



BETHANY SOCIAL SERVICES ROMANIA

Annual Report 2004

Recently, Romania has focused its efforts on fulfilling the conditions necessary for the country to join the European Community. There has been and will continue to be a focus on the observance of human rights.

When discussing human rights, we need to make sure that such rights apply to all human beings, including children. Bethany has worked to help Romania align its views and practices with the rest of the European Community, when it comes to the welfare of children.

While in the past, Romania has had challenges with human rights—and specifically with rights of children aging out of institutions—we have made remarkable strides in improving human rights with the support of the international community.

Bethany Social Services Foundation in Romania is one of the non-governmental organizations that began to work in the field of child protection after 1989. Since that time, Bethany has had remarkable success in a number of essential ways.

We have been able to develop practical initiatives for children and families, foster cooperation between NGOs and public service agencies, complete projects that reflect the goals and values of child protection services, and provide a model of “good practices” for Romanians working in the field of social service.

We owe our success to the fact that we follow the Christian principles and model ourselves after the One who sacrificed Himself for us and in Whom we believe:

...”and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10, 44-45 NIV

Through its efforts and successes, the child protection system in Romania will become a model for other countries. It is our goal—together with all who perform such noble work—to contribute to the improvement of the condition of Romania’s children, especially those who have experienced a life trauma. We offer Christ’s love and the hope of a loving family.

Prof. Univ. Dr. Viorel Prelici, President
Bethany Social Services Foundation in Romania

Legal status

Bethany Social Services Foundation is a Romanian non-governmental, non-profit organization that was legally established in 1994. The National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption reaccredits Bethany's Foundation to develop programs of child protection through adoption. At the local level, the Commissions for Child Protection in both Timis and Iasi counties reaccredit Bethany to develop activities for children who experience difficult life situations.

Mission

Bethany Social Services Foundation, a non-profit organization based on Christian principles, works to improve the quality of life for the disadvantaged, especially children and families, by offering social services and promoting professional practices in the area of social assistance.

Vision

Bethany Foundation will be a leader in child protection at the national level by offering both direct service and technical assistance to communities as they serve their citizens. This will be accomplished through local and international partnerships.

Values

Our team works so that every child will grow up in a loving family, reach his or her potential, and become a vital member of the community. Bethany is committed to offering quality services to our clients. Our team values its employees and encourages team spirit.

EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT TO A FAMILY

1. The National Adoption Program

Partners: The Department for Protection of Children's Rights (DPC) – Timis County
The Department for Protection of Children's Rights (DPC) – Iasi County

Within this program, Bethany promotes adoption within Romania, prepares and evaluates potential adoptive families, and offers post-adoption services.

Organized events:

- The Adoptive Families' Week, Timisoara and Lugoj
- The Day of the Open Doors, Timisoara and Lugoj
- The Round Table Meeting, that brought together the representatives of the public administration from Timis County
- The Adoptive Families' Day in Iasi
- Meeting DPC representatives from several counties, to encourage inter-county adoptions

Results:

- Active cases included 75 children and 88 families
- 17 adoptive families were licensed
- 35 families received post-adoption services
- 19 children were adopted

"Before Christmas, Santa arrived with a present that filled our hearts with joy. Our family is now completed due to the arrival of our sweet Ariana. In our case, Santa's "present" was only possible with the help of Bethany Social Services Foundation. Words are not enough to show our appreciation for the social worker who offered us professional and moral support."

Adoptive Family, Timisoara

2. The Prevention of Abandonment and Child Institutionalization Program

The aim of the program is to maintain/reintegrate children with abandon risk in the biological families or to identify alternative measures for their protection. The partnerships with the local authorities want to involve the community in the abandon prevention and to support the families raise their children.

1. The Abandonment Prevention and Institutionalization Service, Timisoara

Partners: - DPC - Timis

- The Nutritional Recovery Section from the Children Emergency Hospital "Louis Turcanu"
- The Obstetrics - Gynecology Clinic "Bega"

In 2004, Bethany worked with the local medical institutions, the police, and the DPC to prevent child abandonment, and established procedures for dealing with child abandonment.

248 families at risk received counseling and support services and 254 children received direct social services.

The Project of Abandonment Prevention - Iasi, October 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004

Financers: Embassy of United Kingdom, Bucharest
Bethany Christian Services

Results:

- 83 families received prevention services
- 13 group meetings with the parents took place (parental education and support groups)

"I received as a gift from Bethany Foundation my daughter, Nicola. During my pregnancy, I wanted to give the unborn child to an adoptive family. With the help of the social assistant I realized that the most important thing is the mother's love." C.B. mother

2. Dungannon Project - Iasi, July 1, 2003 – July 1, 2004

Financers: Dungannon Town Hall, Ireland
Bethany Christian Services

Results:

- 9 families with children with special needs received prevention services
- 5 meetings took place with the parents who have children with special needs
- material support of \$1,466 was given to the families that received services

"I am the only parent of two eight-year-old twin girls who have a severe handicap. This is the first time I have received real help from an organization." D.S., parent

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES HAVE THE RIGHT TO CARE, EDUCATION, AND SPECIAL INSTRUCTION

3. The Programs for Children with Special Needs

TIMISOARA

1. "Lizuca" Program – The Recovery Center for Children with Special Needs

Partners: Department for Protection of Children's Rights – Timis County
Bethany Christian Services

This program's goal is to improve the level of development for children with special needs by developing individual educational programs and integrating the children into kindergartens or other schools in the community. This program also provides foster parents for the children in the program.

Results:

- 25 children participated in an individual recovery program
- 22 foster care placements were supervised
- 2 children became integrated into the kindergartens in their community

"I am very happy when I see the twins smiling, healthy, and full of joy. Since they came, I have learned something every day. I rejoice in everything they do—as they learn or discover, as they express their curiosity and feelings...even if they make small steps toward physical development. I can say that every day is an experience for them and for me, and we enjoy everything together." S.D., foster mother

2. The Recovery Centers for Children with Special Needs in Timis County

Partners: - Department for Protection of Children's Rights - Timis County
- Jimbolia Town Hall
- Lenauheim Town Hall
- Healing Hands of Love, Inc.

Financer: The European Union in the Phare 2001 Society Civil Program - Access Social Component
Healing Hands of Love, Inc.
Bethany Christian Services

The program was founded in September 1999, and until August 31, 2004, it was called „Healing Hands," sponsored by Healing Hands of Love, Inc. USA, DPC - Timis, and Bethany Christian Services. This program received the "Model of Good Practices" award. Because of the award, the program has been replicated in three other communities (Lugoj, Jimbolia and Lenauheim) in Timis.

Results:

- 59 children participated in individual recovery programs in the centers
- 44 families with children with special needs received integrated social services
- 39 specialists received services of professional development
- 10 meetings with community leaders from Jimbolia and Lenauheim took place

- 2 manuals were edited for educators and specialists who work with children with sensorial integration deficiencies

3. Preparing specialists within the “Child Heart” organization from Galati

The same program was replicated in the Community Center “Iovan Iorgovan” in Galati. Bethany provided the training of the Center staff.

Results:

- 6 educators and 5 specialists received training
- 8 children participated in a recovery program in the center

IASI

4. “Nourishment for a Child’s Soul”

Financers: The “Il Chicco” Association Iasi
Bethany Christian Services

The purpose of this project is to integrate children with special needs into a family in which they will receive the care they need. At the same time, it educates the members of the community to offer emotional and material support to the families who care for these children.

5. “The Family Placement for Children with Special Needs”

Financers: - Carolina Adoption Services, an NGO from the USA
- Bethany Christian Service

Bethany Social Services Foundation purpose of this project is to improve the lives of abandoned children with special needs. The project offers support groups, preparation courses for foster parents, and socialization groups for the children. The newest aspect of this project is the organizing of ongoing special courses for foster parents *after* they have completed their training.

Results:

- 14 working cases of the children with special needs
- 28 working cases with professional foster parents
- 9 support groups
- 1 training for families that wanted to be professional foster parents
- 1 training for the foster parents who take care of the children with special needs

- **Special event: “A Tale with Fairies, Dwarves, and Brave Children”**

For the third year, Bethany Social Services Foundation celebrated the Solidarity International Day of Handicapped People in order to draw the attention for need to socially integrate handicapped people in society.

Partnerships:

- Department for Protection of Children’s Rights – Iasi County
- The Humanitarian Association “Il Chicco”
- The Infantile Rehabilitation Center “Penilla” Iasi
- The Unirea Hotel Complex Iasi

Media partners: Ziarul de Iasi and Monitorul de Iasi.

5. **Dungannon House** from Cogealac, Constanta County

In 2001, Bethany Foundation—in cooperation with the Ireland Dungannon Council—bought a house in the village of Cogealac. A foster family cares for four brothers and a young woman with special needs there. A social worker visits them periodically and helps the family deal with any challenges.

4. **Volunteering**

Volunteering represents the first step in the process of understanding and involving the community in solving problems that appear in the disadvantaged areas. This is why Bethany Social Services Foundation invites as many volunteers as possible to help with community projects.

TIMISOARA

1. **Project “Volunteers with Good Heart for Timisoara” - the 14th year**

Partners: The West University Timisoara
The Faculty of Sociology and Psychology, the Social Work Department
The Department for the Protection of Children’s Rights - Timis County
Timis County School Inspectorate

Implementation period: October - December 2004

Financer: Local Council Timisoara

For 14 years, “Good Heart” has been part of the winter holidays in Timisoara, thanks to tireless efforts of volunteers. “Good Heart” combines fundraising in the streets, fundraising with local businesses, and the organizing of special events. A publicity campaign precedes these fundraising efforts in order to draw the attention of the public.

Beneficiary: Children (and families) at risk from Nutritional Recovery and TB Sections at the “Children Emergency Hospital Louis Turcanu” from Timisoara and at the “Bega Maternity Hospital”

Project News: In 2004, two new partners were involved in “Kind Heart”: The DPC - Timis and The Timis County School Inspectorate. The beneficiaries of this fundraising campaign were children in crisis. Children were encouraged to solve their problems by writing down ways they can cope with their situations.

Awards: “The Most Active Involvement of the Community” and “The Best Public Visibility” awards were given at the Volunteers’ Gala, organized on the Volunteers’ International Day.

Results:

- 135 people volunteered
- 12 educational institutions from Timisoara became involved and helped the children
- 4 commercial centers became involved in “Good Heart”
- \$6,071 was raised from the population
- 10,000 fliers and 100 posters were created and distributed

“Even if I endured bad weather and some people’s indifference, I noticed that there are also people who have a GOOD HEART, and that is why we can hope that it will be better. Our help matters as we can change some wrong thinking.”

F.J., volunteer

2. The International Volunteers for Children’s Project

Partners: La Grave Avenue Church (Michigan, USA),
Children Emergency Hospital “Louis Turcanu”, Timisoara
The Department for Protection of Children’s Rights – Timis County
The County Direction for Public Health Timis

Financer: Bethany Christian Services
LaGrave Avenue Church

Project News: For the first time, a group of volunteers helped care for children hospitalized in the Nutritional Recovery Section of the Children Emergency Hospital “Louis Turcanu” and in Placement Center Nr.1. for institutionalized children.

Results:

- 16 international volunteers cared for 50 children
- people donated toys, clothing, and medication

3. The Project “Volunteering National Week; the Volunteers’ Gala”

Partner: Children Emergency Hospital “Louis Turcanu”, Timisoara
AID-NGO

Implementation period: March - June 2004

Financer: Timisoara Local Council

The purpose of this project is to draw the attention of some public celebrities from Timisoara and to involve them in different projects, to invite local companies to have their employees volunteer, and to organize informal meetings with volunteers.

At the “Volunteers’ Gala,” volunteers who had special accomplishments, and celebrities from the public institutions who were involved as volunteers, received diplomas and prizes.

Results:

- 5 representatives from the local public authorities and the newspaper took part at this event
- 14 persons took part in a meeting whose main theme was “The volunteer joining – proper and diversified approach methods”
- the team consolidation meeting was organized at The Green Forest, where 30 volunteers took part
- 7 businesses were contacted
- 24 volunteers became involved in the project
- 23 individuals/public institutions received diplomas and prizes

4. The Project “Volunteers for Children”

Partner: Children Emergency Hospital “Louis Turcanu”, Timisoara

Implementation period: continuous

Financer: Bethany Christian Services

The purpose of the project is the formation of a specialized group of 57 volunteers to help 65 children and to promote volunteering in the Timisoara community.

Award: "The Most Successful Volunteer Project" is the award offered by the Volunteering Center Timisoara.

When I first came as a volunteer, I did not know how I was going to feel...There were moments when I thought about giving up, and then I would think about those children who were expecting, not money, but kindness. I think that those children deserved our attention over their loneliness and sadness.
G.C., volunteer

5. Other activities developed by the volunteers:

- social services and administrative activities together with the specialists from the foundation
- involving students in volunteering during their practical internships

Award: "The Best Program of Volunteer Administration of a Non-Governmental Organization," offered by the Volunteering Center Timisoara.

IASI

1. The Volunteering Center Iasi

The volunteering Center Iasi is a clearinghouse for the organizations that need volunteers and the people who want to participate in volunteering activities. The volunteering center recruits, trains, and coordinates the placement and evaluation of volunteers.

Results:

- 154 volunteers were recruited
- 120 active volunteers developed 14 activities within 13 NGOs
- 24 courses were held for 166 volunteers
- During National Volunteering Week and Volunteers International Day, the Center promoted the concept of volunteering

2. The 2nd Annual Volunteering National Week 2004 (19 – 25 April)

Partners: AMICUS Student Association

Media partners: Radio Iasi, Radio Hit, Radio VoxT, Ziarul de Iasi, Evenimentul, Monitorul, Ieseanul, Radio Terra, Radio Nord-Est

This second event promoted volunteering through mass media and publicity materials.

Events:

- **The Handicraft Fair for Children** - The project consisted of collecting art or useful objects made by children and selling them to help disadvantaged children living in Iasi. \$535 was used for helping the children at risk for abandonment.
- **"Expo Volunteer 2004"** – An exhibition raised the visibility of volunteering opportunities in Iasi. The event offered non-governmental organizations and public institutions the opportunity to promote their activities and recruit volunteers. Nineteen NGOs, one public institution, and over 400 visitors participated.

3. **International Volunteers Day** (December 5)

Partner: The Christian-Humanitarian Association Serving Life

Media Partners: Radio Iasi, Ziarul de Iasi, Monitorul

4. The 3rd Annual Volunteers Gala 2004 – Over 200 representatives from non-governmental organizations, volunteers, guests from the public administration institutions, businesspersons, representatives from universities, and the press took part at the event.

There were awards given to volunteers for the following categories: *The Youngest Volunteer, The Oldest Volunteer, The Most Creative Volunteer, and The Volunteer of the Year*. Organizations and high schools that developed volunteer programs received awards in the following categories: *The Organization of the Year, The High School of the Year, and The Volunteers Coordinator of the Year*. Sponsors that supported organizations received *The Sponsor of the Year* award, and the media organizations that best covered volunteer activities received *The Press Institution of the Year* award.

5. The Resource Center for NGOs from the Child's Protection Field

Financer: European Union through Phare Program

Partners: Centras Bucharest
Department for the Protection of Children's Rights - Iasi

Implementation period: December 2003 – September 2004
The project continued until the end of 2004 with the financial support of Bethany Christian Services

Goal: Support the development of non-governmental and non-profit organizations that work for Child Welfare in Iasi County.

Services offered:

- consultancy for: social assistance, specifically in the area of child protection; organizational management; management information systems; identifying financial resources; and setting up new NGOs
- training in: social assistance, specifically in the area of child protection; organizational management and marketing, management information systems, and the management of volunteers
- NGOs promotion services in the children protection area at the community, public authorities, and business levels through: theme conferences, NGO Forums, information sessions, promotional materials distribution, and NGO guide editing
- Volunteering Center Iasi: recruiting, selecting, and training of volunteers, and organizing special events
- quarterly editing of an informational bulletin

Results:

- database with 56 NGOs and 776 volunteers
- 8 courses for 111 NGO representatives
- Editing the 6 issues of the information bulletin, *Agora*, (600 copies distributed)
- 200 NGO printed guides; 300 CDs with information about 47 NGOs active in child protection, and also about laws governing social policy between 1990 – 2004
- the distribution of 1,000 leaflets, 550 posters, 6,000 fliers, and 2,000 calendars

6. Resource Center for the Families with Difficulties

This Center also hosts a Club for Children's Leisure Activities - Raducaneni, Iasi County

Partners: The Local Council Raducaneni, Iasi County

Financer: Ministry of Labor, Social Solidarity, and Family

Implementation period: October 15, 2004 – October 15, 2005

Goal: to provide direct and indirect services to a minimum of 200 families and 200 children to prevent child abandonment and to help families cope with discrimination.

Services offered: information about social rights, according to Romanian law; counseling for accessing community resources; parenting education; support groups for families in difficult situations; employment counseling; library with informative materials; at least 2 campaigns to support very poor families; editing 200 *Guides for Parents*; editing 100 *Guide for Good Practice* (for child welfare workers); creating 3,000 informative leaflets; hosting clubs for spending free time (tutoring, educative and socialization activities), providing school and professional orientation; supporting school reintegration for children who quit school; providing snacks for the children who take part in the club activities; and developing local groups of community leaders who advocate for these families.

7. The Sponsorship Program

The sponsorship program offers material support to the families who benefit from the services of The Bethany Foundation. 105 children received food, school supplies, hygienic products, clothing, and toys.

Children have the right to be educated. Education has to prepare the child for life.

8. Life Skills Training

1. The Project "The Socio-Professional Integration of the Young People from the Placement Centers" took place in the following counties : **Arad, Bacau, Cluj and Neamt**

Partners: Departments for the Protection of Children's Rights - Arad, Bacau, Cluj and Neamt Counties

Financer: National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption
Bethany Christian Services

Results: Over 530 young people from the placement centers took part at training courses for developing skills for independent living. 183 of them were supported by the community to continue their studies, to find housing, employment, etc. Over 96 educators were trained to offer services to the young people who leave the placement center.

2. "Building Productive Futures for Youth"

Financer: Rotary Club International
Bethany Christian Services

The project will develop for a year in Iasi County, until October 30, 2005. The young people who have to leave the placement centers receive services to ease their transition into the community.

The project will offer a Life Skills training course, vocational and educational orientation, assistance with housing, and staff training.

9. “Partners for Children and Families” Project

Financer: - World Learning within the ChildNet Program, financed by U.S.A.I.D. in partnership with A.N.P.C.A.
- Bethany Christian Services

Partnership: County Departments for the Protection of Children’s Rights from the following counties: Arad, Bistrita-Nasaud, Hunedoara, Neamt and Vaslui.

Between May 2002 and August 2004, this project built the capacity for local communities to effectively deal with children and families in crisis. They offered training and technical assistance to government staff on issues such as prevention of abandonment, foster care, and national adoption. Thirty-four communities in five counties were involved.

Results:

- 4460 prevention cases in the 5 counties
- 2,062 children were placed in settings other than institutionalization (reintegration into the family, foster care, adoption)
- 123 young people were supported by the community to continue their education, find employment, and payment for housing.
- Educational materials developed by Bethany were distributed to child protection specialists: *The Professional Practices of the Adoption, The Mentor Guide, Skills for an Independent Life, Abuse of Children, Methods of Working with Biological Families, Working with Children with Special Needs, and Foster Care*
- 31 training courses and 16 round-table discussions on the topics of life skills, the prevention of child abandonment, foster care, and national adoption

Organized events:

- “Adoption Days,” “Saint Nicholas,” “Santa Claus is coming”
- “You can offer too” – Campaign for drawing attention of the public and local businesses in 17 communities to support children in need
- “Home again” – Reintegration of children into their biological families (in Neamt and Vaslui counties)
- “Let’s go to school!” – school drop-out prevention program in a community from Hunedoara County
- The Recovery Center for Children and Young People with Special Needs from Gagesti (Vaslui) – A center for supporting children with special needs who are placed in foster care
- “Children’s Club” from Pastraveni, Neamt County – Place where social, recreational, and educational activities take place for the children who live in foster care.

10. “adopta.ro” Project

Partner: Authority National for the Protection of Children’s Rights

Implementation period: October 2004 - March 2006

Financer: World Learning developed within the ChildNet Program, financed by U.S.A.I.D.
Bethany Christian Services

The project “adopta.ro” promotes national adoption and offers technical assistance and training courses to child welfare specialists. The goal is to increase the number of children adopted by Romanian families.

We carry on the following types of activities: recruitment and preparation of adoptive families, post-adoption services, social work education and technical assistance, and work groups and networks for professionals.

In 2004, the site www.adopta.ro was launched, and it will be updated periodically.

Financers:

United Kingdom Embassy, Department for International Development
Humanitarian Association “Il Chicco”
National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption
Bethany Christian Services
Carolina Adoption Services
Rotary International USA
Local Council Timisoara
Dungannon Council of Ireland
Sirois Foundation / Connex
European Union - PHARE Program
World Learning – ChildNet Program

Sponsors and Donors:

Humanitarian Association “Il Chicco”
Student Association “Amicus” Iasi
Astral Telecom
La Grave Avenue Church
Caritas Diocesan Center Iasi
Colgate-Palmolive SRL
The Hotel Complex Unirea Iasi
DIVERTA
Europharm Holding SA
“Filocalia” Foundation Iasi
Horatiu Oana
Judy Karig
High School “Garabet Ibraileanu” Iasi
High School “V. Alecsandri” Iasi
Lukoil Downstream SRL
Etti Stores
Media Global Company Iasi
Metro Timisoara

“Pani Pat” Bakery Iasi
PIM Copy Center Iasi
PSTadvertising Iasi
S.C. AMIOTI SRL Iasi
S.C. AYA SPORTS SRL Iasi
S.C. UNIREA SA Iasi
SC Moda Tim SA - Timisoara
SC Orange Romania
Sharon LaNoue

Partners:

National Agency for Supporting Youth Initiatives
Student Association “Amicus” Iasi
Students Culture House Iasi
Mediation and Community Security Center Iasi
College “Costache Negruzzi” Iasi
College “E. Racovita” Iasi
Centras Bucharest
The Christian-Humanitarian Association Serving Life Iasi
Department for Protection of Children’s Rights Iasi
Department for Protection of Children’s Rights Bacau
Department for Protection of Children’s Rights Suceava
Department for Protection of Children’s Rights Neamt
Department for Public Health Iasi
Sport Department of Iasi County
Faculty for Physical Education and Sport Iasi
“XXI Century” Foundation – Open House Center Iasi
Iasi County School Inspectorate
The Infantile Rehabilitation Center “Penilla” Iasi
East Journal
High School “A.I. Cuza” Iasi
Art High School “Octav Bancila” Iasi
High School “Dimitrie Cantemir” Iasi
High School “Garabet Ibraileanu” Iasi
High School “Mihai Eminescu” Iasi
High School “V. Alecsandri” Iasi
Monitorul de Iasi, Newspaper
Bishop Office of Moldova and Bucovina – Ecumenic Institute “Sf. Nicolae” Iasi
City Hall Iasi
Local Council Raducaneni, Iasi County
Radio Iasi
Iasi Newspaper
Commercial Complex Kappa

Commercial Complex Terra
The German Democratic Forum
BEGACOM SRL

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