



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FOUNTAIN OF HOPE School year : 2009-2010



1. INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUNTAIN OF HOPE

In September 2007, in partnership with the Local Community Council of Panatau and Cooperating Netherlands Foundation (CNF), Asociatia de Ajutor AMURTEL opened the “Fountain of Hope”, an after-school center for the village elementary school children.

The center offers a hot meal, homework support and a creative variety of recreational extra-curricular activities for a maximum of 30 children. The children are students at the “General School of the Panatau Commune” and come from socio-economically disadvantaged families.

The goal of this project is to reduce the number of primary school drop outs in the community. The rural communities in Romania have high rates of children who do not even complete primary school, due to financial strains and parents who are unable to effectively support their children if they themselves often did not complete their formal education.

The project plays an important role in offering a better future to these children by motivating them to continue their studies, awakening a love of learning and discovering hidden talents, thus breaking the cycle of poverty.

2. ACTIVITIES FROM THE 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

A. EDUCATION:

There was a lot of emphasis in this area, as assisting the children in their homework is one of the center's priorities. Close communication with the teachers helped to create a variety of strategies in order to improve the children's scholastic performance. As a direct result of this work, all of the children enrolled in the center



were successfully promoted to the next grade level and there were no school drop-outs.



Household and practical life activities were also successfully organized. All of the children now know how to wash dishes, to serve meals and to clean up and organize the play area. This was accomplished by creating a duties chart so that each child had an opportunity to be included in household activities.

In addition, children had many extracurricular activities, developing their creative skills in painting, drawing, and crafts, as well as participating in many interactive games.

B. SOCIAL SERVICES:

The beneficiaries of the social services offered by the center were carefully selected from amongst a large number of applicants. The Pantatau town hall's social worker handled this aspect through conducting case studies of each family in order to establish fair criteria for selecting those most in need.

In addition, discussions were set up with the parents of the beneficiaries. As it is a rural area, children are often pressured to leave school in order to help out on the farm or with animals. Through parent meetings we offered information regarding the importance of education in developing their children as future citizens of society. The majority of the parents became more cooperative through these efforts, as shown by the fact that following those actions, the children were allowed to remain longer in the center, rather than leaving immediately after eating to go home and help with the farm chores.

C. VOLUNTEERS

As we have a very small team of employees, we have worked to involve volunteers in the project. In the 2009-2010 school year, we had the help of four volunteers from Familia AMURTEL. These young people helped in preparing wood for winter, garden work and renovations.



We also had volunteers from abroad. The children had the opportunity to begin to practice english with an American volunteer and a volunteer from New Zealand.



D. FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

In the past year, the team from the Center worked to increase the budget by organizing different fundraising activities. A second hand clothing sale was organized with a donation of clothes from Switzerland. In addition, the staff promoted the center in the community and rented the space for hosting local events such as baptisms and birthday parties on the weekends. Four such events were organized. In addition, the center provided food and accommodations for two groups of Swiss students, raising a significant amount of funds. In addition, Asociatia de Ajutor AMURTEL promoted the project on the international level to its network of sponsors and partners who generously provided the majority of the operational funding of the project.



E. PROJECT PROMOTION

On the local level an "Open Day" was organized in the springtime. Teachers, students and administrators from the primary school attended, as well as members of the local community council. AMURTEL produced a short video, together with the children and staff of the Center, and screened it during the event, to the delight of the beneficiaries and their schoolmates. An informational flyer about the project was also



distributed to the participants, and there was an open discussion between the community members and the AMURTEL team over light refreshments. In addition, an Italian graphic artist, Rukmini, designed a logo for the center, which was displayed on a banner and the project appears on the AMURTEL website



together with the video.

F. BASIC PRINCIPLES USED AT THE CENTER

In the Fountain of Hope center, education plays a key role in empowering and encouraging children to reach their full potential. The project applies the values of Neohumanist education, such as building self esteem through creative expression, awakening the joy of learning, promoting ecological awareness and learning through challenge and practical experiences. AMURTEL's approach is based on respecting the dignity and nurturing the self-development of each individual to avoid a victim mentality.

G. ONGOING STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In order to offer the best possible social service the center's staff is involved in a continual process of ongoing development. In the 2009-2010 school year, Larisa, the director of the center, participated in an exchange experience with a similar after-school project in Bucharest. Within the center, different meetings and seminars on management and self-sufficiency topics. The president of AMURTEL, Didi A. Devapriya and the executive director, Diipani Halangescu, led the trainings.

H. PROJECT TEAM:

Panatau:

Larisa Bratucu – project Director, volunteer management

Dorina Pascu - cook

Bucharest:

Didi A. Devapriya – fundraising, PR, supervision

Diipani Iulia Halangescu– training, administrative support

I. FINANCE REPORT 2009-2010 SCHOOLYEAR:

INCOME	euros
AMURTEL	5827
Panatau local government	3480
income generation	540
TOTAL	9847
EXPENSES	
consumables	493
food	2304
cooking gas	136
maintenance	216
wages	4264
wage taxes	2428
TOTAL	9843

A warm thank you to our sponsors for the Sep 2009- Aug 2010 Schoolyear:

Divyamurti, USA
Madhuri, Japan
Nirmala UK
Jacqueline Smith, UK
Janel Kim, USA
Maitri, USA
Mandakini, Italy

Uma, Norway
Vishala, USA
Yatindra, Holland
Dina Heisler, USA
Mira, Australia
Chris Walker, USA
Renate Zitzer, Germany
Pranav, Germany
Raymond Deshaies
Rosemary Deshaies

Special thanks to:

Amici Nel Mondo
AMURTEL Fonte Nuovo
an anonymous sponsor

for donations over 1000 euros

THANK YOU AGAIN! It is not possible without your help!