



Annual Report 2010 **Spolu** Strengthening
the Roma Voice
Make the Roma voice heard!

Spolu International Foundation

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Photo: Simone de Geer

Family Ahmetovic, stateless in The Netherlands, depending on support from the society. Their requests for a nationality; one of the universal human rights; have been rejected over and over again.

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Content

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Preface |
| 4 | Evaluating the past five years |
| 5 | Our Partners |
| 6 | Local communities united in regional networks |
| 7 | Financial paragraph |
| 8 | Achievements 2006-2010 |

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www.ergonetwork.org

With the merging of Spolu and ERGO, the website of Spolu has become inactive. All relevant information on previous work and partners can still be found on www.spolu.nl, but new information is placed on the website of the new ERGO Network.



Preface

By **Ruus Dijksterhuis**, Director ERGO Network

With pride I present you the annual report of Spolu International, which covers mainly the achievements of the “Strengthening the Roma Voice Programme” 2006–2010. The external evaluation done in 2010 confirms our view that the Strengthening Programme allowed us to learn more and discover better how to intervene in daily realities of Roma, in local, national and European contexts. While testing grassroots and mobilization approaches, some interesting and encouraging results have been achieved.

The Strengthening Programme aimed to contribute to a strong and successful grassroots Roma movement through which Roma are able to make their voices heard, and to develop negotiating power to obtain equal opportunities. With a relatively small budget, through low-cost, effective projects, with a hands-on approach, we supported 9-13 partner organisations, empowered 18-24 networks and intervened in 51-95 communities in 7-9 countries. We connected dedicated people to our work. These people are deeply involved in contributing to the Roma cause and include board members, staff and key partners.

As there are only a few strong and recognised Roma organisations, we invested largely in the organisational capacity of partner organisations and grassroots groups. We have been very tough on financial and organisational issues, in order to ensure their much needed transparency and professionalism. Even though this took much effort from both our partners and Spolu, we are proud that some of them became recognised and trustworthy (even role model) organisations.

ERGO Network, in which most partners are united, became a recognised European stakeholder and is appreciated for

its dedication on grassroots, bottom up focus. Still, significant work needs to be done to improve the position of Roma in Europe in general and to propose replicating models which can be up-scaled on European level. However, it needs to be acknowledged that we work in a difficult environment due to the combination of taken-for-granted anti-Gypsyism and the complexity of societal and political realities, while there is hardly any support for Roma organisations to address this.

At the same time, grassroots empowerment of Roma remains a crucial precondition for their social inclusion; real, lasting solutions need long term investments! Also a more experimental, learning-by-doing approach to identify methodologies that tackle the root causes of social exclusion needs to be in place. Now that ERGO and Spolu have merged into one organisation, we are well equipped to face the challenging environment within which we work.

Stateless Roma women in the Netherlands



Photo: Simone de Greef

The “Strengthening the Roma Voice Programme” that Spolu implemented with its partners during 2006-2010, ended last year. In 2010 Spolu evaluated the programme which resulted in analyses of the successes and the failures of the programme and suggestions for further interventions. This annual report shares the main conclusions of this evaluation.



Evaluating the past five years

With the Strengthening Programme Spolu choose to invest in Roma capacity and to ensure that the voice of the Roma people is heard. Roma need to be empowered to defend their own cause and ask for equal rights and opportunities in society.

The Strengthening Programme aimed to contribute to a strong and successful grassroots Roma movement. Many Roma

in Eastern Europe live in ‘third world enclaves’ in their society. Authorities tend to look away from the problems Roma encounter instead of trying to solve them. Different key factors such as a critical mass among Roma or methods to curb anti-Gypsyism tendencies are not in place. Still, the programme contributed to: a better understanding on how to empower Roma and their organisations; promotion of equal

citizenship of Roma; a strengthened ERGO network; tangible results on local and national level and experience with international campaigns to address Roma inclusion. The capacity building of Roma NGOs, which was a vital part of the Strengthening Programme, is essential and should be continued to really ensure a growing Roma citizens movement.

Goals of the Strengthening Programme

The overall goal of the programme is ‘to contribute to the achievement of equal opportunities for Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, by making a specific contribution to the creation of a grassroots Roma movement’.

The basic assumption is that local and national governments need capable and qualified Roma as partners with whom they can develop, implement and monitor the policies needed to improve the position of Roma. At the same time, Roma need organisational capacity and leadership and to unite in a Roma movement to make their common voice heard.

Working from this assumption, the Strengthening Programme concentrated on the following four sub-goals:

- Consolidating the international ERGO network.
- Consolidating the organisational structure of ERGO members.
- Establishing strong, active, well organised and visible collaborative regional networks and national coalitions.
- Mobilising local Roma communities and increasing social and organisational representative structures within these communities.

Reviewing developments Spolu

The Strengthening Programme is a learning-by-doing programme. While implementing the programme, Spolu has become an organisation developing international campaigns and contributing to European advocacy.

Continuously Spolu reflected on its role and approaches. The role of Spolu as donor, partner and leading organisation in ERGO was discussed. Attention was also given to conceptual questions like the root causes for the problems Roma encounter. Issues such as the impact of stigmatization, discrimination, and anti-Gypsyism on the Roma community have been important in the analysis of our work. We discovered that ‘agents for change’ play a crucial role in our work as well as young Roma and students. Next to empowerment through community work, the so-called “chain of information” has taken a central place in our work to make people aware of the effects of Roma stigmatization.

After the merging of Spolu and ERGO into ERGO Network, we will continue to facilitate the capacity building of ‘watch dog’ organisations and networks that monitor policies, put crucial issues on the political agenda, formulate solutions and stir public debate.

Our Partners

The Strengthening Programme enabled Spolu to support its partner organisations to become independent, professional Roma organisations, recognised as experts and respected as negotiating partners by local and national governments.



The team of partner organisation EDROM from Turkey

Strengthening the organisational development of the partner organisations is a careful process in which the demands, local context and assumptions of the partner organisation are taken into account. In this process Spolu has been switching between roles as coach, donor, controller and partner.

In the implementation of the Strengthening Programme partner organisations were expected to work on different levels. Working on the community level requires skills to understand the needs of the grassroots people and to motivate them to jointly take action. On national level, partners were stimulated to advocate for the interests of Roma and to create networks to strengthen their negotiating power. As active members of ERGO, partners gained understanding of the dynamics of European policy and its opportunities.

We learned that not all partner organisations were able to act on each level.

List of partner organisations supported

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Albania: | RAA (2006-2010) Amaro Drom (2006) |
| Bosnia: | Plamen (2008-2010) |
| Bulgaria: | Integro (2006-2010) |
| Macedonia: | Roma Progress (2006-2010) Bairska Svetlina (2006-2008) RROMA (2009-2010) Intelekt (2010) |
| Moldova: | Tarna Rom (2006-2007 & 2009-2010) Porojan (2008-2010) |
| Romania: | Impreuna (2006-2007) Fundatia Ruhama (2007) ADCIA (2007) CRCR (2007-2010) |
| Serbia: | Kethane Zajedno (2006-2007) ARS (2008-2009) DUR (2007-2010) |
| Slovakia: | Zdruzenie Spolu (2006-2008) |
| Turkey: | EDROM (2009-2010) Romankara (2009-2010) Matra Programme (2011/2012) |

Spolu decided to challenge the promising organisations to take a leading position in the ERGO network and in their country. For other partner organisations the focus remained on the local level or they received support for a specific goal, such as youngsters and students. This ensured that each partner worked according to its ambitions and capacities.

PLAMEN: Let's play with our trash

Spolu supported the development of four new Mother Centres in Roma neighbourhoods in Bosnia. Key activity of the centres was the 'central meeting place open for all women' where women gathered and informally discussed topics of their concern. In Vitez, one of the initiatives to activate Roma women was called "Let's play with our trash", which started as a handcraft workshop where garbage was used to fabricate new items. The handcrafts were exhibited and sold at various events in the city. Through these and other activities many locals were recruited (youth and local leaders) to collectively strive for the cleanliness of their settlement. After negotiations with the Head of the District of Vitez and the public company "Komulano Vitez" it was agreed that the garbage shall be collected once a week, financed by the municipality.



Roma women meeting in Mother Centre Plamen, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Roma Active Albania (RAA): Interview

Arben Rushiti, Roma leader

RAA taught us to listen to the opinion of others, to be transparent about all activities and to search for a dialogue with the authorities. Although much remains to be improved, we now meet and discuss with local authorities about different issues.

Valbona Dervishi, Project Coordinator RAA

Our strong vision is our strength. We don't aim for short term results; we are patient and give people time to develop. Most organisations that offer training courses to Roma people don't follow them over longer periods of time. We do not only increase capacities through trainings, but also make them understand that the first steps towards change should come from themselves.

Adriatik Hasantari, Director RAA

We felt that we had ownership of the Strengthening Programme, because we were treated as an equal partner in the development of strategies. We were able to experiment and develop our own approach. Spolu coached us in analysing and changing our methods. Also, we had financial security, which allowed us to focus on the long term.

Local communities united in regional networks

Through the Strengthening Programme local Roma leaders were trained to establish grass-roots groups that increased self organisation and social structures in the Roma communities.

Where these local structures were in place, partner organisations united them in regional or national networks.

Most networks started as platforms of exchange, developing into places where common problems were recognised and translated into action plans to address the regional authorities. Now, at the end of the Strengthening Programme these networks face the challenge to further grow into independent, respected and effective entities and to find financial support to continue their work.

Specific attention has been paid to the establishment of networks of Roma youngsters and students. The participants of these networks are supported to become the next generation of Roma leaders. In general, young people are more eager to learn and to share, and are easier to activate than the older Roma leaders. They understand the concept of empowerment and believe in the importance of networking.

EDROM: Roma in Thrace region advocate together for their priorities

In 2010, EDROM established the Thrace Roma network, a regional network representing more than thirteen Roma associations. In December, the Thrace network presented a joint declaration to local, regional and national governments on the four main priorities for Roma in the region. This was one year after the Turkish Prime Minister held an official speech on Roma issues. The Thrace network succeeded in presenting their needs in a structured way and became a serious stakeholder towards the government. This has resulted in support from municipalities for the needs of the Roma in Thrace.

On European level, EDROM was actively involved in the consultation process of DG Enlargement. They visited the DG and presented their local advocacy campaign, which provided EU representatives with insight that there is still a large gap in the reality at grassroots level, the national policies and in the programmes and the perspective at European level. Fortunately, the EU support and the commitment of the national government in the past year are indicators of improvement of the recognition of Roma interests in Turkey.



Participants at national Roma meeting in Turkey, 10th of December 2010

POROJAN: Children's initiative supported by local authorities

Partner organisation Porojan from Moldova supports the Roma Children and Youth Network (RCYN) that unites more than 60 Roma children. Through various activities and intensive support, the children are trained to become a new generation of self-conscious, well informed Roma who can stand up for their rights in the future. Taking into consideration the weak civil society in Moldova in general, this is an enormous achievement.

The RCYN has a direct impact on the community level, as many activities take place locally. The most concrete effect on local level has been the establishment of the Ludotheca in Parcani. This initiative is the first of its kind. It is a centre that is fully run by youth from the network aiming to support other children by organising educational activities. In the framework of the Ludotheca, Roma youth have the possibility to increase their organisational capacities. The local administration has provided a classroom. With the support of Spolu, necessary materials such as books, toys and other educational equipment were purchased. Local authorities and pedagogues have promised to support the initiative also in the future.



Children from RCYN from Parcani, Moldova

Financial Paragraph

This paragraph provides a summary from Spolu's Annual Report 2010, namely the Balance Sheet and the Profit and Loss Account, an Auditor's Report as well as donations received in 2010. The figures are derived from the annual report 2010, which has been issued by BDO Audit & Assurance B.V. Maastricht-Airport.

Summary balance sheet as at 31 December 2010 (in euros)

| ASSETS | 31 December 2010 | 31 December 2009 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Fixed assets</i> | | |
| Intangible fixed assets | | |
| • Other | 4.843 | 7.002 |
| <i>Current assets</i> | | |
| Inventories and work in progress | | |
| • Non-concluded projects | 603.463 | 3.300.798 |
| Receivables | | |
| • Other receivables and prepaid income | 11.286 | 13.040 |
| Cash at Banks | 534.656 | 357.545 |
| Total assets | 1.154.248 | 3.678.385 |

| EQUITY AND LIABILITIES | 31 December 2010 | 31 December 2009 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Equity</i> | | |
| Reserve | 92.747 | 76.851 |
| <i>Short-term liabilities</i> | | |
| Creditors | 30.596 | 65.372 |
| Taxes and social security premiums | 8.094 | 9.778 |
| Advance subsidies | 957.858 | 3.512.199 |
| Other liabilities and accrued expenses | 64.953 | 14.185 |
| | 1.061.501 | 3.601.504 |
| Total liabilities | 1.154.248 | 3.678.385 |

Summary profit and loss account 2010 (in euros)

| | 2010 | 2009 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Net sales | 435.716 | 744.332 |
| Project result concluded projects | 59.282 | 0 |
| Project costs non-concluded projects | -210.806 | -492.701 |
| Project related result | 284.192 | 251.631 |
| Revenue not project related | 272 | 272 |
| Not project related result | 272 | 272 |
| Gross operating result | 284.464 | 251.903 |
| Total operating expenses | 279.910 | 251.631 |
| Operating result | 4.554 | 272 |
| Financial income and expense | 11.342 | 7.805 |
| Result | 15.896 | 8.077 |

Auditors' Report

In accordance with your instructions, we have compiled the financial statements 2010 of Stichting Spolu International Foundation, Utrecht, which comprise the balance sheet as at 31 December 2010, the income statement for the year then ended and the notes.

Management's responsibility

The distinctive feature of a compilation engagement is that we compile financial information based on information provided by management of the entity. Management is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the information provided and the financial statements based thereon.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to perform the engagement in accordance with Dutch law, including the Rules of Professional Conduct and Practice issued by our professional organisation.

We have compiled the financial statements in accordance with the compilation engagement standard applicable to auditors. Our procedures were limited primarily to gathering, processing, classifying and summarising financial information. Furthermore, we have evaluated the appropriateness of accounting policies used in the compilation of the financial statements, based on the information provided by the company. These procedures do not provide assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

Confirmation

Based on the information provided to us, we have compiled the financial statements in accordance with the applicable statutory rules and/or regulations.

Maastricht-Airport, July 2010
BDO Audit & Assurance B.V.
on its behalf,
Drs. M.M.G. Mans RA

Donation awarded in 2010

The Foundation has received a contribution of over 0,7 million euro from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (TMF, Matra Programme and Human Rights) and ICCO for implementation of the programme "Strengthening the Roma Voice" in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, Turkey and for the ERGO Network. For the implementation of this Programme in Bulgaria and Romania the institutions Cooperating Netherlands Foundations and Kerkinactie have contributed a total amount of 0,2 million euro. From the European Commission the Foundation has received a contribution of 0,3 million euro for the "Pilot project Pan-European Coordination of Roma Integration Methods – information and Awareness Raising – REACT!: Make Europe an equal place for Roma".

Achievements

2006-2010

Overview of the results of the Strengthening Programme

Summary: Between 2006-2010, Spolu supported 9-13 partner organisations in 7-9 countries empowering 18-24 networks intervening in 51-95 communities.

| ALBANIA | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Summary of results | |
| Partners | In Albania, Spolu supported 2 partner organisations: Amaro Drom (2006) and RAA (2006-2010). RAA is recognised NGO in Albania and abroad, as Decade Watch partner, however the administrative capacities of the NGO can still be improved. It is one of the founding members of the ERGO Network. |
| Networks/Coalitions | RAA facilitates two regional offices, that support two regional networks (Fier: 2006-2010, Korca: 2007-2010). RAA supports two networks: an informal youth network established in 2007 representing 35 students and an informal women's network is established in 2007, representing up to 90 women in 2010. RAA established a platform of 6 Roma NGOs that is a sought stakeholder in Albania. RAA has been the leading organisation in the Ternype network; a informal European Roma Youth network. |
| Communities | RAA has supported from 8 (2006) to 12 (2007-2008) communities, in each community local structures are established, including a local board, youth/ children groups and women's groups. |
| BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA | |
| Summary of results | |
| Partners | In Bosnia-Hercegovina Spolu supported Mother Centre Plamen (2008-2010). Plamen is a training centre for Mother Centres in Western Balkans, that supports two Roma Mother Centres. |
| Networks/Coalitions | Plamen has facilitated exchange visits for partners from Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Serbia for initiating Mother Centres. |
| Communities | Roma Mother Centres are established in Zenica and Vitez and 4 new initiatives are started for Mother Centres in Roma communities. |
| BULGARIA | |
| Summary of results | |
| Partners | In Bulgaria Integro Association has been supported (2006-2010) and further developed as a professional NGO that is recognised in Bulgaria and abroad. It is one of the founding members of the ERGO Network. Integro acts as a Resource Centre for Turkey, Macedonia and Bosnia. |
| Networks/Coalitions | Integro supports 3 regional networks: GORD network (representing local leaders and NGOs from 30 communities), youth (37 members) and women's network (20 women). Integro is the thriving force behind the national coalition of 5 national Roma NGOs. |
| Communities | Integro has supported from 15 (2009) to maximum 27 (2007) communities, in each community local structures are established, including a youth/ children groups, Mother Centres, IGA groups or Roma clubs. |
| MACEDONIA | |
| Summary of results | |
| Partners | In Macedonia four partners are supported: Roma Progress (2006-2010), Bairska Svetlina (2006-2008), RROMA (2009-2010) and Intelkt (2010). Roma Progress is associate member of the ERGO Network. |
| Networks/Coalitions | Roma Progress supported three regional networks: Active Councils (with representatives from 8 communities - 2006-2010), Youth (2006-2009) and Artist network (2006). The Youth Network became an indepent NGO in 2009, representing 40 youth. Bairska Svetlina initiated one regional network (2007-2008). |
| Communities | Roma Progress has supported from 5 (2006) to maximum 7 (2008) communities, in each community local structures are established, including active groups (youth, women, men), local boards, communicative body, Roma advisory group. Bairska Svetlina supported 4 communities, initiating Initiative Groups in each community. |
| MOLDOVA | |
| Summary of results | |
| Partners | In Moldova two partners are supported: Tarna Rom (2006-2007 and 2009-2010) and Porojan (2008- 2010). Tarna Roma is associate member of the ERGO Network. |
| Networks/Coalitions | Tarna Rom initiated and supports the Roma Voice Coalition, representing up to 20 Roma NGOs. Porojan supports two regional networks (Children and Youth network and Students network) counting 44 members. |
| Communities | Tarna Rom and Porojan have supported from 4 (2007) to maximum 8 (2009) communities, in each community local structures are established, including local RCYN-groups, afterschool classes, Roma students group. |

Donors and Supporters in 2010

www.kerkinactie.nl
geloven-helgen-bevoren



Campaign financed with the support of the European Union

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ROMANIA | Summary of results |
| Partners | In Romania four partners are supported: Impreuna (2006-2007), Fundatia Ruhama (2007), ADCIA (2007) and CRCR (2007-2010). The PCR from Romania is member of ERGO Network. Through ERGO, Spolu supported PCR to get established and recognised. |
| Networks/Coalitions | Impreuna established an Active Roma Organisations network (2006-2007). CRCR supports national Roma youth network with three regional branches, representing 160 students. A network of Roma activists is initiated (2007). |
| Communities | Impreuna supported up to 22 communities (2006), CRCR supported youth clubs in 4 communities (2007-2010). |
| SERBIA | Summary of results |
| Partners | In Serbia three partners are supported: Khetane Zajedno (2006-2007), ARS (2008-2009) and DUR (2007-2010). |
| Networks/Coalitions | ARS initiated two networks (youth and students network representing 45 students). DUR established a Roma Solidarity Movement representing NGOs from different fields. |
| Communities | Khetane Zajedno supported 8 (2007) communities, in these communities an informal network of local leaders is initiated. DUR supports Roma settlements in Belgrade (88 settlements). |
| MOLDAVA | Summary of results |
| Partners | In Slovakia one partner is supported: Zdruzenie Spolu (2006-2008). Zdruzenie Spolu was member of ERGO till 2008. |
| Networks/Coalitions | Zdruzenie Spolu facilitated two regional offices. It supported two regional networks of Roma leaders (eastern and central Slovakia) and a Roma women network representing 20 women. |
| Communities | Zdruzenie Spolu supported from 13 (2008) to 18 (2006) communities, in each community local structures are established. |
| TURKEY | Summary of results |
| Partners | In Turkey two partners are supported: (EDROM 2009-2010) and Romankara (2009-2010). EDROM is associate member of ERGO network. |
| Networks/Coalitions | EDROM supports two networks representing local leaders (Romdef Network and Thrakya Network). The Romdef Network was started initially, but a number of members have joined the Thrakya Network instead. Currently the Thrakya Network is representing 15 organisations. |
| Communities | EDROM directly works in 6 communities in Edirne region, besides 15 communities are supported through the Thrakya Network. EDROM uses small scale grants to train the communities in the field of advocacy and lobby. Romankara supports Roma youth in Ankara. |
| ERGO Network | Summary of results |
| Members | ERGO Network represents 7 members from 7 countries that are recognised organisations in their countries. ERGO became a European stakeholder recognised for its grassroots relations and expertise. |
| Formal structure | ERGO registered itself in 2008 as an independent entity, with its own strategy, board and internal organisation. From 2006, Valeriu Nicolae was executive director. Since 2009, ERGO has a lobby office in Brussel. However, ERGO remained heavily depending on Spolu concerning financial support and human resources. |
| Content | From 2006-2008, a Working group on Lobby and Visibility and Working group on Mobilisation and Empowerment were involved in policy making of ERGO. Key partners were involved in policy making afterwards, such as RAA and Integro, for Youth and Local Monitoring of Policies, which are the main priorities of the 'new' ERGO. |