

Draft Recommendations

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMA AND EGYPTIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN ALBANIA

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Tirana, Albania

General Recommendations and key messages

- Weakness of the governance process, which lacks adequate conditions for institutional cooperation, consequently resulting in weak capacity of the national and local institutions to foster inclusion of Roma and Egyptian children and youth commitment given from the State and international community.
- Lack of adequate monitoring and support from the national to local level, especially with regards to the provision of information to Roma and Egyptian youth, development of knowledge and expertise, technical support and guidance in order to avoid frequent mistakes and learn from previous experience.
- A top-down technocratic approach, limited capacity of the country in engaging key Roma and Egyptian actors in the process – especially at local level, and the lack of adequate consultation with and participation of Roma and Egyptian minority at all phases of the policy process.
- A poor allocation of economic resources and inefficient use of funds – government continue to address Roma and Egyptian minority inclusion through project-based programs rather than sustainable and integrated programs.
- State agencies in close partnership with Roma and Egyptian organizations should address particular situation and needs of Roma and Egyptian girls and women to ensure adequate and equal access to education, employment, housing, health care and public life.

Session Specific Recommendations

Session I: Access to Quality Education for Roma and Egyptian Children and Youth: Perspective from the ground

1. Government must make resolute efforts to eradicate manifestations of Anti-Roma discrimination in schools. To this end, all institutions should ensure that teachers and other education professionals receive adequate training in multicultural education and that national discrimination law includes specific acts to make the law tangible in all levels in the sphere of education.
2. Government should acknowledge the risk of segregated schools and communities make resolute efforts to prevent actions resulting segregation of Roma and Egyptian children in schools.
3. Government may wish to consider supporting pre-school programs that help to prepare Roma and Egyptian children for primary schools, as well as “booster” early childhood development and parenting programs that provide appropriate support to Roma and Egyptian children before entering the primary schools.
4. Government should compel programs that would ensure that the costs of meals, transportation, and similar costs related to education are covered with respect to children whose parents cannot afford to pay these costs.
5. The governmental institutions should invest to the empowerment of the Roma and Egyptian parents and initiative community projects that foster multiculturalism among Roma and non-Roma population, and promote Roma and Egyptian culture in the lenses of educated Roma and Egyptian people in order to prevent practices of school segregation.
6. The government should conceive and implement a monitoring mechanism that makes sure Roma and Egyptian students attend all cycles of education

Session II – Roma and Egyptian Youth Employment: a Human Development Agenda for the Next Decade

1. Government to revise the education policy to reposition education and training to enable Roma and Egyptian entrants to the labor market with the “right” skills, including soft skills which are increasingly being demanded by employers.
2. Improve the labor market forecasting significantly. Skills shortages are result of the discontent between the education and training systems with the private corporate agencies and industries (supply vs demand).



3. Establish a Roma and Egyptian Youth Task Force which consists of government stakeholders, private corporate representatives and Roma and Egyptian youth advocacy representatives. The task force must be high level, reporting to the Office of the Prime Minister.
4. Consolidate information on Roma and Egyptian youth employment programs and interventions at one source to provide access to information.
5. State and corporate employment agencies should place particular efforts to strengthen dialogue with Roma and Egyptian youth enabling free and participatory actions toward integrated employment opportunities;

Session III – Structural and Policy Changes for Roma and Egyptian in Albania: Scaling up Collaboration at the National Level

1. Government agencies should be aware of the responsibilities deriving from the National Action Plan for Roma and Egyptian minority and proactively follow on-going developments at the central and local level.
2. Government should ensure adequate participatory support programs for the social inclusion of Roma and Egyptian minority following the principle “explicit but not exclusive targeting” and “aiming for the mainstream” with the purpose of pursuing the process of integration focused on the access and full enjoyment of the services, employment, education and participation.
3. To ensure that the dignity of all children is fully respected in schools, government should ensure that educational texts include material on Romani history and culture, especially in the regions and localities with substantial Romani populations.
4. Promulgation and implementation of affirmative action policies giving preference to qualified Roma and Egyptian in public employment, public contracting, and in all other activities undertaken and/or funded by the government.
5. Dialogue between the State agencies, Roma and Egyptian minority should be strengthened to reflect the situation in the ground and enact opportunities for the poverty reduction, equal participation, access to quality education and smooth transition to employment.

