Strengthening Roma Participation through Meaningful Advocacy

Daniela E. Miranda
CESPYD – Universidad de Sevilla

Thursday 15 October
14:00-16:00
Challenges and Opportunities for Participation

Absence of Roma community generated evidences in research and advocacy. Consequences:
- Paleative efforts based on non-Roma, majority society knowledge generation
- Roma are blamed, deemed helpless and further silenced
- Repeating oppressive systems

Marginalization at the local level. Consequences:
- High perceived sense of abandonment of public services
- Fragmentation between institutionalized services and influential Roma resources
- Strong sense of Roma identity and connection
- High capacity for resilience and resistance

Example of COVID-19 and consequences for Roma at the local level
- Current living conditions (SDDH perspective)
- NGOs and teachers from local schools provided food and emergency supplies
- Lockdown ends - no more support
- Schools reopen with new protocols without Roma participation
- Roma do not trust schools
- Blamed for school absenteeism and threatened by social services
- Sense of solidarity between Roma
Developing Sociopolitical Control for Meaningful Community Advocacy

How can we ensure that Roma have opportunities to develop sociopolitical influence and recognition at the local level?

- **Sociopolitical control.** Engages historically marginalized groups to gain a deeper political understanding through building critical knowledge, expanding their social support and engaging in local settings.

- **Advocacy.** A method that develops sociopolitical control and seeks to influence Roma policies, led by Roma community narratives and evidences.

Key ideas

Anti-racist policies should follow trauma informed care practices
  • Trust, transparency, and reflexivity

Multi-level, horizontal capacity-building
  • Roma NGO -> Evaluation, peer support and solidfy alliances
  • Roma community -> Capacity to represent selves
  • Reserachers -> Resources, tools and civic responsibility to support advocacy towards institutions

Promote synergies
  • Networks have a multi-level characteristic
  • Identify and partner with influential actors from the community
  • Link to other policy initiatives – Climate change, COVID-19 stimulus responses at the local level
The Voices of Local Roma Women

(1) What challenges do you have as Roma women in defending your rights?
(2) If you were standing in front of an EU policymaker, what message would you like to say to them?

“We have no peace of mind with the daily economic pressures. If we all had a job, this neighborhood would change.”

“There is so much opposition to us, that we ourselves believe that we are not worthy. We have to change that. Come live a day in my shoes.”

“Don’t look at us from up there, empathize with us. Change your position to change your prejudices, don’t teach me HOW to live my life.”

“We have the same problem as all women in this society, but we have our own ways of living that creates other challenges for us.”
Strengthening Roma Participation through Meaningful Advocacy

Thank you!
For more information:
danimiranda@us.es
www.cespyd.es