An Overview of Successful Practices in support of Roma Education

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Presentation Overview

1. **Will briefly outline research done to date.**

2. **Present key findings and lessons learned.**

3. **Describe proposed future research.**

Toward Roma Inclusion: some successful practices in Roma Education in Central and South Eastern Europe (working title)

- **First draft written in fall 2008.**
- **Still more work to be done to finalize.**
- **Not an exhaustive report.**
- **It is one contribution—through discussions we hope the no. of initiatives will expand.**
- **Want to combine the findings of other organizations.**

Objectives of this Report

- **To more clearly delineate successful initiatives in secondary and primary Roma education, suitable for further investment.**

- **To document initiatives that can be mainstreamed into government systems.**

- **To contribute to the efforts of organizations already working in the field.**

- **To suggest follow-up research including tackling challenges in scaling up initiatives.**

Based on assessment criteria, desk reviews and interviews, six initiatives were picked:

1. **Desegregation Project, Vidin Bulgaria**
2. **Alliance for Inclusion of Roma in Education, Macedonia**
3. **Roma Education Program (REP), Macedonia**
4. **Phare Programme: Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, Romania**
5. **Equal Chances, Serbia**
6. **Roma Education Initiative (REI) in Jarovnice-Karice, Slovakia**

Key Shared Elements & Approaches for Success

They include but are not limited to:

- **Including all stakeholders in program development implementation and monitoring.**

- **Non-segregation – programmes that are targeted at Roma not as an isolated group but in heterogeneous environment**

- **Roma/local community/local authorities participation.**

- **Work with parents.**

- **Roma Teaching Assistants/community liaisons.**

Elements & Approaches for Success cont.:

- **Ongoing service provider training in cultural sensitive practices.**

- **Focus on transitions between levels of education.**

- **Child-centered pedagogy.**

- **Liaising formal and non-formal education**

- **Multi-sectoral: i.e. joint work of different social sectors (e.g. health, education, child care institutions).**

- **Holistic: dealing with obstacles and using resources inside & outside of schools.**

Two Examples from the Report

Bulgarian Desegregation Project

- **Utilized: Work with parents, providing school materials & transportation, scholarships & tutoring, extra curricular activities.**

- Results: positive enrollment and retention numbers and state exam results, and scaling up to 10 desegregation projects; 7 supported by EU structural funds; similar projects in other countries

Two Examples from the Report cont.

Phare Programme, Romania

- Utilized: School renovation, teacher training, curriculum changes, Roma participation; approach dealt with obstacles to education inside/outside schools.

- Results: 11.6% increase in enrolment overall, drop out rates halved for primary school; additionally the program was scaled up considerably.

Lessons Learned & Hurdles in Research

Came across countless initiatives:

1. But monitoring and thorough documentation were lacking:

- **Baseline evaluations were often missing.**
- **Conspires to make it impossible to assess effectiveness.**
- **Impossible to know with certainty which initiatives to invest in.**

Lessons Learned & Hurdles in Research cont.

2. **Despite countless initiatives, huge gaps in educational outcomes remain; large numbers of Roma children are still excluded:**

- **Sporadic measures limited in scale and number of beneficiaries limit the overall potential impact.**

- **Initiatives not including meticulous plans for scaling up in their design.**

- **Central governments may need to consider more oversight over local implementation.**

Implications

- **Integrated and universal changes continue to be lacking—this should be a goal.**

  – **Scaling up is not automatic, and not done to fullest potential.**

  – **Changes in governments creates inconsistent implementation affecting success rates.**

Both indicate a lack of political will and a continuing need to shift general attitudes and priorities.

The Future

The initiatives in Romania and Bulgaria were scaled up—BUT coverage is far from 100%.

- **Research into strategies in scaling up:**
  - **How to foster political will & sustain programs?**

- **Longitudinal studies: What happens to initiatives when taken over by governments?**
  - **Is the quality of implementation the same?**
  - **Are the results and success rates the same?**
  - **Identification of successes and gaps.**

Closing Thoughts

- **Input form partners and stakeholders on these issues are not only welcomed, but necessary.**

- **By working collaboratively we hope this work will result in a positive difference in the lives of an increasing number of Roma children.**