

GUIDE FOR WORKING WITH ROMA FAMILIES TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SUCCESS OF THEIR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

**A transnational methodological proposal
for professionals**



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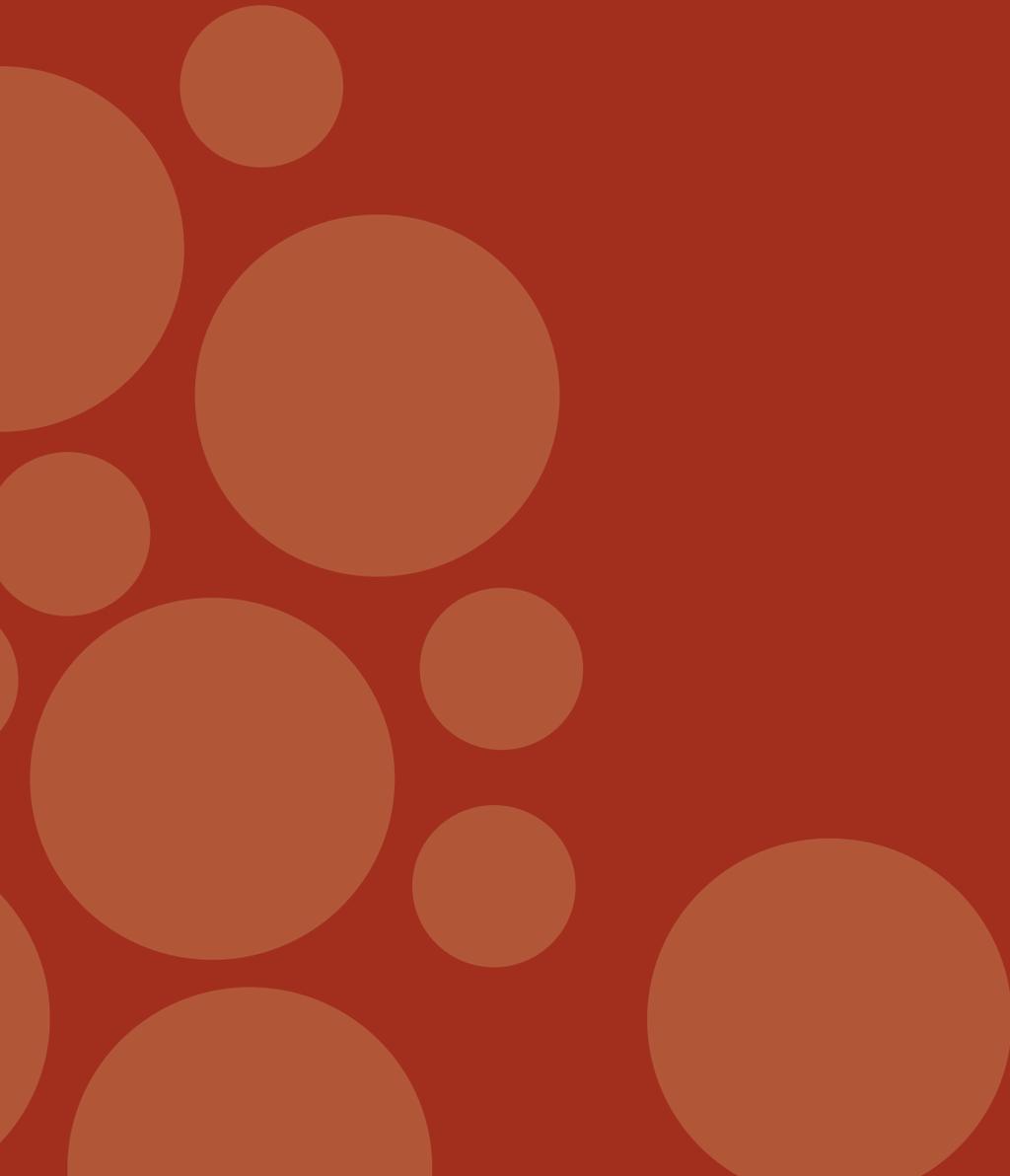


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ABOUT THIS GUIDE





0. Presentation

This guide has been the product of the transnational project "*Roma Families Get Involved: transnational methodology for working with Roma families towards their children's success in education*", with the financial support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency during 2012-2013, together with national co-finances. Various public and private organisations from Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Spain have participated as partners:

- Fundación Secretariado Gitano, Spain (project coordinator).
- Roma Education Fund, Switzerland.
- Roma Oktatási Alap (Roma Education Fund), Hungary.
- Fundatia Roma Education Fund, Romania.
- Fundația Secretariatul Romilor, Romania.
- Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, Spain.
- Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, Centre for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (COIDUEM), Bulgaria.
- Ministry of National Education, Romania.
- Local government of Ács town, Hungary.

The involvement of the family in the education of children has been found to be critical to educational success. Given the particularly important role of the family and the community in the Roma context, it is essential to increase the awareness of Roma families regarding the consequences of early school leaving for their children in terms of their personal development as well as their social and economic integration for the future. It is especially relevant to work with Roma families the permanence in the educational system of the Roma girls, who are most affected by the high early school leaving rates.

This guide pretends to contribute to improving the educational situation of Roma across Europe by engaging Roma parents more actively. To this end, the project has created from a transnational perspective, a practical methodological guide to help professionals working on the ground to involve Roma families in the educational processes of their children.

As described later on, the working methodology to produce this common guide has been very effective and has been able to bring together practical material referred to diverse settings. We want to thank those experts and collaborators that have participated in the different meetings and seminars organised around the production of the guide.

We hope this guide will be found useful by professionals working in the field of education of Roma in its transfer into different European contexts.

The guide is available in Bulgarian, English, Hungarian, Romanian and Spanish and can be downloaded at <http://romafamiliesgetinvolved.org/>

1. Introduction to and objectives of the methodological guide

Issues relative to education and to the Roma community have gained an unprecedented relevance in the political agenda, both nationally as well as at the European level. There is a wide consensus on the need to establish specific, integrated and efficient actions to compensate the inequalities and structural disadvantages that the Roma must face throughout Europe. This current political commitment is reflected in the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, which constitute extremely valuable frameworks to promote Roma integration and to fight against discrimination. The EU2020 Strategy stresses the need to reduce school drop-out rates and to increase the education levels of the European population. The European Framework highlights the determination to face the disadvantages in the educational setting that exist for the Roma population as compared to the rest of the EU's population, promoting the success of Roma boys and girls, specifically, by guaranteeing the financing of primary education at least, as well as by reducing school dropout rates by at least 10%.

These EU objectives must be taken into account in national educational policies; therefore they must centre greatly on investing in Roma children. The experience of different actors at the national level should contribute to generating knowledge of specific interventions and strategies that have an added value and a real impact on truly improving the educational levels of Roma children.

In addition, the Roma community in Europe is characterised by its youth and their low levels of qualification. They are therefore separated from the current economic life. In the mid-term and long-term, increasing the educational levels of Roma children will result in promoting equal opportunities for these children, but also, in economic growth.

Among the multiple agents that affect this situation the family has a noteworthy place given the importance the family has as one of the primary agent of socialisation in educational processes and in the development of individuals together with other social actors such as peer groups. Therefore it is essential to raise awareness among Roma families of the consequences of allowing their children to drop out of school at an early age, both as regards their personal development as well as for their future social and economic integration.

In many Roma families there are no references of relatives who have finished their basic studies and there are even fewer members who have completed studies beyond the obligatory ones. It is therefore necessary to stress this aspect, supporting families so that more and more Roma students finish their studies and become references within their own community.

It is important to bear in mind that today's Roma families are not the Roma families of the past. Roma men and women are currently in a process of

change. We see it in the young men and women that go on to study vocational training or at the university, and then, enter the labour market. Strengthening this change by involving families in the educational process of their children has become one of the most essential tools to guarantee their participation, performance, and greater success in the educational system. That is the reason why this guide is aimed at supporting families.

In addition to the family, it is also necessary to consider other key actors within this process such as: public administrations, NGOs, and of course, school centres. All of them have different but complementary roles and along with the family, they facilitate school participation and success for Roma children. These other actors are not the focus of this guide but they need to be taken into consideration within the proposed plan of action with Roma families.

1.1. General objective

The general objective of this methodological tool is to be an instrument that will facilitate the work with Roma families to reduce school dropout and increase the academic success of their children.

1.2. Specific objectives

The five specific objectives of this methodological tool are:

1. To offer a methodological model of a flexible intervention that can adapt to different contexts where actions with families are going to be carried out in the framework of educational programs or projects.
2. To provide orientation for practitioners who work with Roma families in the main tasks of the intervention process, such as:
 - Assessment of the situation of the community that is the object/subject of the intervention.
 - Dissemination of the intervention and identification and attraction of families.
 - Assessment of each family.
 - Preparation of the objectives and design of the actions in the intervention.
 - Evaluation of each family's achievements in adapting the intervention in an on-going fashion.
3. To offer guidelines to establish an adequate bond and collaboration with the family, the school centre and the student, as well as with other involved services and entities.
4. To warn about aspects that should be avoided during the intervention and to highlight all actions considered "good practices".
5. To advise about the competencies and capacities that those intervening need in order to facilitate the selection process as well as their technical training and the development of their potential.

2. Target audience of the guide

This methodological guide is intended for technical and professional teams involved in the intervention with Roma population in order to offer guidelines of action and orientation, as well as to establish common intervention criteria in the framework of education. This guide is addressed to professionals with some degree of experience in working in the social field.



3. Structure of the guide

The “guide” or “methodological tool” presents *an intervention model* based on the experience that professionals have had working in education with Roma population in the four participating countries: Bulgaria, Spain, Hungary and Romania. In so doing, we have selected and analysed *good practices* carried out in each of the participating countries, which have been analysed in national seminars. All of this work has been gathered in national reports produced by each partnering country and has been the basis to design this methodological guide which was given its final shape in an international seminar with the participating countries and several experts in the area.

The purpose of this guide is to provide a flexible tool to work with different types of Roma families. It can be used in different intervention contexts and in different programs or plans that include, among others, the goal of “working with Roma families in order to give them support to reduce school dropout and increase the academic success of their children”. The guide can also be a helpful tool in designing a specific program.

The intervention described is a methodological proposal based on different theoretical models of which we pick and choose different principles without completely adhering to any model.

The different methodological steps described in this guide are focused on the individual assessments of each one of the participating families and on the design of an individual intervention plan (FWP). It also includes an evaluation of the work that has been performed.

The guide describes different strategies, methods, actions and techniques. It is up to the practitioners to make a good choice depending on the different situations of the families and the context in which the intervention will take place.

The examples try to illustrate some common situations that can happen frequently, but they don’t pretend to reflect all the possible situations.

The guide has been structured in four central themes of content reflected in the following chapters:

Chapter 4: Describes the main factors that influence the success at school of Roma population. These are common to the participating countries in the project: Bulgaria, Spain, Hungary and Romania.

Within the framework of this same central theme we emphasise specifically, and within a broad spectrum of multiple causes, the most relevant problems related to the socio-economic situation of Roma which influence their relationship with the educational system and cause the difficulties in the inclusion and development of Roma children and adolescents (early dropout and success at school).

Chapter 5: Identifies theoretical models or approaches that serve as a framework for the methodological approach for the intervention with Roma families in the school setting.

Chapter 6: Presents a methodological tool for the intervention with Roma families in the school setting, indicating seven key steps for the intervention:

1. Analysing the environment and dissemination of the program.
2. Attracting and recruiting families and partners.
3. Approaching families and creating a bond with them.
4. The initial assessment.
5. Designing a Family Work Plan (FWP) and creating a work alliance.
6. Implementation of the actions foreseen in the Family Work Plan (FWP).
7. Follow-up and assessment of the planned intervention.

In these phases each of the key steps of the intervention are analysed in detail, highlighting the following fundamental aspects in each of them. The structure for all of them (excluding phases 6.1 and 6.7), is as follows:

- What is intended at this particular step of the intervention?
- What are the actions proposed that can help us overcome most common obstacles (difficulties)? What can we do?
- Key messages and ideas.
- An example of good practice for each specific phase (in some phases).
- Warnings and things to avoid.

Chapter 7: Identifies recommended attitudes and competencies for professionals.



EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AND THE ROMA COMMUNITY





4. Relevant factors of the educational systems and the Roma community

The Roma population in Europe and specifically the Roma population in the participating countries of the preparation of this guide, present a series of problems to access, integrate, and enjoy academic success in the educational system.

These problems that affect the Roma community result in a lack of training and therefore in a lack of access into the labour market on equal conditions with the rest of the majority population. This generates more social inequalities, less richness and an impoverished and devalued social perception of the Roma community.

The factors that influence this situation are multiple and long standing. They respond to a variety of social, economic, and cultural causes which have determined the development of the current situation of the Roma community in each of the participating countries.

In order to contextualise the methodological intervention, there is description of the social, economic and labour situation of Roma, as well as the most relevant and common factors that are directly affecting the inclusion of Roma children in the educational system in the participating countries.

The factors identified are present to different degrees in current socio-economic contexts. They must be taken into account in order to understand the complex fact, namely, the access of Roma children to education. We do not intend to speak in general terms as these factors influence the reality of each Roma community and family in different ways, nor do we intend to offer an exhaustive description of each of them. What we do intend is to evidence and identify the most noteworthy aspects that have or may have a direct repercussion on the access of Roma children and youth to the educational system and to academic success. All of them must be taken into account in designing any intervention, as the one suggested in chapter 6.

4.1. Social, economic and labour situation

The Roma constitute a large minority in the countries that have participated in preparing this guide. In Romania, for example, they are the largest ethnic group after the Hungarian minority; in Bulgaria Roma are the second ethnic minority, nearly 5.5% of the population; while in Spain it is estimated that they compose around 1.52% of the population.¹ In spite of the difficulties involved in establishing the exact proportion of Roma population that lives in each of the four countries, it is evident that they form a wide group of citizens that have been present in Europe since the XIV century.

In general terms and although there is much heterogeneity among the Roma community, the socio-economic situation of European Roma shares characteristics. Roma are more affected by poverty and extreme poverty than the majority of the population. Many Roma live today in settlements, nuclei and ghettos, occupying marginal positions in the economic and productive system.

From the perspective of economy and employment, the Roma community usually occupies a position of inequality compared to the majority of the population: they hold marginal occupations, or in some cases, jobs that are not very qualified or secure. In addition, the liberalisations carried out after the fall of socialist governments and the current economic crisis has signified a substantial deterioration in the living standards and unemployment for Roma communities.

The main reasons that affect this situation of economic and job insecurity of Roma in Europe, are the following:

- The breakdown of traditional employment sectors.
- Educational levels below the country average. This significantly limits their opportunities to develop and access the labour market.
- Discrimination in the labour market reduces the possibilities of Roma workers of getting a job.

In short, Roma population, in adverse economic conditions, has a higher risk of being poor and maintaining a marginal position with objective difficulties to access the labour market. In this context, education plays a fundamental role as it is one of the most significant roads to achieve greater development and inclusion, and in short, a better quality of life.

¹ This information has been prepared based on the data provided in the national reports presented by each participating country.

4.2. Education

In general terms the Roma community in Europe presents a lower degree of schooling, higher illiteracy, higher school dropout rates, lower presence of Roma students in higher education and less success at school.

Although the educational systems of participating countries are not the same and have their own particularities, all of them share common characteristics and principles. Among these common characteristics it exist the following school cycles: preschool, primary and secondary, compulsory secondary education up to 16 years of age, vocational training in different areas and university education.

The main principles and educational policies are as follows: the gratuitous nature of public education, the accessibility of different educational levels and the equality of citizens when it comes to education. Plus, in all countries we find a formal attitude that is both positive and inclusive toward ethnic minorities, an attitude which is strongly supported by the EU so that it results in specific policies, plans and actions of intervention with Roma population.

However, these formal principles do not always apply in practice equally to all citizens, like the Roma. It is a fact that in Europe and in all participating countries, to a greater or lesser degree, different types of school segregation still persist. Some measures have been set in place to support the schooling of Roma children. However, in practice these measures and policies are not always adequately materialised as strong segregation still exists and it is still more difficult for Roma population to access mainstream educational centres and their rights are not always fully guaranteed.

The existence of segregation of ethnic minorities and especially of Roma population is evident in different ways ranging from manifest or evident segregation existing in different educational centres, to a more concealed segregation that is manifested differently. For example the abuse of educational measures aimed at special student cases and situations, or grouping Roma students in specific classes in school centres.

Thus, among the different forms of segregation it is noteworthy to mention the existence of special schools for populations with specific needs (mental disability) with lower academic requirements that offer lower levels of education. Numerous Roma children are sent to these centres.

In addition to the existence of school centres reserved for Roma students, segregation also occurs in the centres themselves, as some classrooms are created just for Roma children.

Similarly, a series of special measures aimed at solving the particular situations of students are implemented in a high degree among Roma students. For example, classifying them as "home students" which in practice means that students do not have to attend classes and they just need to go to school to take their final exams; or supporting the access of Roma children in very short vocational training programs which offer a low qualification and provide few alternatives to meet the demands of the labour market.

On certain occasions these situations of segregation are very tied to housing policies: when Roma students live in segregated neighbourhoods, it is common for the schools in the area to also be segregated. But sometimes this is a consequence of the distribution of students by educational levels in the centres. For example, many Roma students have a lower level and therefore end up in the same class.

But segregation, although it is grave, it is not the only problem that influences the Roma community's difficulties in education. There are other factors that come into play particularly in the inclusion of Roma children in the educational system and in their success at school. The most common problems faced by Roma children and families have been grouped in the following three areas.

A. Socio-economic exclusion factors that affect the family:

- *Poverty and extreme poverty.* Poverty constitutes one of the main obstacles in school participation and inclusion. Although it is a complex phenomenon in itself, in its economic dimension it may mean that families cannot access educational centres as they do not have the possibility of assuming the costs of education such as books, transport and other educational costs.
- *Unemployment or underemployment.* Job insecurity, low salary, job discontinuity and economic difficulties to finance educational needs.
- *Internal and external migrations.* Migrations performed mainly for economic and labour related reasons cause a discontinuity in the contact of school centres, students and their families.
- *Lack of necessary documentation.* The lack of documentation and regulation make it more difficult to access and register at school centres (migrants).
- *Geographic location.* The geographic location influences the possibility of accessing school centres, either because they do not exist nearby or because the accessible ones are segregated or have low quality. Certain isolated or marginal settings (ghettos) and areas in the country have fewer resources and therefore provide fewer possibilities for educational development.

B. List of attitudes of the Roma community and the educational system:

- Mutual distrust and prejudices between schools and the Roma community.
- Some Roma see schools as an “*unknown territory*”, unfamiliar to them.
- Many schools have a weak relationship with Roma parents and this has a direct effect on the parent’s perception of the school and the lack of knowledge and information they have about the opportunities and advantages of continuing education for their children.
- Lack of motivation of Roma students.
- Lack of role models within the Roma families.
- School system deficiencies in working with families in poverty or extreme poverty.

C. Deficiencies of the educational system:

- The educational system is not adequately prepared to attend to student diversity from an intercultural perspective that integrates ethnic minorities².
- Teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of and experience in intercultural education and in considering the diversity of pupils within the schools. As an institution, schools are mainly conceived and geared toward a model of homogenous students. Diversity is oftentimes seen as an obstacle associated to the need of compensating difficulties more than as a feature that may be enriching for all students as a whole.
- Lack of sufficient resources to develop quality programs and actions to support minorities and specifically the Roma community.
- Wide range of Roma segregation and discrimination in the educational system.

All of these factors generate:

- Extremely limited progress toward greater levels of education. Roma boys and girls have a hard time accessing preschool education. They generally finish primary education. Dropout problems come when they get to secondary school and there is a scarce access to higher education.
- High rates of truancy.
- High rates of students that repeat school years.

² Intercultural education is a way of understanding education. It is an educational focus that has an inclusive nature, where diversity is an indispensable and positive ingredient that contributes to a quality and holistic education and is seen as an enriching value. It is an education designed to learn to live in society, developing values such as respect and tolerance toward others. An intercultural approach is constructed and developed by supporting and promoting a diverse society where there is room for all people, regardless of their background or ethnicity, or any other differences. This society fosters development and opportunities for all groups: belonging to a different ethnic group does not imply a disadvantage, but rather it is an added value that enriches citizenship.

- Low school/academic performance.
- Discontinuity in their formal education.
- Lesser levels of professional qualification that result in difficulties to access the labour market and in perpetuating situations of poverty and marginalisation.

Given the evidence of the influence of these educational, economic, legal and cultural social factors described above, this guide aims to be an operative tool that will contribute to:

- Approach and support Roma families to favour the inclusion of their sons and daughters in the school community.
- Support the educational system so that it facilitates the participation of Roma students and their families.



THEORETICAL MODELS





5. Theoretical models that support the methodological proposal for the intervention with Roma families in the school setting

According to a vast majority of sociological, psychological and pedagogical studies, the family is one of the key institutions in the socialisation process and an essential institution among Roma. It appears as the prioritised institution that needs to have enough capacity as to fulfil its duties as raising children and providing them with the education and the motivation for it. Families as well as the group of peers are essential in supporting and positively reinforcing children in education. It is widely acknowledged the difficulties that exist in some cases regarding the participation and academic success of Roma children in educational centres. In some occasions parents seem to delegate their responsibility to the educational centres. In designing an educational intervention, the educational resources should take the family into account as a key element of support.

In many families and specifically in many Roma families, traditional patterns of roles according to gender exist. For example, in our own patriarchal Western society males enjoy a socially dominant position. Thus, from an early age, many boys are assisted in acquiring a masculinity that allows them to assume and maintain that position. By the same token, many girls are taught to cultivate a submissive femininity. The masculine and feminine gender roles mutually reinforce each other and thereby perpetuate the inequality on which they are based.

In the Roma family we also find these differences. In some Roma families and communities the differences between male and female roles follow a very traditional pattern with a clear dominance of the authority of the male and his predominance in social life. The role of women is more restricted to the privacy of the family.

Among the characteristics that reflect the existence of this traditional role that affect gender differences in some families, we may find, among others, a family preference to marry within the family, a wife's fidelity and a bride's virginity, which is why fathers sometimes fear when their daughters start secondary education. Contact with boys their age or older boys can lead to emotional attachment and commitment in an unknown environment that may give rise to situations undesired by the family as they may prefer that their daughters marry people they know and who are closer to their circle and have similar customs.

Furthermore, in the more traditional Roma families, women assume a caretaker role very early in their lives. They care for their younger siblings, for example, and in the case of establishing a formal relationship; women also care for their boyfriend's family members. All of which implies dedicating time and energy to caretaker responsibilities, which are oftentimes incompatible with school life (making it difficult to attend school, family fears toward a potential relationship with other boys, etc.).

Social maturity for women is reached with the birth of their first child. Therefore it is not strange to observe that engagements and weddings are celebrated at a young age, and this directly impacts their educational possibilities.

All of these characteristics influence the educational process of the children and it is necessary to consider them in designing an adequate intervention with a family.

But also as a social institution the family adapts to the space and time it lives in. Some important changes are taking place and should be highlighted:

- The appearance and spread of new family models (single-parent homes, that is to say, mothers leading the home on their own, divorced or separated families, cohabitation between two or three generations, etc.)
- The family interacts in its socialising effort with an increasing number of institutions (health, employment, social services etc.). Other factors such as media, (television, but also new technologies: Internet, Facebook; Twitter, Blogs, etc.) have appeared and Roma also benefit from them.

Despite all the changes, the family still has a key importance in society and specifically in Roma communities, having a great positive potential to support children in having greater access to education.

The intervention set forth in this methodological proposal considers some main principles of the following theoretical approaches: the Systemic Approach adapted to families, the Empowerment Model (empowering families) and the Appreciative Intervention based on the Constructionism Theory.

5.1. The Systemic approach adapted to families

The central idea of interventions based on a systemic model is to consider the family as a “system”. The systemic model considers the family to be “an open, stable, system governed by rules, composed of hierarchical subsystems, immersed in a supra-system and one that has its own history³”).

Systemic family theories were based on different theories, one of them being the General Systems Theory (Bertalanffy, 1954). In this work the most relevant ideas for the matter at hand are the following:

- A system is a set of elements that interact dynamically where the state of each element is determined by the state of each of the remaining elements that configure it.

Example: *There are thousands of examples of systems in nature, from a single cell to a galaxy, and social, the family for example.*

- A system can be open or closed. It is closed when there is no exchange of matter, energy and/or information in its environment.

Example: *There are few examples of closed systems in nature because most are in a dynamic interaction with their environment. Thus, a chemical reaction in a hermetically sealed test tube sealed would be an example of a (relatively) closed system.*

- A system is open when it exchanges matter, energy and/or information with its environment. Therefore, an open system is modified by its environment and also modifies it.

Example: *All families are open systems that interact in a community setting and therefore exchange energy, information, perceptions, attitudes and feelings with their environment.*

- Totality or non-summative whole: understanding the family as a system means that the whole is considered as more than the sum of its parts. That is to say, the behaviour of each of its members (a child, for example) cannot be understood separately from the rest of the family. In this regard, there is an ongoing circularity and interconnection between the members of a system. Change in one of the system's members affects the others as their actions are interconnected through interaction patterns.

Example: *Child's emancipation may unbalance the relationship between the parents if the child functioned as a mediator of parental conflicts (totality). However, separately, none of the members of the family system carry out the role that is characteristic in the family system (non-summative).*

³ Ripol-Milet, Alex (2001). “Familias, trabajo social y mediación”. Paidós.

- **Circularity:** due to the interconnection of the members of a System, causality relationships are never linear (in the sense that a "cause" A provokes an "effect" B), rather they are circular in the sense that B retroactively reinforces the manifestation of A.

Example: *The demands for greater autonomy in the decision making of a daughter may collide with the father's reticence, which in turn increases the demands of the first, and so on successively.*

- **Equifinality:** The same effect may respond to different causes. That is to say, the changes observed in an open system are not determined by the system's initial conditions rather by the nature of the processes of change. This definition is not valid for closed systems as these are determined by initial conditions.

Example: *Due to merely pragmatic or contextual reasons, two families may form a domestic organisation that is very similar despite being from completely different origins.*

The theory of communication is another pillar on which we have articulated the theoretical development of the systemic approach applied to the family. It starts with a basic principle: "it is impossible not to communicate".

Some basic ideas that are considered in the theory of communication (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967) are the following:

- In a system, any member's behaviour sends a message to the rest.
- In all communication the following may be distinguished: content aspect (the semantic content of the communication) and relational aspect (it qualifies how the message should be understood, that is to say, it designates the type of relationship between the sender and the recipient).
- The definition of an interaction is conditioned by the judgments of the communication sequences between participants. Open systems are characterised by patterns of circularity, with no clear beginning or end. Therefore the definition of any interaction depends on the way the participants of the communication divide the circular sequence and establish cause-effect relationships.

Another key idea in the Systemic approach of the family is the **evolutionary idea** (Haley, 1981):

- As a system the family undergoes a series of more or less normative phases that pertain to its own life cycle (courtship and marriage; raising children; adolescence; children mature and become independent: empty nest).
- The importance of evolutionary notions lies in the crises that may arise from stepping from one phase to another. In this regard, the optimal way to overcome such crises is to modify the family's system structure and thus maintaining its organisation.

Finally, it is relevant to underscore also structural ideas. We highlight the most relevant ones below.

A system is composed of subsystems in which there are limits. The objective of these limits is to protect the differentiation of the system's own members. *Example: the following subsystems are present in the family system: Conjugal, Parental and Filial.*

- The limits or internal family borders are identifiable with the different rules of conduct applicable to the different subsystems in the family.

Example: The rules that are applied in the conduct of parents (parental subsystem) are usually different than the rules that are applied in the conduct of children (filial subsystem). Thus, normally parents have more decision-making power than children. In this sense it is beyond this logic to argue: "my son is not going to school because he thinks studying will be of no use to him," instead of letting the parents make that decision.

- The limits between subsystems vary depending on their degree of permeability as they can be vague (those that are difficult to determine), rigid, (those that are difficult to alter at any given time) or they can be clear and have clear limits (those that are both definable and modifiable). It is considered that those that have limits provide the ideal adaptation.

Limits can separate subsystems within the family or they can separate the entire family from the outside. In this latter case, the exterior limits are called borders. A family system's borders may be determined by the difference in the interaction between or conduct of family members in the presence of people who are not their family, such as from teachers and/or teachers from the school centre.

The Family from a systemic perspective: the intervention from this approach

The family intervention based on this theoretical approach considers the structural systems of relationships, the subsystems of a greater system (the family as a whole), the integration of its members, the respect held for each of its members (protecting the differentiation of each one), the new and old rules of conduct of each system or subsystem (family limits, internal alliances).

Special attention will be placed on two of the focus of interests that come from Bateson's original approach (1972) as it essential for understanding the family intervention based on the systemic approach.

The focus of the systemic intervention is no longer the individual, or in our case the student, as the alleged "source" of the difficulties of the school integration but rather the characteristics of the organisation of the family system in which the reason for the demand makes sense. The interest centres on the patterns that connect the interactions of the family system. It is not about limiting oneself to try to carry out an individual intervention in the presence of other family members, but the goal rather is to take an interest in the patterns of interaction that are produced in the family which may influence the difficulties in integration and in the success at school for the children.

Another focus of interest that we have mentioned is to consider interaction as a source of information, and therefore, as a form of communication.

This idea of communication leads to a disinterest for the causal explanations and an interest rather, in the pragmatics of the family interaction, although in recent years we have seen a renewed interest in the "problem theories" of the family members.



5.2. The Empowerment model of families

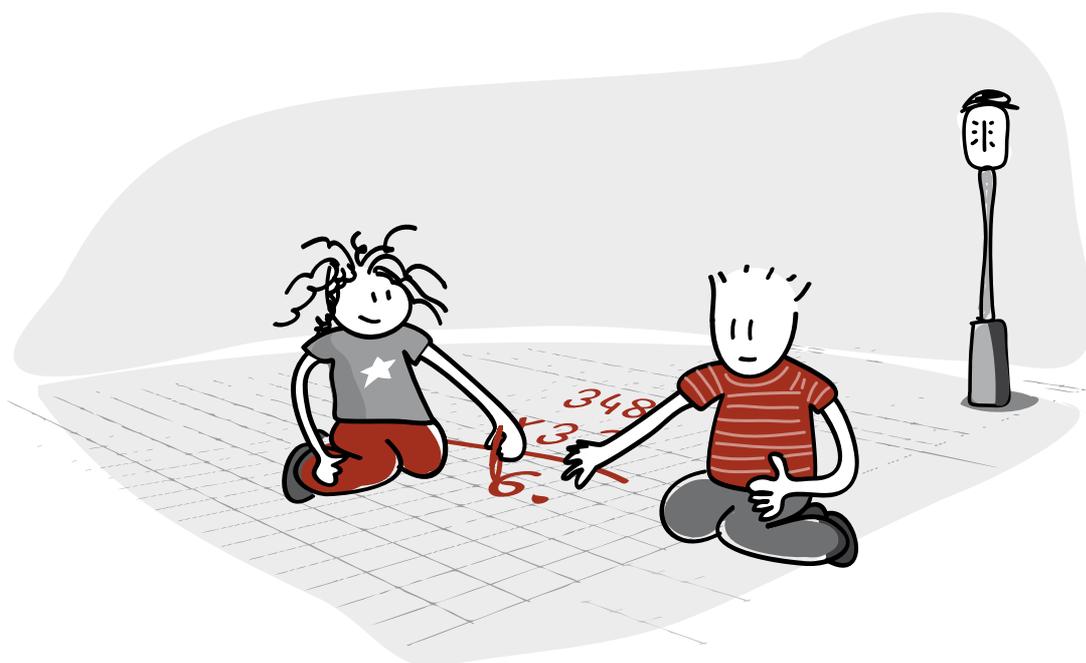
The Empowerment Model constitutes a new strategic perspective and a new approach, inspired and guided by the purpose of empowering and strengthening individuals, groups and communities. It defines a style of intervention, sets the tone, values and ethics and it simultaneously concentrates on both the personal resources of family members, as well as on the micro social environments they interact in.

This model designs and puts into practice strategies to optimise learning in the intellectual, socio-relational and emotional areas.

The fundamental principles of the *Empowerment or Competence Model* which provide clues as how to intervene can be summarised as follows:

- **The way families behave as a result of the interaction** between: family background and the experiences with the educational system, biography, and the family's own history and the consequences that will determine future behaviour.
- **The genesis and maintenance of needs and/or conflicts are assigned a relevant role**, thus it demands that it become another element in the intervention, mainly in the more proximate settings: school, peers and community.
- **Roots of power and control constitute a dynamic process** whose dimensions are not limited within the family but they also have ecological sources and roots, that is to say, they are closely linked to the access of opportunities, material and community resources, and protective elements that are available in different degrees in the different contexts. For example, potential and strengths of the Roma community. That is why it is essential to cooperate in the strengthening of the scenarios where life unfolds for the families included in our intervention. The goal is to strengthen the school and community settings.
- **It is an empowering approach** that centres on the family's resources, both personal as well as social, ensuring that the family's empowerment process is being boosted, bearing in mind the starting point for each family situation.
- **The identification and promotion of resources needed to face necessary changes with guarantees of success.** To this end it is key to facilitate power and control over resources, their availability, accessibility, competitiveness and use.
- **It is located in a positive perspective.** The focus is placed on the family's possibilities, on what they are capable of achieving, strengthening their **potential, opportunities, and strengths**, the belief in the capability of Roma families.
- **One of its strategic principles is to strengthen the family's competencies and abilities** to be able to help in the educational process of their children, but it is fundamental to define motivating and significant goals that will enable fathers/mothers and other relevant members to perceive they are capable of accepting them and achieving them. This is the only way to ensure their commitment with actions to learn and change.

- Another strategic principle in the model is to **promote a responsible commitment with the change**.
- **Action as an element that facilitates and consolidates necessary changes** and progress toward the school integration of Roma children.
- It enables immediate action in families, they are **provided with personal tools** to increase their perception of control over their circumstances, favouring more informed decisions, facilitating the development of self-efficiency, ensuring that their efforts are compensated, identifying and recognising the achievements they have made. Furthermore this model **promotes learning responsibility**, promoting their responsibility in the change and ensuring that they have power and control.
- **The strategic purpose is played out in the interpersonal encounters** shared by the team of professionals and the family members, with the students, professionals from the educational centre, and other technical teams and/or social agents of reference present in the community.
- **It places a large importance on observation and imitation of significant models of conduct** for families and for students, which may be: leaders from the media, other family members, other Roma students, peer group (neighbours, relatives, etc.).



5.3. Appreciative intervention based on the Constructionism theory

Constructionism is a new orientation in sociology, based mainly on Gergen's work (1985; 1994; 1999) and it designates diverse approaches to the way reality can be known and especially how realities can be constructed. There are multiple definitions of social constructionism, due to its very nature, and due to the recognition of the multiple realities generated by the diverse interactions between the individuals who construct these realities.

Given its very nature, constructionism cannot give rise to a unitary definition, due to the fact that knowledge is socially constructed. The inquiry of social constructionism is focused mainly on explaining the processes through which people describe, explain or interpret the world they live in (including themselves)" (Gergen, 1985: 266). Social constructionism is interested in the communication and relations between people and in the process of producing meaning in social interactions. A point of departure is represented by the fact that people, in the same circumstances, are capable of producing very different social constructions of the same reality. The main topics are:

- a. Language, communication and discourse are considered means of interaction between individuals who construct multiple realities. Social constructionism considers that realities are created by people who communicate through language, each of them influencing and limiting the responses of the other. In this approach, the attention is not focused on the individual, but instead on the network of interactions between individuals.
- b. Social constructionism focuses on the relations through which social actors construct realities. The approach of social constructionism starts from the assumption that the language people use in order to understand the world is a social artefact, the historical product of exchanges between people (Gergen, 1985: 267).
- c. This type of approach considers that the subject-object distinction is not productive and generative enough, maintaining a dualism that considers that the subject and the object are independent from each other. "Social constructionism abandons the illusion of the ontological fissure between subject and object and replaces it with an intersubjective reality. It believes in the idea that reality is considered an interactive process because people give meaning to their own experiences through constant interaction with the environment" (Van der Haar, 2002: 26).
- d. Knowledge and social reality are dependent on the social relations and on the negotiation processes between people. In recent years, the sociology of knowledge has refined the approach of social constructionism in order to show that all knowledge of reality is more of a human creation than a mirror of the independent reality (Cojocaru & Sandu, 2011). Social constructionism considers that when we start observing or talking about what is, we, in fact, are constructing a social reality (Van der Haar, 2002: 24).

The constructionist perspective states that we can never know what is universally true or false, what is good or bad, right or wrong, instead we only know stories about truth, falsehood, good, evil, right or wrong, and it abandons the constructivist idea that in the mind the individual represents a mirror of reality. Reality itself is a result of these negotiations and interactions and “we are capable of making multiple and diverse maps of reality” (Maas et al., 2001: 373). Social constructionism is not interested in developing a perfect map of reality, but rather in capturing the processes through which the maps are constructed and negotiated between individuals by harmonising individual maps, because this construction process is the most important: “the attention must be directed towards the multiplicity of the ways the world can be constructed” (Gergen, 1994: 82). They are also useful in interpreting social realities viewed as social constructions of the individual interacting with their environment, and at the same time as an individual’s responses to the conditioning, constraints, and limitations generated by the interpretations and meanings of others.

Action Research and Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry can be an alternative intervention aimed at changing the way people construct the reality in which they live, act, communicate and react, without maintaining the problems they face in the foreground. Other authors have seen appreciative inquiry as an instrument that can be used to lead change in an organisation or in a community (Burke, 2011; Cuyvers, 2010; Lustig & Ringland, 2010).

The constructionist principle used in the application of the appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Whitney 2000: 3-27) takes into account the fact that every organisation is a result of human creation, more precisely of the collective interaction between individuals and of the permanent reconstruction generated by our knowledge, beliefs and ideas. The family is a manifestation of the interactions between our mental models regarding it, which are constructed socially through a relational process. The family is not an objective reality, independent of its members’ individual interpretations. From this perspective, the family is itself a reality generated by multiple interpretations (Murrell, 2001: 92), and family life changes through appreciative inquiry means, in fact, it changes these interpretations and constructs a shared, collective and coherent image.

The practitioner using the appreciative inquiry in order to introduce change in the family life must focus on the following aspects (Bushe, 1995:16):

- a. To appreciatively discover the organisation, by looking for the best examples of success found in the past of its members and to motivate them to identify these examples. The appreciative discovery of successful experiences, interpreted as success by the family members, is guided by the research topic.
- b. To appreciatively understand the family, by approaching it in depth and by understanding the family contexts that have resulted in past success.
- c. To help the family members to appreciatively amplify the discovered experiences and to increase these experiences by encouraging their repetition.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOL





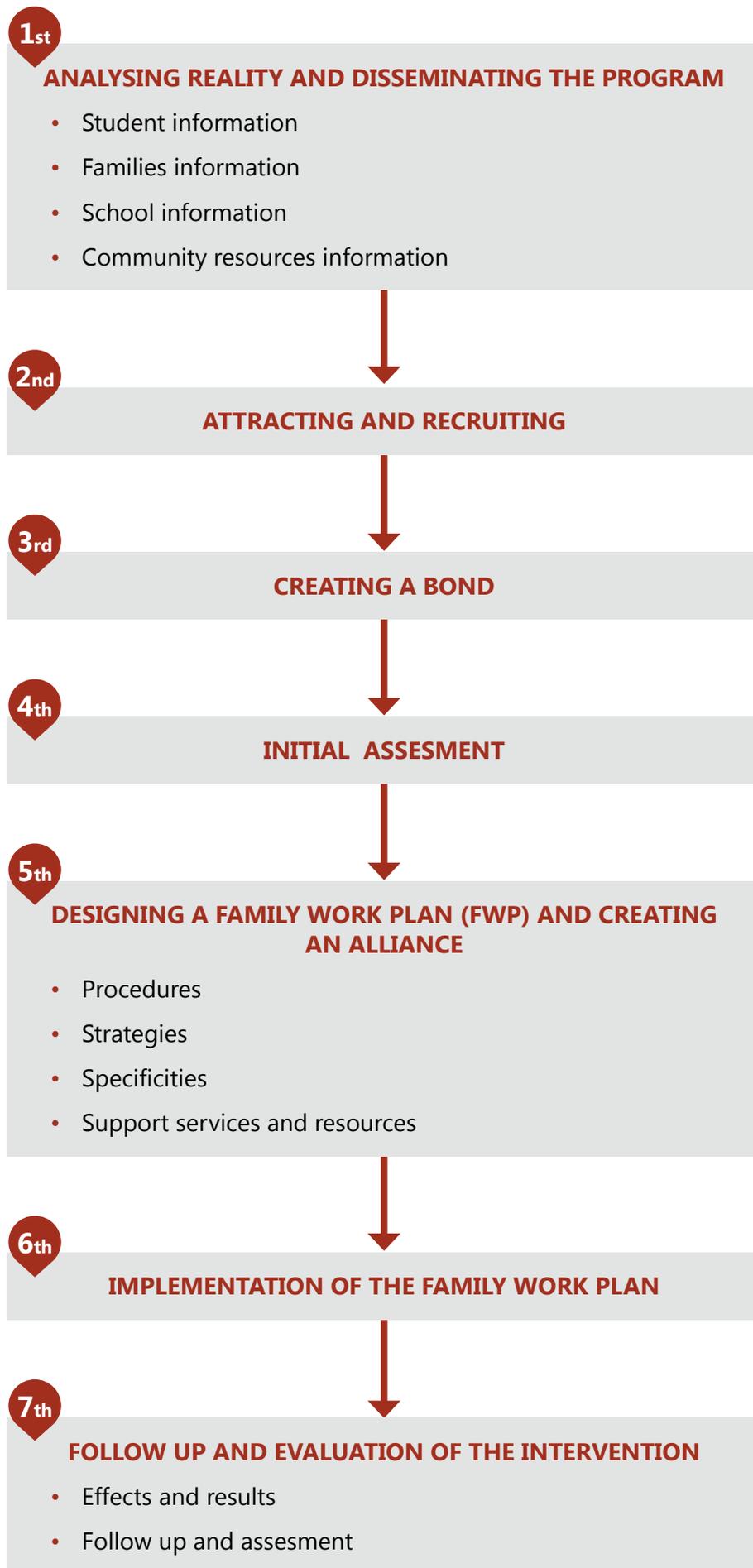
6. Methodological tool for the intervention with Roma families in the school setting

In this chapter we present a methodological guide that provides technical teams with orientation and guidelines for interventions with Roma families in order to raise their awareness, motivate them and effectively work jointly for the integration and improvement of the academic results of their children.

The intervention process has been divided in phases that constitute the moments or steps we consider necessary in order to achieve an adequate intervention:

- **First phase:** Analysing reality and disseminating the program.
- **Second phase:** Attracting and recruiting families and partners.
- **Third phase:** Creating a bond.
- **Fourth phase:** Initial assessment.
- **Fifth phase:** Designing a Family Work Plan (FWP) and creating an alliance.
- **Sixth phase:** Implementation of the actions foreseen in the Family Work Plan (FWP).
- **Seventh phase:** Follow-up and evaluation of the intervention.





6.1. Analysing reality and disseminating the program

What is intended at this concrete step of the intervention?

Before contacting the families it is important to work beforehand to know the context where the professional/technician is going to intervene. Social conditioning factors can be described as contextual determinants because they compose the framework in which the rest of the family situations of need and difficulty are inscribed. It's all about landing in the environment to gather information about some of the key aspects of the socioeconomic and community contexts families live in and simultaneously, to tell them about the program.

This previous work allows you to adapt the intervention, that is to say, the work that is going to be carried out, to the families and their current reality. Plus, it will also serve as a foundation in order to carry out a future assessment of the intervention planned and the changes produced in at least some of the essential aspects.

The following cases may be especially relevant in the analysis and they may be applicable to some Roma families: the limitations imposed by a precarious socio-economic context, isolation between the family and their environment they live in, discrimination or exclusion.

The most important actors in this first phase are: firstly, families, followed by the community where the intervention takes place, the school or educational institution, and public or private institutions that may act in the area where the intervention is to be developed.

In order to realistically analyse the situation we suggest gathering and systematising information included in three sections: information about the most immediate environment, information about the most distant environment, that is to say the social context of the area where the intervention will occur, and information about community resources, both public and private. Below we suggest some of the variables that should be considered in gathering information.

As regards the environment, what information is useful and good to know about?

As regards the family:

- Identify the number and the type of potential beneficiary families, following the program's characteristics and goals.
- Evaluate the language spoken by the families. If it's the language spoken in the country or if it's Romany.
- Evaluate the housing conditions they live in: salubrity, space, overcrowding, facilities, and relocations, for example in the case of families that have been relocated due to Plans to Eradicate Shantytowns.

- Evaluate the labour context: type of occupation, rent, labour situation, labour insecurity, unemployment rate, underground economy, or the type of contracts: permanent, self-employed, precarious and temporary, kinds of work they carry out, recipients of social salary, etc.
- Evaluate health and medical conditions: most common illnesses, the infant mortality, disabilities, special needs, life expectancy, etc.
- Evaluate the family's level of education and their relationship with the school, identifying the values they have toward the school or educational institution; if they are distant or oppositional, their experiences and participation.
- Valorise the social capital of the Roma community professionals/ technicians will work with (relevant aspects related to tradition and culture of the community, cultural patterns, beliefs, values and social structure) and identify its social capital (skills and abilities, formal and informal competences etc.). (See Annex 1, Map of social capital).
- Identify and be aware of the expectations and the needs the community has and feels.

As regards the social context of the area where the intervention will take place (neighbourhood, village, town, settlement, etc.):

- Degree of social structuring, marginalisation, isolation, etc. and/or possible existing violence in the environment.
- Situation and problems with integration, social inclusion/exclusion, marginalisation, of the area where the intervention is to take place.
- Social integration, the family's identity with the community it lives with, sense of belonging. Inclusion or rejection.
- Family's participation in the community's dynamics. Does it participate in social or cultural services or for example is it involved in community events; sport clubs, associations of neighbours, festivities...?

Regarding the community's public and private resources

- Interventions that are being carried out in the community where the intervention is planned in order to avoid duplicity of interventions and/or financing.
- Supply of public and private resources of reference in the area (health, education, employment, social services, entertainment and socio-cultural).
- Family's accessibility and use of resources.
- Community school resources: its characteristics, its attitudes toward the Roma community, the degree of permeability or openness toward the environment, the profile of professionals.
- The attitude of organisations toward the intervention's objectives, identifying the organisation's key people/informants who may participate with the program or action.

- Work groups and meetings with other institutions and entities that work in the environment to establish a network to share information, defining the responsibilities that each one of the interested parties or interest groups in the program will carry out
- Identify the educational policy framework and its implementation at regional and national levels.

This analysis will provide a deeper knowledge of the environment where the action is to take place: its families, characteristics, its socioeconomic and educational situation and its needs as well as the community and the families' potential to develop and apply the program. This assessment will enable the program's implementation by adapting it to the environment's conditions and problems.

Below there are some useful methods and techniques to gather this data. It is important to be aware that each method and technique has its limitations. The selection of the best one depends on the resources, time or needs of the program itself. It is recommended and necessary to use a combination of them to contrast and complete the information that has been collected. This is the best way to better understand the context where the program is going to take place.

Suggested methods and techniques to gather data

The individual and the community itself are the most relevant sources of information, therefore it is important to identify the key informants of each one of the settings. The recommended methods and techniques to gather data are described below:

Secondary sources

National or local secondary sources that refer to the most immediate environment regarding the Roma community, the school or educational institution and the context.

These sources are usually papers or research papers, publications by ministries, universities, research centres, municipalities, NGOs, etc. (for further information consult the bibliography in annex). It is also convenient to review similar projects and good practices to identify different actions and strategies.

Gathering information directly from the community

- Visiting and personally interviewing key informants: families, community leaders and technicians or responsible members of organisations⁴. It is recommended to contrast this information with other sources. It is a common mistake to think that only with the information gathered from the leaders or relevant key people in a community is enough to know what is going on in the context where the program is going to take place. Interviews should not be considered as the only form of gathering data. Actually, the interviews

⁴ It is considered that a key informant is a person who, given their situation or position in the community or institutions, has valuable information to share that will aid in knowing the situation.

register the actors' self-representation, and we need also other sources of information which allow us to build convenient actions based on them.

Depending on each national or local context, key informants may vary and be of a different nature. In some countries, the following key informants may be considered: inspectors that may provide valuable information about the schooling situation of families and students, public institutions that provide information about the socioeconomic situation of families, etc. In those local settings where it may exist, it is convenient to get in touch with the local Roma expert hired, the school mediator, the Romany language teacher, the social worker, etc. At the county level it may be advisable to contact the Roma expert and the inspector of minorities if there are any, meetings may be organised with informal leaders that may provide valuable information regarding the family's profile and its social and economic situation. It is strongly recommended to gather as much data as possible, especially through the process of direct and prolonged participant observation.

- Direct observation in the context, whenever possible and convenient, may tell us, for example, the charge of domestic work that female children are doing at home, which can be a very important piece of information for their school success. This type of information cannot be gathered through an interview.
- Focus groups to evaluate the needs of the community or a group.
- Ad-hoc interview (performed only when considered necessary), to assess the social and economic conditions perceived. In the case of carrying out a questionnaire if it is going to be far-reaching, it is recommendable to partner with a university or a research centre and/or experts who may advise in how to carry it out and analyse it.

As regards the program's dissemination, which is convenient to perform at the same time as the exploration and analysis of the context, the main purpose is to make the program known to Roma families, institutions and social organisations, motivating them to get involved. These are also important occasions to gather data regarding the social context and to become familiarised with it.

The relevant aspects to bear in mind for the program's dissemination and the search for alliances and partnerships are:

- Identify the most adequate means and methods to make the program known depending on the type of population they are aimed at: the families, institutions or organisations operating in the selected community or environment.
- Identify the key person/people working in the area for the program's development and which can support it.
- Involve resources and organisations in the creation of a network of collaboration where information is shared.

It is also recommendable to carry out direct actions with those involved: speaking at educational centres, in organisations they participate in or doing street work. Mouth to mouth works great in these cases with Roma families as many of them have difficulty reading and writing. Posters, passing out flyers, etc., may complement these actions.

In establishing contact with a community it is often necessary to find people who are respected and valued and people who might be interested in promoting change. Once they are involved in the program the first they may facilitate the access and work of professionals in a community.

In the case of institutions it is also advisable to use direct methods, arrange meetings and/or interviews where the program can be presented along with its documentation or results that prove the efficiency of the actions we are proposing.

Whenever the necessary means are available it is adequate to have a presentation with graphic support and to briefly explain the characteristics of the population where the intervention is going to take place, data regarding problems or factors that may be affected by the program, its objectives and the actions to be carried out and the efficiency the program has had, if it has already been implemented. It is convenient to accompany these presentations with a dossier.

In order to establish a program dissemination and/or communication plan we may make use of a simple tool: the communication matrix we include below, which is accompanied by an example.



Example

Beneficiary	Objective of the communication	Content to be communicated	Means, instruments and tools to use
Town Hall social services	Make the program known and seek participation	Program Objectives, proof of the success of these actions	Interviews with responsible parties and attach a dossier on paper and electronic format, slide presentation

Below are the **main actions proposed** to face some of the most common difficulties of this phase.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Have a prior knowledge of the resources and social entities working in the intervention area so they can provide us with information about the Roma people we hope to work with. It's all about knowing the concrete characteristics of the beneficiary; therefore it will be necessary to systematically gather data on the families and environment in the area...

The Roma population is very heterogeneous and they reside in neighbourhoods/ areas that have different characteristics: some families live in complete exclusion and others in integrated areas. This may therefore make it difficult to identify the beneficiaries (target group) as some people of Roma community do not identify themselves as such and often there is an absence of reliable data on the Roma community.

Establish a formal, prior contact with the professionals working in the environment. The idea is to organise meetings and interviews to present what we want to do and thus open doors to collaborate together and share information.

The interested parties, those involved, or those who are working on the ground may be hesitant to give and share information.

Carry out a very good presentation of the project, creating awareness about the situation of the Roma community in the educational setting, using all the tools at our disposal. It's very useful to present data proving the intervention's success if it has already been performed elsewhere in another area or education centre.

Some public institutions lack involvement. It may be difficult to secure the commitment of some educational centres with the proposed intervention.

6.2. Attracting and recruiting families and partners

What is intended at this concrete step of the intervention?

Establish contact and a bond with the selected families and deepen the knowledge of the program and the actions to be developed by the different agents involved: the educational centres themselves, Roma families, students and other social agents in the community.

In this phase the aim is to facilitate the access of families to public services, specifically to school centres including pre-schools.

On the other hand, the first encounters with the family are specifically meant to provide information about the program, and also to motivate the family to participate and explain the degree of involvement that is expected from them.

It is important, as soon as the initial contact begins, to establish trust between the professional and the beneficiaries of the action, that is to say, families, students, and school centres, in addition to specifying the role of each of the involved resources.

How do we reach the beneficiary?

There are several ways to access them.

Internal referral based on other intervention experiences with families in other programs or departments, for example, housing or education within the organisation itself.

Direct recruitment seeks families out directly, contacting them be it through working on the street, using intermediaries, etc. Use the mediums considered to be feasible and adequate depending on the context where the program is developed.

External referral families are referred to our organisations from other organisations, such as the school centre, NGOs, other programs or Social Services, among others.

In the institutions and organisations we have selected to be involved in the program, it is very useful to perform a personal presentation of the project with meetings, interviews, and visits, accompanied by didactic materials and to *define our specific role as regards the rest of the community resources*. The goal is to evaluate the necessary and the convenient agents so that the intervention is not an isolated program but rather succeeds in getting adequate institutions and organisations involved and create a network that will support the intervention, a network where each organisation has a defined role.

In some contexts it may be useful to identify a person or a group of key persons in the community that will promote the program and back up its convenience and usefulness. These figures facilitate the access to a community or to specific families.

The most recommendable tools and instruments and actions to use in this phase are, among others: attend spaces where parents gather such as: parent associations, seminars, etc. and adjust presentations making them adequate for each target audience, both as regards the materials as well as the content of the messages.

In this phase it is convenient to use face-to-face methods and carry out visits, meetings, and interviews with the beneficiary.

The steps to follow are:

- To establish an initial contact with the families using the methods described in this step.
- To identify cases and students susceptible to be beneficiaries as per program criteria.
- To develop group interventions with families and/or specific families aimed at: establishing an emotional bond, a trust relationship, that will help and motivate the intervention.



Below are the **main actions proposed** to face some of the most common difficulties of this phase.

Related to families:



ACTIONS PROPOSED	MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES
<p>Show interest for the family, building bridges and displaying respect.</p> <p>Include people in the team who speak their language.</p>	<p>The Roma family is a part of a community whose social form may differ from those of the professional team's background.</p> <p>Language may also be different.</p>
<p>Clearly define the links with the administration and the differentiated roles and responsibilities of each one.</p> <p>Communicating the following message for example: <i>"You, the family, decide if you want to carry this out or not. My role is that together we to try to find a solution to the problems you are experiencing. Both you and I want your child to have opportunities in the future"</i>.</p> <p>In the first direct contact with the family it is important to "start on the right foot", so that we are perceived as a reliable source of information and someone who wants to help them.</p> <p>Building trust is central. The key goal is to arrange a new meeting therefore we need to pay much attention and put forth much effort to these first moments.</p> <p>To start the family/school relationship it is very effective to begin by working the family's participation in the centre, for example through associations like Partnering Moms (parties, events), Family Schools (teachers who know how to get by in their language, points of interaction, motivating actions like snacks, etc.).</p> <p>In the case of families who are very resistant to change, it may be useful to try a direct approach: contacting them directly through mediation techniques on the street and using mouth-to-ear and/or the snowball technique among neighbours.</p>	<p>Families may be afraid of feeling controlled when they identify the intervention with other resources of the administration, which they say as being controlling. On occasions it is hard to combine some of the intervention's basic bureaucratic needs with the non-perception of a controlling intervention.</p>



ACTIONS PROPOSED

In some specific situations it may be necessary to resort to reference figures like the mediator or similar ones. These figures may be: a religious leader, another family participating in an intervention, a mediator or educator that is working with families and is well considered, etc. They must have a personal approach and listen actively and must also feel free to make suggestions. This makes the non-Roma technician's job easier and brings them closer to the family.

On some occasions, as the relationship with the family is consolidated, it is convenient that the mediator takes a step back and leaves the intervention in the technician's hands as they may limit or interfere with the relationship with the family, especially if he or she is a Roma mediator.

Bear in mind that Roma professionals may be included and not just in the mediation process, as Roma teachers may also forge these relationships of proximity.

The task of successfully securing collaboration is an essential part of the intervention program.

There are three key aspects to getting the family on board: the willing collaboration to discuss expectations, problems and to suggest solutions; the family's participation in specific, agreed-upon tasks included in the intervention; the explicit recognition of small improvements and the effort that has been put forth.

Motivate families to participate at school and to make use of the opportunities to encounter tutors and teachers at school, making these spaces flexible and adapting them so they do not feel excluded.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Some Roma families reject change. In some cases they do not see the importance or the need to receive external support for their children and they thus reject the program and participating in it. On other occasions the family may agree but children don't and parents delegate final decision-making to their children.

The initial attitude is not at all collaborative. The family appears to be distant, indifferent, distrusts our intervention. In sum, their motivation toward the intervention is scarce.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

In these cases grandparents or other family members are usually the ones who care for children. Therefore, it is recommendable to consider the entire family unit so that, in the event of the parent's absence, the work can continue with tutors and those responsible for the students.

It may be difficult to maintain an on-going relationship with the family due to several structural factors such as migrations which some families are forced to carry out for economic or employment reasons.

Identify a key family member, the figure who has the most weight in the family and establish a bond with him or her. Involve several family members so that they provide support in this situation.

Try to raise awareness about how the intervention we offer will benefit all family members: through providing support to access ordinary resources: (referral to employment, housing resources... and the entity's own resources).

In some cases, there may not be a family support network, due to the parent's absence (migrations, single-parent families, etc.) and this makes finding a key figure as interlocutor more difficult.

For example: in cases where children are living in children's homes while they are participating in the program or when they return to their family's household.

Other reasons may explain the absence of a family support network such as in situations where a family is undergoing transition processes (becoming a new unit of cohabitation with minors after a formal family marriage arrangement). These events imply establishing new "agreements" with the new members of this cohabitation unit: "mother/father in law" "uncles/aunts"..., where they, as figures of authority, should be responsible for the education of children. Meanwhile, what may be actually happening is that decision-making is delegated to minors or to the couple.

Related to families and schools:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Performing a very good presentation of the project: creating awareness about the situation of the Roma community in the educational setting, using all the tools at our disposal. It's very useful to present data proving the intervention's success if it has already been performed elsewhere (in another area or education centre).

The following tools or instruments are usually used to support this step of intervention: meetings, talks, interviews, presentations and materials such as posters, flyers, webpages, identifying images, videos, etc.

Foster intercultural values and diversity as enriching elements for students, working with educational centres so they bear ethnicity in mind, respecting the cultural norms and characteristics of the Roma community, so that educational centres will not seem as foreign to this community.

Use the resources offered by laws or policies and inclusion plans for different ethnic groups as an element of persuasion and framework of action.

Suggest to centres that they open spaces to encounter and welcome Roma families and students.

Support teachers (it is recommended to work with groups of teachers) in understanding Roma students, their school difficulties, and also showing them their accomplishments and capacities. Attract the religious leader and/or other relevant people of the community to give support to their educational goals especially for Roma girls.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Some public resources may manifest a lack of involvement or it may even be difficult to secure the commitment with the proposed intervention of some educational centres.

A rigid and not very inclusive conception of the educational system that rather stimulates segregation and exclusion, whether in the centres themselves or because of the existence of segregated centres and spaces.

Segregation and exclusion hinders and discourages.

For example: A part of the Roma population that participates in the Evangelical Church Fellowship, feels a sense of ownership, of belonging to something and they feel motivated to attend. Some of these families perceive educational centres as something foreign that is beyond their socio-cultural reality and, therefore, they put forth no effort toward integration.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Try to get some of the kids out of the ghettos, raising awareness among teachers and staff regarding the perspective taken on differences and diversity and how these are enriching elements, as opposed to uniform schools. Schools must be inclusive, that is to say, the goal is that all students have the same opportunities and that they develop the same competencies and attitudes.

Maintain frequent contact with the centre and follow up on students.

In these cases it may be necessary to consider actions to motivate, support and train in intercultural values and in the understanding of the Roma community, as well as provide them with work tools.

Work with teachers in specific sessions to deconstruct their prejudices and provide orientation and information about the cultural patterns of the Roma community. Do so without criticising them for their initial ignorance.

For example: *"Try to understand that they have never had anyone attend secondary school, they don't understand how it functions exactly, the responsibilities involved, the studying, norms... the parents still see minors as small children".*

Use positive models as references: nearby Roma youth have completed secondary education or have successfully completed another course of study; or identify a family reference or another nearby one that has studied and may serve as a guide for the rest, bringing them close to the family and teachers to neutralise these obstacles.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

In some cases, Roma students are concentrated in specific educational centres placed in "ghettos".

Teachers lack the necessary training to carry out an intercultural intervention and demonstrate an attitude of resistance to the program's application.

Some educational centres may have low expectations and negative attitudes toward Roma students and their families. Roma families may be prejudiced toward and may have had negative, past experiences with the school institution.

For example: *A teacher may affirm: "None of the Roma students I've had up to now has done anything in class, so why bother with them."*

And vice versa, for example: *"My son is no good for school and he doesn't need it to work at the market," says a Roma mother.*



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is important to establish criteria to select the beneficiary that will be given priority depending on the objectives of the project. For example, if it is to reduce the rate of failure in school, reinforce the development and success of Roma students, etc.

The professional's role with educational centres is basically to motivate, raise awareness and train them. The work must be aimed at centres in order to provide them with intervention tools and support them, without losing sight of the fact that joint construction is one of the transversal criterions.

Provide families with clear information regarding the organisation, operating norms of educational centres, in addition to a "catalogue of services/support" that the program offers, such as tools-guide for the involved agents (families, technicians, educators...). The goal is to provide basic knowledge of the benefits they may receive.

In these cases it is necessary to evaluate the resources at hand and evaluate whether it may be useful to provide support such as arranging transport to take children to school, providing them with materials or a meal. These measures will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and depending on the context of each situation. These cost do not need to be covered necessarily by the programme itself; they can be found in external support resources.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Roma students have a very heterogeneous profile. In some cases they are truant or they fail at school but in others Roma students are not identified as such in their centres because their academic performance is at the class average.

Some teachers conceive education as instruction. They think they don't need to educate but rather to provide information.

Families are unfamiliar with the dynamics of school centres and all aspects that influence the educational process: emotional, organisational, motivational... They do not see the need of a mid-term external support, beyond the support that offers "materials": school tutoring, information about scholarships, managing registration...

There are certain aspects like counselling and advice as regards acquiring study habits to continue with school, the importance of self-esteem, social skills, etc., that families do not think will affect the student's final result and therefore they don't consider necessary to have external support to reinforce them.

In some specific contexts it may be difficult to access schools because they are far away or because there is an absence of centres in the area.

In some cases there is not a proper reaction to tackle a situations of extreme poverty and marginalisation that hinder the child's access to school, as they are unable to pay the minimal costs of materials, meals, school transport, etc. All of which contributes to increasing their lack of motivation.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Raise awareness among families. It is important to communicate the importance education plays in the future of their children.

Help them understand that education is another basic priority that you can promote while addressing other needs simultaneously. They are complementary interventions, not exclusive. In this case the professional's ability to communicate these messages is essential.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Families and community leaders are not aware of educational needs as they have basic needs to meet that they consider are a priority.

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ Making an effort to understand the family's reality and perspective which provokes the initial rejection attitude, is an important first step. The goal is to validate, while not necessarily justify, these initial positions, trying to be understanding with their emotions, even if they are negative toward the proposed intervention or even toward you.
- ▶ Know the opinions, expectations and difficulties students experience regarding their school and their future, as well as the degree of motivation toward school.
- ▶ Seek out conversation topics that are pleasant for families to engage in so that they enjoy conversing. You can do so in a positive and relaxed tone, trying to communicate interest for supporting them.
- ▶ It is essential to highlight the advantages of the intervention, emphasising the benefits of opening up to opportunities, as well as the disadvantages of not being instructed. Also highlighting how the resource is optional and voluntary.
- ▶ In referencing other families involved in the educational process of their kids highlight that in so doing they have not lost their identity but rather have achieved significant progress in their children's integration in school. It is important to ensure that the family we are working with also has a high regard of that family we are referencing as a model, as our point of view may not match the perspective held by the Roma community. We need to be very careful with how that family is viewed in the community.

- The family's cooperation is fundamental. To ensure families actively cooperate they need to "get on board" with the intervention process. If the family is on board, if they are committed, they will ideally present the following characteristics⁵:
- The intervention in itself and the tasks it implies makes sense for the family.
 - The family feels involved and works "shoulder to shoulder" with the professional.
 - The family considers that the intervention's goals and actions can be discussed and that they also play a part in defining it.
 - The family thinks it is important to take the intervention seriously.
 - The family trusts that it is possible to advance and achieve positive results.



5 Escudero. V (2009) "Guía práctica para la intervención familiar". Junta de Castilla y León.



Example of good practice in analysing the environment and contacting the family for the first time

The municipal table of school truancy has referred the case of R.

The family is composed of P, who is 23 years old and a son, R, who is 8 years old. P had him when she was a teenager. She is a lone mother (because of different reasons the husband is no longer present in the home).

She currently lives with her parents, her son and a brother. R has a great relationship with his uncle, A, and they play a lot together. A completed a Vocational Training course and he is currently working as a mechanic at a car shop. His job is precarious but he thinks he's lucky considering the current situation.

They live in the suburbs outside of a large city in relocation homes that resulted from the Plans to Eradicate Shantytowns. Her son shares a room with her brother, A. There is no adequate place in the home to do homework and whenever the child does do homework he does so in the living room with the television on.

Before arranging a meeting with the family the professional visits the neighbourhood and gathers information regarding community resources through the existing information on the characteristics of the community. The data is gathered through community resources such as: Social Services, health centre, entities that work in the area. The neighbourhood is very deteriorated and it lacks numerous resources.

The professional contacts different entities and services in the neighbourhood: associations, social networks, other public and private entities, etc.

The health centre and the Social Services centre are located in a different neighbourhood in the district that is quite distant from this one. However, several associations work in the area: one association that is dedicated to the integrating of immigrant population and another that works with Roma population.

The neighbourhood has one park where R often goes to play. He almost never has time to do homework because he stays in the park playing soccer until late.

P's work is to help her parents at the market. It's a precarious and temporary job that does not provide very much income. She has received a scholarship for her son's schooling and a meal plan.

R's form teacher informs her that he is a very bright child and very awake in his Primary studies but he is oftentimes truant and this is affecting his performance at school. R's favourite thing to do is to help his uncle fix beat up motorcycles.

The professional meets with P for the first time at a café. The conversation is focused on P's day-to-day life, her economic and employment hardships, the problems of living at home with her parents, etc. In this first meeting R's school difficulties are not mentioned.

They arrange a second meeting this time, at P's home so the professional can meet R and the rest of the family.

Upon arrival we take a "family or group picture" and we record the initial attitudes we've found in the interview.

The family appears mistrustful based on past experiences and present disagreements with the educational centre's teachers. The mother employs numerous apologies to justify her child's truancy: he's tired, his head hurt, or he simply did not feel up to going.

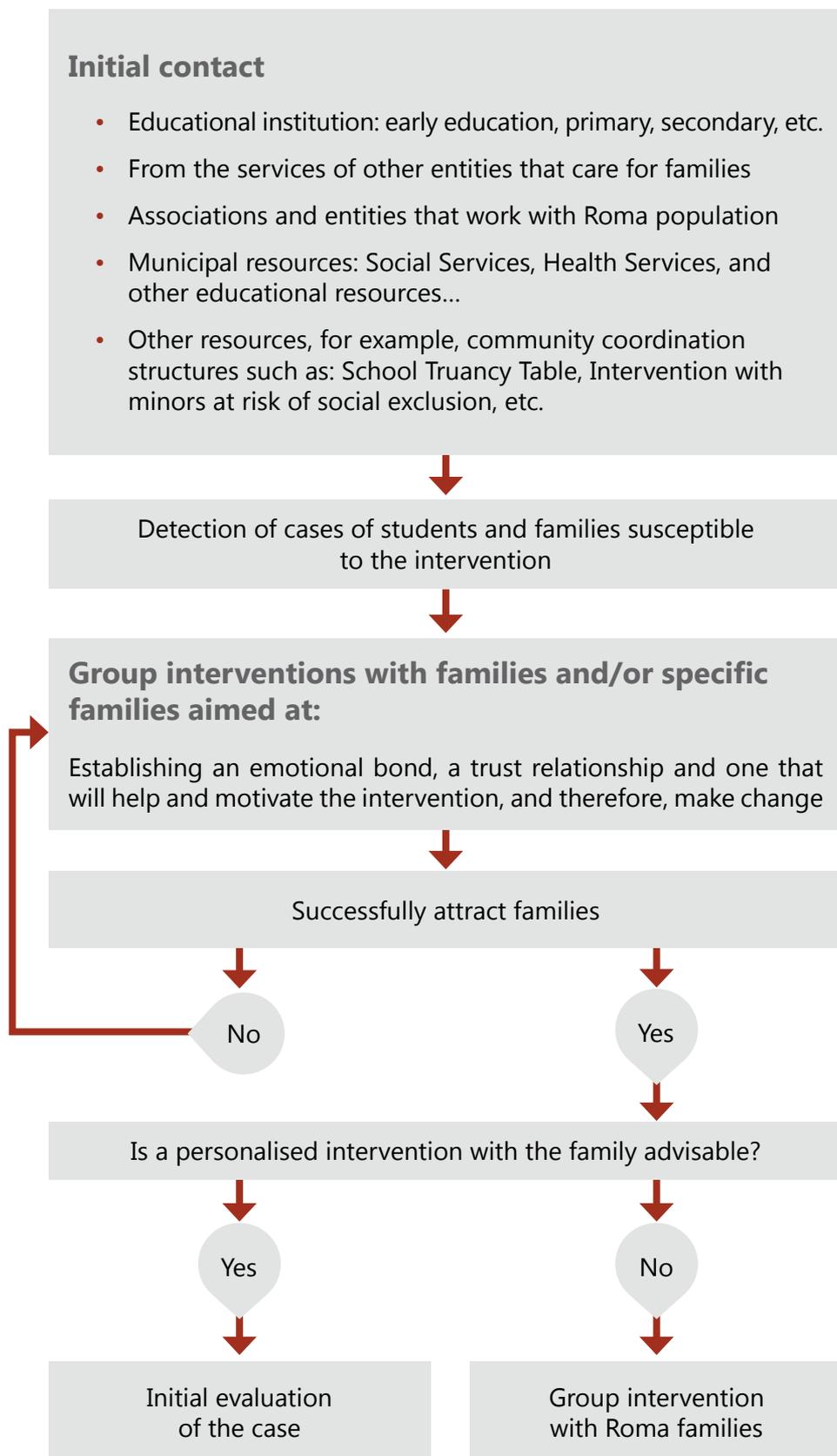
P allows him to stay home arguing that it makes her so sad to see him down because she thinks he's suffered a lot due to his father's ill treatment, and she loves him a lot and wants to protect him. Plus, she thinks maybe that way he can learn to be a mechanic like his uncle and work in the same field. P thinks the school doesn't teach him anything useful that will help him later on in life.



Warnings and things to avoid!

- ▶ **Don't pronounce judgments regarding the family, the centre, tutors or teachers with disrespect and with an absence of legitimisation of their behaviour. For example, telling a tutor: "the thing is you don't understand a thing about Roma families that is why you are prejudiced toward the student because they belong to that community".**
- ▶ **Avoid approaching Roma families with a rigid, controlling role or one that seeks to force them, using negative lines, or using a very technical language that is incomprehensible for the family. For example: sometimes we use technicalities that as professionals we have grown used to, such as: "the student's educational process, educational normalisation, etc."... We forget that families do not have this knowledge of the educational system.**
- ▶ **Avoid using any means to coerce, avoiding saying what must be done instead of facilitating the conditions for a decision to be made and commitment forged with no pressure added, Bear in mind the obligatory nature of schooling and that in this matter we must be vigilant to ensure the law is being complied with.**
- ▶ **Avoid responding in certain occasions with authoritarianism or irritation when a family is extremely uncooperative or indifferent.**

Dissemination of the intervention and first encounters with families



6.3. Creating a bond

This section describes the relationship between the family and the program's professional of reference.

What is intended at this concrete step of the intervention?

- Ensure that the family legitimises the intervention and ourselves as professionals.
- Start building a relationship based on trust and a positive work atmosphere based on the initial formal presentations.
- Attentively listen to the family's demand: their expectations and difficulties, establishing a relationship based on respect, empathy and mutual acceptance between the family and the professional.
- Define our role and adjust the demand to what the program can offer. Who we are and what we can offer.
- Help them to understand the concept of "parental responsibility": the family is obliged to bring children to school.
- Motivate educational centres, fostering the involvement of teachers, especially tutors and the Guidance Department, preparing them to receive Roma families and keeping them in touch with school centres, encouraging them to carry out actions that will motivate the involvement of Roma families and students such as welcome meetings, participation in activities, etc.
- Establish a "work alliance" between the team of professionals and the family members.

There is a variety of actions, tools and methods that may be used in this step of the intervention: meetings, interviews, support and advice, organising a welcome event for the families in the school, the creation of parent groups or associations, training workshops, the organisation of activities with parents, literacy programs for adult, support for other resources, etc.

For teachers and/or tutors it is convenient to consider the possibility of organising seminars, workshops, gatherings, provide individual support, organise seminars for teachers, individual support for tutors, etc., organise training for parents whose children came from segregated schools, literacy programs for adults, support for bureaucratic steps for parents, relationship with other resources.

Below are the **main actions proposed** to face some of the most common difficulties of this phase.

Related to families:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

The compulsory nature of some programmes can serve as a motivating tool and can become an opportunity for the families. They can help, even if it is a bit of a "blackmail" exchange, to secure the family's coming together and commitment.

For example: *The family may be pressured by a technician (related to) school truancy that may impose that they send their children to school or they will file a complaint. It is important to try to discover this circumstance, respond by understanding the pressure the family is under and trying to explain our knowledge of this circumstance and trying to justify and explain the reactions and motivations of whoever is responsible for truancy and the negative consequences of not continuing their studies. It is important to be transparent as regards this information, so that the family does not have the feeling that this is a "conspiracy".*

Firstly, it is important to adapt to their schedule and accept their timing, without invading their spaces (*don't go look for them at work*).

Achieve a *work alliance* with the family that implies "getting them on board" with the intervention process, an emotional connection and a sense of having a shared purpose as a family.

The pressure families may receive to participate in the program, which may undermine its alleged "voluntary" nature.

Thus, for example some Roma families receive a "social salary" or some kind of economic benefit from the administration which implies their commitment to comply with certain obligations or agreements, such as the commitment to regularly attend school or the schooling of their children while they are of the mandatory age as established by law.

Some Roma families may not have enough time to attend the proposed intervention activities, perhaps because they are overloaded and/or their job insecurity etc. This may lead the family to accept the intervention, but they manifest a lack of commitment.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Work with the family regarding the norms and limits with their children.

Communicate to families that they are the ones who must assume responsibility.

Tell them for example: *"The time being, kid is a kid, and you are the one that needs to get involved and fight for their future"*.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Avoiding responsibility and the ability the family has to control their children. Arguing for example: *"if the kid doesn't want to study, what do you want me to do about that?"* Occasionally Roma youth have a lot of authority to make their own decisions and if they don't want to go to school, they don't go, even if their family wants them to. The child has the power and parents do not have authority. Many Roma families let them do as they please by mistakenly interpreting that as a sign of affection.

Facilitate the internal attribution of small advancements and the results that are achieved, that is to say, the conditions that families need to perceive the changes and those they are due to their own merit and effort.

The external locus of control of families: they cannot control the situation, it does not depend on them, rather it is due to what they lack and the hardships of their environment (lack of resources, economic hardship, poor housing, etc.) therefore they feel powerless to change the situation.

For example: *I've got market today, what am I going to do with my child today? I can't take them to school! How am I going to fix this? I have no one who can take care of him (false myth of "family help" that is being lost).*

Related to families and schools:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is crucial to accept the limits, disagreements, and resistance that arise from having a different perspective, understanding the reasons why the family does not send their child to school. We also suggest encouraging the family to think and reflect critically as a family on the cultural elements that may interfere in the motivation toward school.

If applicable, pay attention to the girl's situation regarding school and work. Consider the expectations of the parents to make them aware of the importance of encouraging their daughter to continue studying.

Help families face the pressures that exist in their environment by arguing the importance of education in finding a job, to acquire prestige within the community because their children have gone to secondary school or the university, for example. In this sense, it is important to work on the concept of immediacy, that is to say, thinking in the long-term instead of in the short or mid-term.

Raise awareness in the family arguing that education is compatible with identity and that it is not lost if its roots are deeply embedded. This is another key strategic principle. Being part of Roma must be seen as a complement, and not perceived as a limitation. In doing so it is effective to show positive references of member of the Roma community who have studied and are working, and in so doing they have not lost their Roma identity.

We suggest creating a network of contact with Roma kids from their area or other locations who are going to school, encouraging gatherings between students. Sessions can be organised with groups of Roma students to enable them to each share their experiences at their own education centres, thus seeking alternatives to the difficulties that may arise and finding strength in a network.

It is also important to raise awareness and motivate the most proximate peer group of equals so that families and youth find support in all settings.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

The family perceives the school as a risk: it may be an element that may "lead to losing Roma identity and becoming like the rest" and it may also serve to control their children, thus they become even more resistant to change. Sometimes they create unfounded dangers that are exaggerated and need to be deconstructed.

A mother shares the following message: C is neither "Roma nor non-Roma". Ever since she finished school and started working she dresses and acts just like her non-Roma colleagues. I don't want my daughter to be like that. That girl is going to end up marrying a non-Roma boy... that's how we lose our cultural identity, you non-Roma can't understand. That girl has lost more in school than what she has gained. She's lost the chance of getting married and the relationship with non-Roma has distanced her from her own community. If she went with her cousin and didn't spend time just with non-Roma kids..."

Sometimes the Roma community exaggerates or caricatures the world of the "non-Roma community", when in reality there are not many differences in the characteristics of a Roma child/teenager and a non-Roma one.

The way the identity of being part of the Roma community has been created has configured a negative stereotype and a pejorative image of the teenager who goes to school, producing rejection among some teenagers (the bookworm, the Harry Potter, the geek, etc.) The community itself has created this model in some settings.

In addition on some occasions there is a distortion between the discourse that is assumed about the importance granted to school, that is, what is considered politically correct, and reality. Peer pressure from neighbours, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, etc., may favour and/or increase disinterest toward education.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Redirect the situation in such a way as to remind them that the responsibility lies not with the minor but with the adults that take care of them.

Try to help families understand the importance of studying, identifying their expectations, needs and responsibilities, especially for girls.

For example, *tell them: "Teachers may make mistakes and they may not be right about everything but try to put you in their shoes, and understand that teachers try to do their best and they have norms they need to comply with".*

Teachers may physically go into the villages to talk with the parents. It is important to involve the school centre and the teachers in the situation. Asses the possibility of giving some meals to the children.

Look for the support of other organisations; maybe they can offer some useful help.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

There may be a tendency to side with the child when an incident happens at school... For example, if the child misbehaves: *"That's just because they are taking it out on him because he's Roma... you know".*

In some settings accessing school centres is a difficulty in itself; whether it's because of the physical distance, or the absence of centres in the area, or because they have economic problems and can't pay materials or meals, etc.

In an earlier section we have mentioned the need to highlight the co-responsibility of the intervention. It is important to clearly define what each part is responsible for: the family and the professional, and to be transparent and honest as regards what the program means and is, what are its objectives and limits, the people who are going to intervene, etc. By doing so, the family does not feel cornered or deceived. It is important to contextualise the intervention, explaining key aspects such as:

- Why have you been summoned?
- What are our responsibilities and our limits, that is to say, what are our possibilities within the scope of our professional action?
- What can they expect and what must they not expect from the intervention?
- Is it mandatory to comply with what is indicated to them or is agreed upon with them? Is it voluntary to follow the agreed-upon indications and are there consequences for not complying with them?
- Who is responsible for the process and to what extent?
- Establish a protocol to access families and a guideline for first interviews: for students and for families.

What spaces are more effective in approaching families and creating a bond with them?

It is important to foster a space that is neutral, relaxed, and don't lose sight of the family's preferences, if they specify a place where they feel comfortable.

All spaces have their pros and cons therefore it is good to share and rotate. A space isn't any better or worse than another: there are times and opportunities for different spaces. What is a determining factor is that the space where we communicate with the family be sufficiently comfortable and warm so as to not condition nor interfere with the relationship between the professional team and families. Intimacy in the conversation must be guaranteed.

Let's have a look at the advantages and inconveniences of each one of the spaces where meetings can be held.

 IDEAL SPACES FOR FIRST CONTACTS	 ADVANTAGES	 DISADVANTAGES
<p>Interviews at the entity we work at (not the same as the educational centre)</p>	<p>It is usually a good idea as it is a neutral space that does not associate the professional to the educational centre. Therefore the professional can be easily perceived as a professional who will support and come alongside them.</p> <p>It is very effective for families to observe on location how the entity works with their children.</p> <p>There is program documentation available to show the family.</p> <p>Make sure the welcome space is a pleasant one.</p>	<p>Families have to make their way out there.</p> <p>It may be an unfamiliar place and may seem somewhat cold and too formal. It may not seem close or warm enough.</p> <p>If the first interview does not go as planned families may feel that they are in foreign territory, that they aren't going to receive pertinent answers and they may perceive it as an obligation, derived from other actions.</p> <p>It may be the case that the family has had a problem in the past with a technician from the entity or the family may have had a confrontation over a program the entity has carried out.</p> <p>They may perceive that professionals are "interpreting" one of the different roles they need to interpret. The role we take on with Roma families is sometimes incompatible with roles we establish with other users.</p>



IDEAL SPACES FOR FIRST CONTACTS

ADVANTAGES

DISADVANTAGES

Visit at the educational centre

It is a familiar environment for the student and the family.
It provides the first personal contact between the centre and the family.
The family is more committed to the program.
It brings families and centres closer together.
It places more emphasis on the importance of the educational aspect.
Going to the Educational Centre empowers professionals because it proves that we get involved and that we have an important and specific weight to intervene in Educational Centres.

The family may interpret that the professional is siding with the educational centre.
Families may perceive the intervention as a controlling measure.
It is an external location for the family and may be rejected due to "fears".
With some families, in exceptional cases, it may be best to consider this as a mid and not short-term objective.

Interview with the tutor

They know the student more personally and are directly involved in their educational process.
There is a greater awareness of their needs.
It allows for true mediation and not "go tell them".
It allows the school to get to know the entity's management and will thus make things easier for the form teacher's next visits to the entity.
It helps the form teacher to grow in familiarity to meet other technicians in the entity that are in charge of other programs.
It confirms how serious and rigorous the entity's programs are.
Some families perceive the form teacher with respect.
Students will be aware of our authentic concern as they see how we work with their form teacher.

Excessively formal.
If there has been a conflict in the past or negative experiences, it is necessary to perform other actions to bring them together beforehand.
They may interpret that you are siding with the educational centre.



IDEAL SPACES FOR FIRST CONTACTS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
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Home visit

It creates a bond of trust as the encounter has taken place in their own space; therefore they feel comfortable and protected.

Treating educational matters in a wide sense, where other siblings are listening, underscores the "concern"; and speaking about "school matters" in a normal and shared way with "others" who are not family members.

It is interesting, if possible, to get to know the home, but only if the family offers it.

Some professionals are of the opinion that the first visits ought to take place in the home as most families aren't going to go elsewhere. This situation will start changing as we achieve a greater connection. On the other hand, other professionals consider that if home visits are done first thing, it may be an intrusion on their intimacy. In no case should the home visit be forced.

This first visit must be semi-structured and we mustn't pretend anything other than our sole objective: an initial comprehension of the Program we want to present.

Families that are also being followed up by Social Services, Childhood Protection Teams, may confuse the objectives...

When siblings are present comments or implicit or explicit comparisons may emotionally affect the other siblings...

The family's own dynamic may disrupt the interview's flow. For example: *when you visit some families the rest of the family members continue with their tasks while the interview is taking place thus they may interrupt you numerous times, however, the interruption may itself give us a clue of how to act.*



IDEAL SPACES FOR FIRST CONTACTS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<p>Informal encounters in neutral spaces, such as: interviews in open venues (park, breakfast at a café, specific meeting in the neighbourhood, etc.)</p>	<p>It breaks formality.</p> <p>They don't perceive the "threat" of an office, which makes them think that any action is an obligation.</p> <p>They perceive us as someone who is close to them, and can adapt to them, for example, <i>it is important to go out to the street now and again to clear something up with the grandpa.</i></p> <p>Students may see the professional's ability to adapt to the moment as a positive feature.</p> <p>It provides a sense of speed and immediacy so that issues don't seem as grave or serious.</p>	<p>There can be many distracting elements that may take away from the meeting.</p> <p>There may be a lack of intimacy to deal with certain topics.</p> <p>They may perceive that the technician is not being very professional and may confuse the relationship with a friendship and therefore the message may lose intensity and importance.</p> <p>They may perceive that we are not very professional, although this risk may be minimised if it is alternated with more "standard" spaces.</p> <p>For example: <i>If the place is small it may give rise to rumours among neighbours, acquaintances, etc. Thus, intimacy is lost and it may become an inconvenience.</i></p>

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ Seek out the ideal interlocutor in the family. It may be another person and not the father or mother. If it is convenient, involve several members of the family, for example, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, an older sibling, etc. In this point it is important to be careful and not to "empower" other family members more than the parents. For example, it may be of interest to include a grandfather to help handle specific aspects regarding his granddaughter, but it is necessary to also respect the key role parents play so that the "responsibility" of parents has greater weight and all family members must perceive this.
- ▶ Guarantee the confidentiality of information and data gathered.
- ▶ Carry out actions to motivate families and students (motivational interviews, visits, etc.)
- ▶ Maintain continuity with the teams of professionals that participate in the analysis of needs, program dissemination and first encounters.

- ▶ Foster the competence to dissent and face the pressures present in the environment say for example, so that girls do not abandon the educational system and they can be capable of telling their grandparents or neighbours for example: *"I don't agree" "I have a different opinion" "if the girl stops going to school it is going to harm her and it won't be good for her"*.
- ▶ Raise awareness among Roma families that challenges in the school setting are not as different in other families. Sometimes Roma families need to understand that the mainstream society faces difficulties similar to the ones they face (this may differ depending on the context and circumstances).

For example: *"Your child is Roma but they are also in the same situation as the rest of them and they need to live in the same society. They are Roma, but they are also from this city, this country and they are European..."*

- ▶ Information is more relevant when the messenger is more prestigious and has greater credibility: the messenger must be reliable, that is to say, they enjoy prestige due to their training and proximity with those listening. At certain moments messages are better accepted and they are met with less resistance when we use "messengers" from their peer group of equals or relevant members of the beneficiaries who get committed.

Some key criteria to facilitate change and face difficulties are as follows:⁶

1. Anticipate obstacles and difficulties.
2. Reinforce progress and advancements and ensure that they are pleasant.
3. Identify the nature of resistance and provide adequate assistance.
4. Consider that abandoning the intervention is a legitimate possibility.
5. Focus attention on the short-term advantages and benefits of changes.
6. Speak in a clear and accessible language with families.

⁶ Adapted from Costa, M and López, E "Educación para la salud: Guía práctica para promover estilos de vida saludables". Pirámide. Page 304-305.



Example of good practice in creating a positive bond with the family

The relationship with family XX starts with the referral from the educational centre due to the low academic performance of daughter, C, who is 14 and is studying the second year of mandatory secondary education and she has failed the first year and so far this school year she finished the first grading period with four failed subjects. Her tutor gets in touch with the Association, which launches a program to ask us for help and to provide educational reinforcement for this student, as they think she is perfectly capable of finishing Secondary Education with a bit of stimulus and support from her family.

After a telephone call we arrange a meeting in the evening at the entity's offices. The mother, T, arrives alone.

We begin the conversation by showing interest in day-to-day aspects. We ask her, for example: how many children she has, what are their ages, if it was easy to arrive at the centre, if she feels comfortable, if she would you like to have some coffee or refreshment, etc.

Next, we ask her if she has any needs or concerns regarding C and we strive to make her feel understood.

We show an interest in her experience at the centre and in her daughter's studies. We ask her: When did your child earn better marks, last year or this year? What do you know of your daughter's experience at school? What do you not know about her school experience that you would like to or should know about? What have you done in the past to help your daughter in her school difficulties? What mistakes do you think you have made and what did you do well? Did you agree and where you able to work together?

We also ask her about some facts in order to know what they have done to help their children at school, such as: what activity have you signed your child up for, football? How many times have you gone in to school to speak with your child's form teacher?

Next, we clearly explain why we have summoned her, what our role is and what we can offer her.

T behaves in a defensive manner and manifests negative expectations: "my child is no good at school that is simply not for her and I don't think you are going to get anywhere because the teachers have taken it out on her because she's Roma. Plus, she feels very lonely at school because there aren't any other Roma students in her class" she says.

We try to reformulate her negative thoughts into positive ones:

“Don’t be afraid. Your child is not going to be alone at school because even though there is no other Roma student in her class there is one in another one, in group B. It’s normal for C to feel that way but we girls are used to overcoming these kinds of situations.

You can be at rest and fully trust the professionals that work with her. We see living proof of this every day with the follow-ups we do in educational centres with other Roma guys and girls. We are aware of their dedication and interest, not only for their studies, but also for the quality of life in the centre. Look at F’s example. His parents have supported his education and he’s already in his second year of secondary school” (F is C’s cousin).

Many Roma youth abandon secondary school at 16 years of age without graduating and receiving their diploma. But more and more we are seeing Roma students who, after finishing secondary education, continue with vocational training courses and we even have Roma students at universities.

C has time to redefine her future and we can give her alternatives. We believe in her and by working together we can be successful. C can feel good about attending school and she can finish her mandatory secondary education.

T, the mom, answers: But even if C studies, there’s no work.

Reply: “There is no work that is true. But put yourself in the shoes of a businesswoman who has a clothing store and you need help. Who would you hire: a kid who has not finished secondary education or one who has studied?

T answers: “I’d hired the kid who studied because that way, in addition to selling he can do other things, like running errands”.

Professional: “Therefore, in times of crisis, people who haven’t studied have it worse, you don’t think so?

Next, we establish a commitment to help that is not perceived as a coercion: “we are going to try to talk with the centre to see if C can change groups and be with J, who is also Roma. Do you agree?

In addition we are going to include C in tutoring so it may be easier for her to pass her mathematics and English classes, but we need you, the family to attend the meetings with the form teacher when she calls you and to work with us so that together, we can agree on small goals that we can achieve every month. Do you agree? This way, it is probable that C will finish her secondary education successfully like her cousin F.



Warnings and things to avoid!

- ▶ **Avoid labelling Roma students as problematic and having greater chances of failing at school. This may provoke a stigmatisation that may lead to what is called the “self-fulfilled prophecy”. For example: *reinforcing the teacher’s image and judgment “...well, he’s Roma... we know what that means...”***
- ▶ **Avoid imposing changes from our professional perspective, judging the family’s attitude and behaviour toward school, underestimating their reasons and points of view. For example: *“We don’t tell them anything because if not they are going to go school and let them have it... It’s best if we accompany them to ensure that the conflict that ensues be handled with cordiality and respect”.***
- ▶ **Avoid attitudes of professional despotism which make the family feel questioned or that their authority is undermined by the professional, instead of feeling recognised and legitimised as an interlocutor.**
- ▶ **Avoid creating false expectations about the program or making promises we can’t keep. For example, *“Don’t you worry; I’ll fix this for you”.***
- ▶ **Don’t discredit and blame the family, for example: *“you never do what you can, you’re not interested in what’s happening at the Educational Centre, nor in the studies, you don’t do anything to fix things that aren’t going well”.***
- ▶ **Don’t pressure families into having meetings or participating in the process. Respect their timing. Don’t create mechanisms to force a bond with them.**
- ▶ **We should avoid messages that undermine their reasons and their points of view, like forcing visits or encounters in their home, going to their home unannounced or without arranging the meeting beforehand, not having their “authorisation” or consent to enter their home.**
- ▶ **Avoid taking on board people who understand Roma culture but are not professionals, assigning them as mediators with an expert role, when they lack the necessary strategies and training.**

6.4. Initial assessment

What is intended at this concrete step of the intervention?

The objective is to carry out an in-depth individual assessment of each family or family unit in order to establish the individual intervention plan for that family.

The main actors of this phase are: the family unit and the team/professional that is going to carry out the assessment.

In this phase the basic aspects are as follows:

- Reach a consensus regarding the initial hypothesis, after having gathered individual information about the family and the student that will facilitate an intervention (it will be used in designing the family plan). It will adjust as closely as possible to their characteristics, the difficulties they face, the needs they feel, and their expectations. It's about detecting strengths and weaknesses in the family as regards their children's school situation.
- The information gathered should be aimed at placing the attention not just on the family's difficulties but also to evaluating the possibilities of change within the family, that is to say, it's about knowing the family's resources and strengths.
- The best way to gather information is through interview during the visits to the family. The process may take more than one interview.

We should define basic information variables about the family that will serve to assess their initial condition. The information needed to carry out an accurate assessment includes a series of aspects gathered, as an example, in the "Map of Social Capital (Annex 1), "Family Information Registry Sheet" (Annex 2) and "Student Information Registry Sheet" (Annex 3).

The main areas to assess are:

- Family structure and organisation.
- Family educational style.
- Family attitudes towards and relationship with the educational system.
- Community relationships.

Below are the **main actions proposed** to face some of the most common difficulties of this phase.

Related to families:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Establish a physical space of trust and legitimise the family at all times, respecting the codes and family behaviour.

Identify the family group, who composes it and which are the relevant figures, who can we count on and who can intervene in the diagnosis.

If, at the beginning of the intervention, the bond is not adequately established, it will be difficult to gather sufficient and reliable information on the family.

The absence of a traditional family structure due to the parent's emigration, the existence of single-parent homes, basically single mothers with children and the taking on of responsibilities by other figures like grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc., may also be an influential factor.

Involve the family in defining their difficulties, needs and interests, helping them to define them. The problem must be defined with the family, therefore it is best to begin with one of the concerns they may have regarding their children's school situation.

As professionals we define the problem and the needs and our definition is not discussed. This attitude implies that the solution is also in our hands and that the family does not have much to say.

The initial diagnosis must be conceived as a dynamic and flexible methodological tool, that is to say, it does not intend to obtain a fixed image; rather, it can be modified at certain times.

Once the initial diagnosis has been carried out, it is important to return it to the family so they can contrast and evaluate it. The family must be and feel a part of the process. Special care must be placed on presenting it to the family not in a technical way, but in an adaptive fashion.

Constant changes in the family system and in family dynamics and relationships may influence the diagnosis that was carried out as it does not remain stable. The intervention process in itself implies on-going transformations in systemic relationships within families.

Related to families and schools:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Be transparent in the goals we intend to reach and in our day-to-day work with the tutors and the management team. It's about analysing variables thoroughly, in search of small aspects that add up for example: what does he do in the day-to-day? And without judging him, identifying small difficulties and providing small solutions.

Once the first initial interviews and or visits have been carried out, and in the following ones, we recommend providing them with something they requested and the needs they have expressed. The perception that their needs are met with a response is usually very stimulating; it favours motivation and helps to consolidate the relationship.

Give value to the parents by involving them in some school activities where they can grow and have an active role (i.e. share their experiences in various issues at the school...).

From day one, even if you are carrying out the initial diagnosis it is recommendable to start with an action. It is important to set small goals that can be met.

For example: *We can't promise to find a job if that is impossible; but we can help them find a nursery or childcare service.*



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Some educational centres are reticent when asked to provide information about students and in welcoming staff from outside of the centre.

On certain occasions, not knowing the student's environment may lead to establishing prior hypotheses that have not been contrasted.

For example: *an intervention is set in motion with a male student involving school tutoring at an educational centre. His form teacher attributes all his problems to the fact that he is from out of town. The educators, after months of working in the intervention, clarify that he's lived his whole life in the neighbourhood it's just that he simply changed schools.*

Demotivation, a lack of interest and the family's rejection of the school, constitute an important barrier in gathering adequate information to carry out an accurate diagnosis.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Strategies centred on visualising and boosting the positive resources present in families, and minimising the negatives ones, is essential. It's about analysing the family's possibilities and opportunities in depth and making the focus of the intervention, in their capacity to change, not their limitations.

Look for the reasons why children don't participate in extracurricular activities (i.e. perhaps due to poverty related situations...).

Often, researchers and technicians tend to focus on the risks and in the detection of problems. By doing only this, we lose opportunities. We often don't speak in positive terms about the potential, the enjoyment of rights, or the full development of citizenship.

For example: *what is your child good at? How can these skills be of use to them in their life? What resources do you think your family has to help your child?*

It is important that parents (or whoever is responsible for the family) visualise the expectations and horizon of their children's educational project, and that the diagnosis not be a limitation.

It is important to support female children and, if applicable, to give support to mothers. Find out if girls have sufficient time and space to study and if they have the support they need to study (what are the parents' expectations for their education and future).

One of the basic actions is the family interview. It is recommended to also have more than one and to gather as much information as possible through observation. It may also be convenient to summon the parents, if applicable. If the paternal figure is not present (or if the parents aren't there) it is also convenient to interview a relevant family member as an influential figure. Only on some occasions is it of interest to interview more relatives.

Returning the objective information gathered and analysed by technicians is brought together with families in order to arrive at a consensus regarding an initial participatory diagnosis. Information is also provided in order to modify its own perception.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Centre the attention on analysing what they lack and ignoring their potential and the effort they have put forth in their children's integration in school and the competencies they have displayed in doing so.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is fundamental to gather information from different persons involved in the children's educational process. Thus, interviewing the educational centre makes it easier to corroborate the information received about truancy, academic performance, difficulties, interest, their socialisation process, etc.

It is also recommendable to interview the student so they can tell us their perception and opinion about the support they receive from their family. These interviews with students will allow us to also identify their attitudes and aspirations toward their studies, but it is always advisable to contrast this information and strike a balance between what the child says and what the family says.

In addition, it is also tremendously useful to gather information from other professionals who have worked or are working with the family in order to know and corroborate if they are receiving any kind of benefit or support and also to know if the family is involved in other interventions with other programs or activities.

To this end, it is important to perform a shared analysis and to work with a team to gather different points of view and opinions, requesting the family's authorisation to research and investigate and requesting information on the student and the family from the educational centre and social services.

Team meetings to assess cases and draft a conclusion or a participatory diagnosis are fundamental.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Student information provided by their families or by other resources is sometimes insufficient.

This implies that professionals should put forth extra effort to perform this task of gathering enough information before beginning the intervention.

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ Don't forget that the family system is dynamic and complex and there are different kinds of families (absent fathers, single-parent, etc.). Don't forget that there are many factors to note and assess as they are interrelated in each particular family in peculiar ways.
- ▶ Bear in mind that the first information the family offers may not reveal their reality and you may need to consider that this initial assessment may change throughout the intervention. It is necessary to contrast all the information received, both from the family as well as those received from other resources and those involved in the intervention themselves.
- ▶ Highlight the family's strengths, competencies, and expectations. In doing so it is essential to: explore competent styles within the family and make the most of their skills, promoting them and helping them to develop them fully, constructing our intervention on them.
- ▶ Pay attention to aspects such as the way the first contact (whether it's over the phone or through another means) has been received, the information that has been explained, the tone of voice, the comments, etc. They will provide "clues" about the family's attitude regarding the information we are sharing with them, their relationship with the school centre, how important their children's school process is to them.
- ▶ Maintaining and ensuring the privacy of all information and communication is essential not to lose the family's trust.
- ▶ Don't start from scratch. Find out what their prior experiences have been like, for example, if they have been told the same messages many times in the past and if they have been effective or if, on the contrary, they haven't been of much use.
- ▶ It is also important to explain to families why the information is requested and why it is important to perform a first assessment of the starting point in order to individually design the Family Work Plan. In this regard, it is key to explain and return with all clarity what is going to be done at each step and why, as well as what data protection is all about.
- ▶ When designing the diagnosis and in view of the problems or situations found, take into consideration that it may be useful to refer the family to other available resources in the environment.



Warnings and things to avoid!

- ▶ **Avoid defining the family's problems and needs regarding their children's school life yourself. It is necessary to listen to them and to contrast the information received in order to perform an adequate diagnosis and not base it exclusively on our perceptions.**
- ▶ **Avoid assessing children with special (specific) difficulties without having first consulted with experts in the matter.**
- ▶ **Avoid creating a dependence on services, whether it's because they finance families or because of the type of relationships that it creates between them and families.**
- ▶ **Avoid rushing, pressuring families to obtain all the information we consider relevant. Don't expect to obtain all the information in a single interview. The information we need can wait and it will arise little by little, throughout the process, if we have been capable of mustering our patience and not overwhelming the family with questions about information. The most important thing is to maintain trust and a good relationship with the family.**
- ▶ **Avoid forcing the family to provide information that may be embarrassing. Plus, we must be very prudent in the information that may be let out, such as a teenager's pregnancy, or a family member's use of drugs, etc. It is essential to talk between team members before sharing information with the family.**
- ▶ **Be especially careful not to allow too much trust in the relationship, that is to say, avoid developing such a fondness for the family that may make it difficult to establish the limit between the professional and the personal spheres (such as assisting a family outside of working hours or accepting to help a family in aspects that are beyond our competence). Plus, being a friend may make the rest of the community mistrust us.**
- ▶ **For example: *As Juan (the professional) is Carlos' friend, he's probably going to help his family more than us.***
- ▶ **Be respectful of the family's beliefs, customs, and traditions and do not include actions in the individual plan that go against them, given that they respect human, social and gender rights.**



6.5. Designing a family work plan (FWP) and creating an alliance

What is intended at this particular step in the intervention? Specific objectives

Prepare a Family Work Plan (hereinafter referred to as FWP) with each family, where different agents participate and above all, the family participates, together with the educational centre and the students themselves. It should adjust to the reality of each family in view of the needs that have been detected previously. Planning the actions to be carried out to obtain these objectives and establishing time frames to accomplish them. The FWP must be recorded in a road map to follow which will include a time frame to review the planned actions, so as to include pertinent modifications. The plan is a dynamic work tool subject to revisions and readjustments.

The FWP's objectives are aimed at preventing children from abandoning school and fostering the academic development and performance of students in the educational system, as well as to support families in this process.

One of its strategic principles is to strengthen the family's competences, abilities and expectations to be able to support the educational process of their children. It is important to define motivating and significant goals that will enable fathers/mothers and other relevant members to perceive that they are capable of setting and achieving them.



Below are the **main actions proposed** to face the most common difficulties of this phase.

Related to families:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

The part of the work to define goals and objectives is carried out after a time of contact with the family, which serves to know their problems and needs.

The family's needs are translated into goals, that is how we help the family define what they hope to achieve in reference to the problems or needs that have been identified and stated explicitly. We need to help adjust the family's expectations.

Try to promote families' active participation to the extent that the goals are their personal choice and decision, the actions will make sense and will help them to put forth effort, and overcome demotivation, and difficulties.

Requiring families to get committed is a key element in the process. We need to explicitly explain the role families have in their children's educational process, fleeing from paternalistic attitudes and dependence on services: *how far are families willing to go?*

The professional must also comply with what they have committed to doing. Above all, it's important to ensure that the plan is based on the family's potential and opportunities.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Carrying out the work plan without meeting the minimal conditions of having an alliance with the family.

The team of professionals provides families with the objectives to be pursued.

Families accept the intervention, but then in practice they adopt a passive attitude toward the intervention and do not get involved in it.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is essential to set a sequence of objectives with concrete and realistic goals, placing special emphasis on short-term objectives that make it easy to maintain the relationship and also result in the family's perceiving the intervention's usefulness.

Setting small goals, that are not very demanding, and therefore very easy for families to reach, is a great reinforcement as the family sees the progress and the results and this favours their motivation to pursue change.

Example: *What is the smallest change you would need to see to note that your child is improving/progressing/on the road to success?*

In the Family Work Plan it is fundamental that they be the ones to set the timings that each family requires. This makes it easier to respect the pace of each family and helps us adjust to those small advances they are willing to participate in, and therefore, to assume.

Some families have many shortcomings and therefore, many needs they need to fill, although they have few parental and social, and other skills and capacity. Therefore they require very long time frames in order to observe significant results. In these cases it is necessary to coordinate the family's paces of development and the results expected by intervening professionals.

It is important not to try to force family's pace of commitment, (although we would like to advance more quickly in the accomplishments), by adjusting ourselves to those small advancements, respecting the family's pace at all times in the intervention and respecting the achievement of short-term commitments (minimal commitments).

For example: *As the school year begins: having school books and material up to date, meeting with the tutors when the year begins, always justifying absences, regular attendance, attending meetings with other professionals involved in the case (for example: Social services, Childhood Protection Teams, Social worker from the Health Centre or Hospital, etc.).*

From the assessment point of view it is also very advisable to set staggered objectives that allow us evaluate minimal and rapid progress.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Setting objectives that are too ambitious and long-term may lead families to grow discouraged.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

The application of the individual plan must be firm and in step with the assumed commitments, but it must also be flexible to adapt to changes in the context.

It is important to leave space to review how the individual plan is working, as well as the proposed objectives and time frames. These revisions must be carried out in coordination with the team and with the network of resources that has been created, establishing the times to review the designed Plan, for example every 3 months. The purpose: to track the evolution of the process in terms of the school year, that is to say, from September to June, with written guidelines that are subject to review explaining the tasks performed by all the family members and the team of professionals aimed at the student's success at school.

Give priority to the objectives that have been agreed upon and are adapted to the family's pace, being more flexible with the program's demands.

Place the focus on the family as an interrelated system, as described in the systemic theoretical model suggested. Therefore, it is important to be aware that the actions that are proposed for some of the family members, say for example, father, mother or brother, etc., will affect the entire family unit. It is important to ensure that each family member has a role in the intervention as each one contributes something personal and necessary to each student.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

The Family Work Plan is conceived as a rigid and closed plan that creates a distance with the family's needs and situation.

On some occasions the program's demands on technicians may be too hard, not making it easy to articulate the particular objectives that have been adjusted to the pace of families and the pace of centres.

There is tendency to design actions that are exclusively focalised on the student.

Related to families and schools:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Although the work plan is a family plan it must take the educational centre into account as a key reference.

The tutors working with the family must endorse the objectives defined with the families, so that they confirm their adequacy and enable them to offer whatever observations they consider pertinent.

The plan should also include the objectives to work on with the centre, after having reached a consensus about the objectives.

The lack of collaboration and involvement of educational centres and other community agents may, in some situations, signify attitudes of firm rejection and lack of support for the intervention that may slow down and even modify the Plan's application process. On some occasions it is important to consider the diverse working hours of the different professionals.



Related to families and other agents:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is essential to promote a joint and shared assessment of the family's situation, and include other agents in designing the Plan, as their suggestions and contributions will be extremely valuable. Plus it helps the family perceive that there is a host of people accompanying them in their environment: teachers, tutors, health and social resources.

The plan also includes the necessary support of the other participating agents and the plan will evaluate up to what extent they are able to commit. It will evaluate the real and available support and resources.

The goal is to establish contact with the resources that interest us, whether it's for one-time collaborations or whether it's to prepare a single intervention where the role of each agent will be defined, establishing a smooth and cooperative relationship with the set of administrations and non-governmental entities that intervene in the network. We need to be realistic and adequately value the participation of the involved agents.

We need to know we are working together in a coordinated fashion and we need to know if all involved parties are willing to work together in such a way as to facilitate the design of a single intervention plan that will avoid duplication and will set forth the actions to be carried out.

The objectives are to: identify the agents that will intervene, translate what is expected from each of the agents involved in the change into concrete actions, establish joint working guidelines and guiding principles, and accept some implicit "rules of the game" such as: negotiate, reach agreements, giving in sometimes, etc. It is also important to establish time frames and the tools to be used, establishing a system of assessment that is on-going, quarterly and annual through the joint preparation of the Follow-up Sheets.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

To design an evaluation and a family work plan that does not include the coordination and collaboration with other professionals and/or resources.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

When dealing with a network intervention, clear “leadership” must exist and it needs to be recognised by all parties. Positions must be agreed upon, not imposed.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

In cases where different resources intervene, there may be different points of view regarding the interventions or measures to adopt and this lack of unanimity or agreement may hinder or make the intervention fail.

Related to the process:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is important to recognise the possibility that the process may get stuck, not advance, or may even worsen. We need to make the family see that so they can be aware that it will be impossible to continue the work if what has been agreed upon is not achieved. For example: *you need to be aware that if the children are once again absent from school for unjustified reasons in the next weeks, we may need to review and rethink the entire Work plan.*



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Not foreseeing mistakes or setbacks and assuming that they are part of the process.

Establish a system of on-going, quarterly, and annual assessment, gathering information systematically to prepare indicators of achievement both for the processes as well as for the expected results. In section 6.7 there is a matrix of assessment that highlights the most relevant aspects as examples.

In order to correctly follow the FWP and the implementation of the program, it is advisable to have many one-time follow-up and support visits at the family’s home, having first agreed them with the family, if our situation is one of sufficient trust so as to enable this.

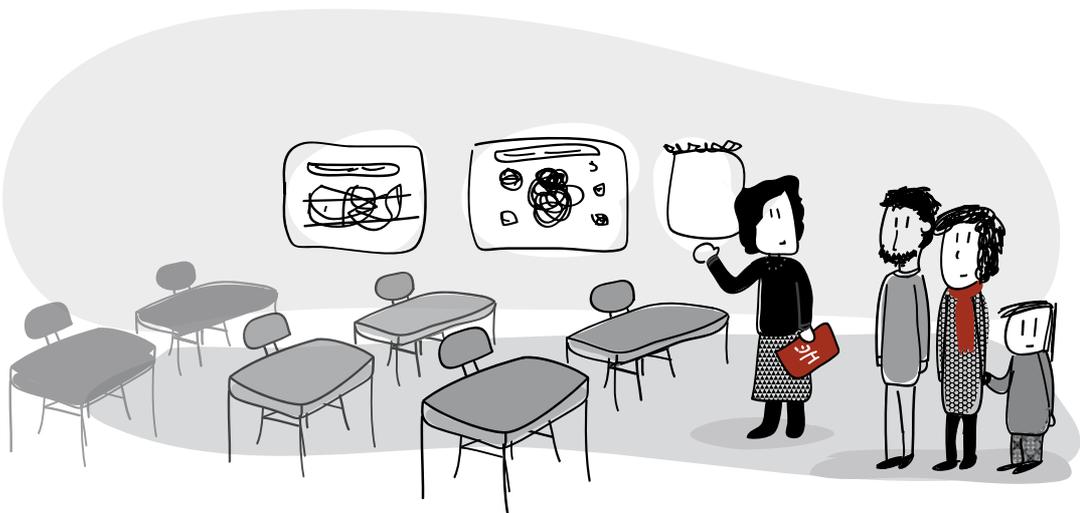
It is important to give families feedback regarding the evolution of the objectives and actions and in so doing we need to follow-up the FWP constantly, evaluating if family’s have made it their own and if they are fulfilling the commitments they took on.

Not designing a Follow-up and Assessment Model in advance with indicators that will allow us to evaluate the process and the results.

In short, it is fundamental to suggest goals and objectives that are significant for the family we're working with. To this end it is necessary to take into account a series of aspects that are summarised here:⁷

Aspects to consider in setting goals and objectives:

1. Are they connected to the matters that concern and interest them, to their needs, culture, religious beliefs, or what they consider valuable?
2. Are families actively participating in choosing and defining them? It should be their own decision.
3. Are they expressed in such a way as to allow you to verify and evaluate the steps taken and the effort made to reach them?
4. They should be prioritised in view of the prioritised aspects that need to be changed, based on the family's choice and the feasibility of the change.
5. Is it worth it, is there a return for the effort put forth?
6. Is it feasible to reach it soon, at least in the case of some of the objectives?
7. Do they produce satisfactory emotional experiences?
8. They need to be aware that they can count on our support to reach them.
9. Families who don't speak the language of the country should be encouraged to learn the national language to be able to better include themselves the country.



⁷ Adapted from Costa, M and López, E "Educación para la salud: Guía práctica para promover estilos de vida saludables". Pirámide. Page 215.

Most frequent developed actions

	Actions	What are they about?
INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY	Family orientation sessions.	These actions are aimed at reorienting, improving, motivating and guaranteeing the student's learning and development. These sessions can be for the entire family, only for the parents or whoever is responsible for the family or only for students.
	Joint tutoring sessions: families, form teacher, and technician.	The aim of these actions is to reorient, improve and ensure the student's learning and development through the FWP design.
	Individual tutoring sessions for students.	The aims of these sessions are to boost/foster/improve and develop study skills and student motivation.
	School interviews.	Relationship with the referential teacher in each centre with free hours to support the integration: Educational psychology assistance and orientation teams. Attention to Diversity Commission, Children's mental health, etc. Detection of school dropout and the student's difficulties and the family's degree of involvement and their difficulties.
	Advice, accompaniment and support actions for the management of resources.	Provide logistic support to families and work for the autonomy of families (empowerment of families) in the arrangements necessary for their children have an appropriate school (apply for school scholarships, a meal plan, scholarship for books, transportation, etc.). Bring the family closer to educational resources they may not know about (open centres, school tutoring, sports, etc.).
	Home visits to inform and follow up on the family.	Actions intended to bring families and schools closer together. One-time advice and educational orientation.
	Actions for conflict resolution between the centre and families.	Act as a mediator between the centre and the family when situations of conflict arise. Offer alternatives to expulsions from centres when situations of conflict arise.

	Actions	What are they about?
GROUP	Group training actions	<p>Set up meeting and debate spaces to discuss alternative proposals to improve the educational processes for their children. These spaces can be organised as a one-time event or for example in family clubs.</p> <p>Family schools. This is a place where the families can relate to other families and can exchange experiences with peers, as well as receive a psycho-educational training.</p> <p>Reinforcing and learning about values and attitudes that promote the family's involvement in the training process of their children.</p>
	<p>Meetings of internal and external coordination with technicians and intervening agents.</p> <p>Team meetings to supervise the FWP.</p>	<p>Coordination with other resources to develop and review the FWP.</p> <p>Coordinate the educational activities with all the professionals involved (for example, in the context within which the lottery system is used to relocate students to other schools).</p>
EDUCATIONAL CENTRE	Sessions with educational centres	<p>The presentation of the intervention project to the school with the management team and the tutors.</p> <p>Training and awareness actions regarding Roma culture and reality aimed at the centre's teachers.</p> <p>Planning work planning with the form teacher of the FWP. Student: common objectives, strategies, actions to be developed, follow-up method and assessment of progress and results with students and families.</p>
SOCIAL COMMUNITY	Activities aimed at community integration: promoting activities in the community, participating in associations, leisure activities in the neighbourhood, participating in workshops that may interest mother, etc.	Reinforcement activities to favour the participation of families in community activities in order to favour their social integration. For example: <i>Conferences against Racism and Xenophobia, March 8th: Women's Day, April 8th, International Roma Day, November 25th Day against violence against women, in February, the week of Carnival in February, Cultural centres, etc.</i>
	Coordination and collaboration with educational centres and other agents in the community network. Resources from local and autonomous community administrations and not for profit entities.	Joint work and referral to other resources if necessary, especially the collaboration developed with programs in Social services, or in other NGOs that offer services in the area and develop actions aimed at families as a group regarding topics on education, health, minors, etc.

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ Co-responsibility is fundamental: the family gets involved in their own process of change.
- ▶ The changes that are proposed need to be changes the family can understand and assume, based on participation and negotiation.
- ▶ Preparing the FWP is a participatory shared task (tutors, families, counsellors, students...) that involves all. It signifies an important effort to negotiate the actions that convince everyone. Families can thus see themselves as a part of the project.
- ▶ Promoting their capacity to choose and decide among different objectives and alternate actions, as well as the responsible commitment with the FWP jointly designed.
- ▶ Referring families to other resources and organisations when they have needs that are not related to or/and covered by the programme.
- ▶ Arriving at the end goal established implies a gradual process that must be accompanied by on-going positive reinforcement.
- ▶ Appreciating the effort the family is carrying out to achieve goals at all times, no matter how small they are. For example: *"Hello, I'm calling to congratulate you because last week the English language teacher told me the kid was charming" or, we can reinforce the mark of a small exam where the child has obtained a good mark or we can use a small paper or project that the teacher gave positive feedback to in order to display it to the parents so they reinforce their child's effort.*
- ▶ Supporting families overcome failure and disappointment which will inevitably occur throughout the process and which may make them abandon the intervention. Mistakes or setbacks may become an opportunity to review the planned objectives and redouble efforts.



Warnings and things to avoid!

- ▶ **Avoid making carbon copies of work plans for families that “look the same” when it comes to understanding or evaluating their children’s education. We may make the mistake of boosting the family’s shortcomings in the process to change the socio-educational development of their child, provoking the undesired effect.**
- ▶ **Avoid stating objectives in negative terms, for example: “stop doing... don’t do... etc.” Our efforts to convince them mustn’t be accompanied by criticism, intimidation, threats, or an invalidation of their points of view.**
- ▶ **Avoid suggesting changes as a confrontation in terms of “I, the professional am right and you are wrong”.**
- ▶ **Avoid personalising everything: we perceive any negative result from one of our families we work with to be “our result”, acting as though we have committed the mistakes they have made. Be careful and do not assume responsibilities that do not correspond to you as a professional.**
- ▶ **Avoid contradictory messages that families sometimes receive from different professionals involved in the design and development of the FWP. It is essential to establish one sole interlocutor to contact the family.**
- ▶ **Some professionals hold that it does not make sense to prepare a written document where the family signs the commitments they have assumed, especially if we consider that many of them are illiterate. In addition, some professionals argue that for most Roma families the verbal commitment, after having reached a consensus, has much more force and that making them sign a document may be seen as a lack of trust in the word they have given. However, for other professionals, using a written commitment is essential as it commits families to fulfil their commitments and, at the same time, they may appeal to it in case of non-compliance. In sum, it is up to the team of professionals to decide what they consider to be more convenient.**
- ▶ **Avoid revealing secrets that some family members did not want others to know about, since it may tremendously weaken the sense of shared goals and objectives.**

6.6. Implementation of the actions foreseen in the Family Work Plan (FWP)

What is intended at this concrete step of the intervention?

The objective is to implement the designed FWP: the actions planned to enable the family to increase the support towards their children at school, as well as its revision and follow-up. This also involves carrying out an accompaniment in the student's educational integration to ensure their active participation in school life and their participation in other educational and social resources (see the diagram below).

The two main actions of this phase are:

- Development and Follow-up of the Family Work Plan (FWP). Development of the actions that have been designed:
 - Individual Intervention.
 - Counselling and sharing educational guidelines with the family, etc.
 - Group Intervention (if advisable).
 - Referral to other resources (if necessary).
- Assessments of Objectives: assess each of the objectives planned in the FWP, and when necessary, design new ones.

Maintain the agents involved and coordinated to follow up and review the FWP with them.



Below are the **main actions proposed** to face the most common difficulties of this phase.

Related to families:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Make the family aware of how important it is to invest in the long term.

In some families, immediacy is the predominating value. The here and now is valued more than the mid-term and long term and on occasions, other aspects are prioritised before education, such as consumerism.

For example: they don't buy school books but they purchase consumer goods they can do without, such as name brand tennis shoes for the child instead of the school supplies they need.

Falling into paternalistic actions that created a dependence on support services.

It is convenient that professionals are aware of this obstacle so they can work with it, thus, they will anticipate the difficulty and prepare a strategy to gradually suggest changes in the family to normalise situations slowly. The male technician has certain strategies and competencies that can help to solve this problem, if he knows the father and introduces himself to the family, for example. Once the family knows the technician, there is usually no more reticent behaviour.

In communities or groups where roles are still very traditional the woman usually puts the family's needs before everything else, and she is the first to sacrifice her studies or any other conduct of independence. In some Roma families this differentiation of roles is maintained where the male exercises the formal authority.

Women are usually the ones who care for the home and also support the domestic economy. Plus, usually it's the woman alone who helps in the children's homework, the follow-up and school accompaniment of their school itinerary.

It would be convenient, if the actions are focused on women, to try to convince and to increase the expectations and to influence the attitudes of the family in order to support the process.

Communicate to families that you understand their situation, their difficulties, and their anguish and that your purpose is to help them solve them.

The family does not trust or legitimise you.

At the beginning of the intervention it is important to meet a demand immediately or quickly, in order to ensure that families are "on board" or committed.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

It is important to facilitate the feeling of efficiency and control to make progress in the expected results, making sure that the efforts they are carrying out are compensated, recognised, praised, and constantly reinforcing their achievements and minimising their failures.

Families feel powerless, discouraged, not very efficient and with scarce control over the situation.

It is important in each context to manage the resources so they can have books and school materials, for example; favouring used books, photocopies, using books from the previous school year, or "childhood checks" to purchase books, etc. To this end, we need to respond quickly articulating all the resources we can access, contacting with entities that provide helps: social services, religious centres, etc.

Help families manage their own economic resources so they can be more efficient. For example: supporting families discern the types of expenses that are basic, can be done without, or superfluous.

The lack of economic resources to provide the family with basic support, for example: to purchase educational material, school uniforms, expenses for excursions, cooperative payment, voluntary contributions, etc., may make the family hesitate to participate and may distance them from the educational centre.

The need to obtain tangible and immediate results, and if they are not produced, frustration ensues and that makes motivation decrease.

Despite changing their domicile the professional must follow the family up, trying, whenever possible, to refer the family to an adequate resource close to their new domicile, and transferring to the new professionals all the available information regarding the intervention developed with the family.

The mobility of users that have no fixed residence. For example: fairs, seasonal workers in the fields, etc. and they take their children with them.

We need to be capable of readjusting our objectives established in the initial work plan once again agreeing upon them with the family. If a new work plan is needed, adjusting the intervention process and the objectives to their pace.

In certain situations, the technician needs to be ready to refer the case to more adequate resources.

The family does not respond to the work plan.

Related to families and schools:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Make the family aware of the importance of going to school and completing mandatory education.

Share examples of Roma community members who have studied or are doing so.

Stress the importance of education as another basic need along with housing, work, health, etc.

Try to meet an immediate request suggested by the family at the very beginning, even if it is not the object of our intervention.

For example: some families may place a great importance to their own family and may require that there be a family member and not merely a friend at the same centre. Respecting that need may help maintain regular school attendance. Having a support network at a centre, be it through neighbours, relatives or acquaintances, is an important support tool for any family.

Support and motivate them to create a Parent Association, raising awareness of Roma families of how convenient it is for them to participate in said Association.

Give them responsibilities and involve them in positions where they are able to develop their skills and to assume active roles.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

The existence of values and convictions that are contrary to those the educational system upholds. This can produce a lack of motivation among families.

Bear in mind that the social pressure in the environment (due to several structural factors and great marginalisation and isolation) is in some cases, very intense.

For example expressions such as: *“my daughter doesn't need to continue studying, she has to help me at home and care for her younger brother”* or *“Secondary school is more dangerous for my children than the street is”*.

“They don't need an education for the market or scrap metals. They just need to help me with the market”.

At the beginning families share basic, one-time needs with us and if they are not met, they may make the rest of the educational intervention more difficult.

The non-existence of Parent Associations or similar ones in centres or, if they do exist, Roma families take part in them to a lesser degree than the rest of the families in the centre.

Related to support networks and teamwork:



ACTIONS PROPOSED

It is important to have a support network, proposing all complementary resources in advance, establishing a work alliance among the professional teams.

Work in coordination with other resources, such as Social services for example or other Organisations that are intervening with the Roma community, in order to complement the intervention from different fronts.

It is important that the network we have woven adapt to specific cases, setting the stage where the potential actions we want to develop can be planned. When it comes to creating a community network, it is important to motivate and facilitate the establishment of feedback in the exchange of information regarding the efficiency of work as a network that can be reinforced in the areas where we do not reach.

The key is that members of the team or other teams in the network may be able to converse about their work, supplying all the available information on the family, both positive and negative. To this end, the channels of communication need to be agile and effective: arranging meetings, telephone calls, email, internet forums, etc.

Speak with the family and inform them that the entity can support them in each need they may have, searching for sources to refer families, whether they are internal within the same organisation or external, and accompany this referral to each pertinent entity.

In the hypothetical situation of the non-existence of a support network, it would be necessary to evaluate if, with the available resources, it would be pertinent to set the intervention in motion, that is to say, if we can, with our minimal resources, obtain the same results.

It is essential to be realistic and adapt the intervention to the real possibilities of the resources we have.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Lacking a good support network that allows the professional to intervene in several settings as often the problem of schooling or success at school is the least relevant one. In order to involve families it is necessary to also intervene in other situations.

Not being able to complement the intervention we are carrying out and not being able to make a referral to provide the intervention with more quality.

We may be met with attitudes that display a lack of collaboration or manifest a conflict between different professionals, as well as coordination and communication failures or that the expectations of what others are going to do are not fulfilled.

Families may seem reticent to working with a set of professionals that are different and have different points of view, interests, responsibilities and procedures.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Teamwork and supervision are the best guarantee of security since we communicate work decisions to our co-workers and we share the analyses of the needs of families. The person who performs the supervision is also fundamental. Supervision and coaching are very efficient to prevent and to deal with the burn out syndrome. They favour objectivity in handling cases and enable a way to work with family-professional dependence.

Pool all the theoretical models that frame the intervention and make an effort to know the theoretical focus and procedures of other teams.

Sharing the same theoretical framework facilitates understanding, communication among professionals and sharing technical procedures. All of this favours coordination, which is necessary.

It is advisable to foresee this mobility to establish, in addition to the technician of reference for the family, other professionals that also come into contact with the family. For example: a coordinator, a support technician.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Isolation and feeling like you are working alone.

The technicians carrying out the intervention present differences in their educational degrees and in the theoretical models used as starting points.

The teams of professionals do not all have the same view regarding the analysis of problems with the families we are working with.

The mobility of technicians that implies adapting to new technicians of reference.



Example of good practice: how to implement an intervention

Roma family, H, constituted by the mother and two daughters aged 10 and 11 years old, came to the school success program voluntarily after having learned about it at the educational centre. There is a good collaboration between the entity and the educational centre. We establish a work plan with the family and the family agrees on it and we begin the implementation. Obstacles arise.

At the beginning the family responds to the work plan that has been prepared, but after a month the girls start having unjustified absences at the educational centre, they misbehave, and they are no longer doing their homework. The marks of the last grading period evidence poor academic results. Plus the girls have stopped participating faithfully in their group school tutoring activities offered by the organisation.

The technician must arrange an interview with the parents to know the causes of the current situation. The family verbalises that they have basic needs that are unmet and they cannot focus on their daughters' education. They are no longer receiving the social help Social Services used to give them. Therefore the parents need to go out and sell scrap metal the entire day long and that is why the maternal grandmother, who has difficulty getting around, is in charge of the girls.

After the meeting the technician analyses the case and detects the following obstacles:

The family has exhibited a lack of trust in the technician. Had they trusted him, the family would have told the technician about the situation and the change in the family situation. Plus, the family prioritises basic needs before education and does not place sufficient importance on the fact that their daughters have a normalised educational process. They are not aware of the collateral damage that truancy creates among minors.

To this end the technician considers that he needs to rethink his strategies with family H.

The first thing he decides to do is to recover trust with the family, relaying to them his concern for the situation they are experiencing and his desire to overcome the "patch" or bad time.

Subsequently he decides to once again agree on the objectives of the work plan (FWP) with the family, bearing in mind that he needs to reinforce any positive change, however small, as the family had already successfully achieved some progress. Simultaneously he will try to meet some of the basic needs the family currently has.

He reminds the parents of the change observed in their daughters when we started to work together. The situation is different now so the technician contacts Social Services to follow up on the help requested. He speaks with the parents of one of the children involved in another intervention at the same educational centre the H family girls attend, so they can help by picking the girls up on their way to school.

The technician decides to sit down with family H to help them manage their income to cover the family's basic needs, do away with superfluous expenses, and placing a special emphasis once again on the daughter's education as one of the family's priorities. At this time the technician needs to convince the family that their daughters' future depends on their education. It is a good time to help them be aware of the negative repercussions of not finishing their studies.

After a meeting with Social Services they are able to receive a one-time help in the case of emergency. Plus, the family accepts the technician's help to efficiently manage the economic help they receive. Simultaneously they refer the father to a program of active employment search in the evenings.

The parents take the daughters in the mornings to the educational centre. They reached an agreement with the centre so that the girls get to school a bit earlier, when the parents go out to work. After school, the mother of the other child in the program picks up the girls and takes them, along with her son, to the school tutoring activity where the girls' parents pick them up in the evening.

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ Maintaining a smooth relationship with the educational centre is key in the success of the intervention.
- ▶ The starting point should be the conviction that families are competent and they have their own resources and capacities.
- ▶ Motivate families and centres to get involved in FWP actions.
- ▶ Explain and make parents aware how their decisions affect their children. For example, the consequences of truancy, arriving late to school, etc. have implications for children and they are often emotional. When the family understands the consequences they usually put forth effort in the solutions.
- ▶ Bear in mind that the intervention undergoes different moments, some of which may be frustrating. That is why it is important to have the capacity to reconstruct it based on mistakes and failures, gleaning something positive out of frustration and offer activities that motivate students. For example: *program simultaneous entertainment activities that may serve to "get them on board": going out to the beach to study, visiting museums, zoos, botanical gardens, visiting radio/TV stations, etc.*
- ▶ Changes in the "schedule" should be made at the moment needed, given the variable circumstances that may arise in reality.
- ▶ Maintain an active and adequate coordination with the different resources and teams involved in the Plan.
- ▶ Offer an intervention from a comprehensive perspective that takes into account and different economic, cultural, educational and social factors that are affecting the different situations.



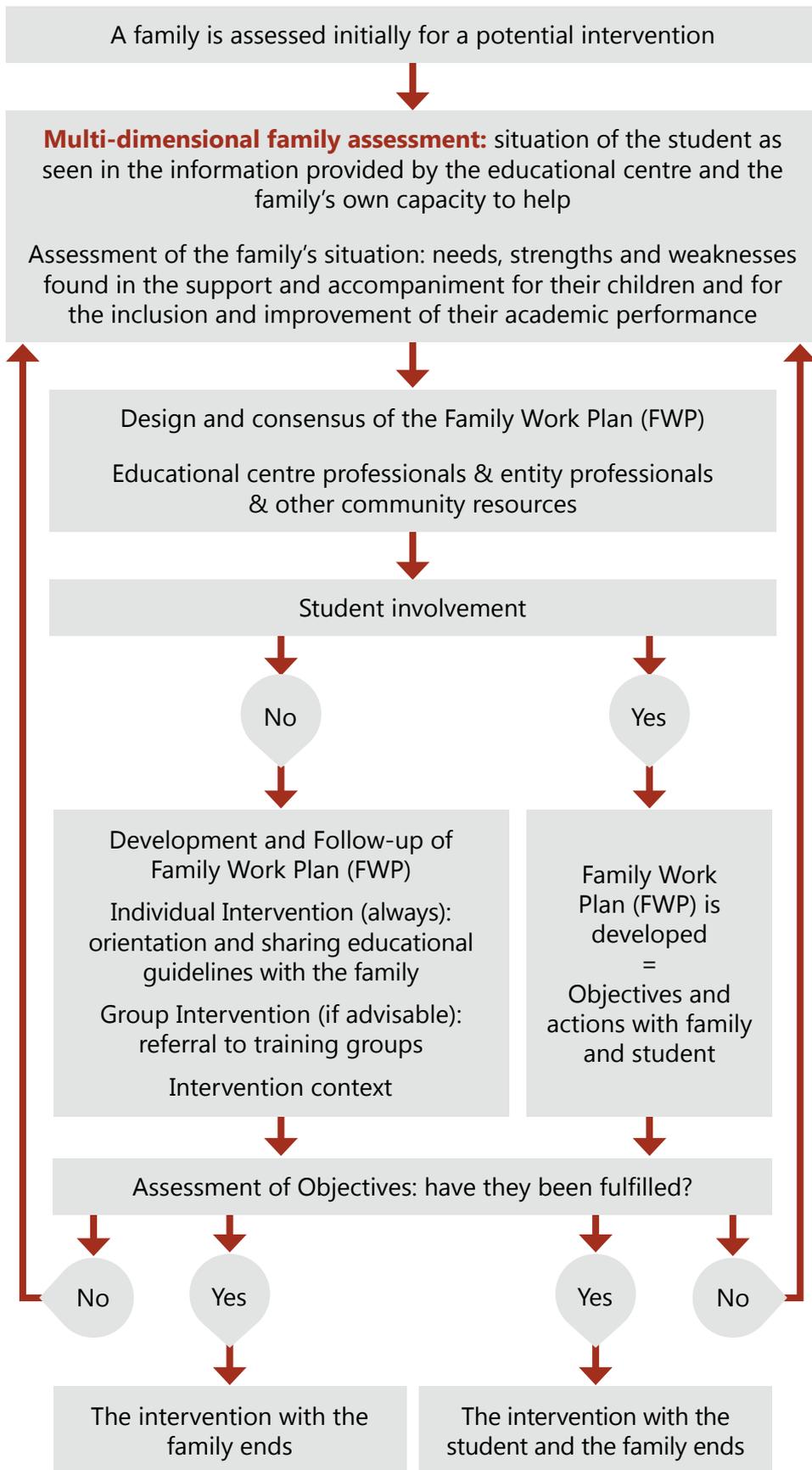
Warnings and things to avoid!

- ▶ Don't overestimate the expectations of the results of the work of the technicians and underestimate the capacities and resources of the family we're assisting.

For example: "don't you worry, I'll take care of that... leave it in my hands! Or, "There's nothing that can be done with this family. They are disasters. They do not collaborate at all and they reject all kinds of actions!"

- ▶ Do not hurt the rest of the families if a "concrete action" has not created good results with a specific family.
- ▶ Avoid ghettos and overcrowding in the classrooms. It is important to have positive Roma references in the centres, other Roma students, but to do so favouring inclusion with other non-Roma boys and girls.
- ▶ Avoid falling into paternalism and having the family depend on the professional favouring extremely demanding and dependent behaviours that do not promote the family's autonomy.
- ▶ When you answer or reply to the family don't forget that the professional's role is to provide information, orientation and support, but not to constantly accompany them.
- ▶ Be careful not to be demotivated: the implementation of the FWP is a long process and difficult moments may arise when the process of the family goes backwards. Notwithstanding these moments, it is important to maintain a positive attitude even when the development of the process faces many difficulties.

Intervention process with families



6.7. Follow-up and assessment of the intervention

What is intended at this concrete step of the intervention?

To carry out a systemic collection of data, both quantitative as well as qualitative, that will allow us to judge the intervention carried out regarding the suitability of the implementation process, the degree of fulfilment of the foreseen objectives and the pertinence and effectiveness of the program.

Furthermore, the evaluation may be internal or external to the program. Internal assessments and follow up usually are performed by the team that designed/implemented the program. Usually, these assessments refer to the analysis of data regarding the implementation of the process, its coverage and the degree of fulfilment of its objectives. It is advisable to use simple designs and instruments at the right times to carry out the assessment. They must be planned within the program from the moment it is designed to the time it is implemented, and if necessary, it can be also used in the subsequent development.

The teams that develop and implement the program may carry out the internal assessment. During the evaluation process it is convenient and recommended that the data analysis and the reports are done within the team framework. This internal assessment has to be considered as a process that will help the practitioners receive continuous feedback about the development of the actions and will allow the team to face difficulties together and to learn from them.

External assessments are those usually performed by specialised teams unrelated to the intervention. It is strongly recommended to have an external evaluator, if possible. Doing so will help to check any aspect of the intervention that may have been overlooked.

The steps to follow in designing it are as follows:

- Select the kinds of aspects we consider relevant to know about the program's implementation process and its results.
- Select the indicators depending on the questions we want to be answered, and then identify the methods and techniques that will be used to find the answers to those defined indicators.
- Plan the moments when we are going to collect data, we leave space to analyse the collected data to gather the opinions of critical agents (stakeholders) related to the program: recipients, team of professionals that directly implement the program, professionals from related support networks, political representatives that make decisions regarding the intervention.
- Issue a periodical report discussing the program's development and results. These reports will help us know that is happening in the program and will allow us to introduce necessary changes. Reports are also important because they reveal the program's development and also give the program visibility and, on some occasions, serve to increase the program's sustainability.

- It is important to have access to the instruments used in implementing the program, such as assessment instruments, for example, the Family Intervention Plan and its follow-up, field journals, minutes from meetings, attendance sheets of family's attendance to activities, student absences from school, etc.
- Furthermore, it is important to complete the information regarding the indicators to use qualitative methods and to arrange meetings and/or interviews to learn the opinions of the participants. These questionnaires are an adequate instrument but, depending on some types of population, they may be difficult to apply them. Instead, some qualitative techniques, such as structured or semi-structured interviews or focus groups, among others provide the same value and they enable us to know and identify what is occurring in the program.
- It is of utmost importance to accompany the assessment with a series of recommendations to improve the intervention, both the implementation process as well as the achievement of anticipated results.
- Once the program's assessment has been completed it is interesting and important to disseminate its results, whether it's through publications or seminars, forums, and/or conferences.
- Pay special attention to assuring the confidentiality and protection of the data produced, mostly if it is shared by different agents.



Below are the **main actions proposed** to face the most common difficulties of this phase.



ACTIONS PROPOSED

Create a culture of assessment, that is to say, perceiving assessment as an enriching element aimed at improving actions and not related to the critical indictment of the professionals.

Use qualitative data collection techniques such as: field notebooks, recorded anecdotes, reports, semi structured interviews, focus groups, etc.

Receive training in the program's follow-up and assessment, assigning time and spaces to this end.

Find a balance between the quality and the quantity of the necessary intervention records, without overdoing it.

Find adequate and feasible methods depending on the characteristics of the beneficiaries.

So long as it is possible ask other professionals participating in the case for support.

Anticipate the possible factors that may alter the collection of information and the value of the supplied results in the design and during the duration of the implementation.



MOST COMMON DIFFICULTIES

Too much action that does not facilitate reflection or the collection of necessary information.

Due to the lack of qualification among the involved parties regarding follow-up and assessment, the importance of assessment is not appreciated and follow-up and assessment are viewed as a hindrance that slows down the intervention.

The process and all of the effort carried out are invisible at times, or they fall short if the information is merely quantitative. Numbers do not imply quality and it is necessary to also record qualitative information.

The program's requirements regarding the use of tools or results to be achieved may condition the intervention with the family. In some cases the fact of completing numerous records may leave the family's own intervention in second place.

The actors involved in the process are lost, both of families due to migrations, or abandoning the intervention, as well as of technical teams due to their mobility or responsible politicians that may affect the evaluation process and therefore, the results obtained.

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ In order to design the assessment of both dimensions, process and results, we have established a series of criteria⁸: effectiveness, coverage and performance to assess the process, and the effectiveness criterion to assess the results.
- ▶ The effectiveness assessment criterion, as Ligeró, J.A (2008) highlights “measures if the intervention causes the desired effects in a specific beneficiary, taking into account the specific and operative objectives, as well as the purposes anticipated in the program or Service, both the planning of results as well as the established processes”.
- ▶ The coverage criterion “consists of evaluating up to what point a program reaches the beneficiary, that is to say, it is about comparing the real population that is involved in the program to the theoretical population that should have been involved in the program” and the performance assessment criterion “analyses if the actions have been performed correctly”.
- ▶ In view of each of the selected criteria, we establish a series of key questions regarding the program’s development, indicators, instruments and techniques to find the information. The objective of this definition is to make it easier for professions to choose the indicators in view of the questions that are asked regarding the different aspects of the program.
- ▶ Indicators are quantitative measures useful in following the evolution of different variables. The variables can be quantitative (number of hours, number of people...) and they can also reflect qualitative aspects (i.e. satisfaction with the program, activity...).
- ▶ The selected indicators that follow are expressed in positive terms. It is also recommended to pay attention to the not so positive or even negative results, and analyse the reasons for them.
- ▶ In order to complete the assessment of the results and actions of the program that arise from the indicators, we also suggest using other methods such as interviews, focus groups, team review sessions, etc.
- ▶ It is strongly recommended to analyse and to cope with the moments of conflict, the things that are not going well, the moments of crisis in the intervention, weak points and failures. We can learn from mistakes.

⁸ A criterion is defined as the “the most positive state of a program and it is compared to the real situation. This contrast allows us to formulate a judgment”. (Ligeró, J.A. 2008)

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS		
ASSESSMENT CRITERION: EFFECTIVENESS		
INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUMENT
<p>Has the planned communication and dissemination Plan of the Program been adequate?</p> <p>How do families hear about this program?</p>	<p>Degree of effectiveness of the communication and dissemination strategies: % of families who assess that the program's dissemination strategies and main ways to learn are adequate.</p>	<p>Call log and log of schools that inquire about the program during one school year.</p> <p>Record of interviews with schools to know the families that have minors enrolled that could participate in the program, and how many families have actually been informed.</p> <p>A distinction should be made between families who come by external referral; in this case it is advisable to assess the dissemination, and families who come by internal referral. In this case it is based on a direct information or communication that is not subject to any plan.</p> <p>Sampling, this consists of quantifying the new families that come every new school year.</p> <p>Questionnaires adapted for each parent although they assess the same aspects.</p>

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS

ASSESSMENT CRITERION: EFFECTIVENESS

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUMENT
<p>Have the families embraced the actions as enthusiastically as anticipated?</p> <p>Have the satisfaction levels of families with the development of actions and with the Program's professional team been anticipated? If not, what difficulties have arisen?</p> <p>Do the families offer any suggestions to make the intervention more effective and appropriate? What kind of suggestions?</p>	<p>Percentage of families that are satisfied with the care provided by professionals.</p> <p>Percentage of families that are satisfied with the treatment: kindness, personal attention and clarity of information.</p> <p>Percentage of families who find the information and orientation provided by the professional that assists them to be useful.</p> <p>Continuity in the program: number of families who begin and end the school year in the program and also continue in the following years.</p> <p>Percentage of parents who would recommend this program to other Roma families.</p>	<p>Satisfaction questionnaire for the families.</p> <p>Assessment report at the end of the school year with the educational centre.</p> <p>Registers of new entries and removals and the families and students who participate.</p>
<p>Have parents participated in family training groups? Have they positively assessed the assistance provided?</p>	<p>Percentage of users that are satisfied with the training received.</p>	<p>Anonymous satisfaction questionnaire for parents at the end of the sessions.</p> <p>Observation/evaluation records of the session instructor.</p>

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS		
ASSESSMENT CRITERION: PERFORMANCE		
INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUMENT
<p>Is the technical team of the program satisfied with its implementation?</p> <p>Were the activities developed as anticipated?</p>	<p>Degree of satisfaction of the team of professionals with the development of the planned actions.</p> <p>Degree of satisfaction of the team of professionals with the support of and coordination with other municipal resources.</p> <p>Degree of satisfaction of the team of professionals with the program's level of acceptance among families and schools.</p> <p>Other educational programs with school tutoring.</p> <p>Other childhood and youth programs organised by other third sector entities (street education, Social services, etc.).</p>	<p>Minutes of meetings/ statements expressed at meetings.</p> <p>Minutes or records of the number of the meetings and subjects covered.</p> <p>Joint agreements on the intervention with the family.</p> <p>Records of the families that have been informed and families that are participating, referred students and compliance of the proposed profile.</p> <p>Assessment questionnaire for other aforementioned professionals or resources.</p>
<p>How has the process been carried out at all intervention stages?</p>	<p>Qualitative indicator: degree of suitability of planned processes compared to those implemented in practice.</p>	<p>Collection of anecdotes from the technician responsible for the case.</p>
<p>Have referral protocols for cases referred to other resources been carried out as anticipated?</p>	<p>Number of referred cases to other resources in accordance with the procedures specified.</p>	<p>Records.</p>
<p>Have families been followed up and accompanied through a Family Work Plan?</p>	<p>Number of Family Work Plans that have been prepared and agreed upon by the professionals, families and other educative agents, with adapted objectives and a progressive approach to fulfil each case.</p>	<p>Social report that assesses the work plan.</p> <p>FWP assessment (fulfilment of objectives, indicators...)</p> <p>Record of assessment meeting of each case with the technicians who are involved in the educational intervention.</p>

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS

ASSESSMENT CRITERION: PERFORMANCE

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUMENT
<p>Do the professionals who cooperate in the family case ask each other about their views on their needs and solutions?</p> <p>Has the work of others been validated?</p> <p>Have joint actions with resources and social agents involved with this collective been planned?</p> <p>What are the objectives and specific indicators of each of the professionals that work in the family intervention from different sectors? Are they consistent and complementary?</p>	<p>Number and typology of the joint interventions with resources and social agents.</p> <p>Number of common objectives and indicators.</p> <p>Number of specific objectives and indicators from the different resources involved.</p>	<p>Collaboration model with entities and resources.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings between the entities and resources.</p> <p>FWP assessment: activities developed and agents involved.</p>
<p>Has the planned family assistance procedure been followed?</p>	<p>Analysis and evaluation of the procedures applied/ followed.</p>	<p>FWP assessment and also, the IWP (Individual Work Plan). If there was no follow-up there should have been a prior renewal of the FWP or the child's IWP.</p>

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS		
ASSESSMENT CRITERION: COVERAGE		
INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE
Was the family orientation and accompaniment offered to every family that needed it? Is the intervention reaching the intended beneficiaries? Are there biases?	<p>Families involved in interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From other entity programs in the municipality, neighbourhood or school, so long as they have the required profile. From programs of other entities. <p>Families that the program supports: number of the families which the program supports case-by-case and family profiles.</p> <p>Number of new groups and orientation groups.</p> <p>Number of families covered.</p> <p>Number of families involved in awareness, motivation and support groups.</p>	<p>Reports from other programs.</p> <p>Family file.</p>
Is the program being accepted at schools?	<p>Number of schools that ask to sign collaboration agreements.</p> <p>Number of schools involved in the family intervention program.</p>	<p>Record sheet of family interventions.</p> <p>Number of agreements signed with schools.</p>
Is the program being accepted in the surrounding community?	<p>Number of community educational agents involved in the FWP.</p> <p>Number of other community agents involved in the FWP.</p> <p>Number of agreements signed with new entities.</p>	<p>Family file.</p>

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS

ASSESSMENT CRITERION: COVERAGE

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE
Does the program recruit the families with the greatest support needs and chances of success?	Family profiles for the criteria set forth in the initial diagnosis.	Databases that contain the basic information of all of program users, as well as the activities carried out with the students. "Reports" of referral cases (they are not always provided in writing).
Do other community programs that support families refer them? What are the main ways families are recruited?	Main ways of recruiting families. Family profiles: % of families who come from other regional programs aimed at families.	Case follow-up sheet Referral file, both external and internal. Social Services: Social Salary Program Other associations or NGOs that work in their environment.
Can the program contact and act with families that are undergoing difficulties and in need by supporting the integration of their children at school as anticipated?	Family profiles of families we work with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main ways they are recruited. • Family Types. • Most common kind of support they needs for integration. 	Family file. School file. Referral file.

Below there is a series of key questions in regard to planning the intervention. The assessment of the fulfilment of the objectives and goals is very important in the assessment. If the purpose is to review the work done preparing the goals included in the FWP, the "Revision Sheet" included below may be used.

Model sheet to review objectives and goals⁹

	YES	NO	REVIEW
1. The objectives have been defined and are the result of a negotiation with the family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The objectives have been endorsed by the educational centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The objectives are realistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. There is time/resources to achieve them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The objectives are clear; they are not ambiguous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The objectives are staggered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. There are big jumps between the anticipated steps or stairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Some objectives overlap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. It is possible to verify the time it takes to achieve them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. It is possible to verify the achievement of previous steps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Achievement indicators have been clearly defined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Has the Family Work Plan been designed adequately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Comments:			

⁹ Escudero. V (2009) "Guía práctica para la intervención familiar". Junta de Castilla y León.

It is essential to select an achievement indicator for each specific goal that has been established. The indicator is the concrete conduct, ability or situation that best represents the goal.¹⁰ For example: the student has arrived to school on time through a two-month period; the student has not missed school for unjustified reasons during a quarter; the student has attended tutoring classes with the anticipated frequency, etc.

But it is also relevant for understanding better the meaning of the indicators, and of the process and results of the programme to gather qualitative data regarding the qualitative aspects of the program and the intervention. This means to complete the information using qualitative methods.

INDICATORS MEASURING EFFECTS/INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM RESULTS		
EFFECTIVENESS CRITERION		
INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE
Is the family making progress in achieving the stated objectives in the FWP as anticipated?	Progress of each participating family in the program: degree of school involvement, cooperation with the school and student support and involvement.	Document that contains the FWP design. Comparison with the initial situation (diagnosis) and the degree of progress in fulfilling the anticipated FWP in relation to the objectives in the short, mid and long term. Field notebook. Follow-up sheet of the design indicators. Follow-up sheet of the revised indicators.
Is the student making progress in achieving the stated objectives in the FWP as anticipate?	Progress of each student whose parents participate in the program: degree of school involvement, reduction of truancy, and improvement of academic results.	Compared with the initial situation (diagnosis) and degree of progress in fulfilling the anticipated FWP. Database of case follow-ups.

¹⁰ Escudero. V (2009). Guía Práctica para la intervención familiar. Junta de Castilla y León.

INDICATORS MEASURING EFFECTS/GLOBAL PROGRAM RESULTS		
EFFECTIVENESS CRITERION		
INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions improve their study habits?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who improve their study habits, from the beginning to the end of the school year.	Individual family and student records.
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions reduce their school absenteeism?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them that reduce their truancy, from the beginning to the end of the school year.	Student attendance sheets of the school and/or Social services (Problem: They are not always strict in record keeping). Follow-up of quarterly assessments carried out for each student.
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions complete primary education and pass all subjects?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who complete primary education with all subjects passed.	Final follow-up that is carried out for each student. Marks.
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions pass from primary school to secondary education?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who pass from primary school to secondary school.	Final follow-up that is carried out for each student. Effective incorporation into Secondary Educational school.
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions complete their secondary education without graduating from mandatory secondary education?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who complete their secondary education without graduating from mandatory secondary education.	Final follow-up that is carried out for each student. Marks. Referrals.
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions graduate from mandatory secondary education?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who graduate from mandatory secondary education.	Marks. Final follow-up that is carried out for each student.

INDICATORS MEASURING EFFECTS/GLOBAL PROGRAM RESULTS

EFFECTIVENESS CRITERION

INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions improve in the achievement of the curricular objectives?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who improve in the achievement of the curricular objectives.	Information provided by the school: tutors, counselling departments... Comparison of marks.
How many of the students whose families have been involved in interventions continue to study past compulsory education?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who continue in post-compulsory education (pre-employment or academics)	Follow-up of the students at the end of mandatory secondary education: those enrolled in technical studies, baccalaureate.
Have families improved their involvement in the educational process of their children as planned?	Overall number of students whose families we have worked with and the number of them who have improved their involvement in the educational process of their children in the school year.	Final scale assessment questionnaire for each professional to measure the involvement of the family. It includes the following items. Does the family... School their child who is in mandatory age. Regularly take the child to school. Justify absences. Care for the child's hygiene, that is to say, does the child come clean to school. Attend meetings with the form teacher when called in. Check if they have homework. Allow them to go on outings and excursions.

INDICATORS MEASURING EFFECTS/GLOBAL PROGRAM RESULTS		
EFFECTIVENESS CRITERION		
INFORMATIONAL NEEDS AND RELEVANT QUESTIONS	INDICATOR	DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE
Have educational centres improved their involvement in the program's actions as planned?	Overall number of contacted schools and those with whom we have established a relationship and the number of schools that improve their degree of involvement in the actions carried out in the program or throughout the program's development.	Final report prepared by the program coordinator at the end of each course based on the degree of school involvement: incidences with the students are communicated quickly and efficiently. Number and type of demands made to the technicians. Offer of guidelines, work materials for the students, in particular for school tutoring.
Has the number of schools implementing cultural diversity mechanisms increased?	Overall number of contacted schools and number of those that have begun implementing cultural diversity mechanisms since the start of the program.	Database. Number of agreements signed.
Has networking been promoted through a coordinated and joint intervention of community resources?	Coordination protocols with the different social agents. Number of networking actions planned and jointly managed across disciplines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community actions. • From public resources. • With other associations. • With social health resources. 	Activities reports and records. Model social action plan shared and signed by all the entities coordinated.

The answers to these all these questions are important to adapt and improve the implementation of the intervention so that it adjusts as much as possible to the needs and expectations above all, of the families, but also of the students and the educational centres.

Key messages and ideas

- ▶ It is fundamental to make the work that is being carried out visible: the process must be visible and it is also necessary to assess the results of each of the initial steps that signify important progress, as well as the intermediate steps and the final steps, which constitute the achievement of the end goal that was anticipated.
- ▶ It is important to record quantitative data: frequency with which something is done, time frames for anticipated tasks, intensity of anticipated tasks, etc. To this end, record sheets may be designed, or a questionnaire or a scale that scores to what extent the anticipated progress was achieved: very much, halfway, only in some aspects, very little, nothing, or it could be structured on a 1 to 10 scale.
- ▶ Numbers aren't the only thing that matter. It's also important to gather and systematise all the information regarding the implementation process of the program. The purpose is to gather a "black box of the intervention" collecting qualitative information, field notebooks, reports, interviews, meetings, focus groups, etc.
- ▶ The information gathered and systematised must lead us to correct the mistakes detected in development process of the actions, assessing what worked successfully as well as drawing conclusions as to the program's effects and results. It should also be useful to prepare recommendations for improvement.
- ▶ Get feedback to improve the implementation process.
- ▶ It is very important to pay attention to the difficulties and failures that have happened in the program, since they give us good lessons to learn from and to improve the programmes' implementation.
- ▶ Pay attention to the development of competencies and skills of the students, for example, the literacy progress of the children. These aspects must be considered in the follow up of the FWP and in the individual evaluation process.

Provide feedback of the main findings identified, the challenges and recommendations of families, teachers, and other agents involved in order to improve the intervention.

Some tools or instruments commonly used in the follow-up and assessment of the process and the results, in addition to the ones indicated in the Assessment Matrixes included are:

- Educational centre file.
- Student file.
- Basic family file. (Family Information Record).
- Education database that includes all the basic information of all the Program's users, as well as the actions carried out with the student.
- Referral file.
- Record of actions and student attendance to the actions.
- Group actions file.
- Field notebook for educators/mediators.
- Minutes of meetings with other involved agents and the agreements reached.
- Participation contracts: educational centres, students and families.
- Assessment reports of the effects of the intervention in students.
- Interviews with critical agents involved in the intervention.
- Focus groups with families involved in the intervention.





Example of good practice of an intervention: Case of family Q.J., which illustrates all of the described phases, from family recruitment to the final follow-up and assessment.

We begin by describing how the family was recruited

The case came to us by a referral from the educational centre. We performed a social analysis of the area. The neighbourhood is in the midst of a complete social transformation and it has social services, an association of neighbours and a health centre. However it does not have areas for leisure or entertainment, public spaces, or a library.

The mother does not work although she would like to; the father works in construction and the younger son has a chronic illness.

The educational program is presented in the educational centres in the area and the School Council approves it, thus the commitments and agreements are made with the centre.

The profile of the target student is established and as a result they provide us with the information of the students they suggest. Subsequently, it is decided that the female student, as she has the profile that was defined, will be the recipient of the Program.

First contact

We get in touch with the family by visiting them or calling them by telephone (there can be different alternatives depending of the context) and briefly explain who we are, whom we work with and what we want to achieve. We arrange to meet the mother for a second encounter to have a coffee in a neutral space.

We keep the appointment.

We approach her with a humble attitude, remembering that as professionals we are an agent that is outside her reality and environment.

When the mother explains to us the difficult situation they experience at the educational centre, instead of making a judgment, we ask ourselves how the situation has developed, and we analyse the conflict step by step, reflecting on specific behaviours and trying to look at the situation from different angles.

Furthermore, we reflect together on the expectations families have regarding support and accompaniment we offer them, contrasting them with the needs perceived and felt by families and real demands. We try to get the family to verbalise the specific demand, that is to say: what are your interests really? What do you think the intervention we offer can provide? We put forth special effort to ensure they know we are willing to help them.

Then we explain the entity well and specifically, we explain the educational program in simple words, with a concrete message, and we are very attentive in our observation of how the mother reacts, both in her verbal and well as non-verbal language.

Our goal is that the family perceive that they are being treated with kindness, that the relationship is based on trust and the interest to help them. We communicate that we care about their child's inclusion and academic performance and that we are there for them.

In addition, we also try to understand and share their point of view regarding the needs and interests and experiences they have had with the educational centre.

We always emphasise at all times that the family is a participant and co-responsible for the intervention. The goal is to try to convince the mother how important it is for the couple, and not just the mother, to get involved.

To improve the family's attention, comprehension, and acceptance, we emphasise the following:

Simplify the information and present messages in a way that is understandable for the family, using close and warm language, short words and sentences, metaphors that are closely linked to the Roma community's cultural context and supported by examples that are very clear and didactic.

We make a special effort with families to use language that is sufficiently clear that they can understand everything: the purpose of the intervention, the objectives we want to achieve, the future trajectory and improvement... Simultaneously, we verify that the information we provide is being understood by asking questions before we give further messages.

Our attitude is flexible, conciliatory, open, and we emphasise the sense of construction: "We're going to do something together". Furthermore, we communicate and maintain a positive vision: "you can do it too, just as your neighbours have done it. The Heredia family has gotten their son to get his diploma for mandatory secondary education".

We convey optimism and hope: "we believe in your capabilities and we are going to help you strengthen them to develop all the potential you have as a family to your children.

We accept whatever they decide and we see things from their perspective, that is to say we try to know, understand, and manage their reality and their cultural keys to legitimise their behaviour: norms of respect, relationships between the sexes, different roles within the family, etc. In short, we recognise and legitimise their views and their difficulties. We accept that they perceive, think, and feel differently.

Initial diagnosis

Both of Q.J's parents come to the entity's facilities to meet the technicians and specifically, the educational staff member responsible for the educational program.

There, they sign the authorisation and commitment as they consider that they are working together to improve their daughter's school performance and they "working on this right now", and they value the time shared in the interviews with the professionals. We explicitly describe the objectives we intend to achieve, we define them operationally and we request their commitment.

Before this, we presented the program to the entity's tutors and we got in touch with the minor's form teacher. We interviewed two tutors/technicians at the entity. They bring us up to date on the minor's education situation and the family's participation: they usually only ever go to school to pick up the marks, although on numerous occasions they have asked to be interviewed a family member. The youngest daughter usually fails several areas of learning but she is hardworking. She is not truant and she is not confrontational, neither with her classmates nor with her teachers.

Designing the work plan

With the information we received about Q. J. and the one provided by the form teacher, we prepared a diagnosis and we began working on designing the work plan, which, once the initial proposal was drafted, was presented to the family and was subsequently modified, enlarged and agreed on with the family.

We approached the Work plan as a task to be carried out together, adopting a position of complementarity and granting parents a position of knowledge, telling them, for example: "let's see what we can do together so that your child obtains better results at school... you better than anyone know your child, therefore help me understand her so I can help her... I would like you to help me so we can help your child, so we two can find a solution".

The commitments with the family are specified in short-term activities such as: attending tutoring classes at least twice a week.

We try to be very transparent regarding what we intend with the Plan and up to where we are willing to go, using accessible, positive, non-imposing, and motivating language. It is at this time where we deploy all of our negotiation and motivation skills. For example: What do you think of the actions we have suggested? Do you think they would be effective? What difficulties may arise?

We conceive both the initial diagnosis as well as the design of the Work plan as changing elements and, therefore, they need to be open and need to be used with this provisional perspective. We also support Q. J.'s family to develop expectations and hopes regarding the results they would probably achieve with the actions we are proposing.

Implementation of the work plan

Once we established objectives to work with the student, the family and the centre, we go on to implement the proposed actions.

With the Family: we should contact their home since they need to attend tutoring sessions. The mother places a request (to find work) and we refer her to the employment services. The entity's technician accompanies the family to the first tutoring sessions and also to pick up the marks.

With the Centre: the tutoring session is prepared with the tutor so that it will be adequately received.

Simultaneously we are preparing to refer the mother to a specific programme to search for employment, with accompaniment and a three-way meeting with a Roma mediator to facilitate the encounter between the educational technician and the mother. We describe the background to the mediator and we arrange a meeting between the mother and the mediator. The meetings with professionals from the employment programme take place, as well as follow-up meetings. The mother attends all of the appointments with the social-employment advisor and is chosen to take part in a training session for hotel personnel and subsequently once the training is completed, the same hotel where she performed her internship hires her.

The father, having seen the mother's positive result, begins the same process and the intervention follows the same course it did with the mother. He responds the same way and he participated in training courses to work as a barrow man.

The bond has been adequate and the family is responding very positively to all of the initiatives we have suggested: family school, conferences, etc.

We identify their achievements and communicate our recognition of them, even of the small steps made to achieve them. In so doing, we prepare a list of all the positive things they have achieved for their child, as regards; the entity, school, their child, how to speak to teachers, how to understand school marks, and schoolwork they previously did not know about, etc.

We help them enumerate their achievements, beginning with the first one: that she is with us, helping us help her child, this is the first objective we have achieved.

When she sees the list of small things, we ask her: How have you felt after achieving these small things? We reinforce the sense of satisfaction, simply with that the reinforcement is performed and she will not become frustrated.

We send on-going messages of optimism and encouragement, helping to maintain a positive vision. For example:

"You can do it".

"We are not alone; there are many people here helping your child".

"You are very capable of helping your child".

"Whatever help you give your child is going to help you draw closer to them and they will be grateful for it".

If Dolores can do it, why can't you?

What difference is there if he is a non-Roma and you are Roma! If he can do it, you're no different! (Appealing to self-love)

We are sure that with our effort and dedication we are going to help her succeed.

Many other Roma have made it and it wasn't easy to do; others have fought before.

We communicate to them the progress that has been made in the right direction and the readjustments that need to be made to continue progressing.

However, before finishing the intervention, one of the agreements was broken. We tried to return to the initial diagnosis with a totally different technique, "the exchange of roles". The professional suggests to the family that they change roles:

- Professional: "We have both made mistakes, but it is very demoralising that we cannot achieve something together for the good of your family so let's try something different. What do you think? Are you up for it?"
- Family: "What is it this time?"
- Professional: "I will be you and you will be the professional that will help me achieve something good for me and my family".

In so doing we are able to show them that we truly care about their family and that we are going to do whatever it takes to work together.

Listening to how the family speaks will help us be aware of the mistakes we have made in the intervention.

Follow-up and assessment

In the educational setting the situation tends to normalise. Q.J.'s parents attend the tutoring sessions without being accompanied by the entity technician and the student improves her academic results.

The student's educational follow-up includes: registration, coordination meetings, monthly reviews of commitments with the family and teachers.

The mother starts collaborating with the centre as a partnering mom involved in preparing excursions, the cultural week. Based on these experiences she becomes a reference for the moms in the neighbourhood.

The following academic year she requests the same intervention for her youngest son. Autonomy is achieved, with one-time requests.

ATTITUDES AND COMPETENCES





7. Recommended attitudes and competencies for professionals

This section includes a systematic collection of some of the general competencies that would be recommended for professionals performing the intervention with Roma families in the area that is the object of this guide. In addition to technical knowledge and experience, it would be necessary that they have other competencies.

Some preliminary considerations regarding the professionals

It is considered that a professional or practitioner is the person who has received specific qualification/training for social intervention, whether they are trained as sociologists, psychologists, educators, instructors, or social workers. They should also be familiar with intercultural work and minorities. Being Roma can certainly be an added value in this sense, but only if he or she possesses the rest of the professional skills. In other words, being Roma is not enough to carry out the type of work this guide proposes, since specific qualification is needed.

According to the characteristics of the program and the position to be carried out it would be necessary to have different types of knowledge and degrees. For some of the program's activities it would be convenient to work with people specifically qualified in the matter and in the case of performing a wide analysis of the environment or a complex assessment, it would be convenient to work on an on-time basis with specialists in social research and assessment.

In addition to technical training some of the professional's characteristics are visible and explicit and will mark an initial positive influence. In other cases, they may clash with the expectations of families. The professional has a view of the world, an education, a set of myths, a sexual identity, a cultural identification, he or she is undergoing a phase in their life cycle, etc. For example, a Roma mother may feel better if she had a first interview with a female professional, especially if it is regarding her daughter. Another example would be the fact that the professional is Roma or non-Roma, an important aspect which on occasions may interfere (not always positively) and may favour a better connection that will help the family get on board and create a bond between the professional and the family. Other aspects are not as explicit but they also exert an influence throughout the intervention process, as we will see subsequently in this section.

All these types of influences are inevitable throughout the process; what matters is to reflect and adequately manage its effects.

We consider that this orientation is important to detect occasions where our own personal or professional pressures interfere in the effectiveness of the intervention; it also helps us to interpret our own difficulties or limitations.¹¹

In the intercultural intervention and in interventions with minorities it is usually useful to have figures that, due to their position, capacity or influence in the environment, facilitate the intervention. These figures are usually leaders in the community, or people of great influence, that is to say people who occasionally act as mediators between teams and target populations.

Another relevant aspect to have in mind is to avoid and or to prevent the burn out of the professional or practitioner. Sometimes the intervention in this field can be very frustrating. The professional has to deal with many difficulties that are not easy to face, and in some cases they may be almost impossible to solve. For this reason it is recommended to develop some strategies and activities like supervising meetings, organise coaching sessions, etc. All these types of support activities can be organised with other external professional experts dealing with these topics but the team itself can also develop them. It is the responsibility of the team leaders to consider these activities and to plan them.

In identifying competencies we have used Mc. Ber's General Competency Model as a guide, although we have completed it and adapted it to the reality of the methodological tool we are proposing to favour an effective intervention that is pertinent to Roma families in the school/educational setting. The most relevant ones are outlined below.

The competencies indicated display a large set of attitudes and aptitudes that would be desirable in the team that is going to intervene. The basic competencies are considered essential for any person intervening in this field: achievement orientation, interpersonal sensitivity and family orientation, flexibility and commitment with the entity and with the program. They ought to serve us in performing a good selection of the professionals that compose the program's team.

Cognitive competencies

Learning: the capacity and interest to improve and expand the knowledge needed to perform their work. For example:

- They have full domain of the educational system knowing about the school setting and how educational centres are organised.
- The professional knows about the history of Roma, some of their customs, lifestyle differences, and heterogeneity within the Roma community, adaptation strategies, socio-economic situation, and norms of Roma families...
- They have a technical or specialised knowledge on working with Roma families.

11 Escudero. V (2009). "Guía práctica para la intervención familiar". Junta de Castilla y León.

- They are trained in Mediation and are qualified in areas of social intervention such as education, educational psychology and social integration, intercultural interaction, social work and social mediation.
- They are up to date with technical aspects regarding the intervention.
- They take advantage of any opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills.

Analytical thinking: the capacity to understand situations and resolve problems on the basis of separating aspects and/or conflicts and the elements that compose them, reflecting on them in a logical and systematic manner. For example:

- The professional analyses situations/problems logically to identify the causes.
- They are capable of thinking of different explanations for a situation.
- They anticipate possible obstacles realistically when planning an action and think about ideas to overcome them.
- They are capable of anticipating the consequences of situations and adapting the intervention plan in a creative way to find solutions to reposition and redirect the intervention when needed, searching for support resources to develop the intervention if it is undergoing a bad moment. The key to manage conflicts is also key.
- They establish priorities with an appropriate sense of what is more important or urgent.

Recognising models: the capacity to identify models or connections between situations that are not so obviously related, and identifying key underlying aspects in complex matters. For example:

- The professional identifies the keys to a complex family situation.
- They perceive similarities between new and past situations of different families.

Achievement competencies

Achievement orientation for the anticipated objectives: the concern and interest to work effectively, for example:

- They find better and faster ways of doing things.
- They establish clear and precise objectives.
- They invest time and resources to support the intervention, assuming calculated risks.

Take initiative: a predisposition to start actions, improve results or seek opportunities before being forced by events and overwhelmed by conflicts, for example:

- They express the desire to do something new and different and improve the intervention.
- The professional anticipates things before they are requests of them or is forced to consider them by events.
- They perform actions that go beyond what is expected of the position they hold. They know to make the most of the opportunities that arise.
- They know how to give quick answers to unforeseen events, that is to say, they solve things.

Search for information: the curiosity and the desire to obtain relevant and precise information to carry out a good diagnosis of the situation of the student and the family and get to the bottom of their needs.

- The professional finds out how other professionals have focused their work before deciding on their own focus.
- They search for information from different sources to clarify a task or problem.
- Goes deeper in what seems obvious to find the facts.

Order and quality orientation: the concern for reducing uncertainty and ensuring the quality of the intervention with follow-up systems, verifications, clear and ordered control. They carry out an on-going follow-up of the intervention and an assessment of the process. For example:

- They are organised and systematic.
- The professional systematically records data and qualitative information of their own activity and the activities of others so they can verify how the anticipated plan is being implemented in the Family Work Plan and in the intervention as a whole. They carefully control the quality of their work and the work of others.
- They develop or use systems to organise and follow-up information.

Influence and service competences

Interpersonal sensitivity: the capacity of listening, understanding, and responding to the concerns, interests, and feelings of others. For example:

- They understand both the strengths as well as the limitations of families.
- They make an effort to understand the reasons why families behave as they do.
- They know what motivates families and what displeases them.
- They interpret with exactitude the non-verbal expressions of fathers/ mothers and other family members.
- They correctly perceive the sense of humour and feelings of families.
- They give time to listen to the problems of others: families, teachers from the educational centres, and professionals of other involved resources.

Family Orientation: the desire to help or serve families. Once they have discovered their needs they strive to meet them. For example:

- They ensure that they understand the needs of families and educational centres, before posing a suggestion.
- Their attitude is to respect their needs, interests and aspirations, taking into account their strengths and weaknesses. They try to answer the family's requests quickly.
- When they can't resolve a problem quickly, they try to find and refer them to the adequate resource.
- They are kind and warm in interacting with families.
- Their goal is to become a significant person and a trustworthy person for families. Below, we include a Decalogue of key elements to achieve this¹²:

Decalogue of key elements to become a person families trust

1. Their relationship with us is emotionally gratifying.
2. We are true to our word and we keep our promises.
3. Within our possibilities and limitations we do everything we can to resolve their problems and achieve the goals they desire.
4. What we do is consistent with what we say.
5. They can come to us in search of support when they are in trouble, knowing we won't reject them.
6. They can trust our competency as technicians; we know what we are talking about.
7. They can open up to us and we will maintain confidentiality if they ask us to.
8. We disseminate positive information about them.
9. We defend and speak highly of them in front of other people.
10. We place our trust in them *"If you say it that settles it"*.

- They do not avoid assuming the responsibilities of other team members when they are absent, in order to guarantee that they give families a pertinent response.

¹² Adapted from Costa, M and López, E's " Educación para la salud: guía práctica para promover estilos de vida saludables" Pirámide. page. 189.

Persuasion and personal impact: the capacity of convincing or influencing others to follow a plan or line of action. For example:

- They persuade families indicating the benefits they may achieve with the professional support they are offering to them.
- They prepare the encounters with families and educational centres with documentation and data regarding the positive results of other similar interventions.
- They anticipate the possible reaction families and centres may have prepare in advance to respond to them.
- They listen actively and attentively. This implies:
 - Attentively listening to their perspective, concerns, desires and feelings, without judging them. In so doing, families attest that they can share their opinion and put forth their point of view regarding the process and other matters.
 - Accepting that the words and messages we communicate may not always have the same meaning for them that they do for us and they can trigger a chain of unwanted reactions.
 - Encouraging and summarising the main ideas and feelings expressed, so that we can adequately understand and empathise with the family's situation, taking care of both verbal as well as non-verbal communication (gestures, posture, glances...).
 - Taking into account what is told us and what is suggested to us.
 - A respectful attitude toward families is key, but it is also important to establish limits when necessary. Yes, it's about building trust, but not abusing that trust, establishing limits but providing a close interaction in the relationship between the family and the professional.

For example: *"We hear you Isabel. Everything you are telling us is important for you and it is therefore important for us. We fully trust you"*.

For example: *"I understand..." "I see..." "If I have understood correctly, your idea is..." "it seems that you were very displeased because of..." "if I have understood correctly you are... and..."*
- Respecting the degree of permeability that they decide to have toward our influence and their right to safeguard their intimacy. For example we communicate: *"Throughout the interviews you will never be forced to say nothing you don't wish to say. No one is going to force the doors of your intimacy. They will open only when you decide to do so"*.
- Being capable of accepting the limits of our intervention, the problematic situations some families find themselves in oftentimes transcend our influence.
- The professional efficiently uses information to persuade others using accessible, positive, non-imposing and motivating language.
- They offer different arguments to persuade and defend their point of view.

- They adjust their language to the level of Roma families. The tone is very important: it must be firm and secure, but also close and affectionate.
- They make a special effort to relay messages so that Roma families can understand them. They know how to clearly communicate key messages.

Organisational knowledge: The capacities to understand and use the dynamic of power, the relationships and influence that exist in the organisation.

Constructing relationships: the capacity to create and maintain useful contacts and relationships with other teams of professionals in the network and/or entities to improve the fulfilment of the objectives of the intervention. For example:

- The professional relates to others easily.
- They develop and use their network of contacts.
- They maintain personal working relationships.
- They offer transactions to other professionals to obtain their cooperation and support.

Leadership competencies (for those leading or those responsible for teams)

Developing people: the capacity to identify strengths and weaknesses in the people they work with and facilitate the adequate means (training, support, opportunities) so they can improve professionally. For example:

- The leader is capable of expressing positive expectations.
- They encourage their team to improve their motivation.
- They take time to listen to their team's problems.
- They delegate and clearly distribute tasks and roles.
- They facilitate that the team's needs (knowledge, materials, etc.) to carry out their work are met.
- They take time to supervising and following up on the intervention.
- They correct their team's mistakes, showing them how each mistake is an area to learn in.
- They provide people and teams with specific and detailed feedback.
- They are proactive and have a broad vision of the intervention.
- They organise coaching sessions to avoid the burn out of the professionals and the teams.

Managing people: the capacity to define and communicate to others what has to be done and ensure that they do it, assuming their own responsibility, recognising their progress and appreciating their achievements. For example:

- The professional sets expectations, assigns tasks and responsibilities and/or limits for others.
- They facilitate open and direct communication with the rest of the team members regarding the problems with the work and regarding achievements.
- They create a good working atmosphere, with motivation and creativity, promoting values like efficiency, professionalism, reliability and commitment.
- Their conduct is an example for the rest of the team members.
- They are capable of making decisions.

Teamwork: the capacity to work with others and help others do the same.

- They are capable of working in interdisciplinary teams.
- They are capable of negotiating.

Personal competencies

Self-confidence: being convinced of one's own capacity and needs, especially in difficult situations that are challenging. For example:

- Professionals take on new risks with a confidence in their possibilities.
- They express confidence and security in their interpretation and in their own points of view.
- They search for perspectives and ideas that enable them to work with hope.
- They are confident in the potential of the Roma community and its families to change. They inspire the motivation of families to fulfil the mission.
- They are optimistic and are convinced that families are capable of change. This competency is fundamental when working with families that have accumulated much frustration and faced many difficulties in their children's integration in the educational system as generally speaking they have a pessimistic view toward their chances of improvement.

Self-control: the capacity to stay in control and keep cool in conditions of hostility or rejection or in stressful work situations. For example:

- The professional avoids letting their own emotions interfere in their work.
- They stay calm in stressful situations.
- They refrain from impulsive behaviour.
- They keep calm when others are angry.
- They do not feel emotionally vulnerable very easily.

- They deal with unforeseen events and ambiguity well (*they know how to sail in stormy waters*). It is important that they do not need deadlines to be met with rigidity nor procedures to be followed “*to a tee*”.

Flexibility: the capacity to adapt to changes, to understand the positions of others and modify one’s own when new situations or needs arise. For example:

- Professionals have a tolerant and flexible view of reality. They are able to question prejudices and stereotypes.
- They act with respect and humility, avoiding arrogance, attitudes of professional despotism and ethnocentricity.
- The professional is capable of modifying their opinion when contrary evidence is shown.
- They are respectful of opposing points of view.
- They modify their behaviour in response to a situation.
- They easily adapt to situations and changes.
- They are capable of resolving conflicts and improvising creatively to unforeseen situations.

Tenacity, that is to say, the capacity to persist in a task for a period of time in spite of obstacles or difficulties, joined with the firmness and capacity to clearly mark the limits of the agreement employing empathy and communication skills. For example:

- A professional persistently pursues a difficult objective until they reach it.
- They give a task the time it needs to be completed.
- They set in motion persistent and repeated actions to overcome obstacles.
- They do not abandon right away although they are met with rejection.
- They are aware of the limits the intervention may have.

At some specific moments, it is necessary to stop intervening when the family is very resistant to the change as it requires working with the family for a very long time without obtaining results, and this takes time away from attending other families with potential. When is the agreement broken?

For example: *When the student and/or the family clearly and firmly manifest their decision to abandon it, when there is disrespect, conflicts and confrontation or even threats.*

For example: *the Work plan is evaluated jointly with the family and the results and actions carried out are returned by each involved actor so that they themselves verbalise their “non-commitment” to what was initially agreed and therefore, we must stop working with them, maintaining assertive communication: “I understand the difficulties you explain but we all need to do our best to fulfil what has been agreed upon”.*

Commitment with the entity and the program: the will to guide their action in accordance with the principles, priorities, and objectives of the entity and the program.

- The professional shares, identifies with, and defends the entity's values and especially the program's values.
- They are responsible for the intervention and they share responsibilities.
- The professional seeks to provide families with a satisfactory answer, ensuring that they value the associated costs of the services they are receiving.
- They know how to reconcile the entity's interests and their own professional interests.
- They talk about their difficulties and look for help when they need it.



Annex 1.

Map of social capital

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu used the term for the first time in his 1986 book "The forms of capital". Bourdieu distinguishes three forms of capital:

- Economic capital.
- Cultural capital.
- Social capital.

He defines social capital as:

"Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition –or in other words, to membership in a group– which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various meanings of the word. These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them. They may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe or of a school, a party, etc.) and by a whole set of instituting acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them; in this case, they are more or less actually enacted and so maintained and reinforced, in exchanges. Being based on indissoluble material and symbolic exchanges, the establishment and maintenance of which presuppose acknowledgment of proximity, they are also partially irreducible to objective relations of proximity in physical (geographical) space or even in economic and social space".

MAP OF SOCIAL CAPITAL	
1. Socio-demographic data	
Husband	
Wife	
Sons	
Other household members	
Country of origin	
City or village of origin	
Religion	

MAP OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

School degree husband	
School degree wife	
School degrees household members	
Other relatives in which city/village	
Who	
Which encampment	
Other relatives at this encampment	

2. Migratory trails (for cases where migration is relevant)

Year of arrival in... (country)	
Staying in other countries	
Other previous visits to... (country)	
Where (map of migratory trail)	
Other cities	
Where	
Reason for leaving	
Date of the first arrival to... (country)	
Date of the last arrival to... (country)	
Arrival at this encampment	
Who has left in... (country)	
Where	
Permit of stay	
Permit as refugee	
Countries where the best welcoming was experienced	
Why	
Evaluations and comments (extensive, the longer the better)	

MAP OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

3. Schooling of children

Children previously enrolled in school (yes/no)

If the answer is not specified, why

Where

In which countries

For how long (formal degrees obtained)

Present situation (school enrolments at institutes)

Map of the households general skills

4. Education and occupation (formal)

A. Husband

Education (formal last degree obtained, subjects)

The school cycle has been completed? Diploma or other qualifications?

Occupation in the country of origin:

- Dependent work (specify)
- From-to
- Independent work (specify)
- From-to

B. Wife

Education (formal last degree obtained, subjects)

The school cycle has been completed? Diploma or other qualifications?

Occupation in the country of origin:

- Dependent work (specify)
- From-to
- Independent work (specify)
- From-to

MAP OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

C. Other household members present in the same hut (follow previous guidelines)

Education (formal last degree obtained, subjects)

The school cycle has been completed?
Diploma or other qualifications?

Occupation in the country of origin:

- Dependent work (specify)
- From-to
- Independent work (specify)
- From-to

Note for the technician/professional: Are there any formal documents attesting the subject's occupations?

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5. Household resources

A. Husband

Previous formal or informal occupation in the country of origin:

- From-to
- Official records for this occupation (yes/no)

Non formalized training/skills acquired during lifetime (transmitted by whom, when and for how long):

- Field (for example manufacturing, agricultural, musical, artistic, etc.)
- Skill (for example commerce, recycling, object mending, cooking, etc.)

Personal skills (for example logic or mathematic abilities, problem solving, conflict solving, good relation and interpersonal skills, empathy, children understanding, language fluency, etc.)

MAP OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

B. Wife

Previous formal or informal occupation in the country of origin:

- From-to
- Official records for this occupation (yes/no)

Non formalized training/skills acquired during lifetime (transmitted by whom, when and for how long):

- Field (for example manufacturing, agricultural, musical, artistic, etc.)
- Skill (for example commerce, recycling, object mending, cooking, etc.)

Personal skills (for example logic or mathematic abilities, problem solving, conflict solving, good relation and interpersonal skills, empathy, children understanding, language fluency, etc.)

C. Other household members

Previous formal or informal occupation in the country of origin:

- From-to
- Official records for this occupation (yes/no)

Non formalized training/skills acquired during lifetime (transmitted by whom, when and for how long):

- Field (for example manufacturing, agricultural, musical, artistic, etc.).
- Skill (for example commerce, recycling, object mending, cooking, etc.)

Personal skills (for example logic or mathematic abilities, problem solving, conflict solving, good relation and interpersonal skills, empathy, children understanding, language fluency, etc.)

Annex 2.

Family information file

This family information file is aimed at assessing the initial conditions of a family that may participate in our program. To this effect we gather information regarding different aspects of the family's reality, their lifestyle, and their relationship with the educational centre.

Variables related to dynamics observed in families:

Family structure and organisation

Family composition

Organisation: The roles each family member has. Are the roles shared or are they attributed exclusively as in, for example, authority role, protection and care role, a more emotional role

Individual characteristics of the family members. Development of each member (what part of their life cycle are they in), situation of conflict detected (alcoholism, disabilities, etc.)

The family's socio-economic situation and employment situation (market, scrap metal, etc.), dependence on Social services for economic, emotional, legal, and educational matters

Family educational style

Communication between members

Existence of family conflicts

High family cohesion

Parental cohesion

Parental agreement

Emotional bond between members of the family unit

Established set of rules (limits and time frames) in the family unit to regulate the coexistence of its members

The family functions in a regular way: study habits, meals, hygiene, time frames, etc.

Loving relationships with their children and between the children and the extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins...). For example: do they show affection, recognition, in an explicit fashion? Do they compare them with their siblings in front of them?

Values or belief systems that are encouraged, especially religious ones, or families that attend the Evangelical church fellowship. In this sense, there are children and youth who may not dedicate sufficient time to their studies because they need to attend church meetings or they are a part of the church chorus

Adequate supervision and follow up

Family attitudes and relationship with the educational system

The educational and cultural level of parents

The needs felt and expectations for the intervention: academic level of the parents, pressure from parents about school

Values that are distant from or contrary to those upheld in the school institution and the importance placed on their children's education

Distrust expressed toward the child and toward the school

Relationship with the school and with different professionals (teachers, tutors, educational psychologist, etc.). The degree of involvement at school and participation in their children's educational process

The family's view of the school: what is understood by school tutoring, how does the day-to-day play out and what does it imply in their daily life and in their disposition to assume those responsibilities (economic expenses, for example)

The family's situation and experience with the centre: what is the particular relationship like for the family, and for the students? Is there any conflict?

Are minors in school and do they regularly attend class at least during mandatory years? Do they participate in educational tutoring? What is their transition like from Primary to Secondary education?

The family's fears: insecurity with teachers? Do they think they have nothing to say and the educational topic corresponds exclusively to the school?

Visible strengths: do they attend meetings organised by the centre? Do they assume an active role in their children's school process? Are there positive adult references that underscore the importance of the training? Etc.

How do they face their children's educational and school needs?

What is the family's degree of motivation toward the intervention?

Community relationships

The identity of families in their neighbourhoods and their sense of belonging

Does the family participate in neighbourhood dynamic? Or do they just participate in social action or also a sport club, neighbourhood associations, festivities...?

In Roma families specific members of the close social network have a specific weight and importance (neighbours, friends, other members of the Roma community, etc.)

The degree of social inclusion: support network at their disposal, participation in associations, community entertainment activities, the Evangelical church fellowship

The family's weight in the Evangelical church fellowship and the assessment of the type of Pastor

Knowledge of the school centre and the centre's educational project

Knowledge of the centre's resources: Orientation Department, tutoring sessions, etc.

Annex 3.

Student information file

Date of entry:	District: Neighbourhood:
Key:	Male: <input type="checkbox"/> Female: <input type="checkbox"/>
Unit of coexistence:	Does the family participate in other entity activities? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> What kind of activities?
Case referred from:	In coordination with:
Educational centre: School year:	
Reason for the Intervention:	

School year academic history	
School truancy	Number of unjustified absences per month
Academic performance	Number of failed exams in grading periods
Class punctuality	

Situations that increase/hinder individual performance:

- The student's social skills: positive self-esteem, tolerance to frustration, both in social relationships as well as in carrying out school tasks, ability to postpone demands (foresee future actions) to work in a team, make decisions and resolve conflicts, take on responsibilities and become independent
 - Daily routines, what they like and their expectations
 - Positive attitude toward school
 - Motivation toward their studies (perception of its usefulness)
- The construction of the student's identity: do students feel good at school, do they consider it to be a space that embraces or rejects them, do they feel comfortable/uncomfortable in class...
- Assessment of the student's emotional aspects: are they "happy"? Do they feel loved? Do they feel respected and valued by their classmates?
- The student's perception of his or her own family

Peer group:

- Integration in the group/class: do they have friends, do they wait for them...
- Excessive dependence on the group
- Rejection by non-Roma peer group
- Feelings of loneliness and isolation
- There is a peer group at school that has positive attitudes toward school
- Positive references at school/at the centre or in the family
- Analysis of the group of friends and the kind of Entertainment they like and they find attractive. For example: Is the entertainment they like always attached to an expense, a cost? Is it a problem because of the need to have income since a young age?
- Analysis of possible bullying situations, male chauvinism or another similar situation

Relationship with the school or educational centre

- Complete rejection of the school: failure to adapt
- Positive relationships with teachers
- Punctuality
- Acquired study habits
- Truant or is disinterested toward school
- Academic failure
- Ease in following rules
- Special educational needs that, in case of not being attended to both at school as well as at home, may lead to failure in school. For example: in the development of linguistic abilities (in the social environment where they live the language is opposite to the standard and abstract language used in school)
- Low levels of interest and aspirations

Family:

- A family environment that favours the minor's emotional stability or one that, on the contrary, negatively influences him or her
- Living in a family unit that is constantly in a situation of crisis and change: reiterated marriage break-ups, violence within the family, emotional abuse toward the minor, etc.
- The family's use of social resources

Community:

- Precarious socioeconomic situation
- Destroyed social setting
- Problems with integration and social inclusion in their neighbourhood
- Knowledge about community resources

Annex 4.

School information file

- Professional profiles of teachers and staff
- Participation of the Orientation Department
- The school's degree of permeability or openness toward the environment
- The form teacher's degree of motivation toward the intervention
- The school's degree of motivation toward the intervention

Annex 5.

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Title: Materiales para la Prevención del Consumo de Drogas, dirigidos a profesionales de la intervención familiar: Manual teórico
Year: 2004
Editorial: Instituto de Adicciones Madrid Salud
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: DEVEREUX, G.
Title: From anxiety to method in the behavioral sciences
Year: 1967
Editorial: Mouton
City: The Hague
Country: The Netherlands
Languages: English, French, Spanish, Italian, etc.

Author: DIAZ-AGUADO, M.J.
Title: Educación intercultural y aprendizaje cooperativo
Year: 2003
Editorial: Pirámide
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: ESCUDERO, V.
Title: Guía práctica para la intervención familiar
Year: 2009
Editorial: Junta de Castilla y León
City: Valladolid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: FUNDACIÓN SECRETARIADO GITANO
Title: Retos en contextos multiculturales: competencias interculturales y resolución de conflictos
Year: 2007
Editorial: FSG
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: LAPASSADE, G.
Title: Socioanalyse et potentiel humain
Year: 1971
Editorial: Gauthiers-Villars
City: Paris
Country: France
Languages: French

Author: LAPASSADE, G.
Title: Groups, organisations, institutions
Year: 2006
Editorial: Anthropos and Authier
City: Paris
Country: France
Languages: French

Author: SAGRARIO SEGADO SÁNCHEZ-CABEZUDO
Title: Nuevas tendencias en Trabajo Social con familias: una propuesta para la práctica desde el empowerment
Year: 2011
Editorial: Trotta: UNED
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: SECHKOVA, RALITZA and MARIN, LAURA
Title: Monitoring and Evaluation System for Interventions focused on Roma in Romania
Year: 2008
Editorial: Human Dynamics Co
City: Bucharest
Country: Romania
Can be found in: (Web) <http://sper.org.ro/cercetari-studii.html>
Languages: English

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Title: Parenting Education in Romania
Year: 2011
Editorial: UNICEF
Country: Romania
http://www.unicef.org/romania/Parenting_Education_in_Romania.pdf
Languages: English

Author: UNICEF & HOLT Romania
Title: Optimization of Parent Recruitment Strategies and the Strengthening of Parents Skills
Year: 2011
Editorial: UNICEF
Can be found in: (Web) http://www.unicef.org/romania/Optimization_of_parent_recruitment_strategies_and_the_strengthening_of_parenting_skills_.pdf
Languages: English

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Author: ARBEX, C.
Title: Elaboración de contenidos en prevención de las drogodependencias
Year: 2012
Editorial: Instituto de Adicciones Madrid Salud y Asociación de Técnicos para el Desarrollo de Programas Sociales. Servicio de Prevención del Adicciones PAD
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: CASTILLO, I., CARBONELL (Coordinators), CLAPÉS, J., COROMINAS, E., RAMÓN, M^a. y TUBILLEJA, E.
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Year: 2006
Editorial: Narcea Ediciones
City: Barcelona
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: COSTA, M. Y LÓPEZ, E.
Title: Educación para la salud. Una estrategia para cambiar los estilos de vida
Year: 1996
Editorial: Pirámide.
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: ELZO J.
Title: Jóvenes y valores: la clave para la sociedad del futuro
Year: 2007
Editorial: Obra Social Fundación "La Caixa"
City: Barcelona
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: ESTÉVEZ LÓPEZ, E., MURGUI PÉREZ, S., MORENO RUIZ, D. y MUSITU OCHOA, G.
Title: Estilos de comunicación familiar, actitud hacia la autoridad institucional y conducta violenta del adolescente en la escuela
Year: 2007
Editorial: Facultad de Psicología Universidad de Oviedo y Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos del Principado de Asturias
City: Oviedo
Country: Spain
Editing No: Psicothema 2007. Vol 19, nº1, pp. 108-113
Languages: Spanish

Author: FUNDACIÓN SECRETARIADO GITANO
Title: Programa "Acceder" por el empleo de la población gitana. Modelo metodológico para la inserción socio-laboral de personas gitanas
Year: 2012
Editorial: Fundación Secretariado Gitano
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Languages: Spanish

Author: LIGERO LASA, J.A.
Title: Dos métodos de Evaluación: criterios y Teoría del Programa
Year: 2011
Editorial: Ediciones CEU
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Editing No: Documento de trabajo Serie CECOD nº 15/2011
Languages: Spanish

Author: LISKÓ-GÁBOR HAVAS, ILONA
Title: Segregation of Roma students in primary schools
Year: 2005
Can be found in: (Web) http://biztoskezdet.hu/uploads/attachments/havas_lisko_szegregacio_altalanos.pdf
Languages: Hungarian

Author: MINISTRY OF NATIONAL RESOURCES OF HUNGARY
in cooperation with the HUNGARIAN EURYDICE UNIT
Title: The Education System in Hungary
Year: 2011/12
Editorial: Ministry of National Resources and Hungarian Eurydice Unit
City: Budapest
Country: Hungary
Can be found in: (Web) <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Hungary:Overview>
Hungary: Overview
Languages: Hungarian and English

Author: MONTURIOL, F. Y SILVA, A.
Title: Los usos de drogas y su impacto en la cultura (el caso gitano)
Year: 1998
Editorial: Asociación Secretariado General Gitano
City: Madrid
Country: Spain
Editing No: Colección Cuadernos Técnicos N° 16
Languages: Spanish

Author: UNICEF & MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND SPORT, Romania
Title: Ghidul mediatorului scolar (pentru comunitati cu rromi)/
The School Mediator' Guideline
Year: 2011
Editorial: UNICEF and Ministry of Education Research and Sports
Country: Romania
Languages: Romanian

Annex 6.

References of organisations and institutions

Public and private institutions and organizations of reference for the guide BULGARIA

Public

Name	Comments
Name: Regional Inspectorate for Education Languages: Bulgarian	Inspectorate for Education
Name: CEICSEM Centre for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (Ministry of Education) Address: (Web) http://coiduem.mon.bg/en/ Languages: English, Bulgarian	Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities (Ministry of Education)
Name: Municipality of Vratsa Languages: Bulgarian and English	Parents' participation in the process of educational integration of Roma children <i>Leading organization:</i> Regional Inspectorate for Education–VratsaTown. <i>Location:</i> District Vratsa (Kozloduy Municipality, Oryahovo Municipality, Krivodol Municipality, Byala Slatina Municipality, Borovan Municipality). <i>Target:</i> 25 parents participated to the training courses; 40 mothers and 19 fathers participated in project activities; 5 schools and 15 teachers. <i>Duration:</i> 1 year: October 2007, September 2008.
Name: Municipality of Silistra Languages: Bulgarian and English	Consulting for working with parents and students by psychologists. <i>Leading organisation:</i> Municipality of Silistra, Department of "Education" <i>Main project partner:</i> Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) "Friends of the world" <i>Location:</i> Silistra Town. <i>Target:</i> 35 mothers and fathers of Romani children; 106 Romani pupils. <i>Duration:</i> October 2011, May 2012

<p>Name: Municipality of Bourgas Languages: Bulgarian and English</p>	<p>Set of activities to motivate children and parents from ethnic minorities to continue education of students after the 8th grade in vocational schools. <i>Leading organization:</i> Municipality of Bourgas. <i>Main project partner:</i> Roma NGO Foundation "Regional Roma Union" <i>Type of practice:</i> This practice is part of bigger project "Education in Vocational Schools—sure way to successful occupational and social realization of children from ethnical minorities", funded by Center for Educational Integration of Children and Pupils from Ethnic Minorities (CEICPEM) and Roma Education Fund (REF). <i>Target:</i> Families with socio-economic level medium-low. Questionnaires survey conducted among 37 parents. Participants in training were 20 parents and 40 students. 24 8th grade students and 27 9th grade students of ethnic minorities. <i>Duration:</i> 9 months: April 2011, December 2011</p>
<p>Name: Municipality of Montana Languages: Bulgarian and English</p>	<p>Training for Roma families and work with mediators. <i>Leading organization:</i> Municipality of Montana <i>Location:</i> Montana city and the following villages: Studeno Buche, Virove and Gabrovnitza. Municipality of Montana is local authority which works with Foundation for regional and cultural development "Nangle–2000" in Montana city <i>Type of practice:</i> This practice was part of a bigger project aimed at integration of 128 Romani children in host schools, outside Roma neighbourhoods and villages, funded by Centre for Educational Integration of Children and Pupils from Ethnic Minorities (CEICPEM) and Roma Education Fund (REF). <i>Target:</i> 128 Romani children <i>Duration:</i> 6 months: January 2011, June 2011</p>
<p>Name: Municipality of Sliven Languages: Bulgarian and English</p>	<p>Completed education integration of children of "Nadezhda" <i>Leading organisation:</i> Municipality of Sliven <i>Location:</i> Sliven (neighbourhood of Nadezhda) <i>Type of practice:</i> project <i>Target:</i> 129 Romani children; 70 parents; 4 host schools and 34 teachers. <i>Duration:</i> September 2011, June 2012</p>

Private

Name: Roma Education Fund
 Address: (Web) <http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/>
 Languages: Bulgarian and English

The Roma Education Fund (REF) was created in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in 2005. Its mission and ultimate goal is to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. In order to achieve this goal, the organization supports policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems.

Name: Centre for interethnic dialogue and tolerance Amalipe Veliko Turnovo
 Address: (Web) <http://amalipe.com/index.php?nav=publications&lang=2>
 Country_Bulgaria
 Languages: English, Bulgarian

Decreasing the drop-out rate of Roma children from School.
Leading organisation: Centre for interethnic dialogue and tolerance Amalipe Veliko Turnovo (NGO) Veliko Tarnovo.
Type of practice: National politics–Program or project.
Location: National.
Target:
 2010: 34 schools, 10 Districts;
 2011: 90 schools, 20 Districts;
 2012: 180 schools, 24 Districts.
Duration: 3 years.

Name: America for Bulgaria
 Address: (Web) <http://www.americaforbulgaria.org/page/home>
 Languages: English, Bulgarian

Programs for the Economically Disadvantaged.
Leading organisation: America for Bulgaria Foundation.
Location: National (the project supported 48 grants supported by local partners throughout the whole Bulgaria).
Type of practice: donor organization.
Target: Being a donor organization the target are the NGO who are awarded the grants. These are the estimated number of direct beneficiaries reported by those NGO:
 Early Education: 796;
 Participation and Performance in school: 28.092;
 Employment: 574;
 Other: 1127.
Duration: From March 2009 to present.

Name: Kindergarten Bulgarche 1949
 Languages: Bulgarian

Leading organization: Day kindergarten Bulgarche Vratsa 1949.
Type of practice: Local intervention.
Target: 72 Romani children, 23 teachers, 60 parents (38 fathers and mothers), 10 single mothers, 12 grandparents.
Duration: 1 year: July 2011, June 2012.

**Public and private institutions and organizations of reference for the guide
HUNGARY**

Public

Name	Comments
<p>Name: Municipality of Hódmezővásárhely Address: (Web) www.hodmezovasarhely.hu Languages: Hungarian and English</p>	<p>Municipality of Hódmezővásárhely has a desegregation program, which is one of the best practice in Hungary. Elementary schools with extreme measures of segregation were closed down and the children have been spread in the other schools of the towns.</p>
<p>Name: Municipality of Ács Address: (Web) www.acs-varos.hu Languages: Hungarian</p>	<p>The town has a complex integration program launched in 2004, when the special elementary school designed for children with special need (SNI) was closed down. The students –mainly Roma children– were integrated into the mainstream school. Today no separate school runs, but the three groups of children: Roma, disadvantaged and children with special need attend the same school.</p>

Private

<p>Name: Unity in Diversity Foundation Languages: Hungarian and English</p>	<p>Since 2006 the Unity in Diversity Foundation has sponsored various projects related to improvement of the quality of life for the Roma and other underprivileged populations in Hungary. These include Meséd (story telling Mothers) for mothers, Fair play for teenage boys, Dance project for teenage girls and scholarship program for the promising talented Roma students.</p>
<p>Name: Open Society Foundations Address: (Web) www.opensocietyfoundations.org Languages: Hungarian and English</p>	<p>The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant societies whose governments are accountable and open to the participation of all people. The Open Society Foundations support efforts to promote equal opportunities and challenge all forms of discrimination faced by Roma, Europe’s largest and most excluded ethnic minority.</p>
<p>Name: Roma Civil Right Organization in BAZ County Languages: Hungarian</p>	<p>The organization is a private Roma civil right organization which is working in the most depressed area in Hungary. It was founded in 2004 as an organization with county-wide cognizance and soon became of regional significance aiming at institutionalized lobbying and generation of helping activities as part of a country-wide network. They contributed to the realistic exploration, identification, signification and analyst/ evaluative presentation of the problems of Roma families and communities both on conferences and forums.</p>

<p>Name: Roma Education Fund Address: (Web) www.romaeducationfund.org Languages: English and Hungarian</p>	<p>The Roma Education Fund Headquarters office in Budapest is a Hungarian (non-profit) foundation that was created in 2006 with the mission of contributing to closing the gap in education outcomes between Roma and non-Roma, through the design and implementation of policies and programs that support quality education for Roma in Europe. The REF is active in 16 countries of Eastern, Central and South-Eastern Europe, running five major programs.</p>
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Public and private institutions and organizations of reference for the guide ROMANIA

Public

Name	Comments
<p>Name: Asociatia Comunelor din Romania/ The Association of the Romanian Villages Address: (Web) www.acor.ro Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>Because of decentralization, the local authorities are responsible for the administration of schools, contracting local Roma experts, school mediators, etc. Local authorities should use this methodology in implementing the social programs.</p>
<p>Name: Asociatia Oraselor din Romania/ The Association of the Romanian Towns Address: (Web): www.aor.ro Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>Because of decentralization, the local authorities are responsible for the administration of schools, contracting local Roma experts, school mediators, etc. Local authorities should use this methodology in implementing the social programs.</p>
<p>Name: Ministry of National Education Address (Web): http://www.edu.ro Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>Ministry of National Education.</p>

Private

<p>Name: Colegiul National al Asistentilor Sociali/National Board of the Social Workers Address: (Web) www.cnasr.ro Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>It is a professional association.</p>
<p>Name: Asociatia generala a invatatorilor din Romania/The Teachers General Association Address: (Web) http://www.aiarad.ro/, http://invatatori.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>It is a professional association.</p>

<p>Name: Fundatia Secretariatul Romilor (FSR) Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>FSR is the national coordinator of the project in Romania. It is the Romanian branch of the FSG in Romania.</p>
<p>Name: Roma Education Fund Romania (REF Romania) Address: (Web) http://romaeducationfund.ro/en Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>REF Romania is partner of the project.</p>
<p>Name: Asociatia Ovidiu RO Address: (Web) www.ovid.ro Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>The Association Ovidiu RO develops educational projects for families and children.</p>
<p>Name: Centrul Romilor "Amare Rromentza" Address: (Web) www.amarerromentza.org/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>The Center "Amare Rromentza" is a Roma organization that works in traditional communities where there are specific problems of Roma children and families.</p>
<p>Name: World Vision Romania Address: (Web) www.worldvision.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>World Vision Romania has developed various studies on the educational situation of children in rural areas.</p>
<p>Name: Fundatia Pact Address: (Web) http://fundatiapact.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>PACT Foundation develops projects for stimulating the participation of community by community facilitation. They also implement the methods of alternative education.</p>
<p>Name: Step by Step Romania Address: (Web) www.stepbystep.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>Step by Step Romania develops educational projects for families and children.</p>
<p>Name: Unicef Romania Address (Web): www.unicef.org/romania/ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>Unicef Romania develops educational projects. They are involved in various educational projects for Roma.</p>
<p>Name: Centrul Educatia 2000+ Address: (Web) www.cedu.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>The Center Education 2000 + develops educational projects for families and children.</p>
<p>Name: Asociatia "O Del Amentza" Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>The Association "O Del Amentza" is a Roma organizations that works in traditional communities where there are specific problems of Roma children and families.</p>
<p>Name: Centrul pentru Educatie si Dezvoltare Sociala Address: (Web) www.ceds.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>Center for Education and Social Development develops educational projects. It is a Roma NGO.</p>
<p>Name: Fundatia Copii Nostri Address: (Web) www.fcn.org.ro/ Languages: Romanian</p>	<p>The Foundation Our Children develops educational projects for families and children.</p>

**Public and private institutions and organizations of reference for the guide
SPAIN**

Public

Name	Comments
<p>Name: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport Address: (Web) http://www.mecd.gob.es/portada-mecd/ and http://www.mecd.gob.es/cniie Languages: Spanish</p>	<p>National Center for evaluation and educational innovation are partners in this project.</p>
<p>Name: Servicio de Protección a la Infancia. Gerencia de Servicios Sociales. Junta de Castilla y León. Address: (Web) http://www.jcyl.es/web/jcyl/Portada/es/Plantilla100Directorio/1248366924958/0/</p>	<p>Public body that assures the protection of children when there are situations where children are, or are at risk of being in need of protection or deprotection, providing the necessary mechanisms to correct the situation.</p>

Private

<p>Name: Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) Address: (Web) www.gitanos.org Languages: Spanish, English.</p>	<p>Intercultural non-profit social organisation that provides services for the promotion of the Roma community in Spain and in Europe.</p>
<p>Name: Asociación de Enseñantes con Gitanos Address: (Web) http://www.pangea.org/aecgit/ Languages: Spanish</p>	<p>Non-profit and intercultural entity that provides social and educational services for a better democratic functioning.</p>
<p>Name: Fundación Privada Pere Closa Address: (Web) http://www.fundaciopere-closa.org/en</p>	<p>The objectives of this Foundation are the education and development of the Roma community in Catalonia to ensure that the largest possible number of young Roma have the chance to enjoy the same educational opportunities as the rest of the population.</p>
<p>Name: Asociación Alanna Address: (Web) http://www.alanna.org.es/</p>	<p>This association is made out of professionals, mainly women, with a long experience in social services. The aim is to promote social inclusion by focusing the programmes on families.</p>
<p>Name: Fundación Meniños Galicia Address: (Web) http://www.meninos.org/noticias_eventos_es.htm</p>	<p>It is a non-profit organisations working for the social promotion and specialised in the field of childhood and adolescence. Their focus is to guarantee the right to family life.</p>

Annex 7.

Thank you note

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Romania

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Spain

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