

SMILESreport

Spring 2007



Matthew 25 v. 40

“ Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”

The work of Smiles is about grasping the challenge God presents in this passage of Scripture. The opportunity for us is to respond to those in need as if it was for Jesus Himself.

As we work in the lives of so many in Romania who are Hungry, Naked and Sick – the words of Matthew 25 often echo in our ears.

**“When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat
Naked, you gave me clothes to wear
Sick, you visited me.”**

With grateful thanks to so many who support our projects month by month, we are able to Feed, Clothe, Visit, Heal, House and Educate. Most important of all, we are able to share the Love of God and the Good News of the Gospel to over 1,300 people every day.

We need your continued commitment, or your initial commitment, to help with the task of fulfilling the challenge of Matthew 25.

A monthly commitment to one of the projects enables Smiles to budget and plan for maximum provision to the people we serve in Romania each day. Such support has enabled the work to grow beyond all expectations, allowing more people to be helped in their deep poverty and need of life's essentials.

Family Care Project

The Foundation's cornerstone project - **The Family Care Project**, continues to serve more than 1,000 people every day, including many children, living in desperate conditions of poor housing, with lack of food, medical treatment and social counsel on how to climb out of their tragically difficult circumstances.

Our qualified Social Workers advise on important legal issues to help secure options for families to rebuild lives and move up from the depths of poverty. Our Doctors serve the medical needs of families unable to provide for themselves and their children. Essential food packages are delivered every month to provide basic provisions for the family to survive.

Jenni Ostafi – Head of the Family Care Project, expresses the delight of helping two special families who were in need :

“People continue to smile, even in difficult situations. Smiles appear when love is in action. In this situation, the father left the family, but Smiles has brought God's love through our direct involvement in their lives.”

“These are children who would never have had a chance to continue their education and to have a different and better life than their parents have had. Because of Smiles they are now privileged to be assured a house to live in with their family.”



The young...



The old...



The poor...



Social workers
Jenni & Angi

Family Care Project



Food Supply



Fuscas family



Torok family

www.thesmilesfoundation.org

Medical

Smiles has had qualified doctors on staff since 2003 and they provide a crucial role in the health care of families living without help from the Romanian State system. Providing care for both chronic disease and acute conditions puts immense pressure on the budgets for our doctors to purchase the medicines required for families to have healthier lives.

Dr Claudia Micula – Smiles lead doctor for Family Care, tells of one case:



Ligia

"21 year old Ligia, comes from a family of 11 children. From the age of 13 she has had problems with her kidneys and had a kidney transplant, donated by her father. She is now very dependent on monthly medication. With the help of large hearted sponsors, the Smiles Foundation has been able to help this young lady, with monthly donations for this medication which enables her to

survive. We don't know what God's plan is for Ligia, but we do know that those of us who are blessed with health, can stand by her through her suffering. This young lady is just one of the many people helped by the Smiles Foundation's medical project. There are many more people who need our help."

One major project of 2007 is to build the Medical block at the Tileagd Complex, comprising Doctor's Consulting room and Treatment room, Dental Surgery and Sterilisation room and an Optometry Examining room and Workshop. Our Medical facility will serve hundreds of people beyond Smiles families in surrounding villages – even to bussing people in who need the help Smiles Medical Centre will provide.

Dr Ema Buzle – Smiles doctor to the Tileagd Community is excited and says:



Dr Ema

*"The new Clinic, which will be part of the Community Complex building, is the most wonderful thing (from the medical point of view) that I could ever imagine in Tileagd. It will have all the facilities that a normal Clinic has, high standards of medical practicality, proper conditions of keeping and maintaining medical supplies. Four projects will run inside of it: **Medical Care, Dental facilities, Vision Project and Pharmacy.***

The medical office will serve the needs of more than 300 people who live in the Gypsy Community and have already been supported by The Smiles Foundation for 6 years, medical support included. But lots more people who live in the villages around The New Complex area will benefit from this Clinic. The medical equipment, the medical attention and support will offer to lots of people in desperate need a professional help.

Some of the specialists from the State Hospital will come twice per year to offer special consultations, so the level of health care offered will be increased.

Also, the dental facility will provide the opportunity for proper treatment for all the people that have never had the means to pay for treatment.

The Pharmacy will store drugs in proper conditions of temperature and hygiene.

The Vision Project will offer the possibility for the poor people to have their eyes tested, to get a pair of glasses when needed for free. This Clinic will also offer a chance for those who can support themselves to contribute with a small amount of money, money that could cover some of the costs that all these projects involve. The Clinic will also provide for some people the possibility of a job.

And finally, I do believe that God will bless this place with love, peace, wisdom and compassion, gifts that could be shared with those that will benefit from The Clinic support."

Education

Phase One of the Tileagd Complex, completed in September last year, comprises the Tileagd Community School and Kindergarten with nearly 100 children in class every day. Education is the secret to a better future, providing the hope of breaking the cycle of poverty that has 'dogged' so many in society for generations. The School provides the Hope and Opportunity for Change – and that is so desperately needed in Romania.

Clara Ungureanu – Director of the School, reports on two children:

"Madalina, from Camelia's class, is a good student, and at the moment she is "getting" to the top position in the class. Her integration into the first grade was difficult. She preferred to go in the city begging than to go to the school. All this has been changed. At the moment she is coming day by day at the school, is very active in the classes and her homework she can handle on her own. In the second grade we could see in her the ambition that she has to "get to the top" and take the opportunity that she has, the opportunity to learn for her future plans. Why all this? Because one day she wants to become a teacher!! And she can, if we, her parents and you can support and help her!"



Radu

"When Radu came at the school, he was prepared to "fight" with the teachers and other children....really rebelling having to attend school! He was timid and he only got involved in the classes when the teacher asked him too. Now, in the second semester, he is the best at mathematics and reading! I'm so proud of him and I can tell this to everybody!"

Comments from Radu's teacher – **Irina Comsa**



Madalina

HELP SMILES

Educational Challenge 2007

One initiative to increase partnership in UK schools with the Tileagd Community School is the '2007 Educational Challenge'

May 27th – 31st, 2007

As the newest Member State of the European Union, ROMANIA faces many challenges to provide quality, inspiring education that can integrate their society and prepare a future generation to help Romania's recovery.

The Smiles Foundation is offering the unique opportunity for those working in the teaching profession, to experience Romania on an Educational Challenge.

Our challenge is inviting teachers to join a trip, visiting our Romanian school, our staff and children to share ideas and support, with a view to **TWINNING** your school with Tileagd Community School for cross cultural exchanges, visits, communication and fund-raising to help support the development of the school in Romania.

Limited places available for this exceptional opportunity.
Full details on our website or available from the Leeds office.
Request your 'Application Form' today.



School & Nursery Directors

The last couple of years have shown what a tremendous difference is made to our Grade School achievements when children have first come through our Nursery facility. Built in 2004 and opened in September '04, the 6 staff initially operated with 25 children under 6 years of age. The new Kindergarten within the School complex has 11 pre-schoolers with 21 children under 4 years remaining at the Nursery facility.

Delia Bideran – Tileagd Children's Centre (Nursery) Director shares a success story:

"Amar Rostas started coming to the Children Centre in Tileagd in October 2006. He is 5 years old and had never been to a nursery before, which is why the first two weeks in the nursery were awful for him. Of course he did not want to be with children and didn't even go into the classroom, but he used to stay all day long in the hall crying and screaming that he wanted to go home, because he didn't want to be with us. He was begging me, to let him go. At the moment I decided after two weeks of nightmare, to tell his parents not to bring him for a period of time, he suddenly stopped crying, but still did not want to go into the classroom, and spent all his time sitting in front of my office, so I decided to spend a lot of my time with him in the classroom with the other children, and this was the only way we were able to make him stay.

What I considered strange for a child, was that I hadn't seen him smiling at all in the first 3 weeks that he was with us, but one day playing with the children, together with the teacher we could see the first smile on his face. In that moment we realised that it was worth all the effort to make him stay in the nursery, no matter how hard it was to achieve this.

Today I can't believe Amar is the same boy I met in October last year. It's amazing to see how he plays with other children, runs laughing in the hall, answers when he is asked something and works together with his peers in order to achieve their level of social, intellectual development."



Amar

Cihei Children's Centre

After Tileagd, our second Children's Centre to be built was in Cihei. Each Children's Centre has a special focus and Cihei was for Abandoned, Neglected and Abused children. Romania has had difficulties in Child Care for many years, way back into the days of Communism and even after 16 years of Democratic freedom, too many children remain extremely vulnerable in homes suffering from poverty or alcohol abuse, or both. After working in the State Hospital for two years, Smiles were all too well aware of the inadequacies of the state system. Whilst we could do something in the hospital, we were always limited by authorities in doing what we believed was really needed. It therefore continued to be a 'frustrating' area to serve in.



Cihei Children's Centre

The Cihei Children's Centre provided a perfect environment to allow children at risk to come and be loved, to be cared for and helped to overcome the trauma they had experienced which often seriously affected them psychologically and well as physically. The facilities built were amazing and provide the children a real haven to grow up in. Smiles employs 8 staff to provide the 24/7 care but has been praying and waiting for the right couple to become 'House Parents' for the Centre allowing it to work more as a 'Family' home than a children's home.

In June, we are excited to be having House Parents arrive to lead the work. A couple called by God to serve in a children's centre several years ago, but have waited patiently for the Lord to reveal where that was to be. **We pray Mioara and Jony** will settle in quickly and continue to develop the wonderful work started and impacting little lives every day.

MAKE SMILES



Cristi

Georgi Opreanu, our Deputy Director of Smiles Romania, who oversees the Centre, shares about one child: *"Cristi came to the Cihei Children Centre in September 2006. He was 18 months old. His father is an alcoholic but his mother loved him, but she didn't know how to take care of him. At that time he didn't know how to walk, speak, feed himself, play or smile. Every time a man entered the Children Centre Cristi started to cry, because he associated men with the problems that he experienced in his past. During the night time he couldn't sleep and was crying until he felt that he was in safe hands. Now, because of the wonderful staff that take care of him in the children centre, he has learnt to walk, to eat, he has begun to speak; but more than that, he has learnt to play with other children. For us to see him smiling is like seeing the rainbow after the storm. It is a promise that these children can have a better life in the future."*

Gepiu was our third Children's Centre which opened in September 2006. The work in Gepiu is much more than the Children's Centre although 30 kids are helped every day there with school assistance, lunches, showers and even laundry facilities for the teenagers. Through the team of 6 staff, Gepiu also provides meals for the elderly, runs outreach work for the teens and is developing a small farm project. 13 Pigs are currently farmed, but chickens are planned for this year to provide both eggs and meat. A major horticultural project is planned with 400 sq meters of PolyTunnels being erected this Spring. With 6 hectares of agricultural land to be farmed, there is always a lot of work to do in Gepiu.

Mihai – team leader at Gepiu, highlights his thoughts on the Centre with these comments:

"Gabi is one of the teenagers from Gepiu whose life can see the influence of the work that is done in the Day Centre. Gabi, like several other children and teenagers in Gepiu, receive from us material support but more important, spiritual support. The Day Centre in Gepiu is the place where Gabi had the chance to get in contact with other people, to do her homework, to be encouraged in continuing her studies (initially because of her financial situation she had to stop her education), but now she is in high school and also doing some Christian courses. Her life has changed and now she serves God and she wants to go as a missionary in Africa. Our desire is that the Day Centre be the place where children's life are changed."



Gabi

Emergency Housing Unit

As an 'emergency' facility, one hopes it will not be used all the time, but since our **Emergency Housing** unit opened in May 2006, many have found refuge there from the trauma of being homeless, living rough or facing eviction due to financial difficulties. In October 2006, the social services department of Oradea approached Smiles to help them with a new programme – assisting victims of domestic abuse. Since Christmas, two ladies have come to us for safety and counselling to overcome the fear and terror created through their experiences. We were also able to respond in February to a lady who had been reduced to prostitution to survive. She wanted to get out of it but needed some 'special help' to achieve it. Smiles' was there to show love, explain **forgiveness and new hope – found only in Jesus** – whatever depths someone has sunk to due to the challenges of life getting on top of them.



EHU

Smiles Club



The Smiles Foundation is established with a primary objective through all its projects – to share the Love of the God with people and give Hope through the Good News of the Gospel. Outreach is achieved in a variety of ways, some in direct evangelism, but also through expressions of love and concern for those in need.

The Smiles Club, run by **Sarah Urwin**, a Smiles Missionary from England, leads one of our more direct Outreach opportunities. Sarah reports:

"Smiles Club has been a wonderful opportunity to disciple around 35 children in a very poor, almost unreached village called Sumugiu. It has been wonderful to see these children enthusiastically learning bible stories, memory verses, and gradually growing in their understanding of who Jesus is and what He has done for them. We are gradually trying to teach the children about becoming close to God and recently I was very moved to find a child crying after a prayer time. She was overwhelmed by the knowledge that God really loved her, and listened to her prayer. We really pray that God will use us to point the way to Christ for all of these children."

SHARE SMILES

Tileagd Church Build

Another direct means of Outreach is the work of Tileagd Community Church, started formally in June 2006, using the rooms of the Tileagd Complex that were still under construction. Sunday services were initially every two weeks, but the community the Church serves asked in January for them to be every week. So they are, and up to 100 people often gather for worship and teaching from Smiles part time Pastors - Ilie, Feri and Seraphim.



Church Design

A Church building has always been part of our Complex dream, but now we believe God wants this built. So we are launching an 'Official' Building Fund to see the money raised quickly so the Church can be built and used for urgently needed Worship, Fellowship and Discipleship. See the leaflet enclosed or check the web-site for more details.

Just **£71.50** will build and equip a square foot of the Church. Could you help with building a square foot? Do it now because if everyone does, the Church will be built and God's Kingdom will be extended on earth in Tileagd, Romania. For anyone, family or Church sponsoring 10 square feet (£715) a tree will be planted in the grounds of the Church and will be named in Honour of you or in Memory of a Loved one.

Mission Trips



Mission Centre

Mission Trips continue to be a great blessing to Smiles and those who come to Romania to experience the work first-hand and share in the lives of those we serve. Numerous trips are on offer in 2007, some in the summer are already full, but room is available on others. If you've never done a Mission trip to Romania before, start planning one now. Personally, as a Family or a Church Group, it will be an experience to change your life. Most of us think a Mission Trip is a time of service and giving to others. Well it is, but we assure you a Smiles Mission Trip will see you being served, you receiving from others and most important of all – **a Great Blessing from God in your life.**

Check the web-site or call now for details and availability.

Prize Draw Winners

We are also pleased to announce the Winners from our Prize Draw from the UK tour last year and Brick Book sponsors up to December 31st 2006.

Congratulations to our Winners:

England – Christine Hollidge from Axminster
Scotland – Morag Crossan from Dalmellington
Northern Ireland – David Wallace from Kilrea
Wales – Jo Carpenter from Haverfordwest



Margaret Wallace

Our 2006 Winner, **Margaret Wallace** from Troon, had this to say of her experience:

"When I won the SMILES prize of a trip to Romania I was over the moon. It was heart-rending but an absolutely wonderful trip and I will most certainly go back again.

The Mission Centre where we stayed was a safe haven to return to after a tiring and often emotional day.

We were so well cared for – great accommodation, great food and great company.

I was very moved by the compassion and devotion of the SMILES workers and I felt very privileged to be part of their work for a very short time.

I loved going with the social workers to visit the homeless, the elderly and the families who are in the food programme. The people are so friendly and welcomed us warmly into their homes. The poverty was shocking and I sometimes found this difficult to cope with.

I visited the Children's Hospital, the gypsy village, the Children's Centre and I helped build a wall of Mihai's house extension in Gepiu!!! There is just so much to do.

If you are reading this and you have not been on a SMILES trip yet then you must go and see for yourself. I promise you 'you will be blessed out of your socks.'

www.thesmilesfoundation.org

Finally, in this very packed Smiles Report, we want to ensure everyone knows our Development Associates for UK. These are the people you can contact for help, advice or resources for anything to do with the work of Smiles. We are also seeking an additional Development Associate for the northern half of England & Wales to join Anna in sharing the challenge of developing Smiles. This voluntary position requires an enthusiastic person committed to Charitable Missions work to deal with promotional opportunities through presentations in Churches & Schools as well as telephone support for Smiles volunteers. Anyone interested in the position should send their personal details to the Leeds office or telephone Anna for more information.



Anna Quelch

Anna Quelch – Development Associate for England and Wales

As DA for England and Wales it is my role and indeed pleasure to assist supporters with their fund raising. The Foundation relies on its supporters to enable the life changing work to continue. We have many resources available: Literature, Posters, Merchandise, PowerPoints, Sponsorship Forms together with a pack of tried and tested fundraising ideas. Our **Smiles Day on 5th May** is an opportunity to promote Smiles nationally with fundraising events and on 6th May encourage your church to have a short talk about the work of Smiles and hopefully take an offering. Please contact me for help, advice & support:

Telephone 01568-610971 or E-mail: anna@thesmilesfoundation.org



Ann Cowan

Ann Cowan – Development Associate for Scotland

I have been involved for some years now supporting Smiles and after two mission trips to Romania my passion to help has only increased. Encouraged by my family and their support and after prayerful consideration I accepted the position of Development Associate for Scotland just before Christmas '06.

The task, although daunting for me is fuelled by the desire to be part of and help increase the already great work that Smiles is doing. I believe that God is more than able to use what little talent I have to make it much greater and more effective if I rely on him and not myself. My aims are to increase awareness of Smiles in Scotland and to encourage the existing supporters in Scotland. I am happy to speak to anyone or go into schools or churches to talk about Smiles, so please feel free to contact me.

Telephone 07962-469567 or E-mail: anncowan@thesmilesfoundation.org



Penny Kennedy

Penny Kennedy – Development Associate for Northern Ireland & Eire

Preliminary meetings have taken place with regard to setting up Regional Groups throughout Northern Ireland in Ballymena/Coleraine, Richhill, Dungannon/Enniskillen and Ardstraw. The aim of these Regional Groups is to exchange ideas and experiences; to encourage folk to go on mission trips; to plan presentations; to organise fundraising activities and to raise the profile of The Smiles Foundation in the area. We hope to focus our fundraising activities this year on raising money for the new Dental Facility in Tileagd. Anyone interested in being part of any of these groups or in starting a new group in a different area, please get in touch with me.

Telephone 028-9059-3446 or E-mail: penny@thesmilesfoundation.org

We are so thankful for your interest in the Smiles Foundation

God Bless you and Thank You for all you do.

In Christ

The Smiles Foundation Team



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