

**EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE ROMA EDUCATION FUND**

BY

ESZTER KÓSA PH.D AND BARBARA TONTE

Final Report October 2008



**INTRODUCTION BY THE BOARD TO THE 2008 EXTERNAL EVALUATION  
OF THE ROMA EDUCATION FUND**

In August 2008, the Roma Education Fund (REF) contracted two consultants to assess, through a fully independent external evaluation, the efficiency and effectiveness of the REF as an institution and identify areas for further strengthening. The evaluation was requested by several of REF's donors as condition for releasing additional financial support to REF. A Reference Group, consisting of representation from key donor agencies, was established to provide independent oversight of the evaluation process.

The Board has followed the work of the Consultants and contributed to their work via personal interviews gathered for the questionnaires and comments provided on an interim presentation of the evaluation. The Board is satisfied with the work of the Consultants and considers the report as a valuable source of information for any interested parties wishing to learn more about the Roma Education Fund and its operations. The Board acknowledges the value of this report and will take the findings and recommendations into account when shaping REF's future strategic directions and management of its operations. However, the views expressed in the report are those of the authors' and may not represent the opinion of the Board or its members.



Costel Bercus  
Chairman of the Board



## TABLE OF CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	9
<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.1. BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.2. FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.3. RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4. COUNTRY ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY DOCUMENTS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>5. ADEQUACY OF THE GRANT SCHEME .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GRANT SCHEME .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>7. MONITORING, REPORTING, DOCUMENTATION.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>8. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>9. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>10. PARTNER RELATIONS, ADVOCACY .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>11. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>12. RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>ANNEX 1.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>ANNEX 2.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>ANNEX 3.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>ANNEX 4.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>ANNEX 5.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>ANNEX 6.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>ANNEX 7.....</b>	<b>58</b>



<b>ANNEX 8</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>ANNEX 9</b> .....	<b>60</b>
<b>ANNEX 10</b> .....	<b>63</b>





## Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to acknowledge the whole staff of REF for providing our team with precious information during the evaluation. Special thanks to Tobias Linden (director), Rumyan Russinov (deputy director), Vivien Gyuris (fundraising and donor coordination), Jen Zsiga (finance and administration manager), Marius Taba (monitoring and evaluation manager), Judit Szira (senior advisor), and Nino Chelidze (manager of the REF's scholarship program).

We would like to thank to the Board and the Reference Group for providing essential feedback. Special thanks to Dr. Freitag for her detailed and material opinion, which contributed a lot to the research.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the donors, grantees, who were ready to answer the questionnaire. Thanks to Anush Bezhanyan (World Bank), Eva Belfrage (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and Janna van der Velde (Coordinator Balkans Regional Programme Royal Netherlands Embassy).

Special thanks to Tímea Borovszky Phd. (Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture), and Orsolya Szendrey consultant for answering and contributing to the evaluation.



# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1. Background

The Roma Education Fund has requested an external evaluation of its performance through an open tender. Based on the service contract between REF and the consultants the following issues are in the focus of the evaluation (as given in by Terms of Reference):

- Review of REF approach to meet its objectives in countries
- Effectiveness of the REF organization and internal processes
- Effectiveness of the REF external communication and partnerships

## 1.2. Findings

Based on our evaluation we found the following most important strengths of the organization:

- In the short history of the organization it has become a well-known and respected foundation in the Roma community with a very clear mission and goal
- Comparing the original goals and mission of the organization and the goals set in the country strategies we may say that the granted projects serve these goals
- All *basic* conditions for daily operations have been worked out, set up and they function well
- Based on the interviews with the staff the personal commitment of the people is very strong
- The Roma representation in the staff is an outstanding example
- The operation of the organization is client friendly and very efficient (fast contracting and disbursement)
- In certain countries REF has succeeded to move from the project implementation support level to policy influence, advocacy level

And we found the following most important weaknesses of the organization:

- Concerning the set goals of REF both with respect to geography and issues there some under-served areas in the achievements
- In some countries the goals and the strategy are very general, an overall priority set is missing for the organization
- Rules and procedures of daily operation are not detailed and clear enough for the organization (i.e. monitoring process, internal evaluation, etc.) or not communicated internally efficiently enough (i.e. conflict of interest rules)
- The indicators are missing from strategy documents and to give relevant evaluation of the projects' and the organization's performance
- The management of human resources is not efficient enough – standards and better work load division is missing, internal communication is weak
- The documentation system is not perfectly functioning – both meaning the content and availability
- Fundraising activities have to be better integrated into REF's daily work

### 1.3. Recommendations

- **Country strategies** should be updated, probably in a shorter version, and should focus on the changes and actions, with more clear priorities – country portfolios of granted projects should be compared with them regularly
- Rules and **procedures of daily operation** needs to be further developed as the organization and the number of granted projects and tasks increase, especially on:
  - Project selection criteria
  - Monitoring procedures
  - Conflict of interest rules should be better communicated internally
  - Recruitment procedures should be worked out
- Set of **indicators** should be defined and used consequently in strategy building, action planning, project selection, monitoring, evaluation and reporting . The already existing policy indicators should also be further developed for better usage, to be able to measure REF's advocacy activities
- As REF's grant giving activity is considered also as a **capacity building** tool among Roma NGOs, it would be important to open to the most disadvantaged, least capable organizations. In this sense further emphasis should be paid on project generation, management consultancy and support
- On the field of **advocacy** it would be crucial to follow the Romanian, Hungarian and the Bulgarian examples, to be able to move from the project level to policy level. In the EU member decade countries Structural Funds targeting for Roma educational desegregation should be a main direction (both supporting NGOs and consulting Managing Authorities). In the other countries it would be crucial to build effective and well functioning relations with the Ministries to mainstream REF's experiences in educational policies. The dissemination of learning of the research conducted by REF should be better planned and standardized
- The roles of **monitoring, controlling and project support** should be separated clearly within the organization not to create controversial situations (for example the unclear role of country facilitators' at monitoring visits).
- **Human resource management** should be strengthened, especially on the fields of:
  - Insurance of more equal workload
  - Better knowledge transfer should be built up for continuous improvement of the organizational performance
  - Internal communication should be improved between the different actors
  - More concrete standards should be worked out for certain functions (i.e. country facilitators)
- The whole **documentation system** should be further developed (meaning both content and availability), MIS should be used more as a consequence.
- **Country portfolios** should be mixed concerning personal responsibilities to have a better sharing of experience and learning and less personal interests related to country performances. At the same time it would be crucial to save the capital already gained

in each countries, like personal relations, knowledge, trustful communication with important partners, etc.

- **The performance of fundraising** should be reviewed. Fundraising should be linked to existing country portfolios, and therefore, should be planned in an integrated method together with REF's overall strategy concerning country goals and horizontal goals in the whole region. Achievements and challenges of fundraising should be better shared within the staff and all staff members should be conscious about fundraising goals during their work. Fundraising should be better integrated into REF's daily operation.

**If we need to summarize in one sentence...**

It seems to us that the greatest challenge in front of REF is to preserve and further enhance its committed, client friendly and efficient functioning with better regulated and documented, transparent daily operations, however, WITHOUT making the organization over-bureaucratized.



## 2. Background information

To specify the scope of the entire evaluation process the REF management and the consultants have agreed on the following conditions:

- The evaluated time period is from the funding of the organization until the 30th of June, 2008.
- The subject of the evaluation is REF's performance and not the grantees' performance or the supported projects' quality.
- During the evaluation the focus is on the grant scheme and at this time the scholarship program and the reimbursable grants are not subjects of the evaluation. However, based on the comments of Board members, we have included an overview on the scholarship program, too.
- During the whole evaluation we have to keep in mind the fact that REF is a young organization that is in an ongoing development process.

Based on all considerations and conditions mentioned above we have dealt with the issues listed below.

- Country assessments and strategies – their quality and content
- Adequacy of the grant scheme – how successfully they target the goals set in the country strategies, how well they follow the actions set up there, how efficiently the granted projects serve REF's original mission and goals
- Effectiveness of the grant scheme – publicity and transparency issues related to project selection, REF's performance in project generation and during project implementation).
- Monitoring, reporting, documentation – transparency and efficiency of procedures, quality of documents, financial monitoring
- Internal organization – internal procedures on daily operation, work load division, knowledge transfer and communication within the organization, recruitment procedure, internal evaluation of staff performance, standardization of job descriptions, communication with the Board.
- Outreach and partner relations – with donors, important partners, potential grantees. Advocacy and policy influence of REF.





### 3. Methodology

We consider **people and organizations** related to the REF (staff members, Board members, grantees, donors, partners) to be the best sources of information on REF's performance. At the same time we also believe that a lot of **documents** (manuals, operational guidelines, project implementation plans, monitoring documents, final project reports, REF annual and monthly reports, etc.) and **data** (on granted projects and grantees, fundraised amounts, etc.) are available to be analyzed to give objective picture on the situation. (We also attach the interview guidelines and questionnaires used.) Because of this we have used the following methodology:

- Interview with staff members (10) (questionnaire: Annex 1) We have to note that it might seem that opinions given are very negative. During interviews we asked first for scores, and afterwards reasoning if it was not the maximum 6. That is the reason of the negative comments, not the whole opinion, but the problems were listed.
- More detailed questions on finances, monitoring, fundraising with responsible staff members
- More detailed interviews on advocacy and policy influence with responsible staff members
- Questionnaire for randomly selected grantees (20 questioned /13 answered) (questionnaire: Annex 2)
- Interview with donors (4) (questionnaire: Annex 3)
- Interview with Board members (5) (questionnaire: Annex 4)
- Interview with important partners in Ministries (2) (questionnaire: Annex 5)
- Interview with the manager of the scholarship program of REF (questionnaire: Annex 6)
- Data base analysis on grantees – publicly available on REF's website
- Document analysis:
  - Manuals
  - Operational guidelines
  - 20 projects documents (PIP, monitoring, final report)
  - Country assessments and strategies
  - Annual and monthly reports of REF
  - Data base on scholarships
  - External evaluation documents



## 4. Country assessment and strategy documents

Country assessments are the fundamentals of REF's activities, as these define the most important problem areas in Roma education. The strategies are built on the findings, as the most promising actions from REF's side to contribute to the problem solving. In this way the Country assessments and strategies are crucial documents concerning REF's daily operation and performance, so we have analyzed the quality of their content.

Country assessments and strategies have been prepared by REF for the following countries: Bulgaria, Czech, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. REF plans to have these documents written for the rest of their target countries, too. All of them are available on REF's website.

The documents concerned all have a uniform construction that means comparative studies can be done among the countries. The problem areas defined in the country assessments are logically related to the planned action in the country strategies. Although the **quality of these country strategies** differs, we can say in general that they contain deep analysis and a lot of information on the Roma communities and especially on their educational status.

At the same time we must keep in mind that in several of the countries major changes have happened since the assessments, because of this at least the identification of main problems and planned actions should be up-dated yearly.

The biggest **weakness** with the strategies and planned actions is that there are no indicators set for them. It becomes difficult to evaluate if goals have been reached in the countries as there are no concrete numbers set for the goals. In some country strategies the goals are very general, or targeting almost all areas of education, it makes their achievability very questionable. Another problem arises from the fact that these documents are relevant for separate countries, but they are not included in a united document to set-up priorities sector-wide in the whole region where REF is active.

### Staff opinion

Average score on country assessment and strategy documents (scores 1 -6): 3,7

Problems mentioned by the staff:

- Assessments and strategies need to be updated (priorities, data)
- These are too long documents for the public
- Because of their length these are difficult to modify
- Documents are well designed, but too theoretic
- There are endless debates within the staff on the targets set in the documents
- There are no concrete indicators, no cost analysis, no concrete steps of action
- The documents are too academic, not easy to understand



## 5. Adequacy of the grant scheme

The grant scheme was set-up to serve to goals described in the country strategies, based on the findings of the country assessments. Our main research question in this case was how well the money allocated through the granted projects (130 in the analyzed period) serve these goals, how well they fit the priorities set in the country strategies, and how over-all they are concerning sector-wide issues. During the discussions with the staff members the topic of the country portfolios (circle of granted projects and organizations) has been raised several times. It is obvious that **country portfolios radically differ** concerning both the number of projects and the project sizes. As “inequality of country portfolios” seemed a crucial topic based on the interviews, we found it important to compare these portfolio sizes from different aspects.

Table 1.: Number of granted projects by countries until July 2008

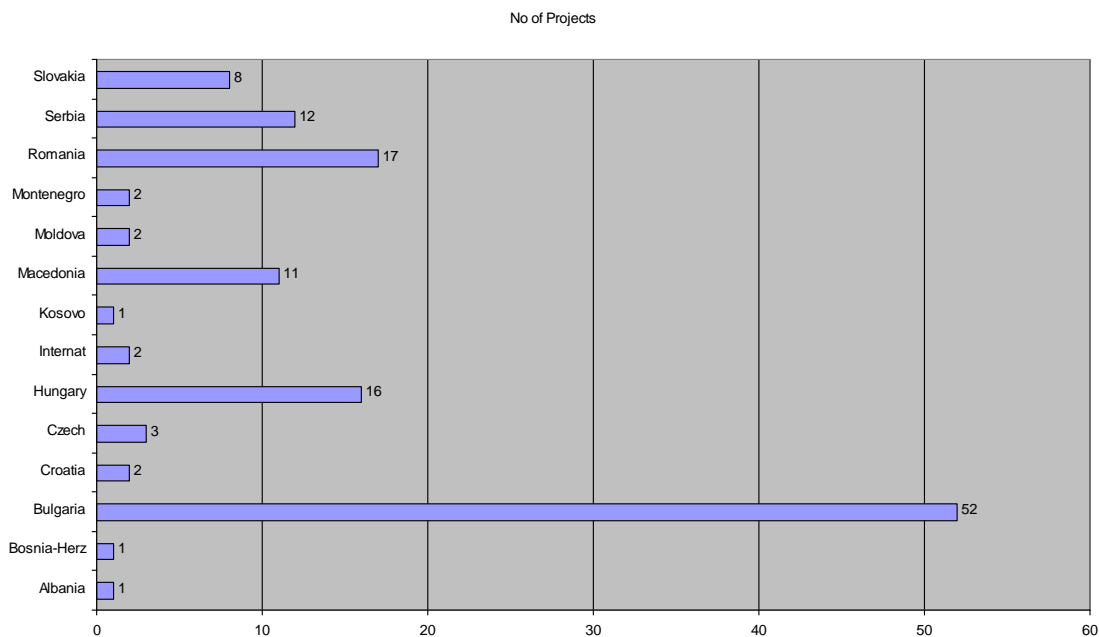


Table 2: Amount of money spent on granted projects by countries until July, 2008.

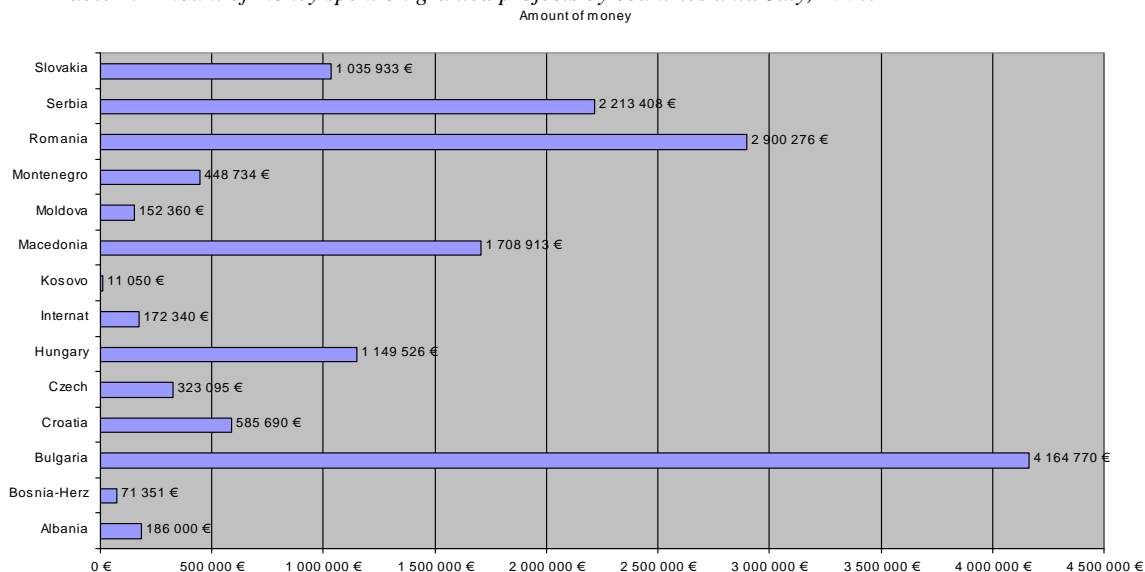
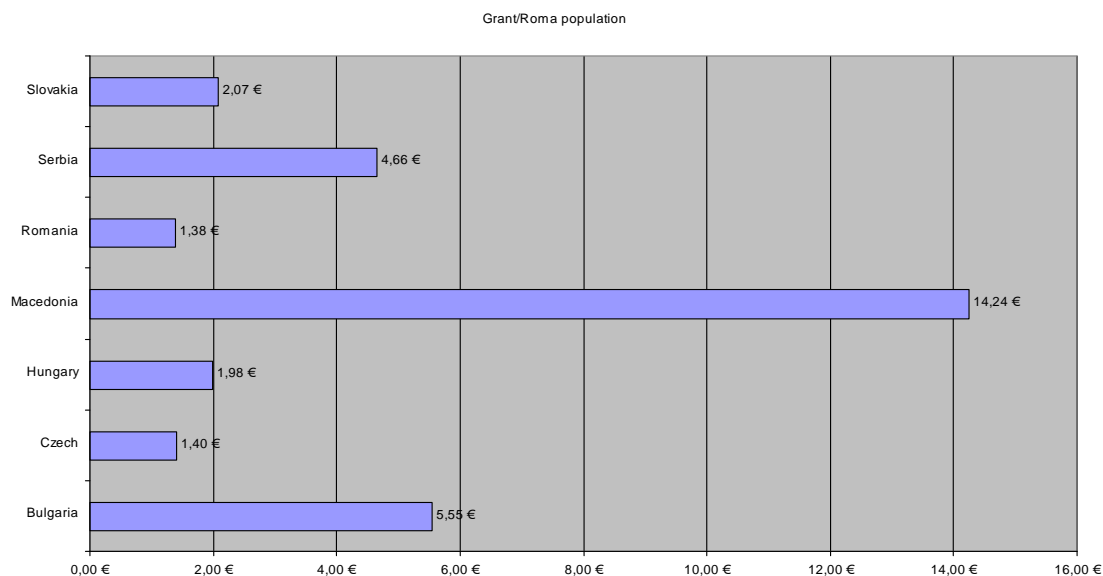


Table 3: Grant spent in countries/head in Roma population until July 2008. (Data on Roma population taken from the country assessment documents)<sup>1</sup>



If we look at the **numbers of the projects** (Table 1.) it is obvious that Bulgaria is far the most “successful”. The high number of granted projects has a historical reason, Bulgarian school desegregation projects were inherited from OSI when REF was created and have been taken over by the other countries. As one of the staff members have shared his view on the topic, REF’s success in a country depends on three factors: (1) deep knowledge of the situation, (2) strong Roma NGOs and (3) good relation between REF and crucial partners. It seems in Bulgaria all of these are given. We think this observation is right, although other factors play important role as well, like education policy in the country, competencies of REF responsible staff members, etc.

However, if we consider the **amount of money spent** (Table 2.) we find that the order changes. It means that in some countries there are mega projects, with far bigger budget and longer project period than the average (around 20.000 EUR and 12 -18 months). It also means that in those countries there are capable NGOs that are able to manage bigger projects, too. Good example is Montenegro, where they run a multi-year project with an over one million euro budget.

The idea changes again if we study the amount of money spent **related to the size of the Roma population**. In this case the high number of projects in some countries become very relative. At the same time in some countries (especially in Hungary and Romania) school desegregation is in a much more advanced situation (has legal background, or even financed on normative bases from the state budget), so these are not necessarily priority target areas of REF. Another argument could be that Roma NGOs in EU member states have much more possibilities to achieve financial sources (from Structural Funds), so REF should concentrate

<sup>1</sup> The data on the Roma population is taken from the county assessments, REF has completed assessments on these countries until now. That is the reason for the limited number of countries in the table.

on the rest of the countries. This argument is not necessarily valid as the biggest Roma populations live in the member states and pre-accession countries, still when we evaluate the success of country portfolios, the proportion of direct spending on projects and the technical assistance of Roma NGOs to apply successfully for EU sources has to be considered, too.

All the aspects above are relevant if we try to compare, interpret and evaluate the size of the country portfolios (number of projects, amount of money spent, amount/Roma population, degree of development in school desegregation, EU membership). To have a realistic picture on REF's success in different countries (meaning the *intensity* of financial support and not mentioning the *quality* of the projects at this moment), all these elements should be considered in an overall strategy that unites the country strategies and defines concrete and measurable indicators for the goals set.

If we compare **the actions set in the country strategies and the content of the granted projects**, we may find that some goals are not implemented through projects. In other words there are some under-served areas where the grant givers (REF) could not find appropriate beneficiaries (Roma NGOs or other partners) to achieve their objective. This comparison was made based on the short description of the projects published, which means that possibly some project elements have been implemented but not included in the project lists. However with this exercise we would like to call the attention that from time to time it would be necessary and useful to compare set goals and portfolios systematically to concentrate more efforts on not served areas and topics. It also might call the attention that in some countries the goals are too ambitious, targeting all educational areas instead of more clear priority sets.

Identified gaps based on country strategies and allocated grants:

- Bulgaria – Kindergarden project
- Czech: Pre-school, Kindergarden projects, local capacity building
- Hungary: Very diverse portfolio, no identified gaps
- Slovakia: Roma NGO network building projects
- Serbia: Rather general goals set, hard to evaluate achievements
- Romania: Roma parents in boards seem to be not achieved
- Macedonia: One mega-project rules the portfolio. Tanoda (Hungarian example for extracurricular schools for Roma children) best practice has not been taken over, although it was planned.

**The opinion of the staff** on the adequacy of the projects accepted:

- Most of the irrelevant, not professional projects are refused, but there are some exemptions
- Not adequate developments are finance in certain countries
- No benchmarks: spending on projects can not be related to original indicators
- In some countries the grants are far from originally set country strategy goals
- Wide variation in quality of implemented projects; some cases of segregation with REF funding.

In some countries the low number of the projects is because of the lack of capacities and competences of the civil organizations/ or the REF misestimates these capacities/competences.





## 6. Effectiveness of the grant scheme

Analyzing REF's grant scheme system we were interested not only in its adequacy (how successfully it reaches the goals in countries) but also in its effectiveness (how well the grant scheme system functions on the grant giving side and how the projects are implemented on the grantees' side).

On the **grant providing side** the following aspects were studied: (1) Publicity – how available the information are on the grant scheme (opportunities for applicants, decision outcomes, etc.). (2) Transparency – are there enough checks and balances built in the system to obstacle corruption or any way of unequal chances in the competition. (3) Selection procedure – are the circumstances for objective decision making given. (4) Efficiency – How fast and efficiently the system works. We had the following findings on these aspects:

- **Publicity:** The language (often academic, and not everything is available in Romanes) and channels used (mostly the website of REF) seem to exclude the most disadvantaged Roma groups to get involved in REF's grant scheme . REF intends to do even capacity building through project support which means that project owners get finance to implement their ideas on one hand and also “learn” project management and development on the other hand at the same time, and become capable to apply for other sources, too. It might be a question that if we concern the grant scheme system as a tool for capacity building, how low the threshold should be set to let in the system NGOs with very little experience, knowledge and skills as the projects themselves should be implemented, too. Information on the grant scheme, on supported projects are available publicly, which is very positive .
- **Transparency:** It seems that in the last three years based on practical experiences and questionable cases the organization has developed its conflict of interests policy gradually. We must not forget that the circle of Roma NGOs and experts on the field is still rather small in the given countries, so the appearance of the same persons or organizations in conflicting situation is very possible. Based on our interviews we have found that staff members who participate in project selection are not sure about their obligations concerning conflict of interest rules.
- **Selection procedure:** The project selection in REF is a multi-level process, with the involvement of different actors. The final decision is made by the Board, while it is prepared by the staff members, who make their suggestions based on detailed evaluation with the involvement of different responsible members. Although it seems that projects are carefully studied in a cooperative procedure (and project owners are even supported to improve the quality of their plans) the scoring and the clear selection criteria system is missing for objective decision making. Until now there have been all together 10 appeals against the decision of REF.
- **Efficiency:** The time period between application submission and contracting is average 2 months. It is outstandingly fast and efficient, just like the disbursements, especially compared to similar grant giving organizations.

**Grantees' opinion** on the grant scheme system's functioning:

- REF is very fast in contracting
- The support provided by REF in reshaping and implementing the projects granted are very substantial
- The quality of the feedbacks (meetings, reports) is very high
- The possibility to submit the application in romanian makes the communication easier
- The disbursements are always on time
- Communication with REF staff sometimes takes long time

On the **grantees' side** we have studied the quality of project implementation based on 20 selected projects' documentation and the opinion of the staff members, with special emphasis on the country facilitators who have close relation to the projects.

Based on the monitoring documents projects are basically implemented following the accepted Project Implementation Plans. **External evaluations** are conducted if a projects' budget is over 250.000 EUR. REF has decided to order such external evaluations in the case of "key pilot projects", which would be repeated in other countries, too. Until now all together 9 procedures have been conducted. The evaluators are selected via open competition, through published Terms of Reference. These documentations (especially in the case of key pilots) contain important information on dissemination possibilities, otherwise no major failures or wrong management has been recognized. In the history of REF only 3 projects have been suspended because of misuse of funding or wrong implementation – MN 004; CZ 002; SLO 014. Again, it is hard to concretely evaluate the achievements (outcomes and influences) as indicators are missing from the project plans. Still, we may say that projects are implemented following the supported plans.

Country facilitators are the actors from REF's side who have the closest view on the projects. We have asked them about the project management level, the professional quality of the projects, their social and policy influence, too. (See Annex 6.)

**The opinion of the country facilitators** on the granted projects:

- Reporting is often delayed from the grantees
- Low involvement of local authorities in the implemented projects
- Project owners often mix up informal education with formal, their professional background is not strong enough
- Project activities have low policy impact
- Among Roma NGOs capacity for project writing, planning is very low
- There is a low interest in the related topics in some countries – not yet mainstreamed by REF how important these objectives are in long term
- In certain countries low number of active Roma organization
- Low interest of other non-Roma organizations and institutions to build partnership



## 7. Monitoring, reporting, documentation

As we have noted above, most Roma NGOs need support in project planning and implementation, as they have very little experience on this field. REF consciously has taken this role as **capacity building** of the beneficiaries is a prioritized goal of the organization. At the same time REF as the **granting body** has to monitor and control the organizations activities and spending. These two roles might be controversial if they are not clearly defined and separated within the organization.

The grantees have to submit their reports quarterly, and **monitoring visits** are taken every 6 months (financial site controls once a year). The monitoring visits have a script, and we found it especially good that not only the organization is visited but the target groups are asked, too (families, parental organizations, etc.). Based on our understanding monitoring visits are considered as opportunities to define the possible difficulties in project implementation, to find the ways of solutions, etc. The main diagnosis and agreements are made with the project owners during these visits, which is followed by a written monitoring report (this is sometimes in delay). The disbursements depend on these reports and on the execution of the expected action of the grantees.

Studying the **monitoring procedures** we have found that some elements are not precisely worked out. For example the composition of the monitoring teams at site visits is not regulated clearly. At these occasions the role of different actors are not always obvious, i.e. the country facilitators' (are they there to control, or to support the organization, or to help with interpretation?). Here we would like to mention another feature that we have recognized during the staff interviews. Since staff members are responsible for certain country portfolios it somehow feels to be their personal interest to present the projects included successful. This seems to lead to the situation where members of the staff are not motivated to share difficulties, or even failures of projects. This is not balanced enough even in the monitoring procedure as not necessarily other members of the staff responsible for different portfolios participate in the visits to have a more objective view or at least a better balanced evaluation.

An often mentioned difficulty concerning the monitoring procedures, the absence of **indicators** appears during monitoring the most seriously based on our opinion. The monitoring documents are rather narrative, we do not find concrete numbers on achievements.

**Financial monitoring** seems to be well regulated and functions very effectively and strictly. Projects receive installments based on the financial schedule set-up at the starting of the project (they are pre-financed) concerning their quarterly reports and monitoring outcomes. At least once a year they go through a local financial controlling, where original bills and receipts are reviewed, procurements and capitalization minutes are controlled. Above 200.000 EUR budgeted projects are obliged to have external audit, too, until now these procedures have not found misuse of money or any kind of problem that REF administrative staff would not have recognized. The grantees are allowed to modify their original budgets up to 10% between the 7 budget lines, otherwise they have to ask for permission from REF. Even in this sense they receive management support from REF, for example financial consultation on bank selection, or cash-flow planning.

REF prepares **monthly and annual reports**. The monthly reports have uniform structure, what is very useful. As these reports are not related to some yearly plan, they are rather

narrative, it is hard to say if the activities reported have achieved goals set somewhere, if there are delays in the performance, or tasks that have not been seen in advance. The annual reports are very rich in information, their publicity (on the beneficiaries for example) is very positive, makes the organization accountable to the community and the donors, too.

Considering the reporting to donors it differs in each case. Donors often have different reporting expectations. At the same time based on their answers they are satisfied with the quality of information included in the reports, and the annual reports have been complemented by several of them.

REF has reformed its **documentation** system a year ago. The recent system is called MIS (Management Information System). It seems that it is not used functionally in all cases yet, some documents are not available there. As the circle of grantees is growing, the number of data and documents is growing, too. Probably it is an ongoing development process where the new tasks or new quantity of tasks demand for more strict regulations, more and better administration.

**The opinion of the staff** on the problems concerning the monitoring

- The monitoring missions are not transparent enough
- Monitoring outcomes should have a better follow-up
- The feedbacks on the monitoring visits are in delay from REF to the grantees
- The system of monitoring is inconsistent because of the lack of indicators
- Some indicators and internal limits in the projects budget should be defined and fixed

## 8. Internal organization

The internal organization of REF is defined in the **manuals** and the **operational guidelines**. These documents give basically good regulations for the daily operation. We have paid special attention to recruitment procedures, workload distribution, knowledge transfer, management costs, missing capacities/competencies and internal evaluation procedures. We had the following findings on these areas.

- **Recruitment procedures** are not clear enough, the decision making competences are not declared. Although it is a cooperative procedure the final decision has been made several times discretionally in the past. Based on our staff interviews it has happened that consensus was developed in a group that was set up to select new staff members, which decision was finally ignored by the Director. (Staff opinion in numbers: Annex 7)
- Country portfolios are very different in size (meaning project numbers this time) because of this the **workload** among staff members responsible for one country looks very unequal.
- Channels of **knowledge transfer** are not set up, which means that experiences, learning may get lost, the usage of knowledge capital is not efficient enough. At the same time – as mentioned above - staff members responsible for certain countries might have an interest not to share difficulties/failures from their portfolio, which again makes losses.
- The **management ratio** looks high as it is 11.7% in 2008<sup>2</sup>. At the same time – based on our interview with the administrative staff – it very much depends on the way of calculation. If purely administrative staff's costs are included, it is somewhere between 4 and 5%. We also have to keep in mind that most of the staff members are from abroad in the Budapest headquarters, which generates extra costs (accommodation, school tuitions, etc.).
- On some areas there obviously are **missing capacities**. All running projects are visited by the Financial Manager for financial monitoring, which is not sustainable with the growing number of projects.
- Many of the staff members are young colleagues at the beginning of their career. It means that **internal evaluation** plays a crucial role to give them guidance for their work. This evaluation is kept once a year, which is obviously too rare to correct and improve personal performances.
- The tasks, responsibilities of and expectations towards **country facilitators** are not clearly regulated and not standardized enough.

---

<sup>2</sup> In Hungary grant-giving organizations spend usually 5-7 % of their total budget on administration costs. In the case of EU sources if the Intermediary Body contracts out grant-giving activities, the limit is usually 5 %.

### **Staff opinion on internal organization:**

- Clarity of personal tasks and responsibilities: **4,5** average from scores 1 to 6
- Missing capacities and competencies for operation on the fields of:
  - ✓ Administrative
  - ✓ Project related financial administration
  - ✓ Public Relations
  - ✓ Human Resources management
  - ✓ Fund Raising
  - ✓ Monitoring
- No knowledge and information transfer within the organization (See details on internal communication in Annex 8.)
- The Board is often slow in feed backs
- There are overlaps in functions in the staff
- The procedure of internal evaluation is too rare and it is not detailed enough
- There is too much pressure on the administrative staff, lack of capacity
- The work load is unequal
- The expected intensity and quality of the country facilitators' performance should be standardized

We found it very important to ask Board members about their opinion on REF's operation , and even on the operation of the Board. The Board is naturally a crucial actor in the organization (decision making body), so we include their comments and opinions in this part of the report. The Board contains of 8 members, they meet a 2-3 times a year personally as the geographic distances are huge. Decisions are often made via internet.

### **The opinion of the Board on the staff's performance**

Average score on the decision preparation (scores 1 -6): **4,5**

- It would be great to have the hard copies of all of the documents few days earlier
- Some of the background information is not available for the Board members
- The Board should be updated about the situations in certain countries. It would be more obvious how the given project relate to the country strategy and the framework strategy itself

Average score on the cooperation with the staff (scores 1 -6): 3,6

- The staff should provide more information, and should share more knowledge about the projects
- The staff should not suspect that the Board slows the process of decision making



**The opinion of the Board** on the weak points of its own operation

- Since everybody is very busy, it is very difficult to organize the meetings of the Board. Some of the meetings are poorly attended, some arrive late, and some leave early
- Only the face to face discussions are effective, the e-board meetings are not useful at all
- Quite limited information is provided for the Board the quantity and the quality of the information depend on the management, it effects the decisions themselves, too
- The Board does not have a vision of its own role



## 9. Scholarship program

Referring to the agreement on the content of the external evaluation, the scholarship program is not a subject of a deep analysis in this document. Here we give a **general overview** on it, based on publicly available sources and interview conducted with the head of the program.

The REF Scholarship Programs provides scholarships for Roma students at the university level. The first two years of the program were financed from gold captured by the Nazis during the II World War and held by the Allied Forces. The Open Society Institute with grants from the C.S. Mott Foundation and the Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation provided funds for the program's 3rd, 4th and 5th year of existence. Since the sixth year, the financial background has been provided by REF with the support of the Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation<sup>3</sup>. In 2007, the Roma Memorial Scholarship Program was completely reshuffled. It was extended and incorporated in the structure of REF. As for now the REF scholarship program contains five different scholarship schemes: the Roma Memorial University Scholarship, the Interregional Scholarship scheme, the Supplementary Scholarship Scheme, the Law and Humanities Program (LHP), and the Health Scholarship Program, which has started in 2008.<sup>4</sup>

The Roma Memorial Scholarship has supported approximately **5000 Roma students** at the tertiary education level in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe to pursue their education in their countries of residence over the last years. For the 2007-2008 academic year, the RMUSP has granted support to 701 out of 1,363 applicants. The grantees must be full-time BA, MA or PHD students at one of the state-accredited and well-established universities in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Turkey. Their selection is based on academic competition; the student's grade point average (GPA) must reach the defined, quite high level. (This level of GPA is different in each country according to the grading system). For the 2007-2008 scholarship years, USD 887,472 was allocated for RMUSP Scholarship Support.

**Further elements of the REF Scholarship Program** are the new Interregional and Supplementary Scholarship schemes. The main mission of these schemes is to support students to study in foreign countries towards their BA and MA degrees. In the 2007-2008 scholarship year, the Interregional Scholarship Program provided financial assistance for seven students from Bulgaria and Romania to study in each other's countries. Six grants were offered to Roma Supplementary Scholarship applicants from Macedonia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania. The Supplementary Scholarship recipients study in well established tertiary education institutions, pursuing MA degrees in the United States, Germany and France. In total, USD 51,000 was allocated under these programs.<sup>5</sup>

The Law and Humanities Scholarship Program has been functioning in Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine since 2004. Due to the needs of the students, this program aims to improve the language skills of its grantees. It offers a language tutoring in foreign languages, in addition to standard curricular subjects. In the 2007-2008 scholarship year, 83 candidates were supported.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://romaeducationfund.hu/> accessed 09.10.2008

<sup>4</sup> Annual Report of Roma Education Fund 2007

<sup>5</sup> Annual Report of Roma Education Fund 2007

Fifty grantees are supported through the funds of the Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation, and 33 grantees receive scholarships from the REF's Core Program funds.

In 2007, the REF designed a new program called the Roma Health Scholarship Program (RHSP). The program offers scholarships for Roma students pursuing degrees as nurses or medical doctors at state accredited/recognized medical and medical -vocational schools in the countries of their residence. This scholarship has become available for students since the Spring of 2008. The main task of the RHSP is to improve the level of Roma representation among medical professionals by providing assistance for health education, mentorship, and advocacy training in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, with a pilot project in Romania.

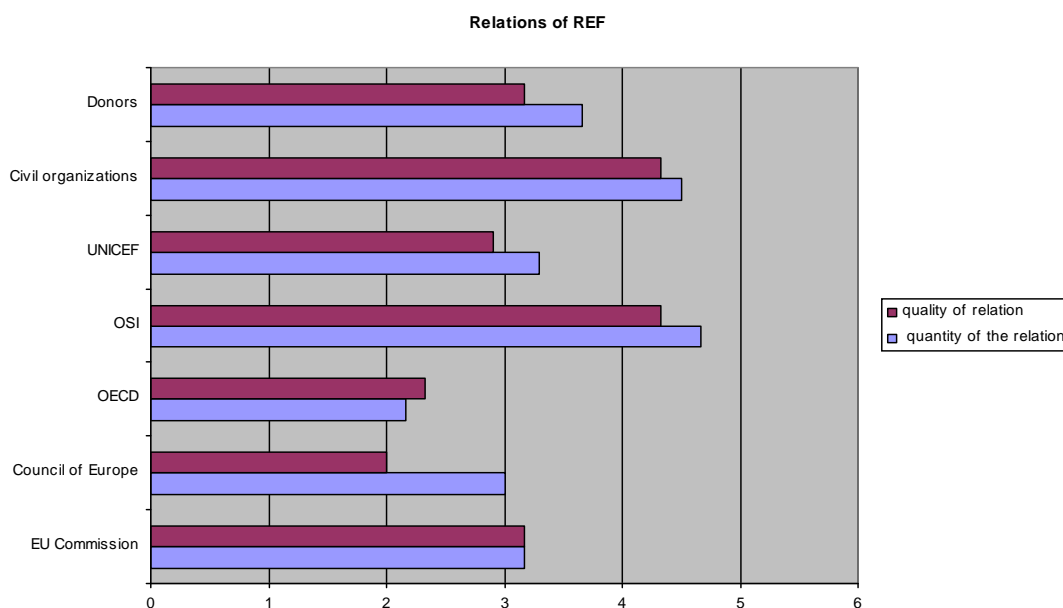
Concerning the future, REF management plans to have a more integrated daily operation with the Scholarship Department. On finances we have received the following data on the Scholarship Program: in 2008 the total budget was 1.742.857 EUR, in which 436.878 EUR was spent on administrative costs (including the salaries of all staff members working in the Scholarship Program). These data and the whole operation of the Scholarship Program need further analysis similarly to REF's institutional evaluation regarding its grant scheme and advocacy activities.

## 10. Partner relations, advocacy

Concerning the outreach of REF we have analyzed its partner relations with special emphasis on donors (and within that on fundraising activities), and also the advocacy activities of REF, where we concentrated on ministerial relations, policy influence, and researches.

First of all we have asked the **staff's opinion on partner relations**, meaning both the intensity (if the contacts are frequent enough) and the quality (quantity and quality of information exchanged), scoring from 1 to 6.<sup>6</sup>

Table 4: Staff opinion on relation to different partners, average scores 1 -6.



Secondly we have asked a **circle of donors** (representing World Bank, OSI, Freudenberg Stiftung, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Balkans Regional Programme Royal Netherlands Embassy) on their opinion concerning the relation with REF, concentrating on the information they receive, the conditions to continue their support and the areas to be improved by REF as they see.

<sup>6</sup> OSI is one of the major donors, but we still found it important to represent them separately as a lot of professional, expert relations exist between REF and OSI.

**The opinion of the donors** on the relation with REF and REF's performance

The quantity of the information provided by REF can be improved, but quality of the reports is usually very high.

Conditions of continue of supporting REF:

- Financial sources
- Quality of the projects supported
- Satisfactory results of the ongoing institutional evaluation
- REF has to continue to focus on its strategy

Areas should be improved according to donors:

- The system of monitoring and evaluation
- Strategy planning
- The quality of the projects, and the national impact of them

The relation to donors and potential donors is realized through **fundraising** activities. (Detailed data on fundraising is in Annex 9.) These data show that the total sum fundraised until 2015 is around EUR 45 million. The yearly amount raised since 2005 is rather constant, around EUR 6.5 million per year. The growth of budget commitments is caused mostly by the increase of scholarships financed principally by OSI. The administrative expenses were kept basically constant. The end of year balance for 2008 is expected to be around zero, may be slightly in the positive range. The composition of donor financing sources (average 2005-2007) is the following: OSI: 39% (including all OSI contributions), bilateral : 37% (coming from 12 governments), multilateral: 21% (WB and CoEDB), and private: 3% (principally coming from the Network of European Foundations).

**Staff opinion on fundraising:**

- The importance of the EU related activities is underestimated
- The bilateral way of fund raising should be less dominant – balanced with others
- The private sector is unexplored
- Application/grant portfolios often do not match potential donors' intentions
- The Board should be more active in gaining new contacts, new donors

**Advocacy** (policy influence) is a central task of REF. Policy indicators have been worked out, however unfortunately these are hardly measurable ones. We have studied in more details this activity in three countries: Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.

In **Bulgaria** the first school desegregation projects have been implemented far before REF's existence, started 9 years ago. The Bulgarian example shows how successful pilot projects can call the attention of policy decision makers and can mainstreamed. The first project

implemented in Vidyn with 300 children<sup>7</sup> was repeated several times, all together with cca 3000 children in different towns in Bulgaria. The experiences of this project have lead to policy decisions; in 2002 Ministerial Ordinance was announced on school desegregation. In 2004 the National Strategy for school desegregation has been accepted in Bulgaria. In 2005 the Roma Integration Decade has born and school desegregation is a central goal set in the document. REF has started its activity based on this. Since then in Bulgaria in the Ministry of Education a special body for school desegregation has been set up (called center for educational integration) in 2006. In 2007 in Bulgaria a real breakthrough has been taken as a in the Human Resource Development Operative Program<sup>8</sup> special measure on desegregation of Roma children has been included.

The Bulgarian example is important as shows how it is possible to move from one pilot project to several projects, then to policy level including legislative actions and program financing on a higher scale.

In **Hungary** there is an agreement signed with the Ministry of Education on that REF gives its opinion officially on all documents related to the education of the Roma. According to the representatives of the competent Ministry, there is close cooperation between REF and the Ministry, what resulted in a good information and knowledge transfer. REF usually reports about its researches, and about its activities. REF is often asked to provide consultancy and expertise for the Ministries. In conclusion, the interviews show that, although the quantity of the issues changes from time to time, the quality of the collaboration is outstanding.

In **Romania** there is no signed agreement with the Ministry, but unofficially the same kind of cooperation works in the practice. Both in Hungary and in Romania a REF consultant works to **influence the development programs financed from Structural Funds**. This is an extremely efficient tool, as REF's experiences and program ideas may be built in the National Development Plans and implemented on a much higher level. The consultants participate in planning of action plans of social innovation measures, and in the yearly review of action plans. The consultants take part in the elaboration of call for proposals (documentation of tenders). Furthermore, in Hungary they consult with main actors such as decision makers of Managing Authority, National Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Social and Labour Affairs, working groups, project leaders of central project beneficiaries. They usually cooperate and provide professional support for the Network of Public Education Equal Opportunity Experts. The consultants also collaborate with Roma Program Support Network, and inform the potential partners, and grant applicants on opportunities. According to the Hungarian consultant, the main challenge concerning the efficiency of the consultant's activities is changing attitude of the policy-makers.

**Research** is also an important tool of advocacy (find list of planned researches in Annex 11, all research which has been conducted is available at [www.romaeducationfund.hu](http://www.romaeducationfund.hu)). REF conducts / has conducted researches on issues related to the education of Roma children (i.e. over representation of Roma children in special schools, or the effect of the affirmative action

---

<sup>7</sup> The project had three main elements: (1) to change the attitude of the Roma community, white parents, teachers (motivation campaign); (2) supportive educational environment in the mainstream schools; and (3) providing academic support to increase the level of education. Technically the project was implemented through taking Roma children from segregated schools to mainstream ones, because of this the popular name is "busing project".

quote in Romania) and other topics, including the country assessments. The decision on the topics is made collectively and the Board makes the final decision. Based on a recent decision, an independent body of experts will be set up to evaluate the yearly research plan and the research reports themselves, too. The main goal of these researches may be two: (1) to direct REF in its own strategy building, and (2) to disseminate the findings especially among policy decision makers to force policy changes. The dissemination is crucial, unfortunately it has no procedure. Because of this the success of dissemination and sharing varies .

**Staff opinion** on REF's advocacy activity:

- Differs in countries, very much depending on the personal relations built with policy decision makers
- The relations built with Ministries are too formal and on a too high level
- Ministry relations should be built NOT with the minority departments, but with the mainstream bodies
- The best level of intervention should be found – not necessarily the Ministry, it might be an institution or office
- Common projects with the Ministries would be important – there is a Slovakian example
- It would be important to build not only national, but European level relations with policy makers



## 11. Summary of findings

The Roma Education Fund has been operating since 2005 (aiming to increase the inclusion of Romani student in mainstream education). REF is a **quite young, and quickly expanding** organization. In 2005 and 2006 there were 54 projects contracted, this number increased to 92 in 2007. The figures concerning the disbursed amounts are also very impressive, while in the first year 822.339 euro was awarded, in 2007 the disbursed amount was 4.852.302 euro. Its achievements are very different in countries because of given circumstances (Roma civil organizations, policy makers openness, etc.) and because of differences in performance within REF (personal relations in the sector and country, personal skills and knowledge, etc.).

Summarizing the most important **strengths** of the organization, based on our findings these are the following. In the short history of the organization it has become a well-known foundation in the Roma community with a very clear mission and goal. During that time all basic conditions for daily operations have been worked out and they function well. Our most important impression was based on the interviews with the staff, that the personal commitment of the people is very strong. It is probably one of the most important resources that has to be built on. Another important issue is, that the Roma representation in the staff is an outstanding example. No other international organization working on the Roma issue has succeeded to employ so high rate of young Roma professionals. The operation of the organization is client friendly and very efficient, the grantees and other partners have a very positive picture on the organization. In the three years operation in some countries REF has succeeded to move from the project implementation support level to policy influence, advocacy level based on its experience and knowledge gained.

**Strengths of REF** according to the staff, numbers on the frequency of mentioning from 9 interviews

mission of the institution(6)  
multinational environment(5)  
representation of Roma within the office(4)  
prestige of the institution(3)  
the professional staff(2)  
research and interest field(2)  
flexibility of management(1)  
professional challenge(1)

Most important **weaknesses** of the organization are the following based on our findings. The rules and procedures of daily operation are not detailed and clear enough for the organization as it is growing, for example on monitoring process, documentation, or internal communication. We are convinced that as the organization itself develops (number of granted projects grow, REF moves from project level to advocacy level) the internal procedures constantly have to follow these changes. On some areas it seems that the internal regulation can not catch up with the daily tasks and it may be an obstacle of efficient and precise performance. One of our biggest concerns is the lack of indicators on several fields (strategy

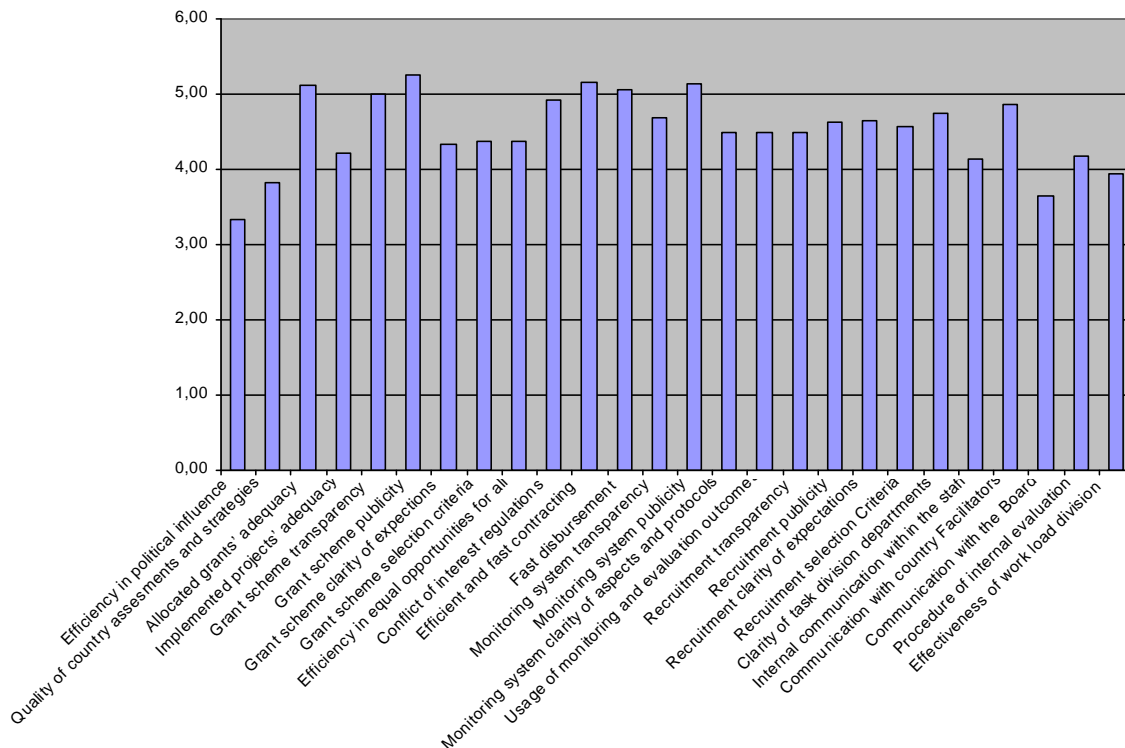
documents, project plans, monitoring papers). Because of this it is rather difficult to give objective evaluation of the projects' and the organization's performance, hard to say if set goals have or have not been achieved. The human resource management also faces challenges as the staff grows, especially standards for functions (i.e. country facilitators) are missing, the workload looks rather unequal within the staff. Fundraising seems to be a sensitive issue, its success is the base of the further operation. Fundraising strategy planning is not integrated into the whole organization's strategy planning, staff members do not have enough information on its achievements and challenges.

**Weaknesses of REF** according to the staff, numbers on the frequency of mentioning from 10 interviews

- lack of knowledge and information transfer(4)
- unequal work load division (3)
- unequalities in the portfolios(2)
- no structured professional development(1)
- burocracy (1)
- often insufficient feedback on completed tasks(1)

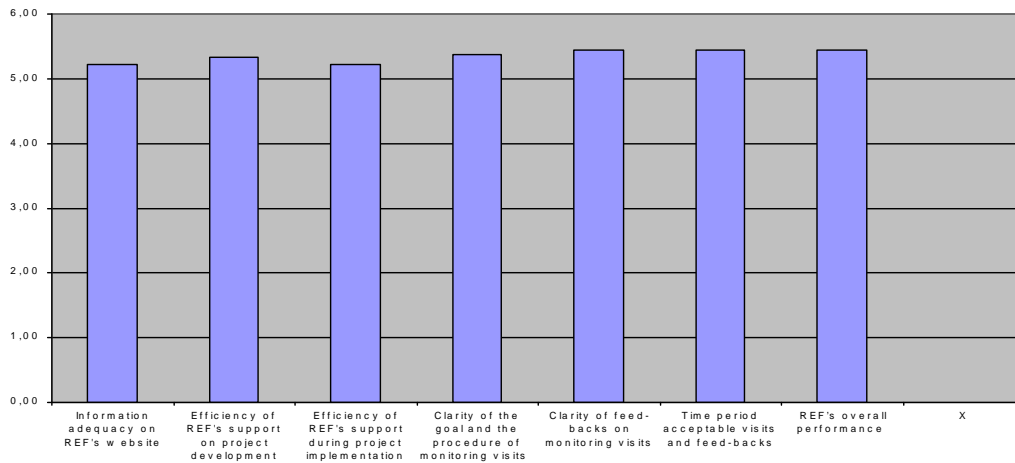
It is worth to have look at how the staff members and how the main beneficiaries of REF (the grantees) see REF in general.

Table 5: Staff opinion on REF's performance, average scores 1 -6



The total average is 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 6 based on the staff's opinion. It is a rather high number, which means that the staff members are quite satisfied with the organization's performance. They are the least satisfied with the policy influence and the internal communication. The best functioning parts of the organization are seen as the different aspects of the grant scheme system's efficiency (fast contracting, publicity of the grant scheme).

Table 6: Grantees' opinion on REF, average scores 1 -6



The grantees have a very positive picture on REF, the average score is above 5 on a scale 1 -6. It was obvious during the interviews; too, they had a very good opinion on REF. It might be raised that it is because they are dependent on REF's sources and the answers given are not necessarily trustable. First of all the answers are treated anonymously, secondly based on other researches we have the experience that grantees may be very critical even if they are dependent.



## 12. Recommendations

Based on our findings we make the following recommendations to the Board and the management of REF:

1. **Country strategies** should be updated, probably in a shorter version, and focusing on the changes and actions. More clear priorities and achievable, measurable goals have to be set in the documents. It would be important to compare country portfolios and granted projects regularly to see the tendencies and not serves fields in granting.
2. Rules and **procedures of daily operation** need further development as the organization and the number of granted projects and tasks grow, especially on:
  - Project selection criteria: scoring should be introduced to have more objective and measurable decisions
  - Monitoring procedures: should be further developed, on the exact procedure of site visits, the sharing of monitoring outcomes
  - Conflict of interest rules should be better communicated internally
  - Recruitment procedures should be worked out, especially the decision making competencies have to be declared
3. Set of **indicators** should be worked out and used consequently in strategy building, action planning, project selection, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The already existing policy indicators should also be further developed for better use, to be able to measure REF's advocacy activities.
4. As REF's grant giving activity is considered also as a **capacity building** tool among Roma NGOs, it would be important to open to the most disadvantaged, least capable organizations. In this sense further emphasis should be paid on project generation, management consultancy and support.
5. On the field of **advocacy** it would be crucial to follow the Romanian, Hungarian and the Bulgarian example, to be able to move from the project level to policy level. In the EU member decade countries Structural Funds targeting for Roma educational desegregation should be a main direction (both supporting NGOs and consulting Managing Authorities). In the other countries it would be crucial to build effective and well functioning relations with the Ministries to mainstream REF's experiences in educational policies. The dissemination of learning of the researches conducted by REF should be better planned and standardized.
6. The roles of **monitoring, controlling and project support** should be separated clearly within the organization not to create controversial situations (for example the unclear role of country facilitators' at monitoring visits).
7. **Human resource management** should be strengthened, especially on the fields of:
  - Insurance of more equal workload
  - Better knowledge transfer should be built up for continuous improvement of the organizational performance
  - Internal communication should be improved between the different actors

- More concrete standards should be worked out for certain functions (i.e. country facilitators)
8. The whole **documentation system** should be further developed (meaning both content and availability), MIS should be used more consequently
  9. **Country portfolios** should be mixed concerning personal responsibilities to have a better sharing of experience and learning and less personal interests related to country performances. At the same time it would be crucial to save the capital already gained in each countries, like personal relations, knowledge, trustful communication with important partners, etc.
  10. **The performance of fundraising** should be reviewed. Fundraising should be linked to existing country portfolios, and therefore, should be planned in an integrated method together with REF's overall strategy concerning country goals and horizontal goals in the whole region. Achievements and challenges of fundraising should be better shared within the staff and all staff members should be conscious about fundraising goals during their work. Fundraising should be better integrated into REF's daily operation.

To summarize our findings and recommendations on REF's performance, we think that the organization is facing normal challenges as it is going through development. During this process, the greatest challenge in front of REF is to preserve and further enhance its committed, client friendly and efficient functioning with better regulated and documented, transparent daily operations, however, WITHOUT making the organization over-bureaucratized.







# Annex 1

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### 1. General

5 most positive things working with REF

5 biggest challenges working with REF

### 2. Political influence

- List REF's tools to influence policy decisions
- Evaluate REF's efficiency in political influence 1 -6

Problems:

- Quality of country assessments and strategies 1 -6

Problems:

### 3. Grant scheme

- How adequate are the allocated grants related to REF's original goals? 1 -6

Problems:

- How adequate are - based on monitoring outcomes – the implemented projects related to REF's original goals? 1-6

Problems:

- Evaluation the grant-cycle (calls, submission, registration, selection, contracting) regulations 1-6
  - transparency
  - publicity
  - clarity of expectations
  - selection criteria
- What are the checks and balanced built in the process for transparent, accountable procedure that insures equal opportunities for all? List
- How efficient are these? 1-6

Problems:

- How overall (all-in, comprehensive) are the regulations on conflict of interest? 1 -6

Problems:

- What are the basics of the internal regulations on publicity related to grant programs?
- How efficient are these? 1-6

Problems:

- Evaluate the proposal selection procedure 1 -6
  - transparency
  - publicity
  - clarity of selection criteria

Problems:

- Evaluate REF's performance related to other similar organizations in 1 -6
  - Efficient and fast contracting
  - Fast disbursement
- Evaluate the efficiency of REF's monitoring and evaluation system 1 -6
  - transparency
  - publicity (towards grantees)
  - clarity of aspects and protocols
  - usage of monitoring and evaluation outcomes (feedback and program planning)

### **Outreach and dissemination**

- What are the main channels and methods of reaching stakeholders? List
  - Potential grantees
  - Potential partners
  - Potential donors
- How standardized and efficient REF's outreach and dissemination are? 1 -6

### **Partner relations**

- Evaluate the quantity of relations with 1-6
  - EU Commission,
  - Council of Europe,
  - OECD,
  - OSI
  - UNICEF,
  - Civil organizations,
  - Donors,
  - Important partner by your opinion: Name:

Problems:

- Evaluate the quality of relations with 1-6
  - EU Commission,
  - Council of Europe,
  - OECD,
  - OSI
  - UNICEF,
  - Civil organizations,
  - Donors,
  - Important partner by your opinion: Name:

Problems:

**Internal organization**

- Evaluate the recruitment procedure 1 -6
  - transparency
  - publicity
  - clarity of expectations
  - selection criteria

Problems:

- Evaluate the clarity of personal tasks and responsibilities 1 -6

Problems:

- Evaluate the clarity of task division between different
- Which are the missing capacities and competencies for operation?
- What are the forms of internal communication?
- Evaluate communication 1 -6
  - internal communication within the staff of the office
  - with country Facilitators
  - with the Board

Problems:

- Evaluate the procedure of internal evaluation 1 -6
  - clarity of protocoll and expectations

Problems:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of work load division 1 -6

Problems:

## Annex 2

### QUESTIONS TO GRANTEES

- How did you get information on REF's grant scheme?
- Was the information on the REF website adequate for you to prepare a good project plan? Score 1-6

Problems:

- Did you need to reshape your proposal after you made the initial approach to REF and before it was submitted to the REF Board for decision? Yes / No
- If yes, what kind of support did you get from REF to finalize it? List!
- Was this assistance enough and efficient? Score 1 -6

Problems:

- How long time did it take from the submission until contracting?
- What were the forms of communication with REF?
- How often have you been contacted by REF staff (the country facilitator, the project officer or other staff) during project implementation?
- In what way did these contacts support your work? List!
- How efficient was support from REF staff? Score 1 -6

Problems (separate out issues with different types of REF staff):

- How many times have you been visited by REF staff on the site?
- Was the goal and the procedure of each visit clear for you? Score 1-6

Problems:

- Were the feed-backs on these visit(s) (what needs to be changed in the implementation, etc.) clear for you? Score 1 -6

Problems:

- How long after the visit did you receive a report of the visit, where this was necessary? Do you consider this time period acceptable? Score 1 -6
- If you had any problem/question during the implementation, did you ask for assistance from REF? Yes / No
- If yes, was this assistance efficient? Score 1 -6

Problems:

- After submission, how long time did it take to get feed-back on your reports? Do you consider this time period acceptable? Score 1 -6
- Were these feed-backs understandable? Score 1 -6

Problems:

- How long time did it usually take to receive the disbursements after reporting? Do you consider this time period acceptable? Score 1-6
- How would you score REF's overall performance as a grantee from 1 -6?

## **Annex 3**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE TO DONORS**

How did your organization get to be a donor of REF?

How do you get information on REF's performance?

Are you satisfied with the quantity of information? Score 1 -6

Problems:

Are you satisfied with the quality of information? Score 1 -6

Problems:

What are the conditions from your side to continue supporting REF?

In which areas do you expect REF to improve its performance?

## **Annex 4**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE TO BOARD MEMBERS**

How often does the Board meet?

What is the way of decision making? (Consensus, voting, etc.)

How would you evaluate the decision preparation that REF staff does? Score 1 -6

Problems:

What are the weak points of the Board's operation?

How would you evaluate the cooperation with REF staff? Score 1 -6

Problems:

How comprehensive are the regulations on conflict of interest? Score 1 -6

Problems:

## Annex 5

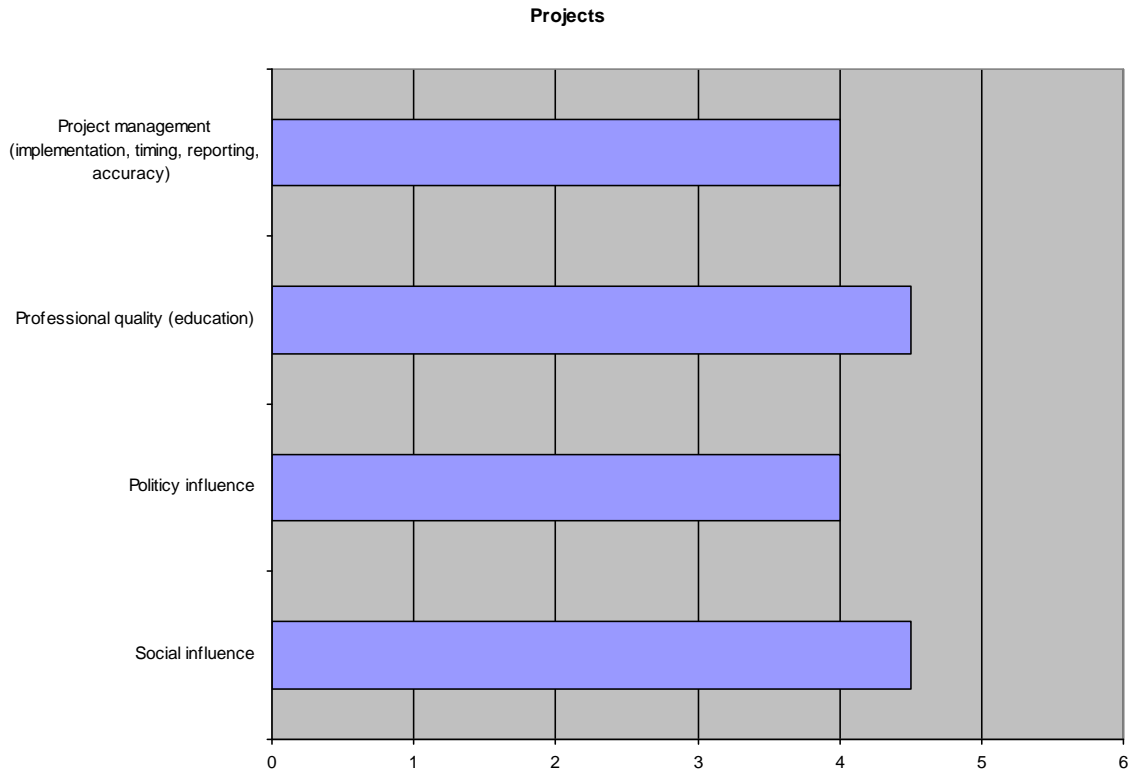
### QUESTIONS TO MINISTRY PEOPLE

- What is the way of co-operation between you (your organization) and REF?
- Have you (your institution) ever asked for expert opinion/recommendation from REF?
- If yes, on what, what has happened?
- Have you ever consulted with REF on Roma education issues?
- If yes, on what, what has happened?
- How would you evaluate REF's performance based on your experiences?



# Annex 6

## Country facilitators' opinion on implemented projects



## Annex 7

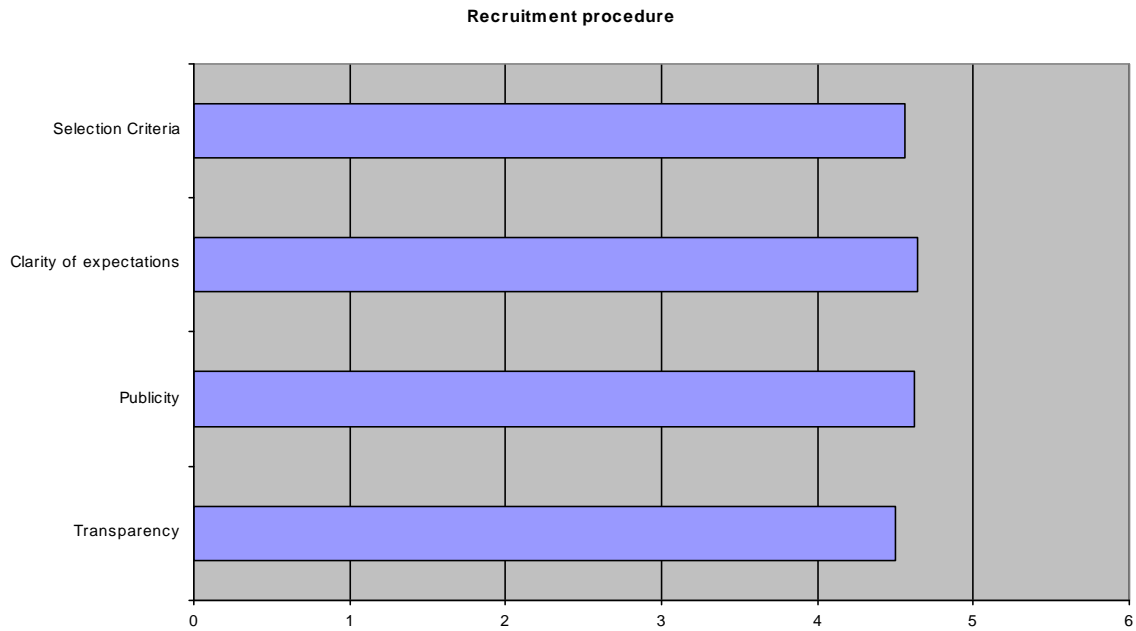
Staff opinion on recruitment procedures. Score 1 -6. Aspects:

Clarity of selection criteria

Clarity of expectations for the position

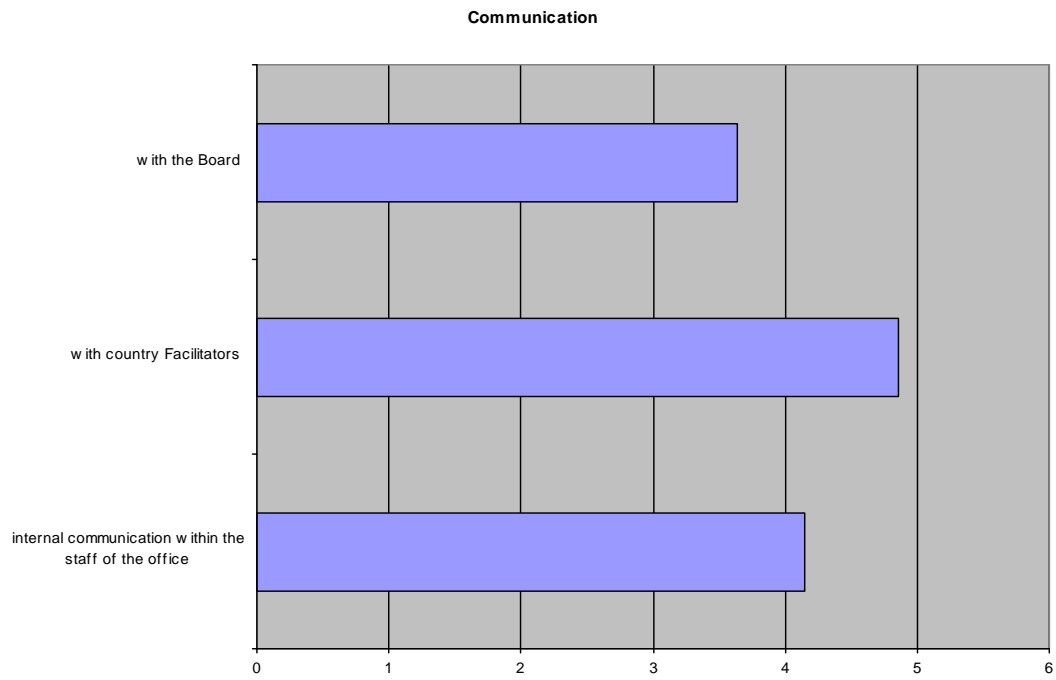
Publicity of vacancies to insure equal chances

Transparency of the procedure to exclude unfair influence



## Annex 8

Staff opinion on the efficiency of internal communication with different actors, score 1 to 6.



## Annex 9

### Roma Education Fund - Donor Commitments 2005-2014

*Including Firm Donor Commitments only*

Type of Donor	Donors	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total (EUR)
Bilateral	Canada: Canadian International Dev't Agency	700 574										<b>700 574</b>
	Finland via CoEDB	60 128										<b>60 128</b>
	Germany: German Government			450 000	1 500 000							<b>1 950 000</b>
	Greece: Hellenic AID	109 890										<b>109 890</b>
	Hungary: Government			152 000	5 049							<b>157 049</b>
	Ireland: Development Cooperation Ireland	100 000	100 000									<b>200 000</b>
	Netherlands: Ministry of Foreign Affairs	700 000	300 000	710 000	90 000							<b>1 800 000</b>
	Slovenia: Ministry of Foreign Affairs	10 000			10 000							<b>20 000</b>
	Spain: Ministry of Foreign Affairs			80 000	80 000							<b>160 000</b>
	Sweden: SIDA		423 112	431 544	639 240	639 240						<b>2 133 136</b>
	Switzerland: Swiss Agency for Development	404 819	400 000	473 313	182 050							<b>1 460 182</b>
United Kingdom: DFID	290 660			214 359	214 359						<b>719 377</b>	
Multilateral	World Bank	833 000	1 666 000	1 545 261	353 500	353 500						<b>4 751 261</b>

	Council of Europe Development Bank	500 000										<b>500 000</b>
<b>OSI</b>	Open Society Institute (OSI)	1 661 000	1 661 000	1 430 799	1 406 000	1 406 000	1 406 000	1 406 000	1 406 000	1 406 000	1 406 000	<b>14 594 799</b>
	Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program (OSI)	833 000	833 000	744 491	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	<b>7 331 491</b>
	Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program 2007-2011 (#2) + Roma Health Scholarship Program 2008*			744 491	1 181 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	703 000	<b>6 143 491</b>
<b>Private (other)</b>	Network of European Foundations*	100 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000	<b>1 500 000</b>
	Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation	94 333	94 333	94 333	130 630							<b>413 630</b>
	James D. Wolfensohn Roma Scholarship Grant		7 958									<b>7 958</b>
	Nicolae Gheorghe, Nicoleta Bitu, Romani Criss	2 600										<b>2 600</b>
	Nicolas Burnett	15 916										<b>15 916</b>
	Bill Newton Smith	591										<b>591</b>
	World Bank Community Campaign			4 220	257							<b>4 477</b>
	Putumayo World Music Company (estimate)			1 229								<b>1 229</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 416 511</b>	<b>5 685 403</b>	<b>7 061 681</b>	<b>6 695 085</b>	<b>4 219 099</b>	<b>3 012 000</b>	<b>2 912 000</b>	<b>2 912 000</b>	<b>2 912 000</b>	<b>2 912 000</b>	<b>2 912 000</b>	<b>44 737 779</b>

Note: Contribution of the Network of European Foundation consists of funds received from the Evens Foundation, the Freudenberg Foundation, the Barrow Ca dbury Trust, the Charles Steward Mott Foundation, and the Remembrance and Future Fund.

Note: An additional USD 1 million was pledged in 2007 for the RMUSP for 5 years and USD 478,000 for 2008 for the new Health Scholarship Program.

Note: Date of data: 11/11/2008

**REF Financing Structure Average 2005-2007 and 2005-2008**

<b>Donors</b>	<b>2005-2007</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2005-2008</b>	<b>%</b>
Open Society Institute (OSI: all pledged funds)	2 635 927	41%	2 998 445	46%
Bilateral	1 965 347	31%	2 240 341	34%
Multilateral	1 514 754	24%	979 565	15%
Private	271 838	4%	315 962	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 387 865</b>		<b>6 534 313</b>	

Note: Given that final figures for 2008 are not available, two tables are presented. One for 2005-2007 only, the second with additional available data for 2008.

Note: These figures do not include any leveraged funds.

## **Annex 10**

Planned studies and researches by the end of 2008

- Affirmative action in education in Romania
- Needs assessments of Roma pupils in Moldova
- Evaluation of desegregation projects in Bulgaria
- ERRC report on Czech ed. System after Ostrava decision
- Bosnia Country Assessment
- Montenegro Country Assessment
- Impact of after school Tanoda in Hungary