

## Roma Education Research Project Local Research Plan

<b>Name of Project:</b>	<b>INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION: HISTORY AND CULTURE OF ROMA MINORITY</b>  (Designing, publishing and disseminating supplementary Teaching materials in Bulgarian schools)
<b>Name of Country:</b>	<b>BULGARIA</b>
<b>Name of Researchers:</b>	<b>PhD Rumiana Gladicheva; Svetlana Vassileva</b>

*After each research question, please describe any issues, modifications, or additions that are relevant to your specific project or country.*

**Research Question #1 – How effective is your project is (A) getting and keeping Roma children in school through completion and (B) improving their educational achievement?**

**Issues, Modifications, or Additions Specific to Your Project/Country?**

The modification we offer is quite significant since it concerns the very project under research. We have got two different but complementary projects that can be investigated within next 5 months. (*'Roma teaching Assistant project'* and *'Intercultural Education: history and culture of Roma minority'*). Our initial idea was to try to survey both programmes. Then it became clear that we will not have time enough, on the one hand, and we will need more people and financial resources to cover both programmes, on the other. So, we had to choose among them.

We found reasonable to concentrate on *'Intercultural Education: history and culture of Roma minority'* financed by PHARE programme. We can mention few reasons to focus on the chosen project. The chosen project has got many advantages compared to the other one:

- 1) Assistant teaching practice exists also in some other countries which keeps opportunity to gather information about such an experience in other sites, while teaching materials are unique and specific. Such information can be collected only in Bulgaria at this stage of Roma Educational programmes development in the 6 countries under research.
- 2) Teaching materials are more substantial for the education system, since they provide tools that can be used by any teacher. Moreover, teaching materials can be implemented not only in Bulgaria, but also in other countries after some adjustments.
- 3) As a whole, the chosen project seems to have more strategic significance than the other one. We consider the position of assistant teachers as temporary, for the strategic solution actually is to

prepare bilingual graduated Roma teachers.

**Research Question #2 – Has your project promoted institutional or policy changes in the public schools which advance goals of equity and educational quality?**

**Issues, Modifications, or Additions Specific to Your Project/Country?**

Teaching materials have been evaluated by both relevant European Institutions and local authorities (Ministry of Education). The supplementary teaching materials are successfully included in the teaching process ranging from 1 to 11 year of study. The booklets are of help to the following subjects: History, Music, Literature.

**Research Question #3 – Has your project results in (A) a change in attitude toward Roma children among teachers and other school staff, (B) a change in attitude toward Roma children among non-Roma children and their parents, and (C) a change in self-characterization by Roma children?**

**Issues, Modifications, or Additions Specific to Your Project/Country?**

We have already received some general information about the referenced issues thank to the sociological research and the established practice to ask for feedback regularly (when it is possible). For instance,

A). 90% of teachers that have already implemented the above materials report about such changes in their own level of knowledge, understanding and attitude.

(B). Non-Roma children became more curious to know about unknown cultural traditions.

(C). Yes, it was identified a higher self-confidence among them, not only in the school, but also in a broader social environment- clubs, the very Romani community. So, the school in this case acts in fact as an initiator of other activities and forms of interethnic co-operation.

**Research Question #4 – What is the feasibility of replicating your project within your country or in other countries based on issues of cost, resources, institutions, and culture?**

**Issues, Modifications, or Additions Specific to Your Project/Country?**

We can share some preliminary conclusions leading to description of some specific aspects.

The sustainability of the project depends on the strategy of funding, because in case of successful first steps, the project will have to proceed further in the following directions:

- materials to be improved, enhanced and kept available via larger print run;

- teachers' training to go on;

- institutionalization and irreversible formal embodiment of the teaching materials in the curriculum.
- Teaching materials should be published not only in Romani (Latin Alphabet) and Bulgarian, but also in English (for example). It will be really convertible in any other socio-cultural context.

***Please describe your current plans or best estimates for carrying out the research associated with the Roma Education Research Project in your home country. In your descriptions, indicate an approximate timeline for completing the different phases of the plan. Where appropriate, indicate how the responsibilities for the research activities will be divided among the researchers. If any or all of the activities associated with any phase of the research project are not relevant to your local plan, indicate that in your responses to the appropriate planning questions below.***

***We recognize and expect that some activities, allocations of responsibility, or schedules will change as you carry out your local research plan. When it becomes apparent that any of the plans included in this document need to change, please notify us as soon as possible.***

**Phase #1 – Prepare a brief written background description on (A) the structure and operation of the public school system in your country, (B) the geographic distribution of Roma children in your country, and (C) educational problems and challenges facing Roma children in your country.**

**What sources do you expect to use in preparing this written background description?**

- 1) website of Interethnic Initiative Foundation
- 2) website of Leonardo programme
- 3) Sociological survey report, data collection field work June- July 2000
- 4) National Statistics
- 5) OSF database, financed projects
- 6) Report on ‘Roma people in Bulgarian Education System’, by Jennifer Tanaka
- 7) National assessment 2000, Ministry of Education
- 8) website of PHARE project ‘School for every child’
- 9) Kolio Kolev Research report on Children at school, 2000

**When do you expect to complete this document?**

Our suggestion: 15 November 2000

Expected by you: 30 October 2000

Responsible: Rumiana Gladicheva

**Phase #2 – Gather information to prepare Program Profile by (A) conducting initial interviews with the Project Director, other project managers, and representatives of organizations knowledgeable about the project (Soros Foundation, other funders, national and local governmental agencies, and non-governmental organizations) and (B) obtaining and review written documents, news articles, and videotapes related to the project.**

**Who do you expect to interview (indicate position and organizational affiliation)?**

1. Ilona Tomova, Project Director of Intercultural education: history and culture of Roma minority
2. Kalina Boseva, Project Director of Intercultural education: history and culture of Roma minority
3. Kristin Razsolkova, Program Director for Education and Culture, OSF Sofia
4. Yosif Nunev, Expert at the National Board of Ethnical and Demographic Issues
5. Elka Andreeva, Expert at the Ministry of Education, Department of Mainstream Education
6. Alexander Grozdanov, Expert at the Ministry of Education, Department of Mainstream Education
7. Regional experts of the Ministry of Education (3 persons)
8. Local Roma NGOs
9. Antonina Zheliazkova, Director of International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations' Foundation
10. Ervant Stepanian, ex-chief of Educational policy Department, Ministry of Education
11. Rumyan Russinov, Board of Directors of The Human Rights Project Foundation
12. Outside funders

**What steps do you expect to take and what sources do you expect to employ to obtain written documents, news articles, and videotapes related to the project?**

- 1) website of Interethnic Initiative Foundation
- 2) available videotapes
- 3) The Ethnoreporter journal, in Bulgarian and English
- 4) nation-wide and regional coverage newspapers, newsletters etc.
- 5) reports of Slavka Grebenarova, Venzislav Dimov, Emilia Mateina and Maria Stoimenova
- 6) other articles

**When do you expect to complete these activities?**

Our suggestion: 30 November 2000

Expected by you: 6 Nov 2000

Responsible: Rumiana Gladicheva

**Phase #3 – Collect statistical records on (A) the project’s impact on Roma students (see Research Question #1), (B) direct services provided by the project to school staff, Roma parents, and other adults, (C) the project’s budget and expenditures.**

**Which Roma students do you expect to use to assess the project’s impact, including age/grade level, type of community, geographical region, and other relevant characteristics? If only a sample of students benefiting from the project will be included in the research, indicate the anticipated size of the sample and list the criteria to be used in selecting the sample.**

- 1) students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> year of study
- 2) in primary and secondary schools
- 3) we plan to observe 9 participant schools (selected among 35 schools involved in the programme) and 9 non-participant schools. 9 participant schools are about 25% of the targeted cluster. The axes participant/non-participant will be the only difference between them. All the other criteria for selection will be common for both clusters.
- 4) schools of different kinds: we will observe ethnically homogeneous and mixed schools within each cluster selected in a proportion that represents their share in the realm.
- 5) according to the type of residence of respondents: students in schools in the Capital (3+3=6),

regional administrative centres, small towns (3+3=6) and villages (3+3=6). All together 18 schools.

We are still discussing whether to choose one group of students (one class) in each of the 18 schools and then to interview all the students in the selected groups (all together 18 groups/classes) or to apply some other approach. If we choose the first approach we will have to interview about 360 students, because each group has got approximately 20 students enrolled ( $18 \times 20 = 360$ ). The problem is that most of the persons involved (directly or indirectly) in the research project find this amount too big.

**What are the relevant characteristics of the students that you expect to use as comparison group(s)?**

- 1) Roma and non-Roma students that study in schools without special programmes for roma children
- 2) other ethnic/religious minorities: Jewish, Muslim, Roma people having Muslim self-identification
- 3) schools in the Capital, regional administrative centres (district towns), small towns and villages.

**What types of records (i.e. enrollment, attendance, course grades, completion, and disciplinary) will you seek to obtain for both the target population of Roma students and the comparison groups?**

- 1) schools records, schools documentation
- 2) enrollment records for children up to 16 years old
- 2) community population registers

**IF RELEVANT, what types of records will you seek to obtain for adults (school staff, parents, or others) who are direct recipients of project services or direct participants in project activities?**

- 1) staff: schools records, regional inspectorates, officially registered subjects in schools records like Roma language, Roma history etc.

In addition, we need to obtain Information about the quality of services provided to the school staff. Such information can be collected from: written teaching materials, audio/video materials, opinions of teachers about their training and impressions from the very teaching materials.

- 2) parents: applications for studying Roma-related subjects signed by them on behalf of their children

**What steps do you expect to take to identify and obtain the records and to ensure that they are in the appropriate computer-readable format for analysis?**

Contacting:

- 1) schools masters/principals
- 2) regional inspectorates that usually keep the mentioned above parents applications
- 3) NGOs

Note: if they are not in computer-readable format we can edit them in the required format.

**When do you expect to complete these activities?**

Our suggestion: 20 January 2001

Expected by you: 30 November 2000

Responsible: Svetlana Vassileva and Rumiana Gladicheva

**Phase #4 – Conduct surveys or interviews of project staff, knowledgeable school staff, adult participants in project activities, and representatives of government agencies and non-governmental organizations who know about the project. Surveys or interviews will focus on project structure and operation, direct services provided by the project, and project impact on Roma students, families, communities, schools, and others.**

**Who do you expect to interview or survey (indicate positions and organizational affiliations)?**

- 1) 6 persons project staff, incl. 4 Co-ordinators affiliated to Interethnic Initiative Foundation
- 2) Experts of the regional Inspectorates, Government structures
- 3) Teachers and school masters
- 4) Members of local clubs, radio and TV local centers
- 5) Probably also Roma parents who are members of the School Boards.

**Do you expect to conduct interviews or surveys with each of these groups**

Yes, we do.

**What steps do you expect to take to identify individuals to interview, obtain their**

**participation, and conduct the interviews?**

Preliminary contacts and then site visits.

These activities probably will go in parallel to phase #5.

**When do you expect to complete these activities?**

Our suggestion: 20 February 2001

Expected by you: 29 December 2000

Responsible: Rumiana Gladicheva and Svetlana Vassileva

**Phase #5 – Conduct site visits to schools and direct service locations operated by the project (i.e. centers) for (A) tours of the schools and/or locations, (B) observations of classrooms or project activities, (C) follow-up interviews with the project director, other project management staff, and project direct service staff, and (D) interviews and/or focus groups with school staff, students, parents, and others.**

**How many schools do you expect to visit? What are their relevant characteristics? If you are visiting only a sample of schools that are participating/benefiting from the project, what criteria did you use to make the selections?**

In the project were involved 35 schools, were trained 200 teachers, all together around 4000 students were involved (Roma and non-Roma ). About 9 schools are going to be chosen among the participants of the programme and 9 non-participant schools of the same type in order to compare their achievements. Typology (sample selection of the schools) will rely on criteria: region, neighborhood, educational level of completion, profile and prestige.

**IF RELEVANT, how many project service sites (i.e. centers) will you visit?**

Apart from schools, some services were provided by few establishments called Clubs ‘Dialogue’. These service sites emerged to some of the schools in the course of the project as experimental/pilot forms of interethnic educational initiatives. (Rakitovo, Silistra and Vidin). These clubs appeared more or less spontaneously but were inspired by the project under research.

**How do you expect to conduct the site visits?**

At least two persons will have to visit each site for at least two working days.

**What steps do you expect to take to recruit interview subjects among program staff? How do you expect to conduct the interviews?**

A very important step for phase #5 and #6 will be preparation and appropriate dissemination of written instruction(s) for interviewers. If necessary, it is better even to organize group face-to face instruction than to face misunderstanding a bit later.

About the concrete steps here.

First of all to contact them and to provide their agreement to co-operate.

- 1) We intend to carry out interviews individually, confidentially and orally.
- 2) Where appropriate, to let people to fill in the forms on themselves

**What steps do you expect to take to recruit interview subjects among school staff, students, parents, and others? How do you expect to conduct the interviews?**

- 1) to identify who is still available among teachers (some activities of the project started 3-4 years ago);
- 2) to follow (if it is possible) the same representative sample as at the beginning
- 3) individual interviews and questionnaires.

***Shortly:***

School staff: individual interviews

Parents: interviews and focus groups for non-Roma parents

Students: interviews and focus groups for non-Roma students

**When do you expect to complete these activities?**

Our suggestion: 28 February 2001

Expected by you: 23 February 2001

Responsible: Svetlana Vassileva

**Phase #6 – Conduct field interviews with Roma students, Roma families, and other appropriate interview subjects. Field interviews should be conducted in homes, community centers, or other community locations.**

**What steps do you expect to take to identify potential interview subjects and to obtain their**

**participation in the interviews?**

- 1) already have been pointed out two comparative groups of schools, respectively students, parents etc: participants and non-participants in the programme.
- 2) to ask assistant teachers to assist in getting access to relatively closed Roma community; also to ask Roma parents in the School Boards.
- 3) to ask Roma students in High Schools and Universities to help us
- 4) first to contact them in other way -phone, mail or to inform them using community mediators

**How do you expect to conduct the interviews and particularly how do you expect to deal with language differences and with gaining the confidence of the Roma interview subjects?**

One of the members of our research team (Svetlana) is going to be our key representative in the Roma minority sites. We can rely mainly on her to provide access to some Roma communities. Nevertheless, we will ask for help also some of the following groups:

1. Assistant teachers
2. Roma students in High Schools and Universities, mainly in Faculties of Education/Pedagogy
3. Roma NGOs and Roma Informal Clubs
4. Teachers in Mother languages in schools
5. Radio-issues of Svetlana
6. Roma representatives for co-interviewers
7. Volunteers
8. To use the engagement approach 'Do you know anybody else who would like to interviewed?'
9. Others

**When do you expect to complete these activities?**

Our suggestion: 28 February 2001

Expected by you: 23 February 2001

Responsible: Svetlana Vassileva

*Most local Soros foundations have agreed to provide you access to equipment, supplies, materials, and other resources that you need to carry out your local research project. Please contact the representative of the local foundation to arrange for this assistance. If you have any questions or problems regarding this assistance, please contact Christina McDonald.*

*If you need additional resources to support your local research beyond those made available by the local foundation, please list these additional budgetary requirements in the categories below. Provide brief justifications for the requests and estimated costs (if possible).*

*Unfortunately we haven't been informed up to now by the Local OS Foundation what is the amount foreseen by them for the present research. The issue is going to be discussed next week when responsible persons from the OSF will be available and ready for negotiations. I will contact you as soon as possible with regard to the information requested below.*

<b>Description</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>
<b>Additional Staff (primarily to assist with interviews of Roma adults or children):</b>		
<b>Travel (primarily for site visits and interviews):</b>		
<b>Other Needs:</b>		