

The Monitoring and Evaluation of the Planning Phase of a Sustainable Development Project in Rroma Communities

Abstract

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The paper that I would like to present at the Conference in Saarbrücken consists of a *monitoring of a sustainable development project* in Rroma communities in Romania. The project took place from November 2004 until August 2005. After being submitted and accepted by the Ministry of Transport and Public Construction (who ordered the project), it was implemented in one Rroma community beginning with September 2005 and subsequently I started the monitoring in late October 2005. Briefly, the project offers principles of intervention in Rroma communities with an emphasis on *housing* and *sustainable development*, by integrating the Rroma communities in the larger administrative to which they belong. My position is at the same time privileged and difficult, as not only am I now conducting the impact assessment and evaluation, but in the project I coordinated the sociological research, and therefore I have the task to evaluate my input in the project also. From this position, I know that part of the team's agenda was the changing of the housing law that in the researchers' beliefs would facilitate the declared scope (sustainable development through housing).

The *monitoring* sets to measure the effectiveness of the project by focusing on the *impact assessment*, and offering a support material for the overall evaluation.

The **impact assessment** is based on an extensive *comparison* between *three Rroma communities*: one in which there has been implemented this very project that I am currently evaluating, a second one where there has been implemented another project of development; and a last one without any development project. Therefore, there are two control groups (the last two communities). This will allow us not only to clarify the statement “better some project than none”, but also to see if this very project was more effective than another. In order to conduct the impact assessment of the project, I take and operationalise the dependent variable; i.e. integration of the Rroma in the larger

community and see the different levels of the development project (independent variable) and the way they have an impact on the communities.

The methodology is mainly *qualitative*, on the one hand because it serves the comparative purpose of the evaluation, and on the other hand due to the lack of statistical data on the Roma population. I base my analysis on interviews I conducted with *members of the Roma communities*: leaders, women and men of different ages, employed and unemployed. Another group of people very important are other *experts in the domain and people involved in the decision making*. With this group I conducted one focus-group and there will also be a round table.

There are many projects on sustainable development in the Romanian context, nonetheless, both the monitoring and the evaluations are done moreover from the office without regard to the effectiveness of the project on the targeted groups. The present evaluation, on the contrary, focuses on the Roma communities and all the other actors that could influence the outcome – *sustainable development*.

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