

Scaling-up: Awareness raising approach

Regional Project on Social Rights for Vulnerable Groups

Short Background

Vulnerable groups, local actors in the field of social work and part of the society in the Western Balkans region lack sufficient knowledge about social rights, including the right to non-discrimination, as well as on what social services exist. This is one reason why state and non-state entities are often not capable to adequately ensure economic, cultural and social (ESC) rights. Awareness raising can be done in cooperation with state and non-state actors as well as human rights and anti-discrimination institutions and it is an informational measure to bridge the gap.

About the approach

Awareness raising has three aims: firstly, increasing the knowledge of target groups about their fundamental rights and enabling them to demand those rights self-consciously. Secondly, making society aware about those groups, sensitising them for their situation and reducing stereotypes. Thirdly, creating an understanding of relevant stakeholders about the situation of vulnerable groups, increasing the knowledge about their needs and drawing their attention to the gaps between the needs and social services offered. Thus, awareness raising contributes

to mutual understanding and to promoting inclusion of every society's member.

Awareness raising measures come in very different forms, as they should always be designed for the specific context, issue, target group and based on the available means. Such measures could be, for example, information points, theatre performances, discussions on television, radio, social media campaigns, etc.

Results

Awareness raising activities can be a first step to stimulate debates on anti-discrimination and other pressing societal issues. Studies on previous awareness raising approaches have shown a significant change in the desired direction in all groups, and most significantly in the target group of vulnerable persons. Nevertheless, changes in awareness takes time and continuous awareness raising efforts are required by national and local institutions. Especially vulnerable groups must be informed continually and represented systematically. To do so, communities should anchor awareness raising in their local planning and/or strategy documents.



“Ej, eve ja onaa” – Theatre Play, Kumanovo



“Bad Words”, TV Series, Serbia

Best Practice Example

One of the successful awareness raising measures conducted within the SoRi I project was the educational TV series "Bad words" for children and young people on the topic of Roma inclusion.

The series is composed of 30 educational episodes, each 15 minutes long. The series was created primarily for the younger audience, up to 15 years of age. The main goal of the series was to sensitise the general public on how the unconscious use of certain words can reinforce discrimination of vulnerable groups, by reproducing stereotypes, in this case regarding Roma.

Research done by the National TV Station showed that approximately 200.000 viewers (children, young people and adults) were watching this series and now know more about issues of antidiscrimination, prejudice and fight against violence.

Title of the example	Educational TV series "Bad words"
Timeframe	3 months for the implementation and shooting
Partners involved	Ministry of Culture; Agency ArtAkcija; National TV Station of Serbia
Target group(s)	Children, Young people and adults
Country	Serbia
References	Upon request 30 episode can be sent via WeTransfer

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