DECADE INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Factors for success or failure of Roma inclusion projects

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DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION 2005–2015

Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015

Building on the momentum of the 2003 conference, "Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future," we pledge that our governments will work toward eliminating discrimination and closing the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society, as identified in our Decade Action Plans.

We declare the years 2005–2015 to be the Decade of Roma Inclusion and we commit to support the full participation and involvement of national Roma communities in achieving the Decade's objectives and to demonstrate progress by measuring outcomes and reviewing experiences in the implementation of the Decade's Action Plans.

We invite other states to join our effort.

Sofia, Bulgaria, February 2, 2005

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 ("Decade") is a political commitment by European governments to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of the Roma population. The Decade is an international initiative that brings together governments, international, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, including Romani civil society, to accelerate progress toward improving the welfare of Roma and to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way. The Decade focuses on the priority areas of education, employment, health and housing, and commits governments to take into account the core issues of poverty, discrimination and gender mainstreaming.

The current member states of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 are Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain.

Planning for the Decade is guided by an International Steering Committee (ISC), made up of representatives of participating governments, Roma organizations, international donors, and other international organizations. In late 2006, the ISC agreed upon the establishment of a Decade Secretariat in Budapest, Hungary, which directly supports the Presidency of the Decade.

DECADE INTELLIGENCE

As stated in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 Terms of Reference, the Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation (Decade Secretariat) is a private foundation established by the Open Society Foundations (OSF) to serve as the main facilitation body of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015. It aims to support the work of the annually rotating National Presidency of the Decade. In addition to the annual transfer of knowhow and initiatives between presidencies, the Decade Secretariat ensures a smooth transition and enhances coordination of all joint activities. It provides continuity to the Decade and acts as the repository of information and knowledge on the Decade.

The Decade Intelligence (DI) entails mapping of projects under the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, analysis of the projects' transferability and applicability, and provision of information and advice to Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 partners on project practices or their elements that contribute to or hinder the achievement of the Decade goal.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DECADE INTELLIGENCE REPORT

The present report is a result of the Decade Intelligence research project. It aims to serve as guidelines for Roma inclusion actors in designing, implementing and monitoring their efforts, by providing them recommendations about factors that can influence the results of their project in either a positive or negative way. The report is not an exhaustive list of such factors; it is a list of helpful tips, rather than a book of instructions. It is a learning tool developed through the years-long experience of attempts for Roma inclusion within the Decade.

Perhaps the best advice an inclusion actor can get is that there is no magic wand to conjure up the right way to inclusion. Interventions depend on the actual context, frequently the actual situation of each individual beneficiary, combined with the complexity of the socio-economic, political and cultural circumstances. The work is long and hard, made even more difficult by the negative attitudes of many toward Roma.

Despite all the efforts undertaken so far within the Decade and other initiatives aiming at Roma inclusion, inclusion of Roma is a distant objective. Thus, it is impossible to talk about a project that has actually worked in full and yielded the desired result. It is only possible to discuss projects that have made some improvement towards the objective of Roma inclusion, and projects that have failed or were not as successful as planned. Simple and sharp classification as good and bad practices is not always possible; most of the projects that have contributed to the inclusion of Roma have faced challenges and most of the projects that were not as successful had some positive elements. Prior to the Decade Intelligence project, there was no existing repository of projects undertaken within the Decade. Therefore the first step was to map such projects and establish a database of Roma inclusion projects. This was done using a snow-ball method: immediate partners of the Decade (National Coordinators in each of the participating Governments, civil society partners active within the Decade and international organizations) provided information on projects they have undertaken or of which they were aware. Information on 314 projects from the 12 Decade participating countries was collected and is available online.[1] This database is by no means exhaustive, as the definition of what constitutes a project carried on within the Decade is somewhat ambiguous. The database encompasses projects that have targeted Roma in those countries participating in the Decade, have been implemented during the period of the Decade, by the Decade partners and in the scope of the Decade (priority and cross-cutting areas). Practices collected through the mapping exercise were assessed for their contribution to the achievement of the Decade objectives. The following indicators have been used:

1. Reduced the gap between Roma and non-Roma (according to subjective or objective measurement).

2. Level of involvement of the government, as the main responsible actor for the inclusion of Roma.

3. Participation of Roma.

4. Level of institutional incorporation of the practice.

5. Connection to Decade priority and cross-cutting areas.

6. Geographic coverage.

Since not all of the indicators have the same importance within the Decade a "weight" factor has been assigned to each. Collected projects were assessed against these indicators.

The projects collected within the Decade Intelligence have an average assessment of 16 points (from a maximum of 30). This indicates that the projects within the Decade were good enough to make some progress towards the objectives, but not sufficient to produce the real change to which the Decade participants committed themselves within this initiative.

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1   Decade Intelligence database available on http://romadecade.org/about-the-decade-decade-good-practices (link accessed on 18.03.2014).

Comparing the different indicators, Roma participation has the highest average, which means that the projects for inclusion of Roma in this survey have involved Roma in the project cycle significantly. It also shows that the principle "Nothing for Roma without the Roma" has been the value of the Decade that was most successfully promoted. There is still much room for improvement, because even this indicator has an average of 3.5 points (from maximum 5).

The next highest averages for the indicators are: geographic coverage (2.9 points, with higher points given to projects that show broader geographic coverage as well as cross-border impact), the demonstrated reduction of the gap between Roma and non-Roma (2.6 points) and the Decade priority and cross-cutting areas (2.4 points, with higher points given to projects that addressed multiple priorities and cross-cutting areas). This means that the Decade, through the projects implemented under its framework, to a certain extent managed to promote expansion of the work on Roma inclusion from the local level to the national level (and sometimes with cross-border effects), and in developing methods to tackle exclusion in a more comprehensive manner.

The worst assessed indicators are the level of involvement of the government and the level of institutional incorporation of project practices (2.1 and 2.3 points on average respectively).

These indicators suggest that governments are making insufficient efforts at inclusion of Roma and that the high level political commitment represented by the Decade Declaration has not been translated into law or practice. In order to achieve real inclusion, greater government engagement, scaling up and institutional incorporation of good practices are a must. Inclusion can not be achieved by leaving the main role to civil society or international organizations, with their limited resources and reach.

The Decade Intelligence Project then looked deeper into the practices for Roma inclusion implemented within the Decade in order to understand the factors that move forward or impede such efforts and disseminate this information to others.

With this in mind, 42 projects were selected for deeper evaluation. The selection included projects with high, middle and low scores from the assessment. It also included projects from different priority areas and with different approaches. Each evaluation was done by interviewing implementers, beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries, partners and other stakeholders of each project on the following aspects: 1) relevance; 2) efficiency; 3) effectiveness in producing the planned results; 4) impact on the inclusion of Roma in the respective area; 5) sustainability; 6) other influencing factors. The present report presents the findings and the recommendations emanating from this analysis.

The report is structured in five chapters. Each chapter provides general recommendations, a description of the findings, illustration of the findings using actual project examples (which appear in text boxes) and a summary. The projects mapped and evaluated with the Decade Intelligence are not classified as successful or unsuccessful, good or bad. Our intention is not to praise or blame, but to use the existing projects to learn and improve in the future. Therefore project examples do not necessarily include explicit details that would directly identify the particular projects discussed. These illustrative practices are not exceptions, but in most cases typical.

BENEFICIARIES OF ROMA INCLUSION PROJECTS

For interventions aiming at Roma inclusion it is very important to reach, select and involve beneficiaries in an appropriate manner, based on beneficiaries' own conditions, needs and demands.

According to several evaluated projects, an effective method to reach beneficiaries is a grassroots approach, when inclusion agents do outreach to the potential beneficiaries and discuss in depth both their situation and the benefits the project is offering. Such an exercise should not be used only as an advertisement for the project, but also as a needs assessment. It is best to engage potential beneficiaries of the project (this is discussed more in the next chapter). The information provided to the potential beneficiaries should be detailed and understandable to enable them to make an informed decision about their participation. The discussion should be realistic about the possible impact of the project – a number of projects in the study created false expectations and frustrations among beneficiaries because of a failure to explain honestly the impact.

> In one of the projects in Hungary where a door-to-door approach has been used to reach beneficiaries, the implementers even paid specific attention to spending equal time in each house, as a precaution to avoid suspicion that some people are preferred over others and are more likely to benefit from the project.

> A project in Bulgaria offering loans for outstanding debts for electricity is targeting only those formally employed; excluding most potential beneficiaries who do not meet this criterion, even though some have sufficient income to repay the loan. A project for employability in Montenegro offering vocational courses is accessible only for those with completed primary education. This excludes the majority of potential Roma beneficiaries from participation.

The criteria for selection of beneficiaries need to be adequately designed – based on the situation and needs of potential Roma beneficiaries. A common mistake is when criteria are simply copied from similar programs for non-Roma that may exclude the majority of Roma from participation. If the project is genuinely determined to resolve the issue, it should either first provide an opportunity for those in need to meet this criterion, or it should allow for exceptions that enable those who don't meet that particular criterion to benefit from the project. In the second case, the need to resolve the issue related to the criterion should not be neglected. In many cases, even when criteria are designed well to provide access to the majority of Roma in need, the projects fail to reach those often called the "poorest of the poor" or "out of reach". An example of this is when housing projects fail to reach the homeless. Targeting hard to reach sub-populations may make it difficult to show impact to the public or the funders because of a higher failure rate. Those most marginalized may not be as numerous as the average and the process of resolving their problems may take far longer and be more difficult and expensive. A more particular problem in this sense is reaching the "legally invisible", which includes stateless persons, those without residency permits for a particular locality, those lacking birth certificates or other documentation, or persons missing from administrative registers for any other reason. It is, nevertheless an imperative to consider this category of people in each project and endeavor to include them.

Tensions and frustrations can occur among potential beneficiaries, particularly when the project has limited resources and thus is unable to respond to the demand. In such situations project beneficiaries may be in very similar conditions with many others that don't benefit from the project, which adds to the frustration in the community. A transparent and accountable selection process with the participation of those concerned can ease this problem, but the best solution is to ensure sufficient coverage of the project to respond to the demand.

It is also important to provide a range of incentives and safety guarantees for the beneficiaries in order to ensure participation in a project. For example, it may not be enough to enroll children at school to ensure their attendance and active participation. Measures to ensure children are not exposed to bullying, violence, intolerance or discrimination may also be needed. A number of the evaluated projects in fact offer safety guarantees such as accompanying Roma, particularly girls, by trustful persons from their home to the place where the project is implemented. This might sound trivial and unnecessary, but for participation of many potential Roma beneficiaries it is a must. It is often needed for the project to provide incentives for participation, particularly in case the project is taking beneficiaries away from their regular activities, such as those in the informal economy that ensure the only limited source of income for the family.

A project in Croatia aiming at ensuring access to social services for Roma is offering housekeeping services, transport to facilities providing social services, accompanying volunteers, etc. for and during the engagement of the beneficiaries in the activities.

Several of the evaluated projects have provided for either explicit but not exclusive targeting or for mainstreaming. The difference between the two is that the first is targeting Roma, but is not excluding non-Roma in a similar position from benefiting from the project, while the second is targeting the general population, but at the same time is ensuring adequate access for Roma. In case of mainstreaming it is important to apply the conclusions from the discussion above on the access criteria. In all except one project of those evaluated these approaches have been assessed positively – as factors of success recommended for Roma inclusion projects. In one project where explicit but not exclusive targeting has been applied to the dissatisfaction of the beneficiaries, it is the result of deeply rooted mutual intolerance and tensions. In such cases the safety guarantees and sufficient information to potential beneficiaries are particularly important.

"[T]he tension around "projects for vulnerable groups" vs "projects for Roma", both in the context of political manipulations and in the context of everyday cohabitation, is much bigger than this very project could assume solving… [Roma] could not totally accept the idea that in a project dedicated to Roma, "Roma" is replaced with "vulnerable groups", while at the same time everybody talks about the fact that Roma benefit from too many projects…" – Statement from an evaluation of a project in Romania.

A project in Montenegro aiming at social integration of young Roma refugees was intended to benefit 20 Roma children – it ended up with 130 children, both Roma and non-Roma. Non-Roma children approached the project on their own because it was attractive. They interacted with the Roma children and as a result the distance between Roma and non-Roma begun to diminish.

The projects that deliberately aim at bringing Roma and non-Roma together are assessed very positively in the evaluation. As a clarification – projects that target both Roma and non-Roma are not necessarily ensuring that Roma and non-Roma beneficiaries are put together in a safe and controlled environment intentionally in order to build relations. When such an effort is specifically made, the results on inclusion are better. It is important to note here that such a component might provoke tensions and conflicts, but this should not discourage inclusion actors – on the contrary, it should be a note of caution that informs project design.

An encouraging finding of the evaluation is that almost 90% of the evaluated projects applied at least one of the aforementioned positive aspects of targeting project beneficiaries. However, there is no single project combining all the positive elements. In 36% of the evaluated projects, problems related to the targeting of beneficiaries have been reported.

Targeting (selection criteria, outreach method, etc.) should be culturally and gender sensitive. This aspect has only been indicated in a very few of the evaluated projects, but not explicitly articulated. A culturally and gender sensitive approach in practice means the use of language understandable to the target group, scheduling of activities to avoid overlap with traditional or religious events, appropriate dress code or other cultural or gender related requirements.

In one of the projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina the target number of beneficiaries was not achieved fully because Roma in significant numbers left the country to pursue better living conditions. Hopefully inclusion projects themselves can help prevent such a situation, but inclusion actors should be aware of the possibility. Such a situation might occur for many reasons beside socio-economic conditions – political conditions, natural disasters, hostility of the majority population, etc. The evaluation does not recommend how to respond in such a situation, but possible options might be: to close the project, to continue with a smaller scale project, to follow the Roma with the project (possibly through cooperation with relevant inclusion actors at their destination), or a combination of these options.

THOROUGH AND MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT OF ROMA

For successful inclusion projects targeting Roma, they should be involved in all the stages in the project, and their involvement should be meaningful and effective.

"[Without full participation of Roma], the County School Inspectorates, for example, will never be motivated or able to report on cases of school segregation, school drop-out or the real causes for absenteeism or lack of access to education. Furthermore, they will not be able to identify and provide the social conditions needed for assuring school participation." – Statement from an evaluation of a project in Romania by which participation of Roma was provided, but ended immediately after the project.

Roma have to be involved from the beginning of the inclusion project to its end. The best way to start is with a demand from the Roma community itself – they articulate the problem, and preferably offer possible solutions. People may have wish lists and not everything is possible, but through open and honest communication when people are ready to talk and listen, compromises are possible and desirable. On the other hand, in the majority of cases, communication on this level is difficult because of lack of mutual understanding and distrust, sometimes combined with a lack of capacity of potential beneficiaries to articulate their problems and the lack of capacity of inclusion agents to fully understand the situation.

It is also important to involve Roma in the decision making process since this can have crucial role in successful outcomes (and prevent spending resources in vain). This is beneficial for Roma as well, because it is empowering: they gain knowledge on how the system functions, establish relations outside the community, and develop capacity for participation.

Unfortunately the evaluation came across very few projects applying these principles, but at the same time these have shown better success. However, the large majority of projects have meaningfully involved Roma in the implementation and monitoring, mainly as providers of various types of mediation and outreach to the Roma community. In fact almost 80% of the evaluated projects had forms of mediation performed by Roma individuals or organizations. There are projects in which Roma mediators are based in the facilities of a public service provider/implementing organization, or outside, working strictly in the field or based in another facility, usually closer to the community). Both models are assessed positively. The choice depends on the actual conditions and the subject of the project. The mediators' main role is to "translate and convey" information between project beneficiaries and public authorities/implementers of the project. This means that they gath-

The case of a social field work project from the Czech Republic is an important example. It provided mediation on two levels – community and regional. On the community level social workers and assistants have been recruited among Roma and have been engaged to directly provide or ensure public services to Roma. They are supported by regional mediators that provide continuous capacity building and technical support, mediation with higher level authorities when issues are not solvable on local level, and act as monitoring data collection points. Such a model was established in the '80s. It was abandoned with decentralization when local governments got the whole responsibility for this work (management, recruitment, monitoring, etc.). Regional mediators were dismissed and only social field workers and assistants were left. This has had a negative impact on the whole program for many reasons: mediators were used for administrative work rather than field work by the local governments, recruitment became irregular, there was a lack of technical and capacity building support, etc. Realizing this, Czech Republic partially revitalized the previous model with only few municipalities opting for decentralized management.

er information from both sides and repackage the information so that it is understandable to the other side. They also act as community empowerment agents for the Roma community and as meaningful contributors to the public policy debates within mainstream society. Roma mediators can also contribute to trust-building between excluded Roma and others (general population, institutions, organizations, etc.). In some cases Roma mediators are the actual providers of services or implementers of activities in the community. In such cases, mediators should either have the necessary capacity or acquire it through the project. A number of projects include a component of continuous capacity building for the mediators, which has been identified as a positive factor. In general, mediation models of various forms are very beneficial, positively received, and highly recommended.

Complaints regarding negative aspects of using Roma mediators are found only in about 12% of the projects evaluated. The main complaint about such projects is that the model is usually implemented only during the project lifetime and authorities do not take up and institutionalize the model within the system. Other concerns include inadequate capacity building of the mediators; unsatisfactory working conditions (engagement limited only to the duration of the project or lower payment than other service providers on the same/similar level of position); barriers to influence policy debates (including limited mediator capacity to articulate obstacles and recommend changes to the authorities). Another criticism leveled at mediator projects generally is that mediators are no substitute for the state employing Roma in higher level service provider jobs: e.g., Roma mediators working in a school that has no Roma teachers.

In some of the evaluated projects the Roma community has been faced with taboo topics (such as early marriages), differences of opinions on priorities or approaches, or competition between individuals or organizations. The same mediation model is successfully used in some of these cases. Conversely, it is problematic and can hinder inclusion efforts when such frustrations rising within the Roma community are left unaddressed.

Finally, an important aspect of Roma involvement is community development and empowerment. Most of the projects have neglected this aspect, although it is crucial for the sustainability of change that projects cause, with a few projects even reporting creation of further dependency with the project instead of empowering Roma to claim their rights and act towards their implementation.

DESIGNING ROMA INCLUSION PROJECTS

Projects for inclusion of Roma should be designed on the basis of a profound understanding of the situation of Roma, their needs and interests, as well as the relations and behaviors of non-Roma towards Roma and vice versa, the overall socio-economic, political and legislative context, and risks surrounding the project. Project design should also learn from previous practices on the subject in the community or outside.

A project implemented by a non-governmental organization in Croatia specifically targets the lack of home support for Roma children in learning, by building capacity of parents to help their children in pre-math and pre-read skills through play and by facilitating better access of parents to schools. By this, the project is targeting a very specific gap in education faced by excluded Roma, which has been identified through years-long engagement and open discussions with the potential beneficiaries, as well as the implementing organization's knowledge of the subject. Such a gap could easily go unnoticed by the educational system and continue hindering the process of inclusion.

Half of the evaluated projects report success in changing the situation of Roma due to specific practice during the planning process. A number of these projects claim profound knowledge of the situation of Roma as precondition for appropriate planning. Such knowledge is largely due to the long-term presence and trust-worthy activity within the Roma community, and direct, meaningful involvement of the potential Roma beneficiaries in the process, including in designing and decision making. Some of these projects also have carefully considered existing risks, while some have reported piloting or multiplication of the designed methodology to confirm it yields results or adjust as appropriate. Many of these projects are in fact developed through a long process of trial-error-adjustment, which is recommended for inclusion projects.

There are also projects arguing for the importance of taking into account the social relations and norms, cultural features of the society, traditions, behaviors, socio-economic conditions, priorities and interests, the political situation, legislation and other factors related to the environment in which the project should be implemented that may have an influence, both positive or negative, on the project.

A project in Romania aiming to increase the employment of Roma through social economy enterprises was designed on the basis of a novel idea. However, it faced a number of problems because it didn't take into account that the legislation in the country does not allow for establishing such for-profit entities with a social service mission enterprises.

Within this evaluation there are two projects that have actually started with doubts towards Roma based on prejudices (one that Roma would not return loans, and the other one that Roma children, particularly girls, would not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities). Both the projects had the positive factor of involving Roma in the management who pursued the aims and insisted on implementing the projects. The success of the projects thus didn't just bring change to the lives of Roma, but also managed to change certain false beliefs towards them, at least among those non-Roma related to the projects.

On the other side of the coin are projects that ignore the needs and interests of Roma during the planning process, or other crucial environmental factors. Hosting a single consultation meeting or reading a study with statistical indicators, for example, is not enough to gain the understanding needed to design a project that would effec-

tively change the situation. It might work, of course, but with numerous adjustments along the way – which in itself is recommendable, provided there is commitment to the aim of the project. Another impediment occurring during the designing process is when the project is tackling only one aspect of a problem. This usually has a rationale behind it, such as limitation of resources, but it doesn't actually solve the issue. Sometimes tackling a specific gap might be beneficial, but usually if combined with other projects. Pilot actions that are not continued are also considered unsuccessful in terms of making lasting change. The worst case scenario is when projects are based on stereotypes towards Roma.

"Talking about its social impact, the project also aimed at creating and running models that could be replicated. The appeal to solidarity, support and volunteering on behalf of each other (re)created community forces that were under threat because of the current problems of poverty and day-by-day survival." – Statement from the evaluation of a project in Romania.

For Roma inclusion projects it is also important that they be founded on common values and principles, particularly on human rights principles. If a system of universally recognized values, such as human rights or social justice, is taken as a basis for the project and all activities are undertaken in line with that approach, transforming the values into practice, the project has a positive influence on both Roma and non-Roma. It also contributes to overcoming various reasons for resistance to change (such as fear, stereotypes, etc.). One quarter of the projects evaluated consider this factor of success. Some projects report obstacles to the success of the project even when such values are mainstreamed in the project concept. This is when those values are not well understood or are interpreted differently for different people. For this reason, it is very important to ensure that such values are promoted among those implementing or otherwise involved in the project before the actual implementation.

Two specific findings of the evaluation in regard to the design of interventions are that the interventions might be far more efficient and effective if taken early, and that the interventions are meaningful for Roma if they are able to address crisis and emergency situations or employ change management measures. Early taken actions are those that deal with the problems in their early stage. For example, in education that means actions during preschool or primary school age, or in employment during the transition from education to employment. Of course this does not mean that where problems are already advanced they should be neglected. Addressing crises and emergencies or using change management techniques means that the project has a certain level

A project in Bulgaria has successfully transferred Roma children from a segregated into a mainstream school. However, in those school the children faced secondary segregation by being placed in segregated classes or even segregated as a group within mixed classes. Project implementers report that such situations are difficult to handle, because usually it is unexpected, and also the implementers are not ready to respond for various reasons (confusion, lack of resources, lack of know-how, lack of capacity, etc.).

of flexibility and allows for response to unexpected situations in which beneficiaries might find themselves during the implementation of the project. An example for such a situation is when tensions arise in a family because of the clash over the participation of women in an employment inclusion intervention.

One of the most important findings of the evaluation is the need to implement an integrated approach to Roma inclusion projects: instead of tackling the priority areas one by one, they are addressed in combination. In this sense it is important that the beneficiaries of the project benefit from all the components of the project for which they have a need. A particularly useful model for implementation of such an approach is individual/family social manage-

A schooling program from Catalonia, Spain has been designed to tackle all the aspects needed for inclusive quality and integrated education of Roma. The program promotes the education of Roma at all stages though work with students, families, schools and other relevant stakeholders (such as social services and employers). It uses "Roma agents" that work on an individual basis with the students, monitoring their attendance and performance, discussing with them, their families and schools in order to diagnose the situation and assess the needs and work on achievement of the aims for each individual student, including administrative assistance and information, link to social services, etc. Moreover, the program promotes Roma culture through the curriculum, ensures education that provides employment prospects and finally assists each student in the transition from education to employment.

ment, which comprises identification of beneficiaries in a socially disadvantaged position, undertaking a thorough needs assessment, establishing concrete individual/family objectives for inclusion and developing tailored roadmaps for achievement of the objectives. Such an approach can also be beneficial when priority areas are addressed separately. For such projects, the timeframe usually cannot easily be determined in advance, since each individual roadmap might take different time to achieve the inclusion objectives. Some of the evaluated projects, although not implementing an integrated or individual social management approach, pursue a complex combination of measures tackling various aspects or root-causes of the problem, which is also considered a factor leading to success. There are also examples of projects that have taken into account differences within the target group depending on the location, thus designing different methodologies to tackle the problem in different circumstances. Two-thirds of the projects evaluated have employed one of these three methodological approaches. On the contrary, if a project is tackling only one aspect of the problem it has less chance to succeed and in particular to ensure sustainability, because of adverse effects from those aspects of the problem not tackled by the project.

Regardless of the priority area in which projects for Roma inclusion are implemented, the evaluation reveals three areas which need to be incorporated already from the design phase: 1) promotion and protection of Roma identity, 2) fighting discrimination and promotion of tolerance, 3) empowerment of the Roma community. When these three areas are not considered during the design phase, obstacles in the implementation and the results of the project usually arise. The projects examined with the evaluation have only partially taken these aspects into consideration, often during the implementation rather than the design phase. However, people involved in those projects have identified these components as highly important and recommend their consideration during project design.

Two more points for caution: inclusion actors should be careful not to design too ambitious projects given available resources, or methodologies offering no or insignificant value for the beneficiaries. Planning can be too ambitious because of the high competition for funding, compelling a project designer to promise more than can be delivered, although sometimes it happens because of negligence, or simply because of unrealistic expectations. The second point may indicate more serious problems during the planning phase: sometimes projects are duplicative, delivering the same benefits already provided by others. Sometimes the benefit might be real but impractical. A blatant example of such case is a project through which beneficiaries were provided instructions about nutrition which they were not able to apply because of poverty. Other examples are projects providing additional classes for students that are exactly the same as the regular ones; projects providing vocational training that deprive beneficiaries of the time to earn income informally and that do not offer a real prospect of employment; etc.

IMPLEMENTING ROMA INCLUSION PROJECTS

Several aspects have been identified by this evaluation as important for successful project implementation: long-term implementation (through continuation, replication, multiplication, follow-up and ultimately institutionalization); involvement of relevant stakeholders and exchange of information, as well as outreach; appropriate monitoring of progress and results, through cooperation of official monitoring bodies; recruitment of appropriate personnel and adequate capacity building.

The Acceder project (employment program from Spain implemented by the Fundación Secretariado Gitano) has been working on inclusion of Roma in the labor market in Spain for five years. It is based on the belief that contract based work is the best solution for inclusion in the labor market, and takes an individual approach to assist each beneficiary. It has successfully assisted nearly 45000 Roma in getting jobs, and continues. Retaining its main objective and strategy over time, the program has adjusted, in response to changed circumstances and beneficiary demands by creating individual road-maps to labor market, changing networks of collaborators, meeting needs of employers, as well as in funding, time and geographic scope. Such flexibility has allowed the project to pursue and achieve results.

Designing Roma inclusion projects is a long and complex process that should take into account the recommendations from the previous chapter. Good planning is a prerequisite for success, and when it is done properly implementation is significantly easier. Despite good planning, implementation may still face numerous challenges, mostly because there are usually factors hidden during the planning and obvious only during implementation. The change that the project itself causes requires regular revisiting of the plans and adjustment as appropriate. Similarly, external changes can also influence an inclusion project. Flexibility of the project to be able to respond to such challenges is therefore one of the important factors that should be taken into account during implementation. Successful projects for inclusion of Roma are dynamic. While the long-term objective set by the project remains the same, the project might need to change during its planned lifetime to meet that objective. It is also beneficial for some projects to relate with other projects that are compatible, or to be replicated (in other localities) or multiplied (extended to include more beneficiaries).

Furthermore, inclusion actors should take into account that addressing the impact of structural poverty and discrimination can take generations. Roma inclusion projects usually should last a long time. More than one-third of the projects evaluated within this report have been implemented for more than three years, some even for decades.

A project in Romania dealing with inclusion in employment, funded by the European Union, has provided various services to 22,579 people, about half of whom are Roma. However, the project timeframe was not properly planned to last long enough and provide actual employment for the beneficiaries – only 500 got employment in supported enterprises because the project ended before job placements could be secured. Moreover, there was no time planned to monitor the effects after the support to the enterprises ended on the employment of the beneficiaries.

"One more positive change happened in Canton Tuzla. The cantonal service for employment allocated funds from the budget for the employment program of Roma for the following two years." – Statement from an evaluation of project in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One-fifth of the projects evaluated, on the other hand, have offered only temporary solutions. Those projects ended for different

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