

30. Project: Agents of Equality

1. Opis projektu: ciele, hlavne/kľucové aktivity a výsledky projektu. Ukážte, ako organizujete Váš projekt a ako ho financujete. Ukážte nám, čo konkrétne robíte v rámci projektu a ako konkrétne pracujete. Keď sa budete vzťahovať na kritéria Sozialmarie, ulahčite nám ohodnotenie Vášho projektu. (max. 3 A4 strany)

The project „the Agents of Equality“ is the answer to the discrimination of the Roma women in their own environment, by their men and the community.

The aim of the project is to reduce the discrimination of the Roma women in the settlements and make them as much confident as they need to become full citizens of the Slovak Republic.

The project works with simple Roma women, who are mostly only primary educated. During the year the project effects about 50 women and 50 children from 6 localities in Spiš region. This is how many people are actively involved in the project.

We also consider passive people in the project participants, viewers of our activities and the inhabitants of the communities where the project is implemented.

Informations about the project are spread by electronic media as well, so thus it reaches regional and nationwide public – Roma as well as Non-Roma.

The project draws from the experiences of the people in the civic association SPOLU-Slovensko, who have worked in the Roma communities in Spiš for almost 10 years. Based on their experiences we can claim Roma men as more active and more easier to motivate for a project by a reward.

We prefer women, volunteers for our project the Agents of Equality, as these women want to change their lives and do something about it. When we find them, we start working on their self-development. Their development depends on the development of their families, children and the community.

However, we do not want to isolate them from their environment and issues of the community they live in - just the opposite.

We do activities in different ways and levels.

a/ There are mainly local activities, which we divide into social and public.

Social activities are focused on improvement of social situation, we offer self-help consulting, organize meetings in the households of the chosen women to find out where our help is necessary, we do charity, f.e. In Dlhé Stráže showering of children, collection and expenditure of used clothing and shoes. We always need active local women to lean on and to accompany us during our visits. We do not come up with ideas, instead we react to a particular situation, we try to know people and not to change them to what we are. It is a long non-violent way that never ends.

We do not own clubs nor community centres or other buildings. We make use of everything already existing and work mainly outside in the terrain.

In every target locality we organize several public activities during a year; in 2016 f.e. Sport competitions in Dlhé Stráže, a drawing competition and glass painting in Podskala, a sport tournament of Spiš Roma girls in Jánovce, the St. Nicholas group in Hájik and Levočské Lúky.

These activities are s motivation for the people actively involved in the project, their reward and an impulse for the community to join. They are the proof for the public that we do good charity and that we do it with Roma people – volunteers who take responsibility and leading positions. Moreover, these activities are always the opportunity to train the skills of organizing things together, of organizing public events with a charitable aim.

30. Project: Agents of Equality

b/ Beside local activities we do regional activities too, which are mostly sport and cultural, but spiritual as well. At the same time we join nationwide or regional activities, organized by other subjects. It is not common for Roma women to take the flag to Rysy 2 500 m (a yearly hike to a mountain where organisations and people from all over Slovakia join). It happened so in the international climb where about thousand people attended (2014) and in the national climb to Kriváň (2015).

We organize cultural performances as well, f.e. In the street on International Day of Freedom for the last 3 years, organized by the Roma women leaders and performed by the children from the child development groups.

In 2016 we performed on the main stage of Spiš fair (15 July)

From spiritual activities it is mainly a national pilgrimage to the hill in Levoča (in July), which we have participated in with the Roma women for 3 years.

These activities are to attract the public, show Roma people, mainly Roma women, in a good light, to allow the change of opinions on the Roma people as the people who not only sit at home and wait for state benefits.

These activities are the reward, future motivation, wholelife experience for the people actively involved in the project as well as a good example for others.

The project activities strenghten the sense of belonging, as we often meet, talk, change opinions, work in teams (Roma and non Roma people, men – women).

c/Another important activities are seminars, trainings, courses, excursions – simply education. In 2016 we organized: 7 courses, 3 excursions and 1 seminar and for the first time we performed at Spiš fair and the fest in Hanušovce nad Topľou at the invitation of our partner.

We lead our courses in two ways:

- Continuous personality education in a professional area, which is f.e. Work with children, community work, projecting etc.,
- Hobby education, often creative – f.e. Creative workshops, sewing, decoration making etc.

d/ A specific chapter in the project the Agents of the Equality is the work with children in the child development groups Čonoro and Khamoro in Hájik and Levočské Lúky. These groups were formed in August 2016 by transforming from previous informal kindergartens, after school classes and cultural and sport activities with the Roma children done by our trained Roma volunteers as „ the instructors of education“. They are methodically guided by our qualified pedagogues, who they meet during methodical days at least once a month. They have the resource book of activities, inspired by the nature, and which they use to attract the children. This manual consists poems, songs, nursery rhymes and colouring books and it is prepared by our member – a primary teacher and our volunteer Mgr.Danka Šusterová, who also participates in many activities with our children.

The activities of the child development groups are held outside in the nature, on trips and different public performances, or in the households in the settlement.

In Levočské Lúky the women deal with the children almost every day, in Hájik twice a week and in Podskala – once a week.

e/ Parallel to these activities is work with donors, partners and media.

There is a partnership with municipality, or other institutions of public sector (schools, kindergartens, etc) in every localition.

We have had signed the agreements of cooperation with the villages Jánovce and Dlhé Stráže. We attended the municipal councils in Spišská Nová Ves and Levoča in 2016.

30. Project: Agents of Equality

We have special relationships with the town Spišská Nová Ves, where the town mayor participates in our many activities every year and, in return, SPOLU – Slovensko participates with the Agents of Equality in town activities.

New this year was the participation of our Roma children team, prepared and enrolled by our Agents of Equality, in the town evening run. It was the first time of the town history that a Roma team took part in the evening run through the town (June 2016).

In 2016 we also shared the project named the Incubator for the Community centre with the village Spišský Štiavnik, financially supported by the village (the deputies, the mayor) by the amount of 1040 Eur.

Donors are actually us - the members of SPOLU – Slovensko, because every year each of us gives a piece of their property, space or even money to help realize their activities. We have working meetings about twice a month.

Sponsors are also Roma parents, who contribute to travel expenses or admission fees on different trips, organized by the Agents of Equality.

Many public events were also supported by a Roma businessman PhDr.Stanislav Vospálek in the form of contribution on refreshment in 2016.

Beside this, we gained more than 600 Eur from 2% income tax, which were sent to us in accordance with the Income Tax Act by unknown donors.

We meet with the donors as often as we can and have special relationships with them. Our biggest donor – Welthaus Graz – is for SPOLU-Slovensko in the position of a partner and consultant.

There is a little formality and more close relations and self-help in the project the Agents of Equality.

The incomes of the civic association OZ SPOLU – Slovensko spent on the project the Agents of Equality in 2016:

Welthaus Graz :	28 000 Eur
Donors 2% from income tax :	660 Eur
Village Spiš.Štiavnik :	1 040 Eur
PhDr.Stanislav Vospálek :	200 Eur
Little donors :	100 Eur
Material help of the project partners approx. :	1 000 Eur

Expenses of SPOLU-Slovensko in 2016 :

Activities in the localities and region :	20 500 Eur
Project administration :	7 350 Eur
Small purchases and services:	2 650 Eur
Audit :	500 Eur

The Agents of Equality have presented themselves several times on TV, central as well as regional in 2016. We have special relationships with employees of TV Markíza and TV Reduta (Spišská N.Ves), who often attend our events and are interested in our activities. We have a good relationship with the daily newspaper SME, of which journalist wrote a nice article about us in 2015 and contributed with the amount of 100 Eur to SPOLU – Slovensko. The work with media was overtaken by the Roma leaders from the settlements Drahuška Poláková and Jarka Kotlářová in 2014. They even took a basic course of photography and since 2015 have been doing the documentation of their activities.

The website www.spolu-slovensko.sk and facebook spolu-slovensko is administered by the project manager.