

THE PROGRAM
“THE ACCESS TO EDUCATION OF
THE DISADVANTAGED GROUPS
WITH FOCUS ON THE ROMA”
THE PROJECT OF DÂMBOVIȚA
DISTRICT “WE WILL MANAGE
TOGETHER”*

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Abstract: The paper presents the project to facilitate the access to education of the disfavoured groups, focusing on the Roma, in Dâmbovița County. Among the strengths of the project is the incipient awareness of the school segregation of the Roma and of the adverse effects on the quality of education, the improvement of the physical environment of the schools and of the existing endowments, the improvement of education quality. Following the implementation of the project, the school inspectorate gained experience in elaborating the local educational policies and this experience is reflected in the county strategy to ensure the access to education for the disadvantaged groups, which aims to identify the problems in an objective manner and to use statistical evidence for the arguments.

Keywords: quality of education, Roma groups, educational policies, school inspectorate, school migration.

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Beneficiary: The Research and Education Ministry by The Scholar Inspectorate of Dambovita District.

Partners: The District Dambovita Council, The Local Councils from Sotanga, Potlogi, Gura Ocnitei, The Foundation for the Peoples' Support by Reciprocal Support.

The financial value of the project: 607744 €.

The main financing: The European Union with 490742€, the difference being covered by the partners.

The objective from the district level

1. A raise of the number of the children that are registered in the Fantanele and Capu Plaiului kindergartens with at least 50% till the end of the period 2003-2004, comparing with the scholar year 2002-2003.
2. To sensitize the need of education for at least 50% from the number of parents and children till the end of the scholar year 2003-2004 by:
 - To reduce with at least 75% of the scholar dropout comparing with the previous year;
 - The involvement of at least 50% of the parents in the scholar and extra scholar activities.
3. To enrich the conditions of the instructive-educational process, by rehabilitations, buildings and endowment with equipments, didactic materials, scholar furniture, till the end of the scholar year 2003-2004.

Target groups

Direct beneficiaries:

- 420 pupils that are subscribed at the I-IV classes school from Iazu;
- 590 subscribed pupils to Cojasca school;
- 645 pupils subscribed at the I-IV classes school from Fantanele, from which 140 are from the afternoon recovering programs;
- 246 pupils from the kindergarten and the no.2 school Sotanga I-IV classes;
- 66 pupils subscribed at the kindergarten and the school Capu Plaiului (Gura Ocnitei), I-IV classes;

- 474 pupils subscribed to the Romanian schools and in Potlogi;
- 200 pupils that abandoned the classes of the imperative learning from the schools Cojasca, Fantanele, Potlogi, Romanesti.

Indirect beneficiaries:

- All the teachers that teach at the schools that are included in the project, from which around 110 are from the formation program;
- The parents of all the pupils from the target groups;
- The local authorities and the community in its assembly.

Results

- The integration at the kindergarten of 125 children with the age between 3 and 6 years old; a number of 100 children from Fantanele Kindergarten and 25 children from Capu Plaiului Kindergarten. Quantitatively talking, the no.1 objective of the project was accomplished 88, 8%.
- To reduce the abandon rate with 76% comparing with the precedent scholar year over the total of the subscribed schools to the project. The dynamics of the abandon rate from the schools from the project of the years 2002-2003 (precursory year for the project) is as follows:
 - The objective of the involved parties is declared in the internal evaluations as being realized entirely. There is mentioned the presence of 1624 parents in the presented actions inside the project for all the schools included to the project.
 - The raise of graduation with 8, 9% comparing with the precedent scholar year, over the total of the schools from the project.
 - To include at the classes the second chance type of a number of 131 young people and their maintenance to these classes in a number of 123.

School	The number of pupils that abandoned in 2002-2003	The number of pupils that abandoned in 2003-2004
Romanesti	30	0
Potlogi	2	0
Sotanga	4	0
Fantanele	43	17
Cojasca	41	15
Iazu	7	0
Capu Plaiului	0	0
Total	137	32

The evaluation of the impact

The time that passed after the project ended is short and an evaluation of the impact is premature, being known the fact that the educational interventions show their effects in a longer time. Some punctual remarks can be made anyway:

- It isn't clear in what measure the raise of the number of children from the kindergarten is because of the project, the raise of birth rate or of other external factors of the project.
- The effect of the reduced desertion is a sure one, but it isn't known how sustainable it is as the project finished.
- The raise of graduation level (in other words a lower rate of no graduation) is a fragile indicator to measure the scholar performance having a great grade of subjectivity (comparing with a standardized test). The results from the last national test (2004) show very weak results from one of the school from the project. Such as:
 - To Fantanele school, from 48 subscribed pupils to the test, just one passed the exam;
 - To Cojasca school, from 80 pupils subscribed, 11 graduated the exam;
 - To Romanesti school, from 34 pupils subscribed, 7 graduated the exam;
 - To Potlogi school, from 46 subscribed pupils, 23 graduated the exam;
- In the absence of some adequate indicators of monitoring, it is hard to appreciate if the parties' subscription was an effective or formal one.

Strong points of the project

- The earned experience of the Scholar Inspectorate in elaborating the local educational policies. This experience is reflected in the district strategy of providing the access to study for the disadvantaged groups, the revised version which is superior as quality from the initial one. This version identifies the problems objectively, in real terms, brings a statistical evidence for argumentation.
- The incipient awareness of the scholar Roma segregation problem and of the negative effects over the education's quality.
- To enrich the physical environment of the schools and of the existing subsidy.
- As a result of the raise of the education level, there is a lowering of the Romanian pupils' migration from Sotanga School, in accordance with the opinion of the school's management.

Weak points

- To delay the rehabilitation work or the wrong accomplishment. As for example, the Capu Plaiului School didn't have any kind of warming in the winter 2004-2005 and the warming wiring wasn't functional even to the visit date. In the same school, the parquet from a study class damaged in a short time after it was mounted. The septic tanks from the school Capu Plaiului are badly executed. From this reason, in the school Capu Plaiului the toilets are unusable.
- The delay of the teachers' guidance.
- Some teachers left these schools after they got professional guidance through these projects (such as from the school Capu Plaiului).
- The problems that appeared for offering a warm meal in Cojasca School. The assurance of a meal was possible only for four months and not for 12 as it was initially predicted.

Recommendations

- To elaborate some monitoring indicators more sensible in measuring the impact.
- The desegregation of I-IV classes Capu Plaiului school at a distance of 1, 5 kilometers away from a school of the same level where there study mainly Romanian students. The didactical teachers from the school agree with the idea of desegregation as well as the scholar Roma mediator.
- A bigger involvement of the inspectorate.