



ANNUAL REPORT

For fiscal year

January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011

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About us

ReachOut.BG – Bulgaria is a branch of the charity ReachOut.BG, registered in the UK. The organization is also the successor of its Bulgarian sister organization “Friendly heart” Association. The mission of our activity consists in helping improve the well-being of children deprived of parental care, children with disabilities and handicapped.

As of February 2011, ReachOut.BG is a member of the Bulgarian National Children Network (<http://nmd.bg/en/>). This membership allows us to raise the profile of our activities among participating organizations. The network gives us the opportunity to take part in the generation and definition of programs and projects providing services for children in Bulgaria.

Our goals:

-  To create and maintain long-term programs for helping children deprived of parental care.
-  To provide them with access to additional education and training in various educational programs and specialized courses;
-  To support ideas, initiatives, and other organizations, whose priority is to help the development of children deprived of parental care.

The Team of ReachOut.BG



Ivan Vatchkov
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Hristina Georgieva
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Kristina Gologanova
Coordinator

*Kristina manages all the
organizational aspects of our
activity.*

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Volunteers at ReachOut.BG



Irina Popova

Owner, MyTeam

Irina runs an Art workshop for the children in Orphanage

P.Slaveykov

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Yana Abrosimova

Fashion stylist,
Medium Station

Yana teaches the children in Orphanage P.Slaveykov how to cook

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Asya Rusanova

Freelance designer

Asya teaches the children

in Orphanage P.Slaveykov Fashion Design and Tailoring

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Ivan Peykov

Programmer

Ivan helps the children

in Orphanage P.Slaveykov in Mathematics



Maya Nikolova

Accountant

Maya helps the children

in Orphanage P.Slaveykov in Mathematics



Olga Dikova

Helps the children in Orphanage
P.Slaveykov in Bulgarian



Nevena Haydinyac

English teacher
Nevena helps the children in
Orphanage P.Slaveykov in
Bulgarian



Rositza Guenova

Rosi helps the children
in Orphanage P.Slaveykov in English

What we achieved in 2011?

Throughout the year we kept our efforts focused on the well-being of the children in Orphanage “Petko Slaveykov” in Sofia. Based on our experiences from the previous years, we undertook actions to enhance the cooperation with the Orphanage by offering, along with the volunteer courses, some new activities, oriented towards children with special needs and those with learning difficulties.

In 2011 ReachOut.BG team directed their efforts mostly to providing educational help by assuring personalised support on the basic school subjects – Bulgarian language and Mathematics. This kind of support is crucial for the development of the children in all such institutions, as many of them have difficulties with learning the material. This leads to poor results in school, very low level of literacy and in the long term, greatly reduces their chances to succeed in life. With a real threat that some of them will remain technically illiterate and incapable of basic arithmetic, they would be uncompetitive on the labor market and would only be employed for poorly paid positions requiring low or no qualification, or would remain unemployed.

Therefore, ReachOut.BG made a transition from the previous volunteer courses towards activities supporting the school learning, which will remain a priority for the organization also in the coming years.

The Organization’s team has also invested efforts in enhancing the cooperation with the management and the staff at Orphanage “P. Slaveykov”. During the year, we had several work meetings at which we discussed the implementation of specific activities that would support the development of the children. We set the basis of a stable long-term cooperation, based on dialogue and on setting plans for helping specific children in accordance with their needs.

With respect to the legal and regulatory requirements for providing services to children in Bulgaria, at the end of 2011 ReachOut.BG filed an application for a license for such activities with the State Agency for Child Protection.

Volunteers' courses

The courses in cookery, fashion and fine arts that were started last year, continued to take place until the end of the school year 2010-2011.

🌍 In the Cookery course led by Yana Abrosimova, the children continued to learn to cook and to explore recipes from the Bulgarian and the international cuisine, to gather information about the products, their nutritional qualities and their prices on the market. The children decided on their own what to cook during the classes, they were preparing a list of the necessary products for each time, taking into account the budget they had. Thus they learned about the products required for the preparation of their favourite meals and went through each step of it with joy and pride.

🌍 In the Fashion and Fine arts courses the children acquire helpful sewing skills, develop their imagination and find a way to use unnecessary materials; they learn various artistic techniques.




School support

Through the direct contact with the children during the volunteer courses' classes, the ReachOut.BG team found out that most of them have difficulties in preparing their school homework and that there are shocking gaps in the knowledge they were supposed to have acquired in formal education school system. Therefore, at the beginning of school year 2011-2012, we suggested to the Orphanage Management a new initiative that we called "School support". It aims at providing individual lessons on the basic subjects – Bulgarian language and Mathematics – that would help the children catch up on the material and do better in school.

To prepare the launch of this new activity, we cooperated with the Orphanage's management and the principal educators who are in constant contact with the children's teachers and know their learning difficulties.

At the same time, we started a campaign to recruit volunteers for the realization of this activity. Thanks to the efforts of Irina Popova, in October ReachOut.BG took part with its own stall at the "Mixer" event, organized by Gorichka.bg (another NGO). Our participation there resulted in recruiting several more volunteers.

Thus, at the beginning of November 2011, we started the individual work with 10 children from third to seventh grade once a week covering the following subjects;

-  **Bulgarian language** – the main objective of these activities is to help children overcome their difficulties with reading and writing, as well as to foster an interest in books. This is why along with the preparation of homework, the volunteers read with the children fairy tales books or encyclopedias for kids. In this way, the children develop a desire to learn new curious facts about the world around them. In addition, their progress in Bulgarian language will help them with the other narrative subjects like Man and Nature and History.
-  **Mathematics** – most of the children have serious difficulties with this subject and the main objective of our volunteers was to identify the gaps, and then go back through the material and fill them in. The volunteers were selecting the problems in such a way, so that the children can relate them to their everyday life. Thus, they were able to see the real benefit of the acquired knowledge in mathematics.
-  **English language** – the English classes, led by Rositza Guenova, took place again throughout the past year. Most of the children study English at school, so by means of different playing methods, songs and short films, they could strengthen their knowledge.


Speech therapy

During the past year, ReachOut.BG started providing this type of specialized help for the children with special needs for the first time. For the reported period, we identified three children with Down Syndrome, living in Orphanage “Petko Slaveykov” for which we decided to provide with speech therapy. We hired the services of a paid professional therapist with experience in the subject. An individual assessment was made for each one of the 3 kids and therapy programs were created in accordance with the needs to develop the language and speech competence.


Psychological support


We started this activity at the beginning of 2011, using paid professional children psychologist. The three children with Down Syndrome, who were provided with speech therapy, were given in parallel weekly individual consultations. Ensuring this kind of professional support allowed to create an initial psychological assessment and individual work program for each child. The psychologist’s work was oriented mostly towards boosting cognitive development and communication skills of the children.

Events

 **Visit at Bulbank** – for the adolescents from the Orphanage “P.Slaveykov” who were going to the course Personal Finance in 2010, we organized a visit to the central branch of Bulbank, Bulgaria’s largest commercial bank. Staff from the Department „Customer care” had organized a program for the children which included tour of the branch, introduction to the activity of the department handling private clients and the one for corporate clients. During the tour, the children were able to ask specific questions and to get information on how to open a bank account, what types of

payments cards exist and under what terms they can be used. In addition, they were given various information materials.

 **Mixer** – At the end of October, Gorichka.bg organized this event to help different NGOs recruit volunteers. Since ReachOut.BG is an organization, greatly relying on volunteers to carry out its activities, taking part in event was really beneficial for us. This was possible thanks to Irina Popova who was working actively in the last few years for the realization of most of our initiatives.

 **Christmas Walk** – through our work with the children, we at ReachOut.BG are aware that the holidays are usually a very lonely time of the year for them. This is why we decided that sharing the holiday spirit by going to cinema and spending the second day of Christmas together the kids was the gift that would make them really happy.

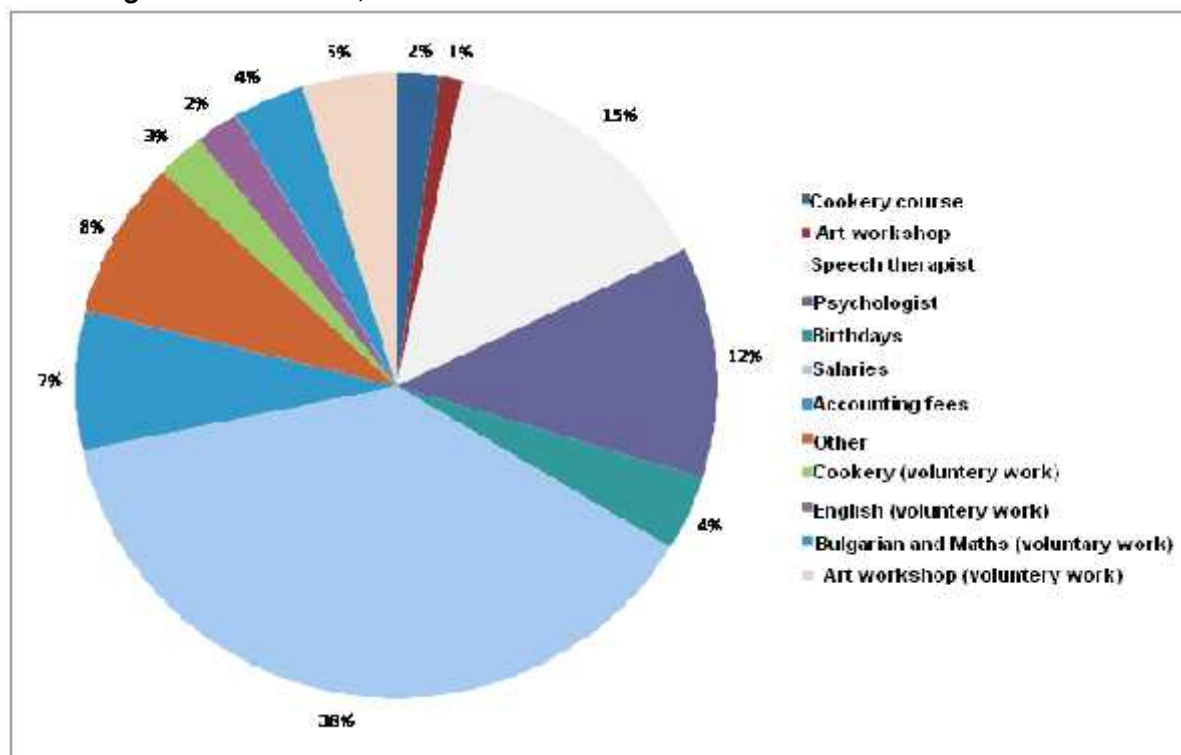
Financial report

Sources of financing and expenditures made during the period
January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011 *Bulgarian leva*

Income (donations)	16,244
Expenses, from which:	14,908
<i>Cookery course</i>	399
<i>Art workshop</i>	153
<i>Speech therapist</i>	2,500
<i>Psychologist</i>	2,040
<i>Birthdays</i>	701
Total direct:	5,793
<i>Salaries</i>	6,530
<i>Accounting fees</i>	1,200
<i>Other</i>	1,385
Total administrative	9,115

Expense report – details

As it is visible from the above table, around 45% of our organization's expenses are for salaries. We would like to clarify that the main reason for that is our work's structure which is based mainly on volunteer work. If we set a rate of 12 lv/hour of the volunteer work and add the total in the expense table, the total part of the salaries goes below 38%, as indicated below.



ReachOut.BG plans for 2012

We have ambitious plans to strengthen and develop further our activities during 2012:

- ✚ Creating conditions for sustainable future development of our activities in Orphanage P.Slaveykov;
- ✚ Improving our school help work by preparing individual programs for each child and measuring tangible results in school performance;
- ✚ Launching a pilot program to support adolescents who will leave the orphanage when they turn 18 with the everyday challenges: Looking for accommodation, getting documents and social insurance ID, looking for work, preparing CVs, planning personal budget, etc.;
- ✚ Expanding our volunteer network by identifying and attracting both private volunteers and corporate partners. We aim to create a model for a Social responsibility program for companies in Bulgaria;
- ✚ Organizing work meetings with NGO-s aiming at creating lasting partnerships and exchange of good practice for work with children deprived of parental care;
- ✚ Provide initial and ongoing training of the Organisation's the volunteers engaged in ReachOut.BG's various initiatives.

How can you support our initiatives?

One of the main objectives of our organization is to provide precise information about the kind of support the children deprived of parental care need the most. We have found the two most successful ways how you can help are:

With your time: the most valuable donation you can make is your time, experience, attention and care. The children who live in an Orphanage need this the most. For more information, contact us at info@reachout.bg



Financially: ReachOut.BG's initiatives aim at improving the quality of life of the children without parental care. If you want to support any of them, please visit our website and go to our "Donations" page: <http://reachout.bg/?cid=8> where you can choose to donate via bank transfer or debit/credit card via Paypal.