

Using mediation in ethnic-based conflicts

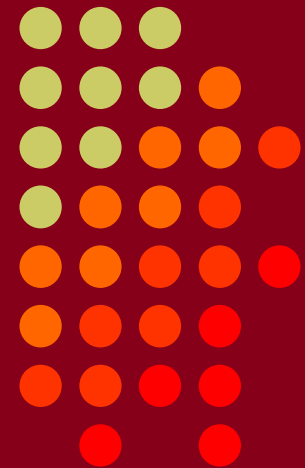
Can community building and community mediation help in a small Hungarian village, where roots of the conflicts are supposed to be the Roma people?

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Foresee Research Group

Contemporary state and perspectives of
probation & mediation

12 April 2010, Presov









**PRINCIPLES OF
COMMUNITY
BUILDING**

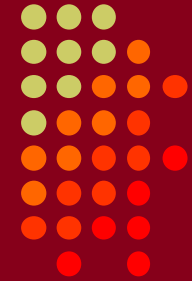
**PRINCIPLES OF
ADR/RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE**



COMMON PRINCIPLES

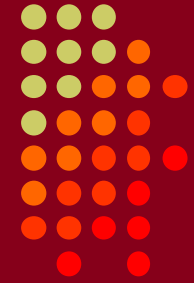
AS STARTING POINTS

(SOME) COMMON PRINCIPLES AS STARTING POINTS:



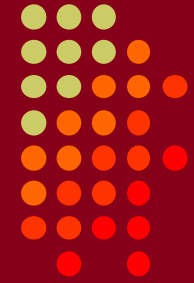
- trust, honesty amongst the actors
- voluntary and active participation - bottom up responsibility taking
- involvement of an external and impartial professional (mediator, facilitator) into the decision-making
- empowerment of the parties
- autonomy: articulation of our own interests and needs
- ‘widening the circle’: involvement of supporters: widening the internal and external social network and the available resources

(SOME) COMMON PRINCIPLES AS STARTING POINTS:



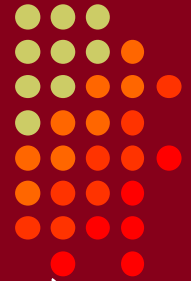
- (re)building and (re)strengthening community bonds
- cooperation and partnerships: thinking, learning, planning and working in a team
- sustainability – seeking for long term solutions
- "learning by doing"
- cohesion through communication
- future-orientation

Background of the model programme



- 800 habitants, 20% Roma
- 3 months and approx. 3500 EUR by the Ministry of Justice (Crime Prevention Comm.)
- a team of 10 professionals: mediators, community developers, social workers, film makers, photographer, communication cons.
- a network of 11 consortium partners led by the Foresee Research Group

Roots of the conflicts



- high crime rates (robberies, thefts, damages)
- conflicts of how living together peacefully
- segregation
- negative stereotypes in the community
- Romas labelled as "animals", causes of troubles
- Living in fear, in crime, in scare

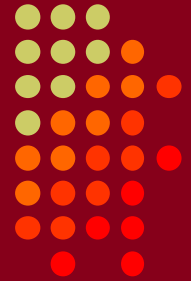
BUT....



Some people still believe
in the future of the village!

What did we do?

1. Diagnosis
2. Training series
3. ADR services
4. Community building
5. Evaluation and dissemination



1. Diagnosis - 6 focus groups and 38 interviews about harms, needs, interests, available resources, common vision



- Inter-group conflicts (minority, religious, new and old settlers, political, personal)
- Inter-ethnic marriages with non-Roma
- School employment of Roma
- Cultural differences (Roma – Swabi)
- Future of the school: structural and personal issue
- No use of existing resources
- Lack of understanding and communication between Roma and non-Roma people

ARE THESE ROMA-RELATED CONFLICTS AT ALL?

FOR WHICH OF THESE CONFLICTS WOULD YOU USE MEDIATION?

Needs of the Roma people:

- Employment
- Respectful communication
- Good schooling
- Public transport
- Activities for children, playground



ARE THESE SPECIAL
“ROMA REQUESTS”?

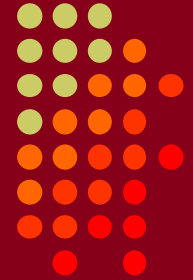


DIFFICULTIES IN THE PROGRAMME



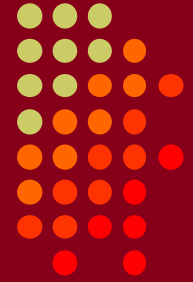
- Passivity of the school
- Lack of involvement of the local representatives of Roma people
- the "20-80 rule" – 20% of people do 80% of the work (participation in training, activities etc.)
 - how to handle the overload of these people?
 - how to increase the 20%?
 - how organise all the activities to avoid the overlap of activities?

STRENGTHS



- recognition of the problem
- openness to dialogue
- some committed people
- common vision for the future
- trust towards our team

2. TRAINING SERIES



- teambuilding
- tolerance raising
- mediation (30hrs) + case generation
- implementation + mediation protocoll

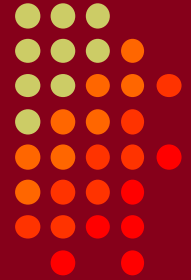
3. ADR: applying mediation and providing consultancy (co-mediation) in certain conflicts



POSSIBLE CASES

- group assault
- conflicts within the school
- norms of how living together respectfully
- thefts, damage of plants, week-end houses
- vision of the village
- events where Romas are discriminated from
- lack and use of community spaces
-

**BUT TO GAIN REFERRALS TO
MEDIATION...**



TRUST IS A MUST

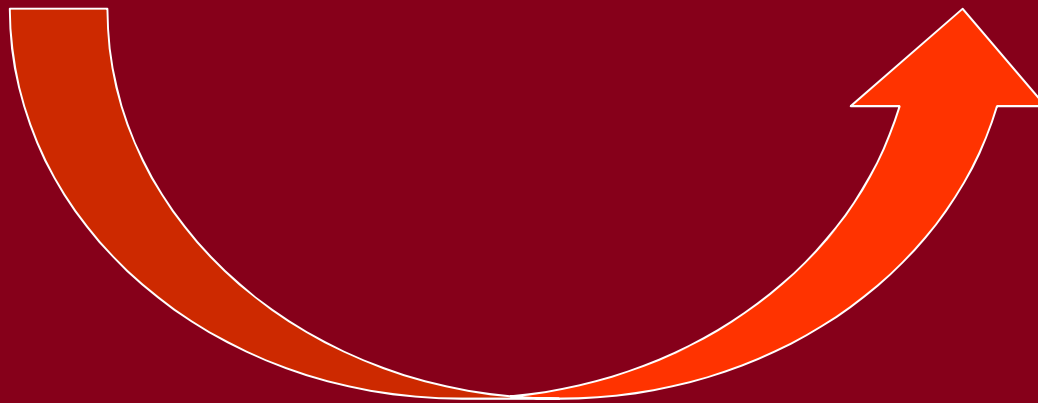
TO GAIN SMILES WE NEED.....



**COMMUNITY
BUILDING**

**MEDIATION
/RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE**

+



TOGETHER....

4. COMMUNITY BUILDING AND DIALOGUES



Empowering local volunteers by involving them into group activities for...

- strategic discussion on the future of the village
- children
- mothers and their babies
- Roma people
- helping the information flow amongst local actors and the professionals
- school supporters
- playground supporters

5. EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION



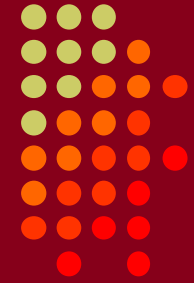
- Film
- Media news
- Presentations
- Follow-up research
- Articles and studies
- Networking

RESULTS OF THE PROGRAMME



- 14 trained volunteers
- 7 certified mediators
- successful mediation cases
- implementation protocoll
- positive impact of the group activities and the dialogue processes
- satisfaction with the programme even by those who dropped out
- wide dissemination of the film and the results

WHAT ARE STILL QUESTIONS...



- how to better keep Roma people in the programme?
- how to empower Romas to participate in community dialogues and feel them believe they are indeed equal partners?

WHAT WE ARE CERTAIN ABOUT...



- non-violent communication
- voluntary participation
- long-term sustainability in focus
- a small group of local people can make a change
- the main task is to build trust

CONCLUSION IN THREE POINTS



1. Trust cannot be achieved solely by **social work**, or **community building**, or **ADR**.
2. These approaches need to be **combined** so that people gain trust through strengthening their individual security, their integrated position in the community and their constructive conflict resolution methods.

CONCLUSION IN THREE POINTS



3. It worth looking beyond conflicts labeled as ‘ethnic-conflicts’ and focus on the real needs. 

Instead of blaming other groups, maybe there is a general question: how we can respectfully and peacefully live together?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!**



For more information, please contact:

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Our film on the project:

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