

UNICEF GALA 2007

Benefiting children with disabilities

Gala hosted by UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador



On 17 February 2007, the National Romanian Television Channel (TVR), in collaboration with UNICEF Romania, organized the *UNICEF GALA* for raising funds in the benefit of children with disabilities in Romania. Andreea Marin Bănică, the first Romanian UNICEF Goodwill

Ambassador, together with Cătălin Măruță and Gabriel Coveșeanu hosted the event.

The Gala brought together Romanian personalities including Romanian Presidents and Prime Minister, and people from economic, artistic and sport domains,

alongside close partners of UNICEF and representatives of prestigious firms from the private sector.

The Gala raised around 700,000 Euros, in order to contribute to the improvement of the situation of children with disabilities.

UNICEF initiatives for children with disabilities

For every dollar spent on children, the whole community benefits seven-fold.

In order to help children and youth living with disabilities realize their rights, UNICEF is supporting care and recovery services, social integration, improved access to public services, development of systemic changes and public awareness campaigns with funds raised during the Gala 2007.

Recovery services and therapy—

The basic recovery services supported by UNICEF include multidisciplinary therapy based on evaluation of the needs of children with disabilities and the evolution of individual cases.

Enabling *physical rehabilitation* services, UNICEF is supporting the procurement of equipment for kinetherapy, ergotherapy, physiotherapy, logopedy and others. In addition, novel ideas of involvement in

sports, art-therapy and water therapy are also being supported.

To enhance *psychological and mental development*, UNICEF is supporting services geared towards development of spatial-temporal orientation, psychological independence, emotional and behavioral development, among others.

Social integration—

Social autonomy is the first step towards social integration of children with disabilities, particularly for children with autism.

UNICEF is supporting initiatives in integrating children with disabilities into society and as well in obtaining skills to enter the labor force. Social integration programs extensively involve support to parents and advocacy within the communities. Many of these

initiatives involve group education and counseling.

Supporting access to public services—

The primary bottleneck in the ability of children with disabilities to seek out services is the lack of access to information.

UNICEF is enabling the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream public services—health and education—through curriculum development, access to improved socio-medical and special needs education services.

Rehabilitating and establishing centers—

UNICEF is directly supporting rehabilitation and endowments for a day center in Bucharest, while also supporting the adaptation of existing space for creating a



Continued on flip side →



playground and an indoor swimming pool.

Systemic changes—

In order to ensure a sustained improvement in the situation of children with disabilities, UNICEF is supporting policy and curriculum for special needs education; advocacy for recognition of art-therapy as a profes-

sion, and international workshops on “improvement of services for children with disabilities” and on “prospects for art therapy”.

Furthermore, UNICEF is supporting the training for specialized staff to improve the infrastructure and develop child rights based practices.

Funds raised during the Gala have been allocated to activities that are currently under implementation. These initiatives are undertaken in partnerships with both non-governmental organizations and centers managed by the Romanian State for children with disabilities.

Promotion and upgrade of education for children with special needs is targeting **7 kindergartens** in partnership with **RENINCO**.

Improved care for new born babies in maternity hospitals, particularly for those born prematurely or with disabilities at the **Cuza Voda Maternity Hospital** in Iasi benefiting **5,000 new born babies** every year.

165 children benefit of recuperative services at the Residential Center for Children with Disabilities “**Crinul Alb**” in Bucharest.

In partnership with **HandRom**, **18 children** from rural communities in Arges receive support

while their parents and communities are involved in campaigns.

80 children from special education kindergartens and schools, residential institutions and communities are receiving psychological rehabilitation at the **Diagnosis and Art-therapy Center** in Timisoara.

An initiative for the official recognition of art therapy as a profession is underway in partnership with the **International Foundation for Child and Family**.

In partnership with **Esperando** in Baia Mare, UNICEF is providing chances for recuperation and improving the abilities for integration of **50 children** with disabilities.

30 children from Negresti benefit of recovery services through the **Vaslui Direction for Child Protection**.

Centrul Aurora in Bucharest is being supported and adapted to meet the specific needs of **20 children** with disabilities.

Public campaigns—

UNICEF is supporting a nationwide campaign in benefit of children with disabilities. This campaign alongside the several other local level advocacy campaigns are developed in order to increase public awareness on the rights of children with disabilities and as well to mitigate discrimination.

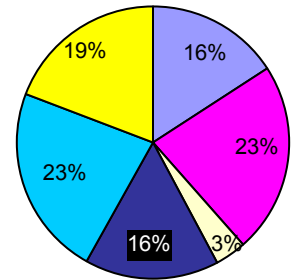
Eliminating stereotypes and promoting the rights of **20 children** and adolescents with mental disabilities, **Organizatia Trebuie** is developing social campaigns in Braila.

Through **Organizatia Trebuie** another **20 children** suffering from multiple disabilities and between 4 –12 years of age are being supported in Bucharest.

In partnership with **Asociatia Junior**, **10 adolescents** with motoric disabilities are being supported for social and labor market integration.

An international workshop on autism has been organized in June in benefit of over **10,000 children** throughout the country in partnership with “**Copii in Dificultate**” Foundation.

Several initiatives are underway in partnership with **Motivation**, including a nationwide campaign, while involving **200 children** in sport activities and benefiting also another **100 children** living in institutions.



- rehabilitation
- recovery
- social integration
- access to services
- policy and systemic change
- social awareness campaigns

Most of the funds raised have been allocated to projects to date. The distribution between activity types is as shown above.

