



RON & JEANNIE SECK - Missionaries in Hungary

May 2015



Figure 1: Enter a Roma Village with Ron and Marijana

Dear NAB Family and Friends,

REZ Serbia, our NAB and CHE sponsored team in Serbia, will soon begin two long-term community outreach and development projects near Novi Sad. With this in mind, Ron and Jeannie and the REZ Team began to survey potential communities April 27 through May 5. It was a sobering but exciting experience as we saw God opening doors of ministry to us. Here is a brief report

on each community in which we did a preliminary survey. As you read the reports, which village(s) would you choose?

Village A: Mirko and Slavtca are a Roma couple who have spent the last three years planting a church among their people in this village. It has not always been easy and Slavtca almost succumbed to burn out in their first year as she tried to take on all the burdens, pain, problems and trauma of those who flooded into their house. They slowly realized they had to keep some boundaries and close their gate and door sometimes or go crazy.

Today their church is thriving, men and women are coming to Christ, a discipleship program has begun among future leaders and Daniel is running an active children's program here as well. Mirko and his wife have a dynamic vision of the future which includes wholistic ministry to their impoverished Roma community members and the construction or renovation of a building to become the village's community center, youth center and church. REZ Serbia is investigating a partnership with Mirko and his sending church to help them launch a church-initiated outreach and development program in this large, very needy community.

Village B: Forty years ago a fire destroyed a complete Roma community. The Serbian government moved the whole village to temporary quarters on a plot of ground in the middle of a large farming field. They housed them in old train cars that had been reconstructed to be cattle stalls, with no electricity, running water or plumbing. The temporary became permanent.

PRAISES

- God greatly blessed the Gathering Wave Conference in Durres, Albania, in April. Eleven countries are moving forward with plans for community outreach and development
- 20 women will be taking the Women's Cycle of Life training course in Belgrade, May 10 to 16.
- We were able to survey 5 Roma villages in Novi Sad, Serbia, for possible NAB sponsored CHE projects.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- That REZ Serbia is led by God to the right villages to begin community work.
- For Laci and Eszter and the work in Boldog and Matraszolos in May-June
- Eszter's baby is due in mid-July.

Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord.

Habakkuk 3:2



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Figure 2: Jeannie and Marijana talk with leaders in Village B

Today, 70 families, totaling about 800 people, live in unbelievably squalid, garbage-laden conditions. Electricity finally came in 2008! Two years ago a well-meaning aid group re-roofed the dwellings with material that has begun to leak water profusely, causing the mud-brick walls to dissolve and the electricity to become dangerous. They also installed a leaky septic system that is now polluting the drinking water. Children are sick with water-borne diseases and kidney problems. Adults suffer from severe chronic illnesses like high-blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, emphysema and heart disease. This is a village desperate for the right kind of help that does not continue to hurt them. A Baptist church in Novi Sad has begun to reach out to this community and hopes to start a Bible study here soon. **REZ Serbia is**

praying about partnering with Village B and the Baptist Church to do long-term community development here.

Village C: This is a village of about 1000 Musl*m Romas. The village leader is a vigorous man with a great heart for his village, especially the youth. By himself he secured the financing and mobilized the community to construct a large new building to be used as a community center, a mosque and a youth center. He explained the vast array of community problems including a high rate of illiteracy, unemployment, drugs, crime, violence among youth and the inability to get legal papers so his people could work, go to school and access medical care.

We spoke to him about Community Health Education (CHE in the Musl*m context) and what it could do for his community. He was immediately interested. "The W*h*bi Musl*ms have come here and asked if they could start a mosque and madrasa," he told us. "But we don't want them and their violence and killing here. But you can come and use this place for teaching our people and our youth!"

We arranged a meeting with him and the community Roma leadership team for the next morning. We were completely up-front with them that REZ Serbia is a Christian organization. They were content as long as we started from our common ground: the Ten Commandments! The community leadership will now decide whether they will want to meet with the REZ Team once more or call for a community-wide meeting to introduce CHE! **This door appears open.**



Figure 3: New Community Center in Village C

Village D: This Musl*m Roma community of 3000 on the outskirts of Novi Sad hums with the activity of families collecting and recycling cardboard, plastic bottles and metal. But their poor squatter houses are walled-off from each other by old carpets and sheets of metal and wood, revealing the distrust and division that exists between them. Few outsiders enter this village with its maze of narrow dirt and rutted alleys

The W*h*bi radicals are active here. There is no Christian influence aside from Slobodan, who coaches young men in soccer while sharing the Good News with them.

So, which villages is God laying on your heart? Which would you choose? Pray for us as we continue to get to know the people of each of these villages and make the decisions about where to begin.

Ron and Jeannie Seck