



series 3 - edition 10 NEWSLETTER

Autumn-Winter 2020 Your update on Smiles Projects in Romania

Welcome to our Autumn-Winter 2020 Newsletter

What a year 2020 is turning out to be!
No one could have anticipated the
challenges we would face this year.

All our plans lined up for the year have
largely been impossible to fulfil and instead, left us with immense
difficulties in moving forward.

Of course, that doesn't mean we won't move forward because
Smiles is accustomed to battling the difficulties to achieve the
objective. With God on our side, we already have the victory, so we
just need to be focused and committed to what we have been called
to do. One positive aspect of this crazy year, has been the
opportunity, provided through less activity on the ground, to plan for
the future. We have done more planning this past year than for a
very long time. That has been good.

In September 2019, I sat calmly with my Management Team in
Romania and discussed plans for the decade ahead. Whilst many of
those ideas are still valid and being worked on, we now have the
COVID impact to deal with, and that is severe for just about every
charitable/mission organisation in the world – Smiles included.
I am excited with the progress being made in formulating the plans
for the years ahead. 2020 will soon end and for sure I believe 2021
will be so much better. Thank you for your continued support in all
we try to do, and I look forward to sharing our exciting
opportunities as we progress through the rest of this year and
into the next. God bless you all.

Kevin Hoy,
CEO The Smiles Foundation



Mask - the symbol of 2020 by Adi Matis

About six months ago, when we all were suddenly
made aware of this virus, despite the worrying news, we were
convinced that very soon all will be back to normal. At that time, wearing a mask was
something new, unusual, often funny, but temporary, we were all sure. Yet, after so much time, it is
obvious now that the mask is here to stay and in the meantime became part of our daily routine.

Wearing the mask is an iconic image for this year. But I am afraid not only as a protective
measure, but also for the way people are able to interact with each other. This "protection"
easily becomes "prevention" and not only against the virus, but against those around us,
friends, neighbours, even family... We are hiding behind it, from the virus and people
equally. Stay safe, but isolated. Protected, but alone. Hidden to the world.

We sure hope this will not continue indefinitely. There are many voices to talk about the
side-effects of this limitation and we all feel it. We miss the smiles and laughter. Wearing a
mask becomes more and more a symbol of restriction and limitation on behalf of
protection and security. This feels unnatural. So, while for the moment we need it, we
hope we will not need it for much longer - definitely not as long as it becomes a
symbol of isolation and solitude, more than anything else!





The projects under 100 Love Club were always about showing love and acceptance to all those desperate for a friend who would understand their problems and will do something to help. Through the years, we have been doing exactly that under numerous programmes that were run in Smiles. From offering accommodation and assistance to victims of domestic abuse in our Mierlau Shelter or various support for communities like Salard, to helping children with after school lessons in Gepiu or delivering Sacks of Smiles... all done with love and compassion.

Loving and lifting

Ultimately, across our projects, the greatest need we have is for a loving heart and it's just a shame that most of the people around us will not see it - those underprivileged who need help, actually need a person first rather than food or clothes or even shelter. A person who would care and be there for them, showing they love them and wanted something better for them - but that is the most difficult to find. A loving heart is a very precious thing!

Most of the time during this period we were trying to see everyone, to visit and encourage folk amidst these very unsettling times. As everything was very restricted, we needed to adapt the activities we would have had otherwise run, so we had less meetings with fewer people, making sure we respect the distance, to the best of our abilities. In Gepiu we still get together with our younger friends, because they - and we - value very much the opportunity to meet and discuss. We want to see that continue.

All in all, like everywhere else, despite the inevitable reduction in activity, we feed from the thought that soon a new and refreshed set of opportunities will open up again for us, to enable us to continue loving and lifting people up.



Hope is something we cannot have too much of, neither can we give too much away! The Smiles 200 Hope Club is about helping and restoring families, individuals, communities, all in need of getting a new vision for their own future; moving from hopeless to overcomers, in their own situations.

The Field Project, which encompasses Family Care and Homeless Programmes, was very busy during the pandemic months. We visited our beneficiaries almost on a daily basis, trying to provide for them even more than other times, as the whole set of restrictions and limitations affected some of them very significantly. The work was less, the jobs fewer and money for their daily expenses often missed. So, we wanted to help and we did so, even though at times we were very limited and restricted ourselves. The Homeless visits were reduced as well, given the limited interaction allowed.

Rapa Community, as well as the other groups we work with, were visited often and support was given either through the church or directly to people, when food packages were delivered, medicine and other necessities as well. Also families from Corbești were visited and they received according to their needs. We continued to add new families to our support list. There were at least 7 new families we started to visit and some of them indeed faced serious difficulties and will need to be assisted for quite a while.

We want to say thank you for still enabling us to care for these people, even though sometimes no doubt you felt helpless. The pandemic is not easy to take by anyone, therefore we appreciate your support! God bless!

Giving hope



Growing

Tileagd Gypsy Community has always been one of the groups we tried to help and assist in the best way we could. Not only through the

Educational programmes, which were

and still are very important for the children, but also with Family Support, as we always tried to have a holistic approach to their progress and development.

In the past months, as we had to face the multitude of issues generated by the COVID-19, we decided to provide some extra support, in order to make sure families had the basic needs covered, like food, clothing and medicine.

The Smiles 300 Grow Club has endeavoured to encourage and motivate people from Tileagd to grow and change their vision for the future in a way that will ensure they won't need assistance for ever, but instead they will one day be able to find ways forward by themselves. We believe such times are close, but there is still a lot to be done. That's why we initiated an after-school programme for the kids from the Tileagd Gypsy Community, starting this October, so that they will still be assisted in their education, even after ceasing the functioning of the official school in our Complex facility.

We feel a lot has been achieved and we have good plans for the future and thank you for being a part of them!



Sharing Jesus

As a permanent aim of all projects from Smiles 400 Faith Club is the amazing achievement of someone understanding they need Jesus and that He is the only one to really change things.

While we were very disappointed to not have been able to do camps at Dezna Outreach Centre, neither could we visit communities during the summer, with COPs, the Outreach Department was still pursuing its main focus, sharing Jesus with people and encouraging them to follow Him.

As soon as the group meetings were allowed, although with reduced numbers, we were very happy to start again praying and worshipping with our friends from Tileagd, Rapa and more recently, Mierlau. Pastor Vasile and his friends, a very committed and devoted team, were seeing these groups as often as possible, without letting the pandemic restrictions to prevent the spiritual food that people need!

So, as three of our friends from Mierlau decided they wanted to be baptized, and we are always in favour of such decisions, we took the opportunity to organise a Baptismal Service, for the first time, in Mierlau. The invited pastors and our own team were thrilled to see this happening, as we said before, we always enjoy and rejoice when people decided to give a public testimony of their decision to follow Christ.

The plans for future Outreach programmes are amazing and we believe God will bless us with good people to take part in implementing them. We do not want to stay defeated in front of the complicated times we face today, but rather press on and continue, in various ways, to share Jesus and help people in their spiritual development. Thank you for being part of this too, all efforts are making sure we bring our contribution to enlarge the Kingdom even more!
Many blessings!



Caring

Our Residential Care continued to offer love and support for many elderly. Despite the difficulties, we did not put anything on hold but quite the opposite, we tried to go an extra mile and make sure everyone was safe, protected, medically supervised and cared for in the best way we could, as well as providing various activities as usual.

We were also protected by God and thankfully there weren't any major problems, although the virus managed to find us, despite the best measures being taken. We have been through lockdowns, procedures, inspections, but overall, we did very well, much better than many other centres, where unfortunately many elderly had a lot to endure and suffer.

We are grateful to God and to you, for your support, and we all hope that soon life will be able to return to normal, as we always encourage our residents to think! Continue to pray for us and be encouraged knowing He is our best protection! God bless you!



The Smiles Foundation wants to express their sincere thanks and appreciation for your support over the years and particularly through this difficult time of pandemic. These months were difficult in many ways, but we felt encouraged and motivated to continue our work, knowing there are many supporters out there who believe what we do is valuable and important, and so we carry on, for the benefit of many!

Thank You!



Getting the chance in the past months to get together, virtually, on several occasions, helped us understand once again that God has people ready to support a good cause, and this is very encouraging for us to know.

Also, the past months represented an unexpected but welcome opportunity to think about and consider the future programmes that will be run by The Smiles Foundation. We have not lost time being forced to reduce the work, but instead we were thinking and planning for the next stages, and it is all very exciting. We'll be very happy to share with you all soon, but reading the monthly web updates will help you see where we're heading and you'll know what to expect!

We wish you all the best and please stay safe and secure through these times! Trust God for protection and be assured He knows where we're going - we might be unsure, but He is not! Take care, dear friends!

Please pray that:

... despite all the bad news around us, we will be able to continue our work and the support will not be missing.
(Nina - Accounts)

... our residents will not suffer from the COVID-19 effects and soon a cure will be found, before too many people will be affected.
(Carmen - Residential Care)

... Sminro will do well and the plants we grow in the glasshouse will be sold in time to the clients.
(Simona - Sminro)

... we'll always be grateful for the protection and for the health we receive from Him, during good or bad times!
(Ghiury - Tileagd School and Nursery)

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The Smiles
FOUNDATION



The Smiles Foundation UK
PO Box HK70, Leeds, LS11 6YR
Telephone: 0113-276-5060
Registered UK Charity No. 1087961

The Smiles Foundation USA
10645 N. Tatum Blvd # 200471
Phoenix, AZ 85028
Telephone: 423-239-9525
Registered USA Charity # 860957704

www.thesmilesfoundation.org
info@thesmilesfoundation.org

 The Smiles Foundation
Romania, US and US