benefits, services, etc.), difficulties in understanding and interpretation</p> <p>one-way relationships, lack of integration, lack of inclusion</p> <p>low awareness - family planning, money management, future planning, sustainability</p>
Family/community side	<p>Properties/houses in bad condition,, common waste in the yard</p> <p>Problems with utilities Disconnected or missing utilities,</p> <p>Illegal use of public utilities</p> <p>low levels of conscious animal/pet keeping,</p> <p>Unsettled property relations</p> <p>Fights in the streets,</p>	<p><u>Norms, habits</u></p> <p>intergenerational low educational attainment and limited perception of the world,</p> <p>domestic abuse (verbal, physical)</p> <p>Transgenerational communication and attachment patterns across families.</p> <p>Patterns of "learned helplessness" resulting from community isolation</p> <p>Closed ethnic and cultural system, Hungarian language learned late</p>

	<p>frequent crimes (burglaries, thefts), litter, illegal dumping, stray dogs on the streets, drug dealers and users, unpaved road, lack of street lighting, abandoned, damaged, dilapidated empty properties, dilapidated houses</p>	<p>Multiple disadvantages (ethnic, women, disabled, etc.)</p>
<p>The Local Institutional System</p>	<p>Emergence of theft, robbery, vandalism in the village More Roma children in school - more and more non-Roma are choosing other school for their children School fights, aggression, frequent absences Drug and alcohol users appear in the village</p>	<p><u>Inequalities in access to local services:</u> Direct or indirect discrimination or segregation in schools Lack of infrastructure locally (e.g. lack of specialists, development, geographical distance, etc.) They do not provide the same rights and services to the settlement as in the rest of the village (e.g. infrastructure)</p> <p><u>Institutional inertia and inconsistency (Knowledge/patterns/norms/habits)</u> Infringements without consequences: the office/police/authorities do not act or act with delay (illegal dumping, burning of rubbish, stray dogs, vandalism, domestic abuse, school absence, criminal offences, child neglect, etc.), Kindergarten teachers and educators feel helpless and powerless. Hectic and unpredictable debt collection The local institutional system does not recognise the benefits of Roma culture, which they see as a handicap and a barrier</p>

<p>The public/ macro level</p>	<p>Human services (mental health, early development, drug prevention, rehabilitation), housing subsidies, tax benefits, credit subsidies are unavailable to Roma living in the settlement (since, for example, public employment is not considered a social security status).</p>	<p>Territorial and social inequalities in access to services</p> <p>Inequalities in schools - increasing school segregation in small Roma settlements</p> <p>Lack of inclusive education</p> <p>Settlement bias in the distribution of services (territorial inequalities in the labour market and the lack of support for related mobility)</p> <p>Enforcement procedures, borrowing and lending without unrealistic collateral checks - creating a debt spiral</p> <p>No help to end the debt spiral - debts are growing.</p> <p>The perverse redistribution - supporting the middle class with tax policies, family support.</p>
<p>The social attitude</p>	<p>Roma living in the settlement are not welcome in village programmes (they don't even go, they are not a target group)</p> <p>discriminating, non-accepting attitude (I had to work for it, when he proves himself..., it's not going to work out anyway... etc.)</p>	<p><u>Attitudes of the local community, population and local care workers:</u></p> <p>They are not familiar with the living conditions and problems of the people living in the settlement</p> <p>Local care workers, the majority in the village, blame the people living in the settlement, while they think they are trying to help them</p> <p>In inclusive education, Roma inclusion has no value. Lots of anger and resentment about local Roma</p> <p>They have unrealistic expectations that are aligned with majority norms, transgenerational patterns, research on Roma is not known to them</p> <p><u>National/Social</u></p> <p>Racism, gypsyism is accepted in Hungary, but a supportive, inclusive attitude is not common.</p> <p>people in the majority are often unaware that they are in a privileged position and that having certain opportunities is so fundamental to them that they do not even consider that others do not have access to them. Accordingly, they often have unrealistic expectations.</p>

The approach of Bagazs

As can be seen from the previous table, the problems in segregated settlements are manifold. Before presenting the responses to these in more detail in a following table, it is worth briefly outlining the approach that frames the work of the BAGázcs in support of local settlements.

We believe that through our locally-driven, layered programmes

- Firstly, we provide "symptomatic treatment" - focusing on problems that, if solved quickly, will help the individual, family or community to close the social gap in the short term
- on the other hand, we support the empowerment of people living in the settlement to change at individual, family and settlement level,
- We are working to make the local non-Roma village community (including those working in the institutions) aware that without their action and change, harmonious coexistence cannot be achieved
- In areas where we cannot act at local level, we try to make the problems heard

It also follows from the above that multi-level action is essential, and that it is not enough to address just one segment of the problem, such as education, housing, crime or the labour market, nor is it enough to tackle the problem at the level of the individual, the family, the community or the wider environment.

To achieve real Roma inclusion, we focus on the following areas:

- Individual reinforcements: self-confidence, goals, vision, motivation, parenting skills, community activism, awareness raising (in child-rearing, career choices, etc.).
- Educational programmes: from pre-school to adult education, children's development, strengthening basic skills, tutoring, support for home learning, personalised assessment and access to and completion of personalised development, access to appropriate educational institutions. Supporting educational institutions to ensure that children living in settlements also have access to quality education.
- Public safety and crime prevention: reducing re-offending, tackling systemic failures in child protection, police procedures or any institution in contact with the residents of the settlement.
- Labour market integration: getting more people into the open labour market and earning more.
- Improving housing conditions in a sustainable way: reducing debts, managing home ownership issues, legalising water, sewerage and electricity, reducing the amount of rubbish and stray dogs on the streets, making street lighting available.
- To highlight local anomalies affecting the Roma community and make proposals to ensure that people living in settlements have equal access to quality education, labour market, public safety and legal security.
- Empowering the majority community through the involvement of volunteers.

Possible answers and solutions

	<p>Social characteristics: addressing problems/"symptoms" visible to the majority of society Tangible "quick fixes"</p>	<p>Reasons and explanations behind symptoms - require long-term action</p>
<p>Programmes directly supporting the empowerment of the individual</p>	<p><u>Subsidies (services or financial support)</u> driving licence, OKJ training, job search (writing CVs, applying for jobs, commuting expenses) legal assistance support for drug rehabilitation processes <u>Assisting with official business</u> (e.g. replacing documents, utilities, credit settlement, property settlement, job search) Supporting processes related to expert investigations Investigate specific needs, identify development needs.</p>	<p><u>Mentoring adults: empowering the individual</u> - identifying and understanding the problem - developing soft skills (directly and indirectly) - trust, positive feedback, affirmation, listening and listening, conflict management, communication skills, awareness raising (family, financial, environment, etc.) - For parents, parental competence: fulfilling school obligations (parenting, contact with teachers, encouraging children to learn, etc.), working with children at home (playing together, learning), strengthening school relations - Demonstration of common accepted habits/patterns, showing new patterns e.g. through personal example, attitude building, group programmes, excursions, integrated programmes, camps <u>Developing children</u> in the home environment, reinforcing basic skills, promoting school success, encouraging children and parents to attend school regularly, promoting healthy lifestyles, disease prevention, supporting further education - through admission preparation, developing digital competences <u>Opening up to the world:</u> study trips, reward trips <u>Adult education/tutoring</u> Road safety training, adult education training</p>

<p>Family/community explanations, reasons</p>	<p>Legal help to settle property ownership Support for utility installation - with co-payment Shared care of the environment of the settlement - organising community programmes, strengthening local activities (installing a camera system, installing street lighting, collecting rubbish and reporting illegal dumping) spaying and neutering of dogs, rehoming of stray dogs, reports of criminal offences drug-related actions</p>	<p><u>We work with people on the settlement on a family basis:</u> Involving as many family members as possible in the programmes (mentor for parents, development volunteer for children, involving them in community activities, etc.) Families are also supported by a family coordinator and individual volunteers to address family dynamics and patterns. Strengthening communication between family members Consulting parents in children's programmes, involving them in development peace, Support for joint family trips and activities <u>Contemporary groups - community building:</u> The community can stand up for their interests if they face difficulties as a group, which is why we are working to strengthen community programmes for all ages. homogenous groups where belonging to the local community and collective action can be strengthened and emphasised: power group, girls' club, local activist group reinforcing integrated programmes, so as not to work in isolation with children and adults living on the settlement (specialised clubs, training, preference for integrated workplaces) and thus also to promote inclusion and the acquisition of common standards</p>
<p>Reasons arising from the characteristics of the local institutional system</p>	<p>Regular consultations with the local government and members of the local care system</p>	<p><u>empowering and strengthening local institutions</u> Strengthening long-term cooperation with local institutions and their staff Mapping and understanding local needs, and providing programmes that respond to local needs Involvement of local institutions' staff in programmes implemented in the settlement - discussion of background causes and problems so that solutions can respond to local specificities Supporting joint actions, strengthening the child welfare system, taking on a role as a member of the so-called signalling system If necessary, reporting of child endangerment and solutions to eliminate it Providing extra resources to the local care system (providing intensive family support where needed, bringing in extra costs to deal with local issues) Strengthening the link between people and institutions Feedback on possible negative practices and proposals to eliminate them Regular communication of our programmes to the local community</p>

		<u>Legal Clinic programme:</u> raising awareness of national but also local anomalies, presenting cases
Public/macro reasons		External communication, <u>sounding out systemic problems</u> cooperation with Roma and Roma-led organisations to raise awareness of a systemic problem at national level, occasionally organising professional conferences, taking on expert tasks, etc. Drawing attention to the fact that certain rules fundamentally affect people living in settlements (housing support programs, debt settlement, free choice of school, low budgets for education policy, social policy, lack of access to appropriate development, etc.) Litigation against offending system failures (e.g. child protection cases)
Explanations and reasons for social attitudes		<u>raising awareness at social level</u> Involving volunteers in as many roles as possible - to make more people from the majority society aware of existing inequalities and measures that reinforce disadvantage Corporate relations - not just fundraising, but information sharing, sensitisation, raising awareness of privileged position, etc. Volunteer involvement and awareness raising In external communication, raising awareness of the multi-level nature of the problem. Continue teaching at universities, offering classes and traineeships. <u>Reducing prejudice at local level:</u> Collaboration, discussions, presenting the background to problems, giving feedback. All our programmes involve liaising with the institutions linked to the programme, partly to identify institutional anomalies and find solutions to correct them, and partly to reduce existing prejudices.

In the framework of systemic development work, we work simultaneously with all the actors of the so-called "family system" and we also work with local actors who have an impact on this family level or on the individual.

The parts of the system:

- **Adults**

In their case, the aim of the individual work is to increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, to set goals and to be able to take steps to achieve them. The goal should be based on personal needs and wants: a job, debt management, legal housing, even the addictions treatment where appropriate.

If the adult has a child, we also support the adult in their role as a parent, so that they can help their child to learn, if necessary, to become more aware of their child's performance and the importance of their relationship with the school. We also support parents whose child has been removed from the family: to keep in touch with their child and, in the long term, even to become capable of bringing up their child in a family.

- **Children**

In their case, the aim is to develop their cognitive and social skills, their self-esteem and to support their institutional (pre-school, school) integration, participation and academic performance.

- **Members of the local care system**

Teachers, members of the child protection services, child protection nurses, nursery school teachers, teachers working in schools, local authority representatives and staff, police officers. Our aim is to better understand their role and help them to get a better understanding of the children and adults living in the settlement, their problems and its root causes. To reduce any prejudices and discrimination that may arise and to support them as experts in achieving their goals. At the same time, we consider it important to motivate them to work with children and adults on the settlement and to cooperate with us, to find the place of each professional in the system and to support them in working more effectively and cooperatively.

The aim of the Association is to help the people living in the settlement to access the appropriate and necessary services available in the public care system. On the other hand, to provide the staff of the institutions with a multi-faceted education through which prejudice can be reduced.

There are barriers that do not arise from the prejudices of those working in the institutions, but from structural problems, decisions at state level, legislation, or typically from redistribution in favour of the middle class. These are outside the Association's remit, and the Association considers it its task to highlight these problems.

We are trying to encourage institutions to recognise that a significant number of people living in settlements need extra support to access the services they are entitled to, because of their particular difficulties, and in some cases they require special services, fair treatment and special attention.

Equally important in working with the institutions is the need to prepare and empower the "other side", i.e. the people living in the settlement, to meet the institutions' stated and unspoken expectations. This is based on ongoing discussions and consultations with the institutions, and on individual, family and group work with the people living in the settlement to bring about the desired change.

Supporting participants scheme

Working with individuals, families, the community and local institutions is ensured through a complex support system.

Who are the actors working with each of the actors in the local system?

- Volunteers (mentors, patrons, etc.) who typically work with individuals, adults or children
- Staff members who coordinate volunteers in a program (program coordinator), work with the families they are matched with (family coordinator) and collaborate with members of the care system Staff work in close collaboration.

About Bag

The village of Bag, with a population of nearly 4 000, is located 40 km from Budapest. The majority of the Roma minority of about 350 people live on the outskirts of the settlement. The built road ends at the border of the settlement and there is no street lighting. A quarter of the houses have no running water, half of the households have an electricity meter, and only every second house has a bathroom. Most of the 60 or so houses in the settlement are in a poor state, with unplastered houses with no fences, crumbling roofs and unlocked doors and windows. There are usually several generations living in the same family, with grandparents living with their children, grandchildren or even extended family. Girls and women have children at a young age: 21 on average, but half of the people living in the settlement become mothers before they reach adulthood. Although every second adult in the settlement works regularly, many live in income poverty, some in extreme poverty, mainly because of the high number of children (on average 4 children, so almost half of the settlement's residents are under 17). As a result, families have accumulated significant debts (mainly to utility companies, but also a high proportion of bank loans), some of which are being repaid. Early school leaving and school drop-out are common, with half of the people living in the settlement having only completed primary school. In 2017, someone graduated from the settlement for the first time. The average life expectancy is far below the national average due to unhealthy nutrition and poor infrastructure and physical environment, with only 5 people of retirement age out of the 350. Like the segregated settlements in extreme poverty, the settlement in Bag has a high crime rate (nearly a quarter of them said they had committed a crime in their lives) and a high rate of illegal substance use.

The digital competences are much lower than those of the majority society. They can mostly use Facebook, but even there some functions, such as creating a group post or posting an ad, can be a problem for many. The phone is usually their only smart device, internet access is limited, and only a few families have unlimited data.

Bag - stakeholder analysis

(part of a background study prepared to complement the Bag Local Equal Opportunities Programme)

- Concepts

Stakeholder: - from an organisation's perspective: any individual or group that influences or is/may be affected by the organisation's achievement of its objectives, i.e. (*AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard-2015*)

Stakeholder: a person or organisation that can influence, is influenced by, or feels influenced by a decision or activity (*ISO EN 14001:2015 Environmental management systems. Requirements with guidance for application*)

Stakeholder engagement: an activity undertaken to create an opportunity for dialogue between an organisation and one or more stakeholders with a view to informing the organisation's decisions. (*ISO 26000 Guide to Corporate Social Responsibility*).

- Stakeholder analysis of the local equal opportunities programme of the municipality of Bag

The stakeholder analysis is analysed from the perspective of the interests and influences of different organisations and individuals on the Local Equal Opportunities Programme (LEOP), the appropriate design and modification of the LEOP and the effective implementation of the measures contained therein.

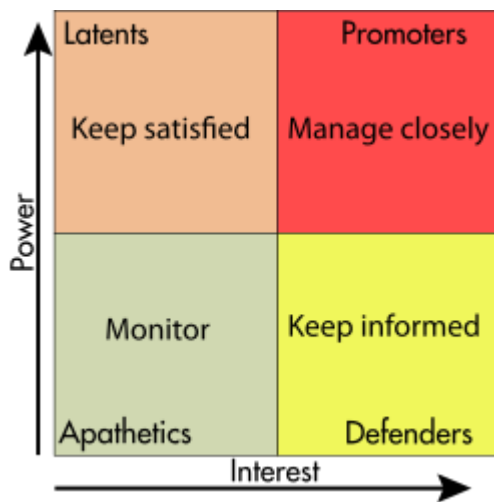
Stakeholder analysis can take several dimensions, and the success and effectiveness of the LEOP can be facilitated by involving stakeholders in its design and operation, which can both provide some of the resources needed to implement the measures and also have a positive impact on the motivation of stakeholders at the appropriate stage of the process.

Investigation dimensions:

- the interest of stakeholders in the proper design and operation of the LEOP and the implementation of the measures formulated
- the influence and power of stakeholders to ensure that the LEOP is properly designed and implemented effectively

- stakeholders' motivations
- how to involve stakeholders (existing and future communication methods)
- a list of topics where each stakeholder could be involved

The following analytical tool was used, with the stakeholder matrix being used to place each stakeholder group:



Stakeholder	Power / degree of impact	Interest rate	Role
Representative body	high	high	Promoter
Secretary	high	Medium	Latent
Mayor	high	high	Promoter
Clerks in the Mayor's Office	low	low	Apathetics
Family Support Service - Manager - case managers - family carers	high high high	high high low	Promoter Promoter Latent
Kindergarten	high	low	Latent
School	high	high	Promoter
Midwife service	Medium	high	Defenders
General practitioner / paediatrician	high	low	Latent

Child Welfare Office	high	low	Latent
Church representatives	high	Medium	Latent
Civil Guard	high	high	Promoter
Tradition and association groups	high	low	Latent
Residents living in the settlement with higher chances to move out	Medium	high	Defenders
Residents living in the settlement with lower chances to move out	low	Medium	Apathetics
Residents in the immediate vicinity of the settlement	low	high	Defenders
Commuters, new habitants	Medium	high	Defenders
Habitants of the village	high	high	Promoter
Police	high	low	Latent
Public utility service providers	low	low	Apathetics
Local businesses	Medium	high	Defenders
Bagázs	high	high	Promoter
House of Culture	low	low	Apathetics

'Fáklya Group' - the voice of the Roma in the settlement

The Fáklya group aims to empower the people of the settlement through tangible programmes where they can feel the power of community, togetherness and experience success. Both Roma and non-Roma, living locally and those who have already moved out of the settlement, play an active role in the implementation of the programme. The Fáklya group is trying to encourage the people living in the settlement on several levels. On the one hand, they regularly visit and support members of the community as fellow travellers. On the other hand, they involve the locals in a local action. We are constantly communicating about the programmes to community members and the village to raise awareness about the strength and potential of the community.

The Fáklya group is a closed group. The group is facilitated by a facilitator. She facilitates the work on the topics and the selection and implementation of the project.

The group meets every two weeks and works within the following operational framework:

- Each semester, the group will choose a problem to work on
- They define the change they want to achieve in a given area over a quarter, taking into account capacities and opportunities.
- It sets out an action to this end, which is planned, organised and carried out by the group members.
- During the organisation and implementation of the action, the team members will talk to the people living in the settlement about the issue and raise awareness about it
- We are trying to organise company volunteer days around the issue to get more people involved in solving the problem.
- We communicate about the organisation, meetings, programmes. We inform the locals and the wider community in the village.

To achieve this goal, members work in three working groups:

1. Every two months or so, the organising team organises the actions, which are decided by the whole team. The aim is to produce tangible results and to get as many people as possible to join in. For example: litter picking on the site.
2. Every week, members of the Evangelist group visit the site together and talk about the issue. It is important that they share their own experiences, their own aspirations with the locals and encourage them to get involved and engage with the issues we are working on at the time. We think it is important not only to organise local actions, but also to let the local people know about the issue.
3. The communications team will post news on the topic in an internal Facebook group. An important element in communication is to talk about the causes to the villagers so that they can see the specific difficulties the problem is causing. We show what the villagers have done so far to solve the problem and what difficulties they have encountered, as well as the actions taken and their results.

Actions and achievements of the Fáklya Group during the 'Different Bag' project

1. Public waste and littering

Reducing public waste on streets and fighting littering was one of our project's main topics. In the settlement the majority of the streets and some of the gardens are untidy, and on many abandoned parcels you find big quantity of public waste, which attracts more littering, unwanted animals, demotivates people to keep their garden tidy, makes a bad impression of the neighbourhood which further aggravates exclusion and discrimination.

The first step was to understand the problem deeper: why do we have so much litter in the streets and in the gardens? What we found is that one cause was incorrect waste management habits within families - some do not use garbage bins but burn up or bury the household garbage. However, this was the smaller part of the problem. Not all public waste on the streets

and gardens come from people living there: in many cases people from outside transport their garbage here and deposit it in abandoned parts of the settlement.

We started to work with families one by one to identify where the waste is coming from, and based on this, support them in how they can reduce the quantity, how to properly manage the household garbage, and what to do if someone places illegal garbage next to their house. Parallel, we started to work with the local government to see how illegal waste dumping can be addressed.

We encouraged the families to participate with small presents (e.g. plants, flowers) periodically to help them make their environment nice.

At the end of autumn 2021, a local group involved in the project organized a garbage collection day where people from the settlement joined forces to mow down the grass, collect garbage on the streets. With the help of volunteers and local government support we also managed to clean 3 parcels with illegal waste and on the very same day trees were planted in the gardens' of the participant families.

2. Dogs in the streets

Another main focus of the project was to see how we can address the stray dog situation in the settlement.

Dogs on the street might be dangerous or at least threatening for anyone: not only people living there but anybody who needs to go by: postman, doctor, social workers, teachers, our colleagues and volunteers. The dogs also enter the village and this aggravates the tensions between the settlement and other locals.

Main objectives were to raise awareness between people living in the settlement on responsible dog ownership, find a home for the dogs who had no owners or which were no longer wanted, get the dogs with owners vaccinated, chipped and preferably neutered, get the dangerous dogs collected by animal control services.

Over the first months we spent time on assessing the number and condition of the dog population and went house by house to explain our goals to the habitants of the settlement. We faced a lot of challenges there, as neutering was absolutely not welcome among the dog owners. Parallel we also noticed that getting a dog chipped, vaccinated and neutered or getting the dogs collected will not solve our issues as dog population changes quickly. Therefore we decided to slow down with concrete, material actions and put more effort into changing how people are looking at animal care.

We set up a working group contacting and collaborating with professional dog organisations – university, dog protection and animal protection organisations, dog adoption centres, dog shelters, vets, with two goals: to collect good practises we can use in the project and also to educate ourselves on the topic. Based on these collaborations and professional support, we decided to elaborate our dog focused animal protection programme to educate children and

adults on animal protection, animal rights, responsible animal ownership, which - as a vertical - is being built in all our age and topic-based programmes (children development, adult and family mentoring, collaboration with institutes) to ensure sustainability.

3. Crime and drug usage

Bag is a village with very high crime rates compared to regional figures. Our initial idea was to fight the topic where most people wanted to see a change: the designer drug problem. Despite the very strong commitment of all stakeholders, this was a topic which proved to be a hard nut to crack and after several failed attempts we recognized this is completely out of our scope within this project, therefore we had to rescope this project part.

As a result of conversations with our stakeholders, one more topic arose, which - besides increasing social and physical segregation - deepens stereotypes and is often a misunderstood phenomenon: utility usage.

People living at the settlement who use public services illegally in many cases pay more for the service in form of penalties, and as the fee is so high and the whole procedure is so complex, without support they cannot make it through the process in legal ways.

Therefore, for those who participated actively during 6 months in our group sessions and projects, we offered financial and administrative support for the (re)connection to electricity, running water or drainage network.

We started to work with 11 families on these issues, and we are in different stages in the procedure with all of them - depending on the complexity of the ownership of their home, their debt status and volume, and the connection type. Electricity connection preparation works have been finalized for 5 families already.

Summary of the project and the future of the Fáklya Group

During the implementation of our project, we spent the majority of our time and efforts by listening to all the stakeholders, how they see the local problems, what they think the causes are and solutions might be to reduce internal tensions, discrimination and segregation.

The expected results of “A different Bag” project were diversified. Our three selected projects were meant to be a tool for learning more about each other, developing intercultural communication channels and for capacity building - while the main goal of the program was not only to implement these projects within one year, but to develop a local Roma strategy. A strategy together with the local government, the care system (ie the village itself) and the local Roma and non-Roma inhabitants. Even though this common strategy has not been finalised yet, we consider the past year as a success and an important step towards a true collaboration between stakeholders and towards achieving real Roma inclusion on a local level.

Over the course of the project, we managed the tensions, preconceptions and segregation at two different levels: on one hand, we organised and supported activities which had an immediate impact on the people living in the segregated area (trees, flowers, garbage collection, stray dog collection and adoption, dog vaccination, chipping and neutering, electricity works, etc.) with the aim to motivate people and also to reduce the physical and social segregation between the settlement and the rest of the village, which eventually reduce tensions.

On the other hand, we worked with all our stakeholders for a long-term impact, sensitising them towards each other, helping them to recognize the issues, the root cause of them and the potential blockers, through capacity building and empowering people so they are able to articulate their needs and stand up for them.

The main change in the community is the more open and regular conversations, higher engagement of local people and institutions and more trustful communication between parties.

We were able to build a common ground between stakeholders where everyone understands that multi-level action is essential, and that it is not enough to address just one segment of the problem, such as education, housing, crime or the labour market, nor is it enough to tackle the problem at the level of the individual, the family, the community or the wider environment.

In the future, the activist group (Fáklya) will work on topics selected by the group itself or the ones the local community is highly interested in eg. the ones highlighted on local forums. Going forward this group should be expanded – involving more people living in the settlement or in the rest of the village. We believe that over time, this activist group will be able to speak up and articulate their needs and rights in collaboration with the local government and other allies from outside, and Bagazs will be able to gradually step back and let the local group and the local government work together.