

**“TOGETHER FOR BETTER HEALTH, FOR US, BY US”****April - June 2015 Report****Diana Stoica, July 2015**

**Goal:** to improve health and access to medical services for impoverished children, ages 3-5, in OvidiuRo’s *Fiecare Copil in Gradinita* communities.



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**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (April – June 2015):****Medical Caravan**

- **130 children & 150 parents** received free medical exams.

**Health and hygiene**

- **544** children participated in “Hopscotch 2”;
- **42** communities distributed kindergarten hygiene supplies (toilet paper, soap);
- **544** children ate cherries and other fruit on Fruit Days.

**Trainings**

- **500 teachers** attended 10 training sessions for Summer School “Hopscotch”, organized by Maria Gheorghiu, OVR’s executive director and head trainer. Teachers were equipped with new workbooks, educational materials and lesson plans;
- **44 teachers** learned how to explain the correct procedures for washing hands and coughing or sneezing.

**Sharing experiences**

- Three OvidiuRo members visited three Roma communities in Slovakia and met with T4BH partners.

## TIRNAVA MEDICAL CARAVAN (JUNE 27-29)

Conversation between a doctor and a patient:

*"When was the last time you saw a doctor?"*

*"A long time ago..."*

*"Do you remember how long?"*

*"14 or 15 years I guess."*

Classrooms in Tirnava, 54 km from Sibiu, were transformed into medical examination rooms for two days in June. Fourteen resident doctors and medical students from the Carol Davila University of Bucharest offered free consultations to the villagers in pediatrics, cardiology, internal medicine, ophthalmology, dermatology, neurology, oral check-ups and various tests. 150 adults and 130 children received general check-ups and in some cases were directed to a specialist.

It was difficult to convince the people to come and talk to the doctors in the Medical Caravan. People said they were healthy and didn't have any health problems. The parents of a lot of children who did go to see the doctors were away working in the fields which resulted in the doctors not being able to talk to the parents and explain their children's health situation. One mother of five boys, one of them only 5 days old, refused to bring them to the doctor. Despite the fact that she graduated high school, she claimed that they don't need doctors or education.



There was also a fourteen year old girl, Andreea, who was in very bad shape; she hadn't had a bath in weeks and could hardly speak, but she was very happy to simply hang around the caravan. Some kids drew pictures while they sat in the doctor's lap. As a "thank you" some parents kissed the doctors and promised to follow the treatment.

The **most common health problems among the children** are skin diseases, scabies, breathing problems, parasites, rickets, heart murmurs and chickenpox. Many children have vitamin D deficiencies. The entire community suffers from a general lack of education regarding hygiene, health, and nutrition. Many poor mothers do not know how to properly wash their babies and, in some cases, they only use water, without any kind of soap, which results in the spread of the skin diseases. The hygiene products that Tirnava parents get through T4BH are very important. The T4BH grant supplied the medical caravan with medicine, food and travel reimbursement. In order to keep the costs as low as possible, the OvR team and the students sought donations of in-kind goods – water from Coca-Cola

and food from Carrefour. Tirnava has been part of FCG since 2012 with 50-60 severely impoverished children in the program each year. This is the sixth caravan organized through the T4BH grant.



On the second day, reporters from a national TV station DiGi24 came and interviewed people. See their material [here](#).

More pictures and other info on the caravan, [here](#).

### FOLLOW UP: VLADUT

Vladut, the case study in Ovr's [Final Report for 3 years](#) underwent a second surgery to straighten out his clubfoot in May. Check-ups revealed Vladut needs one more titanium implant in his ankle, so that the bone structure will be able to develop properly. A third surgery will probably take place in August. Medical visits to the Bucharest hospital have become even more of a struggle, since Vladut now has a baby brother, who is being breast fed – but his mother managed very well the 6 days that she had to spend in Bucharest with Vladut.



*Daniela, a student from the medical caravan where Vladut's problem was initially discovered, is now by his side every time he comes to the Bucharest hospital. Vladut's condition—tibia genesis—is rare in Romania and Daniela is planning to do a case study about him.*

### SUMMER HEALTH SCHOOL (AKA "HOPSCOTCH")

The 2-week educational module is designed for children, ages 3 to 14, to explore the world around them, starting with their own body, moving on to their community and then to the galaxies through a special workbook (designed and printed with funds from GSK--view PDF [here](#)). During the activities, children are taught basic hygiene & health elements. **4600** children are expected to attend "Hopscotch" in June and July.

Thanks to a new partnership with the Public Libraries Organization, teachers can now access modern resources—some Summer Schools actually took place in the libraries.



## TEACHER TRAININGS

During the 12 trainings organized throughout the country, 500 teachers discovered new methods of approaching children in a more friendly manner—and now focus on the creativity of each child and teach them how to be more independent.

One of our guest trainers, Crina Grigore, introduced the science component—and now children are creating erupting volcanoes using flour, water and egg paint, bicarbonate and vinegar, experimenting using colors and discovering new mixes (ex: yellow and blue=green).

We also created a Facebook group where teachers are sharing experiences and photos from the Summer Schools—check it out, [here](#).

## THE T4BH PARTNERS FACE2FACE MEETING IN POPRAD, SLOVAKIA (MAY 27-29)

The group visited three predominantly Roma communities where access to health care was very limited, and only one of them had a GP. All the communities had water pumps but lacked toilets—very similar to OvR communities.

We encountered a little girl who was brushing her teeth with a toothbrush but no toothpaste.

The Romanian team (Arina Ciunca, Elena Mocanita and Diana Stoica) was impressed by how developed the health mediator system is in Slovakia. The health mediators discussed their training, work and the difficulties they encountered. The group identified a number of priority hygiene issues—hand washing, tooth brushing, access to healthcare and vaccination—that we want to address together. Our team was delighted to find out about the new €20,000 GSK grant which will help OvidiuRo integrate the PHASE materials into the current program.

THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS POSSIBLE!

