

“TOGETHER FOR BETTER HEALTH, FOR US, BY US”
October - December 2014 Report

Goal: to improve health and access to medical services for impoverished children, aged 3-5, from OvidiuRo's *Every Child in Preschool* communities.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING REPORTED PERIOD:

Health and hygiene education

- teachers from all FCG communities have been informed about the correct procedures all children should apply when washing their hands and coughing/sneezing – in this regard, teachers received posters and lesson plans.
- 42 communities received funds for kindergarten hygiene supplies (toilet paper, soap)
- to ensure that teachers apply the methods properly and children are given the best examples, we informed the FCG communities that the healthcare funds for hygiene are only provided until December 2014. By the end of this period (October – December 2014), our community managers and spotcheckers assess the impact and results of this health project (by observing the acquired habits of children during classes at the end of the three months).

Fruit Day

- 18 communities received funds for the Fruit Day activity (once a month, all the children – FCG and non-FCG - receive fruits), starting with September;
- 8 other communities received funds for one Fruit Day activity (these communities are new in the programme, so it was a pilot-activity). As a result, the activity will be implemented monthly starting with January in these communities.

Incentive for doctor and nurse to go for medical visits in remote Hetea from Valcele

- As agreed with the doctor, starting with October he is visiting families from remote Hetea twice a week, together with the nurse.
- Moreover, there are 11 communities where medical prescriptions that are not free are supported by T4BH, with the help of our local FCG coordinators.

Basic medical tests (throat swab and stool sample)

- This is the third year when GSK makes these tests available to FCG children – they are required for all children before preschool starts but, as they are not free, poor parents rarely afford them. FCG Children from 12 communities have had basic medical tests done in October, with the family doctors writing prescriptions to all the children who were found positive.

Follow up on individual cases

In what concerns the situation of **Vladut Ganea** and his mother, we managed to take Mrs. Ganea to the doctor before the boy's surgery - for echography and also for blood tests. The results of the echography showed that Lenuta was on the 5th month of pregnancy, that the baby (a boy) was fine, with no signs of malformations (as in Vladut's case).

Vladut had the surgery at the beginning of November. It was a difficult one, as the doctor said, but it went well and the boy was fine. Still, the recovery will be a complicated procedure, as Vladut has now a "fixator" on his leg - a metallic frame that supports the medical rods implanted in his leg. Vladut will have the fixator on his leg for almost

6 months - maybe more. During this time, he needs day-by-day special care - the bandages on the medical rods to be changed and the screws on the fixture to be moved.

During the hospitalisation, through T4BH, we were able to provide Vladut all the support needed, from the regular day-by-day needs (diapers, food, etc) to medicines and bandages/sanitary alcohol that they constantly needed for the day-by-day care. We were also able to cover the expenses - which was very important - for the six titan broaches implanted in Vladut's leg during the surgery and also for the after-surgery radiography.

At the end of November, Vladut was discharged from the hospital and went home, to Hetea. Ever since, he was brought back to Bucharest two times, as per the doctor's recommendation - each time he made the same radiography and then went to the doctor, at Budimex.

During all this time, thanks to T4BH program, we continued to provide Vladut the medicines and the sanitary alcohol and bandages he needed and to cover the expenses for the radiographies. Also, we took care of anything needed in order to make sure Vladut comes back to Bucharest for the periodical examination, as the doctor requests.

Vladut's condition is good for the moment, the doctors are positive regarding the chances that he could walk again, but the process is very complicated and risky, especially because he needs to stay in very clean, almost sterile environment, he needs day-by-day care for the leg and a very responsible family around him. Given the conditions his family lives in (they are very poor), plus that his mother will give birth in March, this is quite challenging, but not impossible mission, as the team (here in Bucharest and the local OvR team) is very close to them, continuously monitoring and answering their needs (related with Vladut's condition).

On December 19, Vladut will be brought again to Bucharest, to Budimex hospital, together with his mother, for the 3rd time (for the radiography and for the examination). Depending on the results of the radiography, the doctor will decide when he needs to see him again.

A group of six mothers from Buhusi continue to receive monthly birth control pills. The 7th woman who used to receive them has moved abroad, together with her family.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

- **Lack of human resources:** the shortage of health mediators or community nurses who are trained, hired and mentored remains a hard to solve systemic problem in the communities where we work. Many poor people don't know how to solve their medical problems, where to go and how to present their problems, so the lack of health mediators is highly affecting their recovery, while the work-load required to following up health cases is assumed by FCG local coordinators as extra tasks.
- **Lack of teachers' concern about class hygiene:** hygiene or health education are not standard practice in kindergarten, and it is a long process to determine teachers to be proactive in teaching children how to properly cough, blow their noses, or wash hands - and to incorporate hygiene education in their daily teaching routines.

TIMELINE FOR NEXT THREE MONTHS

- New medical caravan.
- Continued standard health activities – medicine and transportation to the doctor's, health education, fund for hygiene (toilet paper, soap) and monthly fruit day.
- Health education: awareness campaign for children regarding the importance of washing hands and correctly coughing and blowing their noses – follow up

APPENDICES

Grant communities: *Poieni, Săcuieu, Călățele, Iara, Viișoara, Moldovenești, Cojocna, Bonțida, Cășeiu (Cluj), Râciu, Apold (Mureș), Cugir (Alba), Brateiu, Alțina, Târnavă, Vurpăr, Roșia (Sibiu), Augustin, Ormeniș, Apața, Târlungeni,*

Zizin, Râșnov, Budila, Vama Buzăului, Comăna (Brașov), Întorsura Buzăului, Vâlcele (Covasna), Buhuși, Bacău (Bacău), Vaslui (Vaslui), Moroeni, Mănești, Gura Șuții, I.L. Caragiale, Potlogi (Dâmbovița), Podari, Cetate, Maglavit, Valea Stanciului, Amărăștii de Jos, Calopăr (Dolj)

