

A rural landscape at sunset. In the foreground, a wooden fence runs across the frame. Behind it is a field of tall grass. In the middle ground, a white barn with a grey roof is visible. The background consists of rolling hills under a sky with soft, golden light and scattered clouds. A few birds are flying in the upper right corner.

OPEN FIELDS

FOUNDATION

2017

ANNUAL REPORT

OPEN FIELDS

FOUNDATION

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Vision & Mission

Vision:

At OPEN FIELDS Foundation, our vision is to work with communities, helping them improve their lives and their environment.

Through training and capacity building, OPEN FIELDS Foundation works with communities to identify and nurture shared values and envision and create a new future.

We are working in partnership with communities and other entities to create sustainable impact, empowering and inspiring people to make personal changes for a better world.



Mission:

The mission of Open Fields is caring for People and the Environment.



Values

1. TEAM WORK

We care for others and we always offer our support. We are honest and we are trustworthy teammates. With a positive attitude and a high sense of humor, we create around us an atmosphere that motivates and empowers our team.

2. INNOVATION

We encourage and endorse new ideas, study, and research. We are constantly preoccupied to create an environment that favors innovation, to continuously improve ourselves by analyzing and importing models, information, and know-how. Innovation is the essence of evolution.

3. BALANCE

Values and people, goals and results, standards and reality. We work with halves out of which we must build the whole. We search for and always find solutions, we are open-minded and involved, and we approach different situations both with professionalism and empathy. We respect diversity and minorities.

4. INTEGRITY

Human qualities play an important part in our activity. Our mission to pass on is possible only if there is honesty and integrity. We always keep our promises.

5. GENEROSITY

We concentrate our professional knowledge and human qualities in order to pass on information, good practices, and know-how. We observe and we act. We give and we help. We have our hearts in what we do, we are flexible and proactive.

6. EXCELLENCE

We are known as the best in our field because we have high professional standards, because we pay attention to details and we act promptly and efficiently. We are dedicated to push forward our professional limits through continuous improvement and to surpass expectations. We believe in excellence and in the power to pass on the will to give and to excel to our partners and beneficiaries.

7. SUSTAINABILITY

We have a replicability and scalability-based portfolio, with transparent and accessible models. We support community through education, micro-financing and resources. We pass on information, know-how and good practices through every beneficiary, every partner and team member who is perfectly aware that his/her defining role is to pass something on.

OPEN FIELDS

FOUNDATION



Letter from the chairman of the Board, PETER IRETON

2017 has been a truly an engaging and challenging year for Open Fields. We had a lot of work to do and, in the same time, strengthen existing partnerships and pursue new possibilities. I am very pleased to see how everyone in the team, both the staff and the board, was committed to give their best to embrace this new beginning. In these difficult times of instability at both international and national level, as well as the transition from being a Heifer International branch office to becoming an independent Romanian NGO, Open Fields' performances are remarkable.

In May 2017, I had the privilege to host the international meeting of NGO's network in Sanlucar de Barrameda, Spain on May 16th. Representatives of NGO's with kindred vision from Spain, England, Ireland and Romania were present and many ideas and opportunities arose from this meeting. Open Fields was represented by the board of directors. The Open Fields staff also had the opportunity to have a teambuilding experience in Sanlucar. The board of directors' meetings are very



fruitful, and during these meetings we had different guests joining us, like Brendan Mimmagh from VIVA, (founder of Volunteers in Veterinary Association in Ireland) as well as Marco Antonio Gomez, director of "Cambia Vidas" NGO Spain.

It's a new, and demanding phase for Open Fields' journey, some things are different while others follow a similar course. Something we hold valuable for us and we want to continue pursuing is the permanent relationship between the Romanian and Irish farmers, as we carry out, in partnership, Bóthar's mission of "Helping people to help themselves" in the poor villages of Romania.

The field visits are a constant reminder of the fact that Romania is more than a beautiful country with hard working people but there are still a great number of poor families, in rural areas that need an opportunity, a chance to help raise themselves above the line of scarcity and find a way to reach self-sustainability.

At this exciting time of crafting a future for Open Fields, I am honored to provide guidance and support to this extraordinary team. Our mission is always on my mind!





Message from Open Fields' CEO OVIDIU SPÎNU

Our 2017 Annual report covers Open Fields Foundation activity on a calendar base, from January to December. There were twelve months of challenges, achievements and developments marked by some important milestones. The most significant was the celebration of 25 years from the very first project started in December 1992. As the organization changed name, vision and structure from Heifer Romania to Open Fields this quarter of century was marked in our own style, by donating 65 heifers to poor people in Transylvania, a donation received from Irish farmers, through our long term partner: Bothar.

2017 was the best year for Romanian agriculture marking also a progress of our current projects. We closed well a funding cycle of Norway Grants, Swiss Development and a Phase II of the CRS project funded by Danone. The same time we opened new projects such as "Food Hub" funded by Romanian American Foundation (RAF) and a Dairy Cows project for poor people in Transylvania. New initiatives are in the pipeline targeting old and new donors and partners.

Last year we continued the international networking, strengthening the connection with our traditional partners and developing new connections and contacts. Most of our foreign partnership is developed in Europe and the US including NGO's, business,

universities, agencies, churches or private persons. In the country we were active in the NGOs sector with a special focus on the civil society and organizations sharing the same vision and strategy as Open Fields. Our organization is an active member of Euromontana the European Association of Mountain Areas, Agro-Transylvania Cluster and the Rural Development Network. We are actively involved and we are regularly attending various regional and national fairs, conferences, seminars and different activities that overlap our mission of caring for people and the environment.

The Board of Open Fields supported our efforts in finding a new identity as an NGO, they inspired and motivated us during this new journey. We grew and developed our organization in harmony and we became an example of success and good governance. International Board members Chairman Peter Ireton from Ireland and Gary Parrish from the US brought their experience and overview that was shared with the Romanian members who are developing their capacity. The most important is that we operate as a team of partners and friends for the success of our organization

In this moment of reflection on our achievements in the past dozen of months, we should address a special recognition to Heifer International. Grace to the generous transition support we received from our founders, we were able to pass successfully the difficult time of building a new identity and a strong national NGO. We are proud to introduce Open Fields Foundation as the continuator of Heifer International work in Romania and in the region. This strong heritage allow us to believe that we will continue to change people life and to inspire others in the coming years.

As a cycle is ending and a new one is opening in front of us, I would like to thank and congratulate in the same time our staff, board members and supporters and to pass on my deep recognition to our donors and project partners.

The future is in our hands!



History of Open Fields



To describe who is Open Fields and the work we do, one must go back in time, back to the first dawn of the pioneer organization, Heifer International. More than 70 years ago, in a devastated, hungry post-war Europe we find Dan West, a compassionate farmer from the American Midwest who went to the front lines of the Spanish Civil War as an aid worker. His mission was to provide relief, but he soon discovered the meager single cup of milk rationed to the weary refugees once a day was not enough. And then he had a thought: *"What if they had not a cup, but a cow?"*

That "teach a man to fish" philosophy is what drove West to found Heifer International. And now, more than 70 years later, that philosophy still inspires its work to end world hunger and poverty throughout the world. Since 1944, Heifer International continued offering support in more than 40 countries, empowering families and communities to turn hunger and poverty into hope and prosperity.

After 25 years of serving communities with full support from Heifer International, Open Fields continues to accomplish the mission of serving the poor and those in need of assistance while caring for the environment, thus proudly carrying the legacy received from our founders.

Open Fields, former Heifer Romania, began its first project in 1992. Since then, it has spread its activity all over Romania and the neighboring countries, Moldova and Bulgaria. So far our organization has implemented 70 projects, characterized by diversity of the project type and beneficiaries:

- Livestock
- Gender
- Agro-tourism
- Training
- Reforestation
- Youth
- Micro credit
- Agroecology
- Artificial insemination

Our Work

For 25 years, we have provided livestock and environmentally sound agricultural training to improve the lives of those who struggle daily for reliable sources of food and income.

The core of the principles is passing on the gift. For each livestock gift, families agree to pass on the offspring of that animal to another person in need. The evolution from gratitude to generosity is a powerful transformation.

Our Projects

Nr.	Country	County	Status	Project Name
1)	Romania		Historical	Angora Goat Production on Family Farms in Romania (Phase I)
2)	Romania		Historical	Angora Goat Production on Family Farms in Romania (Phase II)
3)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Dairy Cattle Improvement in Corus
4)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Pigs Breed Improvement in Corus
5)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Small Farm Development in Bologna
6)	Romania		Historical	Dairy Cows for "Cristian" Association
7)	Romania	SV	Historical	Dorna Candreni Cattle Improvement Program (Phase I)
8)	Romania	SV	Historical	Dorna Candreni Cattle Improvement Program (Phase II)
9)	Romania	MM	Historical	Vadu Izei Dairy Cow Program
10)	Romania	BN	Historical	Small Farm Development of Telciu
11)	Romania	MS	Historical	Hungarian Minority Dairy Program in Panet
12)	Romania	BH	Historical	Caminul Felix Dairy Project
13)	Romania	SV	Historical	Cattle Project of Pojorata (Phase I)
14)	Romania	SJ	Historical	Ileanda Community Pig Project
15)	Romania	TL	Historical	Small Ruminant Improvement in Topolog Village (Phase I)
16)	Romania	TL	Historical	Sheep and Goats Improvement in Topolog Village (Phase II)
17)	Romania	SV	Historical	Small Scale Fish Production in Pojorata and Dorna Candrenilor
18)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Furioso-north Star Horse Revitalization in Jucu Village
19)	Romania	SV	Historical	Trout Fish Project in Cozanesti
20)	Moldova		Historical	Dairy Cows Project in Sofia
21)	Moldova		Historical	Livestock for Hearing Impaired Children in Hirbovat
22)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Farmers Feed the Children
23)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Farmers Feed the Children (Phase I)
24)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Farmers Feed the Children (Phase II)
25)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Farmers Feed the Children (Phase III)
26)	Romania	GR	Historical	Small Farm for Orphans in Giurgiu
27)	Moldova		Historical	Livestock for Orphans in Orhei
28)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Poultry for Small Communities
29)	Romania	HD	Historical	Livestock for Unemployed People in Rachitova
30)	Romania	CT	Historical	Goat Project in Cobadin
31)	Romania	MS	Historical	Roma People's Goat Project in Nemsă
32)	Romania	MS	Historical	Goats for the Roma Community of Deaj
33)	Romania	SV	Historical	Cattle Project of Pojorata (Phase II)
34)	Moldova		Historical	Rabbits for Farmers in Radeni
35)	Moldova		Historical	Cattle Project in Javgur

Our Projects

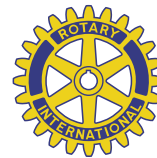
Nr.	Country	County	Status	Project Name
36)	Romania	SV	Historical	Romanian Carpathian Project - Dairy Sheep on Mountains Peaks
37)	Moldova		Historical	Dairy Cows for Women in Buteni
38)	Romania		Historical	Goat Breeding in Roma Community of Cuiejd
39)	Romania	NT	Historical	Sheep Project in Borca
40)	Moldova		Historical	Rabbits Project in Vadul Rascov
41)	Romania	HD	Historical	Cattle Project in Vata
42)	Romania	SV	Historical	Romanian Carpathian Project Phase 2.
43)	Bulgaria		Historical	Livestock for farmers in Balvan
44)	Bulgaria		Historical	Livestock for Orphans with Disabilities
45)	Romania	SJ, MS	Historical	Alpine Goats for Two Poor Communities
46)	Bulgaria		Historical	Livestock for farmers in Pleven area villages
47)	Moldova		Historical	Cattle Project in Carnateni
48)	Romania	SV	Historical	Livestock for Highland Farms in Carlibaba
49)	Romania	VN	Historical	Sheep, bees, and Reforestation project in Vranceoiaia
50)	Romania	SJ	Historical	Dairy cows and artificial insemination for Maeriste
51)	Romania	SJ	Historical	Honey production for poor communities in Central Transylvania
52)	Romania	HD	Historical	Cattle Genetic Improvement in Hunedoara County
53)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Revitalization of water buffalo breeding in Aschileu and Mera villages
54)	Romania	SJ	Historical	Honey and Trees Project
55)	Romania	VS	Historical	Pig Project for Rebricea
56)	Romania	BZ	Historical	Sheep, Fruit Trees and Reforestation Project
57)	Romania	CJ	Reporting	Milk for Orphans
58)	Romania		Historical	Genetic Improvement of Cattle in Transylvania
59)	Romania	TR	Active	Chance for All- DANONE
60)	Romania	BN	Reporting	Empowering Roma Women in Bistrita County
61)	Romania	SV	Historical	Strengthening the Capacities of Forest Owners Association for Sustainable Forest Management
62)	Romania	MS, SV, BN, NT	Historical	Sustainable Agriculture Models in the Romanian Mountain Area
63)	Romania	BN	Reporting	Empowering Roma women in Mures County
64)	Romania	MM	Historical	Greening the Agroturism Business in Romania Project
65)	Romania	SV	Historical	Green processing of wild berries social enterprise
66)	Romania	SV	Historical	Microcredit Project in Doma Candreni
67)	Romania	MM	Historical	Microcredit Project in Vadul Izei
68)	Romania	CJ	Historical	Microcredit Program in Corusu
69)	Romania	SV	Historical	Microcredit Project in Doma
70)	Romania		Historical	Microcredit Project in Pojorata
71)	Romania		Active	Food Hub
72)	Romania		Active	Dairy Cows for Poor People in Transylvania

Open Fields' partners

Major Institutional Donors and Partner Organizations:



World Vision




NIBIO
NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE OF
BIOECONOMY RESEARCH




Universities:



Project Areas

 Historical Projects

 Active Projects





OPEN FIELDS' Priority Issues

1. Promoting Open Fields Foundation at national and international level
2. Smooth transition from Heifer to Open Fields
3. Staff capacity building
4. Attraction of EU funding
5. Developing new partnerships
6. Establish a new reporting system
7. Ensure long term financial sustainability
8. Development of value chain and integrated projects
9. Offer education and projects for the youth and disadvantaged people
10. Optimizing impact and cost effectiveness ratio





Our Active Projects

1. Chance for All project with Danone

Initiated in 2012

Active Program

Total Budget: 3,512,000 EUR

Financed by: Heifer International, Danone Romania, Danone Ecosysteme and Bothar

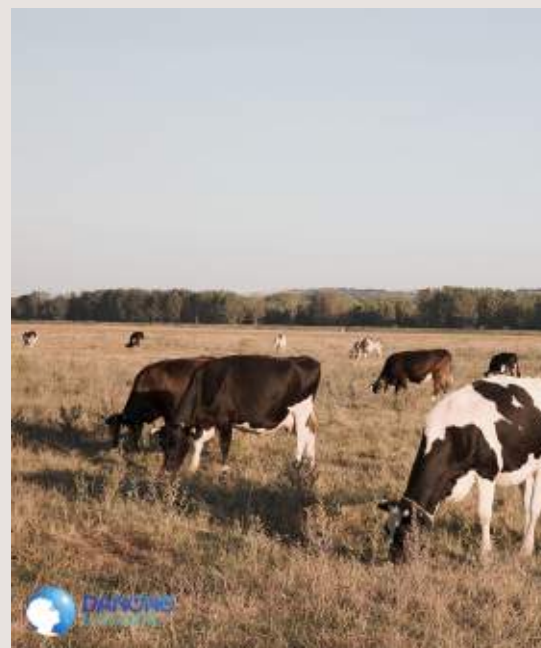
The Chance for All project is a landmark project, bringing together a diverse set of partners to work with disadvantaged communities to achieve a lasting economic and social impact.

Chance for All is a joint undertaking, involving the work of Danone Ecosysteme, Danone Romania and Bóthar, to lend a helping hand to poor Romanian farmers, to help them increase their income and to improve nutrition. The second phase of the project started in late 2015.

In the first half of 2018, we expect the launch of the third phase that will be focused on consolidating past results and creating environmental friendly agricultural models.

In order for small-scale farmers to gain the critical mass necessary to improve the quality and quantity of production, this project assisted participants in establishing three large producer groups of 150 families each, giving farmers the ability to invest more in their farm and creating a joint collection point. By having these in place, milk processors were more interested in buying and the larger groups were then better able to negotiate the milk price.

To support the development and success of these larger producer groups the project partners provided farmers from three communities in Central and Southern Romania with 214 Irish heifers and 11,000 artificial insemination straws from Bóthar Charity Ireland, to improve the breeds and increase productivity. In addition to the heifers, beneficiaries have benefitted from facilities that can ensure the quality of milk produced





including 32 Transportable Milking Parlors (TMPs), cooling and storage tanks and over 500 stainless steel cans.

This initiative also delivered a specialized training component including health, hygiene, nutrition, pasture management, artificial insemination, milking and cow reproduction. This aided them in obtaining a high quality and quantity of milk, which meets European Union standards. The market access for the milk is ensured by Danone.

The challenges are significant, but so are the rewards. The support received through the project helped build more resilient communities and link them in a sustainable manner to markets, through the provision of high quality livestock, the organization of community groups, social and technical training and assistance, and providing them with access to reliable market partners.

Photo credits to "Danone Ecosystem Fund / Philippe Cap"

2. Food Hub project

Initiated in 2017

Active Program

Total Budget: 230,000 USD

Financed by: The Romanian-American Foundation & Open Fields Foundation

Open Fields Foundation, together with Civitas Foundation as program operator and the Romanian-American Foundation as the main sponsor propose a new project: "The FOOD HUB", following a model successfully implemented in the United States and in several European countries.

In the North East of Romania, as in many parts of the world, small producers of agro-food industry struggle to access the market and the potential consumers of these traditional products have little access to them. The business initiated and operated by Open Fields Foundation through a specialized economic entity will







create a bridge between local small and medium scale farmers and processors and the consumers who want authentic products: traditional, local, tasty, healthy at a fair price.

Simply collecting and organizing a diverse product market that flows through the different channels to the final consumer is not enough. Providing assistance and training to producers in areas relevant to them, and consumer information and awareness is an important element of this program. In a wider consortium created by partners put together with other players (such as those in the central and local government, research and education units, politicians, formal and informal opinion leaders alongside the civil society), we propose to launch a public discussion on this subject.

By the end of the project, the small and medium producers will benefit through the Food Hub of an important distribution channel to different markets, will have a sustainable development and diversification governed by the laws of competition. The producers will be paid correctly and on time and they will have access to an information data base and relevant experts for their field of activity. The customers, on the other hand, will benefit from these healthy, tasty products loaded with local cultural footprint that contributes to strengthening local brand.



3. Dairy cows for poor people from Transylvania

Initiated in 2017

Active Program

**Financed by: Bothar, Ireland
& DOW Agrosiences, USA**

The poor rural people in Transylvania face high levels of unemployment, finding work where they can, but do not earn enough to cover the basic needs of their families. For the targeted communities the average income per household is around 100 USD, a third of the families in the rural areas do not have how to cover their day-to-day basic needs, and one in every eight children goes to sleep hungry every night. One family has between 5-10 members according to the local authorities and the Resource Center for Roma Communities. Roma have low access to public services and are routinely discriminated. Negative stereotypes and prejudices toward the Roma are deeply rooted in the public consciousness. The targeted villages have Roma and non-Roma population. In all these locations the Roma are not involved in community life, so thorough this intervention we aim to bridge this social gap. Merging the Roma families in the village life and involving non-Roma families in project development and implementation represents a way of turning a challenge into opportunity.

The goal of this project is to lift out of poverty over 200 Roma and non Roma families, which are now struggling to put food on their tables. Through the development of social capital and engaging into a pro poor wealth creating dairy value chain these families become models of sustainable small holder farming systems.

30 of these pure breed Holstein Frisian heifers (young pregnant cows) will be given to 30 poor families in poor villages located in Transylvania, Alba county, in the region of Ighiu villages. The rest of the heifers will be donated to 180 beneficiaries from other villages in Sibiu and Brasov counties, with full support from our

long-time partner Bothar.

A donation of a cow per family solves the nutrition problem, generates income by the sale of extra milk and also gives the family an occupation and self-esteem. Open Fields Foundation will prepare the community and will select first recipients based upon a set of transparent criteria.

The project takes advantage of good local animal breeding conditions and opportunities of accessing the market and creates an income generating model for poor small holders. Training in animal breeding and



small agriculture supplies will be offered along with the livestock. The project will be open for anyone, but will primarily serve the poorest and most marginalized members of the community. The project's key concept is that each recipient must pass on to another poor family the first female offspring of the animal they receive.

This practice ensures that each participant in the program becomes a donor, enhancing dignity and participation in each project. Passing on the Gift also helps communities to become self-sustaining.

Key Projects

1. Projects for Roma people

The life of the 5 million Roma people living in Central and Eastern Europe is quite dramatic. With an income of one-third of the national average, the two million Roma living in Romania endure harsh living conditions which lead to a high infant mortality rate (three times higher than the national average) and to life expectancy 7 years less than Romanians". According to surveys, one Roma out of six is "constantly starving" and unemployment reaches levels of 80% or more as they lack the marketable skills necessary to find jobs. (UNDP's study *Avoiding the Dependency Trap The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe*)

Poverty leads Roma people to cause troubles in a struggling, developing country and area, which leads to discrimination against them everywhere. Migration to Western Europe is a common phenomenon, associated with further discrimination by Western Europeans. In a poll published by the France-Pressé news agency found that three





out of four Romanians fear Gypsies and would not tolerate Gypsies as neighbors. The European Commission stated that “Roma remain subject to widespread discrimination throughout Romanian society.” The distrust and discrimination causes a great obstacle towards their integration and economic development. The major challenges of the Roma minority are overcoming poverty, improving access to education, housing and developing marketable skills. All of these projects have as main goals helping the Roma communities overcome poverty, prejudices and discrimination. Open Fields provided the beneficiary families with heifers, goats and saplings trees but in the same time with trainings on different valuable subjects such as: livestock well-being, environmental improvement, new practices in sustainable agriculture, gender, hygiene, nutrition, basic bookkeeping and other relevant matters. Helping turn the subsistence Roma families into self-sustainable farmers that add value to their communities was the aim of the projects. Strengthening the involvement of women and girls at the family and the village level is adding to the transformation of these families into participative community members that contribute in developing the local economy. Such projects were implemented in many villages across Romania, in counties like: Cluj, Sibiu, Alba, Mures, Bistrita, Brasov.

2. Farmers Feed the Children & Milk for Orphans

“Farmers feed the Children” and “Milk for Orphans” are a couple of our most well-known and appreciated projects. They were designed and developed in cooperation with Rotary International, and through this, nutritional supplements (milk and other dairy products) were provided to hospitalized children, orphans as well as children with physical or mental disabilities.

Through the project local farmers from villages close to the City of Cluj-Napoca were equipped with quality livestock (heifers and chickens), equipment and animal health training, to improve their nutrition, increase their income and improve their local livestock. This also developed a sustainable economic base for the farmers as they established a marketing co-op. The farmer beneficiaries produced and offered meat and milk products to vulnerable children from hospitals, orphanages, schools for children with special needs, even to children living by the landfill sites. Vocational agricultural training was provided to older children at the orphanages to prepare them to be more suitable for the society. Special efforts were made to assist





women in small-scale food processing and community leadership initiatives. As the entire family is involved and focused, the improvements in their nutrition and their efficiency and profitability.

Over the implementation year and after that, the project evaluators noticed a measurable increase in children's health as well as in the lives of the farmers.

A food processing and distribution network is fully functional and self-sustaining businesses and farmers have raised the local profile as well as their incomes. The project was implemented between 2002 - 2005.

3. Sustainable Agriculture Models in the Romanian Mountain Area

www.carpatsheep.ro

The project “Sustainable Agriculture Models in Romanian Mountain Area” aimed at the modernization of six sheepfolds in the middle of the Carpathian Mountains, as processing units for sheep milk, a milestone between two significant systems: alpine pastures, the idyllic alpine environment, sheep breeding as specific and traditional activity on the one hand and on the other hand: the modern consumer who can be reached by means of the new possibilities of packaging, labeling, branding and modern channels of marketing.

This project refers to the whole value chain, starting from the generous nature and the purity of mountain, and reaching the end customer by a series of processing and marketing steps.

A modern sheepfold which complies with the European standards on hygiene, traceability, food safety, without giving up the traditional recipe, may have access to the contemporary outlet market, providing major benefits for the future mountain economy. In order to find high quality products on the store shelves, a structural intervention has been conducted, throughout the whole chain, the first link being the grass carpet.

An improvement of the farming procedures is mandatory in order to have a more competitive position, by strengthening the associations of farmers, by increasing their power of negotiation, by developing the marketing opportunities, the brand elements which should evoke the interest of the end customer for a quality product “the mountain product”.

In order to support these farmers, “Sustainable Agriculture Models in Romanian Mountain Area” project was implemented by a consortium of Romanian and Swiss partners: SAB (The Swiss Centre for Mountain Regions), Open Fields Foundation, “Dorna”





Mountain Farmers Federation, Agrom-Ro, Romontana with the support of the Swiss Romanian Cooperation Program and Heifer International.

The project also proposes the association of more producers, who can jointly transform the subsistence agriculture in a source for income. The farmers received vocational training for the professions newly added in the Romanian Occupation Codex, namely shepherd, sheep farmer and mountain sheep man.

The construction of the modern sheepfolds comes as a solid proof for the farmers that the modernization of agriculture is not just necessary, but also achievable and that through the joint efforts made by the participants in this project, it is possible to fulfill the dream of a more prosperous future. The modern sheepfold in which the Romanian shepherd obtains a high quality traditional mountain product is hard evidence that there can be a balance between tradition and modernity.

4. Greening the Agro-Tourism Business in Romania

www.comunitateverde.ro

The Together with NIBIO (The Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research) and OVR Agro-Tur-Art Foundation as a local partner, Open Fields implemented a project, based on improving the waste water and manure management systems in rural areas and educating the rural population on the importance of responsibly managing waste.

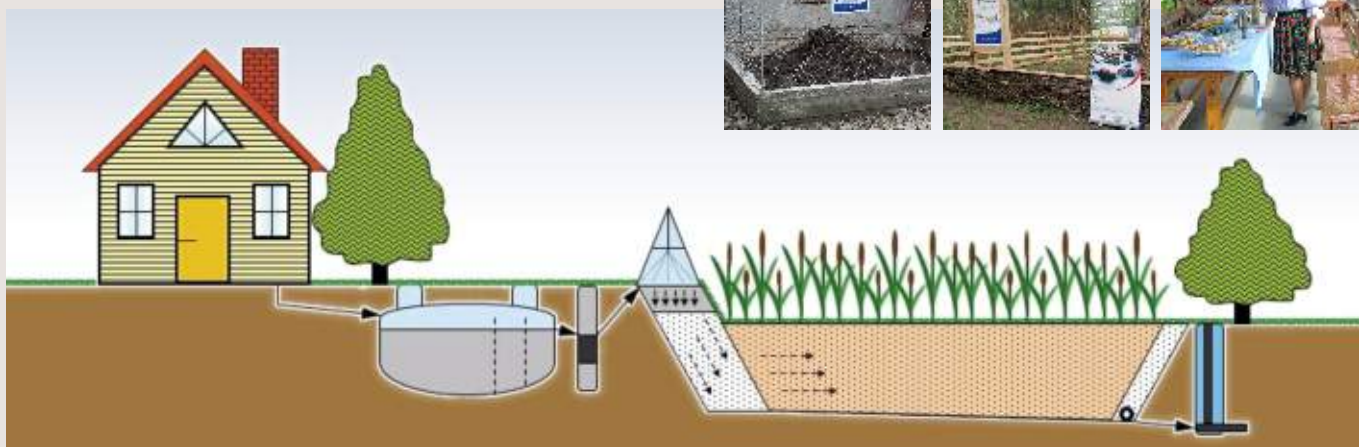
This project is benefic to whole Romania because the waste waters, domestic waste and manure management systems, especially in rural areas, are characterized by insufficient protection of the water resources, a very low percentage of population being connected to sewage and waste water treatment systems, malfunctioning of the existent treatment stations and overall incompliant waste management. Manure management systems are rare in Romania and implementing such systems will prevent groundwater

contamination and can be efficiently used as fertilizer. *"Romanian-Norwegian as a living partnership is very important to us. The second very important thing is innovation. And innovation does not mean doing something that no one has ever done before, but to import something new in the area, as we did with these green waste water management systems"*, reckons Open Fields CEO, Dr. Ovidiu Spînu

The project's objectives:

1. Two practical models of waste water were created. These environmental friendly systems using reed- bed filters are unique to Romania, being developed with support from NIBIO.
2. Greening waste management systems for 60 subsistence-farming households.
3. Best practices guide for successful replication of greening the rural tourism industry.

On March 30th, 2016 held in Sighetu Marmatiei, Maramures the closing conference of the project, took place in the presence of a broad group of participants,





including Her Excellency Mrs. Tove Bruvik Westberg, Norway Ambassador in Romania and other representatives from the local authorities, environmental clearance, Romanian waters, Rotary club members, NGO representatives, plus others interested in the project.

Mrs. Ambassador Westberg appreciated the good cooperation of the Romanian and Norwegian partners in this project and outlined the fact that environmental protection has become one of the pillars of sustainable development: *"It is a pleasure to be here today with you and find out more about the project which ends today, one with evident results. Today, the future of Europe cannot be planned without taking into account the principles of sustainable development, environmental protection is one of the main pillars. Norway is determined to become one of the most innovative and green economies in the world, and we are glad to see*

such initiatives being implemented in Romania."

Authorities in Maramures were very pleased with this project and stated that such systems should be implemented not only in Maramures but all across the country.



5. Projects in the Romanian Mountain Area

One in 12 people around 700 million individuals live in mountain regions. Mountain communities are among the poorest and most affected by hunger in the world.

The characteristics of high-altitude environments and of the communities that call them home the harsh climate, short vegetation season, poor soil, a constant decrease of the traditional logging and mining activities, to name just a few mean that development in highland areas requires a different approach based on mountain-specific research and knowledge.

According to a new FAO report (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), "mountains have only recently begun to attract the attention of political decision-makers and economic planners. Mountain law is, thus, still in its infancy: only a few mountain-specific legal instruments, national and international, are currently in place. Still, a few countries Switzerland, France, Georgia, and Italy are examples have enacted legal instruments focusing specifically on mountain areas, and other countries are in the process of developing similar legislation.

As members of EUROMONTANA (The European Association of the Mountain Areas), Open Fields developed various projects in the Romanian mountains area, and below are some of the most representative projects with this focus.

Green Processing of Wild Berries Social Enterprise

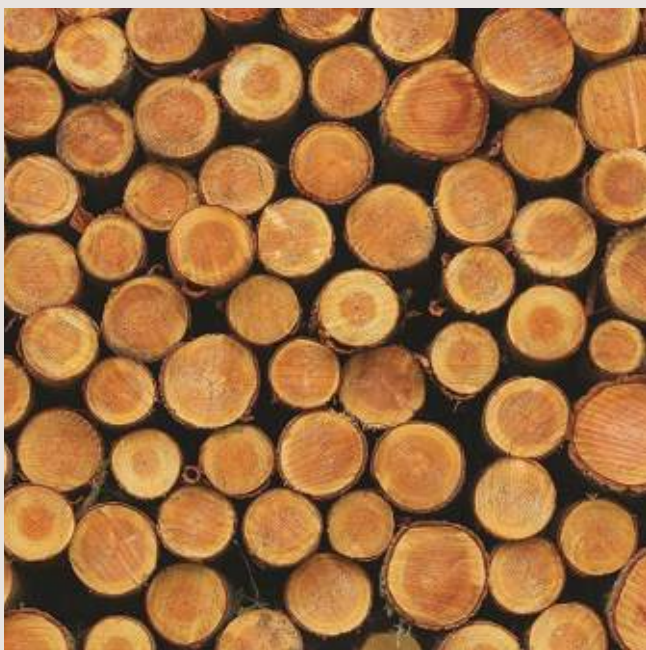
This project developed in partnership with FAMD ("Dorna" Mountain Farmers Federation) and NIBIO (the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research) created a non-wood product processing unit using sources of green energy and obtaining certified products. Non-wood products refer to all types of

berries (blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, redcurrant, blackcurrant etc.) mushrooms and herbs.

The second purpose of this project was to raise awareness of the federation's members about the importance of correct capitalization of non-wood products gathered from the forest floor and the added value of this activity. Currently, gathering and processing these natural resources does not represent a key point of interest for people in mountain areas, due to the lack of processing infrastructure.

Through the project, Open Fields raised the farmer's awareness on the importance of managing these resources in accordance with environmental principles, ensuring a sustainable management of the forest areas. Thus local mountain farmers', members of the FAMD, now have the opportunity of obtaining certified products that can be sold under a unified brand, gaining added value diversification this leading to the dynamic control and prevention of chaotic exploitation of non-wood products.





Strengthening the Capacity of Forest Owners Association for Sustainable Management

This project developed in partnership with the Agency for Development and Cooperation helped strengthen the capacities of forest owners associations in order to develop organizational strength, elaborate national PEFC (Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) standards, so that they become more efficient and gain higher internal cohesion and to develop management skills that respect certification standard for sustainable forest management. This has increased income, natural growth and biodiversity of forests.

Sustainable Agriculture Models in Romanian Mountain Area

The project aimed at the modernization of six sheepfolds in the middle of the Carpathian Mountains, as processing units for sheep milk, a milestone between two significant systems: alpine pastures, the idyllic alpine environment, sheep breeding as specific and traditional activity on the one hand and on the other hand: the modern consumer who can be reached by means of the new possibilities of packaging, labeling, branding and modern channels of marketing. The production factors were strengthened: such as animal nutrition, animal sheltering and the cheese making facilities of the traditional production system. The market opportunities of traditional products were improved. Through the accurate recording of every step, quality standard of milk, technical chart of production, logistic chart, branding, labeling, packaging, usage of EAN bar-code system, health control and traceability system the products will comply with the legal food and health requirements and qualify for the modern retail. Furthermore, through targeted marketing activities the products will access new markets.



6. Revitalization of Water Buffalo Breeding in Aschileu and Mera villages

Total Budget: 131,047 Eur
Financed by: Heifer International & World Vision

The project goal is to improve the living standards of poor farmers in two Transylvanian villages by revitalizing water buffalo breeding.

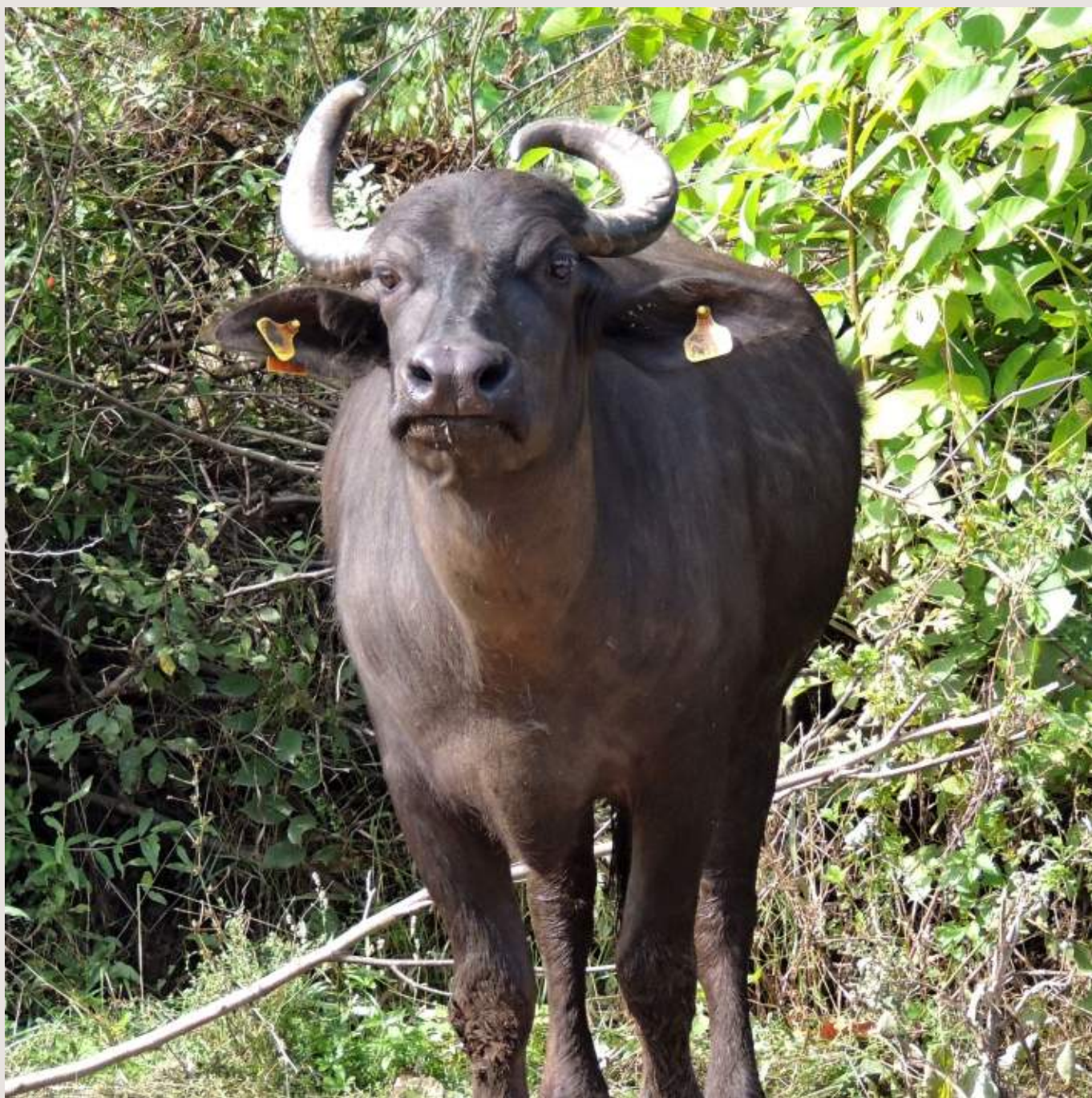
Open Fields provided families in Aschileu and Mera villages with water buffaloes. The project contributed to strengthening the peace and the cooperation between two different cultures and nationalities, as Mera is inhabited by Hungarians and Aschileu by Romanians.



Project participant in both communities have improved their nutrition and income through the consumption and the sale of water buffalo products.

Through passing on the gift, from the initial 30 water buffaloes that were donated, we have reached a number of 85 families that this project has assisted so far, and the relay is not over.

Open Fields is currently working on developing a next phase of this project, in partnership with another organization.



7. Projects in Moldova & Bulgaria

By combining the provision of livestock with training in animal husbandry, natural resource management, nutrition and income, leadership skills and gender equity, we have created a development model that strengthens the social, economic and ecological fabric of a community. Livestock play a central role in our work, both as a strategy for alleviating poverty and achieving food security and proper nutrition.

Livestock provide food and nutrition for people, while also giving them tangible assets with which they can improve their livelihoods. Each country program has a tailored approach to animal health and husbandry, based on local resources and livestock.

Sandwiched between Romania and Ukraine, Moldova emerged as an independent republic following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe, with its economy relying heavily on agriculture.

Between 2002–2008 our organization developed few projects in the Republic of Moldova. The local project holder was “*Vatra Satului*”/ “The Village Heart Foundation”. Other project consultants were members of the Agricultural University of Chisinau.

The projects developed in Moldova are:

- Dairy Cows Project in Sofia
- Livestock for Hearing Impaired Children in Hirbovat
- Livestock for Orphans in Orhei





- Rabbits for Farmers in Radeni
- Cattle project in Javgur
- Dairy Cows for women in Buteni
- Rabbits for farmers in Radeni
- Cattle project in Javgur
- Dairy Cows for women in Buteni
- Rabbits projects in Vadul Rascov
- Cattle project in Carnateni

Another former communist country our organization was involved in is Bulgaria. According to a EuroStat survey of EU satisfaction rates, Bulgaria is the least happy country in the European Union. After joining the EU in 2007, Bulgarians were hopeful that conditions would improve. On the contrary, unemployment rates remained high and Bulgaria continued to be the poorest country in the Union.

Bulgarians have been living in poverty since the fall of the communist regime in November 1990. EuroStat found that more than a third of the European Union poverty resides in Bulgaria, Romania and Greece combined. Of the Bulgarian population, 34.2 percent is severely deprived, meaning that they cannot pay their bills, heat their homes or afford an annual vacation

Due to decades of poverty in Bulgaria, the availability of qualified workers is severely lacking. This is both due to the inability to properly educate youth and the emigration of young people to more developed countries.



The projects developed in Bulgaria are:

- Livestock for farmers in Balvan
- Livestock for Orphans with Disabilities
- Livestock for farmers in the Pleven area villages

Financial Information

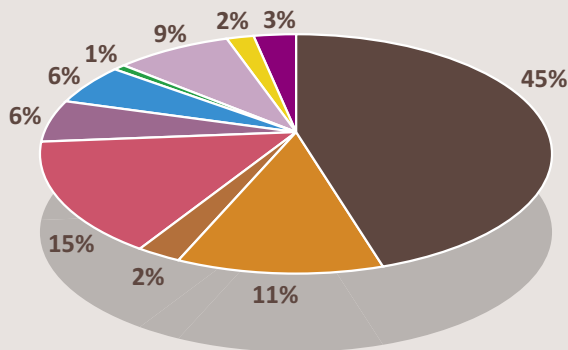
FY 2017

Incomes	EUR
Heifer International HQ	423,128.74
Bothar in kind	102,000.00
Bothar	22,738.31
Danone Romania	138,963.68
Ecosystem	54,400.95
Romanian-American Foundation	54,571.13
Civitas Romania	6,639.32
Swiss Contribution	80,245.05
Dow AgroSciences	19,652.28
Other	29,712.64
Total Incomes	932,052.10

Expenses	EUR
Office expenses	235,889.19
Projects expenses	1,089,354.48
Total Expenditures	1,088,768.02

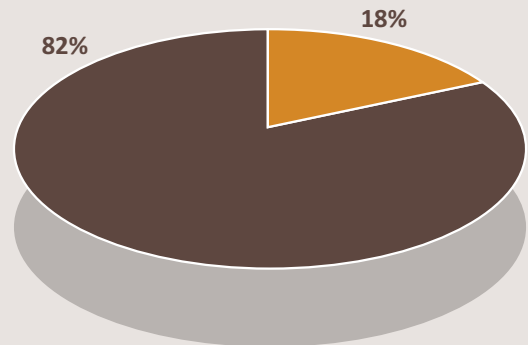
Incomes

- Heifer International HQ
- Bothar in kind
- Bothar
- Danone Romania
- Ecosystem
- Romanian-American Foundation
- Civitas Romania
- Swiss Contribution
- Dow AgroSciences
- Other



Expenses

- Office
- Projects



**BENEFICIARIES
IN FY 2017**

BENEFICIARIES	FISCAL YEAR 2017	
	Directly	Passing on the Gift
Families and orphans assisted	7,913	1,794
TOTAL	9,707	

**BENEFICIARIES
TO DATE**

BENEFICIARIES	TOTAL TO DATE	
	Directly	Passing on the Gift
Families and orphans assisted	70,597	98,999
TOTAL	169,596	

260 PEOPLE TRAINED DURING FY 2017

**RESOURCES
PROVIDED
DURING FY 2017**

LIVESTOCK:	Original Placement FY 2017	Passing on the Gift FY 2017
Heifers	102	48
A.I.	6616	1231

OTHER RESOURCES:	
Milk	4,438 liters
Sour cream	836 kg
Yoghurt	14,429 cups
Feta cheese	1,052 kg
Soft cheese	1,052 kg

OPEN FIELDS' Team



Ovidiu Spînu
Executive Director (CEO)



Alin Tekonczia
Director of Finance



Gheorghe Abrudan
Field Assistant



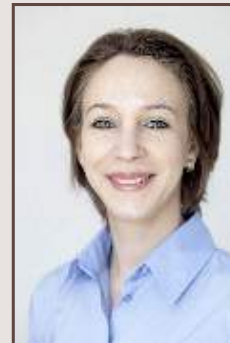
Alina Rus
Project Manager



Cristina Ciotlăuș
Director's Assistant



Andreea David
Economist



Flavia Mureșan
Project Manager



Dorina Suătean
Janitor

OPEN FIELDS

FOUNDATION





OPEN FIELDS

FOUNDATION

OPEN FIELDS Foundation

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