



**Genesis Community Development
Network
Genesis Foundation Romania**

Organizational Description

Genesis is an agency whose mission is to improve quality of life among the poor through the processes of Transformational Community Development. It is a United States based organization with offices in Sweden, Holland, England and Northern Ireland and field operations in Romania and Zambia.

The processes involved in the Genesis methodology differ from a vast majority of development practices. To many, development means relief, aid, or a series of projects with a systematic design to improve the natural circumstances of those suffering in the grip of poverty. Our approach is first of all holistic, in that we believe the problems associated with those living under poverty are interconnected. It's not just the economy, or the education, or the religion, or the family or the children or the joblessness....it is all of the above working in concert that creates an entrapment for those who are marginalized. Our community work is therefore systemic and embraces helping to correct all of the dysfunctional relationships within the systems and structures that facilitate poverty.

Secondly, our process is community owned and community driven through a series of participatory learning exercises. We do not arrive in the community as the experts with the answers to their problems. This approach often results in development practitioners trying to repair things the community doesn't believe are broken. Instead, we function as facilitators to help the community identify problems of importance, propose solutions to those problems and implement their ideas. Then a project will be evaluated to determine its success or failure.

Thirdly, we do not operate under the definition of poverty as an economic issue. Our view is more aligned with defining the condition as an amalgamation of failed relationships...with family, neighbors, the community at large, others, and the various political, religious, social and economic systems within the culture. Life in the midst of the combination of these failed relationships becomes a struggle for survival and the survival strategies of the poor reinvent their poverty. The cycle needs to be broken for genuine systemic transformation to occur.

All of the projects and activities of Genesis, whether educational, infrastructure, agricultural, advocacy, economic development or vocational are geared towards implementation through this methodology.



Roma houses in Romania

