



# Heifer Romania Newsletter

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### LATEST ACTIVITIES

- February 21-27, a Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Roundtable was organized by Heifer Albania. Heifer Romania was represented by Calin Sahleanu, Director of Programs Based on Heifer values, variables and predefined indicators, the working group defined the best approach to reflect their programmatic needs and objectives of a common baseline tool. Participants analyzed indicators and worked on elements of questionnaires, based on thematic areas.
- In February, Heifer Romania staff: Ovidiu Spinu, Laura Manciu, Monica Popovici and Andreea David and project leaders: Ioan Cozma, Alexandru Indrea, Paul Budau and Alin Prunean attended a Certified Trainer program (TOT) and successfully obtained Trainers Certificates for EU projects from DeKlausen, a consulting firm.
- Ovidiu Spinu, Alin Tekonczia obtained a Manager Certificate in EU standards.

### VISITS AND EVENTS

- At the end of February 2010 the launching of the “**Cattle Genetic Improvement in Hunedoara County**” project took place. At the event 15 artificial insemination technicians from Hunedoara County were present. The event in Hunedoara which opened the project had good media coverage. The Artificial Insemination project was requested by agriculture leaders of Hunedoara County who committed to advertise and support it. All guests from all organizations gave optimistic forecasts on the success of this project.
- Heifer Romania attended the celebration and opening of the “Learning on the Streets” project, date which coincided with 105<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Rotary Club.
- Rian Fokker, country director of Heifer Nederland and Neeltje Suijkerbuik, Heifer Nederland Project Coordinator came to Romania in order to visit the two projects financed by Heifer Nederland. “Alpine goats for two poor communities” project and



“Livestock for highland farms in Carlibaba” project. They also went on field visit and found out information about the well-know Romanian project, named „Farmers Feed the Children” (27-0708-03) and they were not only interested in the project development,



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but also were impressed by its complexity. Management and financial issues were discussed by the two representatives of Heifer Nederland with Heifer Romania management. We consider that their visit in Romania was a fruitful experience.

- Heifer Romania was proud to host the visit of Stephane Batoux, Director of Danone Romania, Moldova and Adriatic countries. The basis for a strong future collaboration was set during his visit. The meeting included a field visit to the Farmers Feed the Children project.
- Ovidiu Spinu met Milena Pruna, director of NGO Transylvania in order to discuss and establish issues regarding a new project resulted from the collaboration of Rotary Club and "Farmers Feed the Children" project for autistic children from Cluj-Napoca.
- Ovidiu Spinu and Alina Rus attended the CEE Council Meeting on May 18-21, 2010, hosted by Heifer Slovakia, in the beautiful old city of Kosice. At this meeting, all CEE Country Directors were present together with HQ representatives: Jim DeVries, Priscilla Thompson, Greta Grishanova and Marcia Fletcher. The main objectives of this meeting were: country program updates, project approvals and administrative issues. The Country Directors briefly presented an overview of the programs developing in their country focusing mainly on



project proposal discussions. Mr. Michal Demes, member of Heifer Slovakia Board of Directors and President of central and Eastern European IAALD "International Association of Agriculture Information Specialists" joined discussions sharing interesting and relevant aspects from his professional experience, also providing useful guidance.



From May 5<sup>th</sup> until May 9<sup>th</sup> 2010, Heifer Romania attended the International Trade Fair for Agriculture Food Industry and Packaging, (AGRARIA) 2010. The Heifer team attended this event, organized specific activities and took part in conferences and focus groups on different topics. The visitors had the opportunity to see the newest agricultural techniques and technologies, put on display by producers and distributors of agricultural machinery and also pure breed animals. We attended the event because it brought us the opportunity of establishing new contacts and interact with key representatives of the

agribusiness. It was a great chance for visitors to learn about Heifer philosophy, cornerstones and related activities. The staff presented the success stories and the current projects developing in our country. One objective was to establish new possibilities of partnerships and collaborations with other companies. Heifer Romania set up its own exhibition stand that was appreciated, but more appealing was the information about the activities developed in Romania and worldwide.

- Heifer Romania was actively involved in the celebration of 140th anniversary of "Nicolae Balcescu" Theoretical High School, from Cluj-Napoca. The Heifer Romania team worked with the English teachers and the school management to organize a workshop for the students in the fifth grade. The workshop named "Heifer – Passing on the gift it's all about



people” was built starting from the illustrated story from the Beatrice’s Goat book. The children were split into work groups and were asked to do several activities related to the story. They made drawings, wrote poems and songs in English about Beatrice’s life. Some groups made scientific work on life in Uganda also considering Heifer philosophy. The key event of the workshop was acting Beatrice’s story in a small play. The Heifer philosophy and message was received with an open heart and the children will pass it on to the mature. For Heifer Romania it was a great opportunity to bring forth our mission and vision to a young audience and stir up their interest in humanitarian activities. The local media attended the event, so media coverage for Heifer was excellent. We thank the “Nicolae Balcescu” High School for this opportunity as it was a great way to address this young promising generation, which has an open mind and willingness to succeed.

- Professors Mark Rusell, Paul Ebner and a group of 18 students from Perdue University, USA came in Romania for an exchange experience. They worked together with the Romanian students of West University in Vata commune. Heifer Romania and Perdue University has developed a partnership based on agricultural and animal breeding information exchange and a new exchange experience program is planned to happen in November. Both American and Romanian students worked together and during their 3 weeks stay they discovered the Romanian rural life.
- On May 21, Calin Sahleanu, visited Archita village where he had a meeting with representatives of Maria Nobrega Foundation. Opportunities issues regarding a future collaboration for a project were discussed. Maria Nobrega Foundation has been already active in the community and they plan to get more involved in supporting the poor farmers there. Col Michael R. Carrington, the director of Maria Nobrega Foundation and Mr. Dan Dimancescu, the trustee for Romania were impressed by Heifer work and they express their willingness for a future collaboration with Heifer Romania. Heifer Romania staff will have a few site visits and a need assessment will be done in Archita.

## PROJECT UPDATE

- On April 24, 2010 in Bilbor, surrounded by the pictures scenery of the Romanian Carpathian Mountains, the Passing on the Gift ceremony for the Romanian Carpathian Project phase II (# 27-0726-21) took place. Heifer Romania started the Romanian Carpathian Project phase II in 2007, in order to increase the farmers’ income, improve their nutrition and take care of the environment. The community members built a wooden cross in order for the moment to be remembered over time. The wooden cross, the animals and all who attended were blessed during the religious ceremony that opened the event. During the POG celebration, 55 sheep where passed on to new project participants through random draw. The beneficiaries and the entire community celebrated this event and consider the Heifer project as a major step in the development of Bilbor. They have accepted to become part of the great international Heifer family and are willing to inspire other communities to take this path of self-sustainability and self-confidence. The Trif family is one of the new project participants that received the Heifer gift. “These animals are a great help, we will have milk and cheese every day and we can sell the extra milk and dairy products” said Costica about the gift received. The family is very thankful that Heifer opened this opportunity for them. This way nutrition will be improved bringing at the same time more income to help them build their dreams.





On May 2nd 2010, the POG ceremony for the “Sheep, bees, and Reforestation project in Vranceaia” (#27-0731-01) took place. The project started in the fall of 2008 in order to increase farmers’ income, improve their nutrition and take care of the environment. The aim of the project, through Heifer gifts, is to help these communities to alleviate the harshness of life and to offer them a better future. Another major goal of the project is reforestation of the slopes in order to avoid the soil erosion and drought, very common in the Vrancea region. The passing on the Gift ensures continuity of Heifer’s projects and the way to help more and more people, who struggle against hunger and poverty. During this event, on May 2nd, thirteen families received ten sheep and one ram. Two hundred community members gathered to attend the ceremony. Representatives of local and regional administration, the project holder and members of Heifer Romania team also took part in the event, organized in a beautiful orchard, property of the local priest. A stage was set and members of the community presented folkloric dance and traditional songs. The Dantis family is one of the thirteen to receive the Heifer gift. Their existence is far from easy but this family has a big heart and they took in foster care a 9 year old boy. The Danis family is hard-working and tenacious, planning for the future to buy more animals and also rent some land. “Heifer has provided us a chance for a better future and now all we have to do is make the best of it.” said Fani while holding a lamb. The Danis family and all the other project participants are grateful that Heifer developed this project in the area creating new opportunities for self sustainability.

- April 25, 2010, a beautiful Sunday morning was the perfect time to organize the POG ceremony in Tulghes, on the heights of the Carpathian Mountains. This day was celebrated by the communities in the region who dressed up and prepared for this very special moment. Heifer Romania and the project holder, Mountain Farmers Federation Dorna, organized the POG for the Romanian Carpathian Project phase II (# 27-0726-21). The local partners decorated the scene with fir tree branches and placed a banner above it stating “Pass on the Gift - Third edition”. Speeches were held by local and central authorities representatives, all talking about the importance of preserving traditions and customs. The children wearing folkloric clothing with the support of the Tulghes Culture Centre management presented a series of traditional dances and songs that brought a smile on everyone’s face. During the ceremony, 110 sheep were passed on to ten families through random draw. The Caia family is one of the ten families that received the passed on gift of sheep. They are excited to breed sheep and are confident that the animals will provide them better nourishment and extra income. All Caia family expressed their warm and happy thoughts about Heifer and the project developed in the region. “Heifer gives us the chance to have a better future and to create new possibilities for our children” said Mariana Caia. Her husband agreed that, in this way the youth and the children from this community will be able to work and live within the community. “We have hoped our children will stay close to home as new opportunities are beginning to show for the future” declared Costica. They believe this Heifer gift will improve their future and with the support and assistance from Heifer staff, project holder and other project participants, their efforts will thrive. The farmers in Tulghes showed their content of being able to practice an old tradition in modern ways, without needing to leave their birth place and most importantly without having to change who they are. They are grateful to Heifer for this chance and all of them fight for the next generation, for their children. For them it is the most appropriate way to pass on the gift.



## CALENDAR OF FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Upcoming exchange experience with Heifer Poland team and also with Heifer Slovakia.
- Update on future project in collaboration with Danone Romania.
- Writing the EU project proposal.
- Upcoming Employee's evaluation.

*Caption describing picture or graphic.*