



FARA Charity Annual Review 2019



FARA Charity transforms
the lives of the most vulnerable
and disadvantaged in Romania

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CHAIRMAN

Jane Nicholson MBE

ROYAL PATRON

HRH The Prince of Wales

TRUSTEES

Richard Chalk
Siobhan Cross
Lucinda Dawson
Philip Groves
Mary-Jo Hill
Donald Morton
Jane Nicholson
Michael Nicholson
Odile Rimbart

THE ROMANIAN TEAM

Regina Bulai – Executive Director and Tackling Poverty Through Education Director
Ioana Giurisici – Services for Children with Disabilities Director
Carmen Netedu – Child Services Director and Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities Director
Carmen Pop – Youth Services Director

OUR VISION

Our **Vision** is of a world in which everyone can live with freedom and dignity in a loving, protective environment, experiencing fulfilled lives whatever their ability.

OUR MISSION

Our **Mission** is to transform the lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged living in Romania's poorest communities.

OUR VALUES

Our **Values** underpin all our work and are shared by all those involved in carrying out our mission both in the UK and Romania.

FARA strives to build a just society serving the common good, based on Christian values of love, justice, dignity and respect, welcoming people of all faiths and none.

- ◉ We act with kindness and compassion
- ◉ We respect the human dignity of every person
- ◉ We believe in practical hands-on care
- ◉ We strive to build a just society
- ◉ We responsibly collaborate across all sections of society
- ◉ We strive to be a best practice organisation

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Fundatia FARA is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation founded in Romania in 1991. It is the partner NGO of FARA Foundation a Registered Charity in the UK.

I founded the charity to transform the lives of children suffering neglect and abuse, abandoned in Romania's notorious institutions. my inspiration and vision in those early years remain at the heart of FARA today.

Our mission today is to transform the lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged living in Romania's poorest communities.

FARA cares for the most vulnerable social groups facing extreme poverty, addressing social inclusion and poverty reduction. Operating in three regions of Romania, fulfilling lives, rebuilding futures, and spreading hope. Our work is lifechanging for many families living in abject poverty, for children and adults with disability and youth at risk.

In 2019, the 28th year of the FARA Foundation working in Romania, we have widened our reach to more than 600 beneficiaries across 10 programmes. From giving nourishing food to a child to ensure school attendance, to providing a secure life to young people with learning disabilities rescued from the state institutional system, and providing vital therapy services to children with disabilities, steps towards independent living for young care leavers from the poorest communities and providing a nurturing home to children, **we focus on longevity of care with family at the heart of all we do.**

In the next year we will look at increasing the sustainability of FARA in Romania by developing a fundraising and advocacy team, to fight for the rights of our beneficiaries and to start the process of funding the programmes in Romania.

I thank all our staff, beneficiaries, volunteers, and supporters of FARA in Romania and ask you to continue helping us to grow the FARA family.

There is still so much to do, but the strategy to reach more beneficiaries by 2023 and to become more sustainable gives us a true and strong direction and we will carry on working to meet our mission.

Thank you,



Jane Nicholson

Founder and Chairman of FARA Charity



“What counts in the end is not how much we achieve
but how much we love.”

St. Teresa of Calcutta

FARA Foundation is a registered charity in the UK and Romania, founded in 1991 to support the poorest and most vulnerable children and young people in Romania.

Jane Nicholson founded the charity to help the children she saw suffering a life of neglect and abuse in Romania’s notorious state institutions. The word fara mean “without” in Romanian and the charity was created to provide a family for those without.

Collaborating across all sections of society and cultivating relationships and partnerships, FARA charity is one of the largest NGO’s working in Romania. FARA Charity strives to build a just society serving the common good with values based on Christian roots, welcoming people of all faiths and none.

FARA Charity cares for Romania’s poorest families, helping to heal abuse and trauma amongst marginalized and discriminated children and adults. Giving security and love to those who need it most – fulfilling lives, rebuilding futures, spreading hope.



WHY ROMANIA?

The situation in Romania over the last 30 years has changed, but there are still “more than 50% of children suffering from severe deprivation”

Opening doors for Europe's children.

The drive to close the institutions has been the focus across Europe and Romania but the issues that put children into the care system have not been addressed and so many children and young people still suffer. Today there are approximately 7000 children living in 163 institutions. The Romanian Government has been instructed by the EU to close these institutions and they intend to complete this task by 2026.

Despite efforts to change the system, many vulnerable social groups continue to face extreme poverty, social exclusion, and discrimination. Families living in poverty lack support leaving children vulnerable to school drop-out or being placed into social service provision and the poverty cycle endures; young adults are leaving state institutions without key life skills, at risk of social exclusion and homelessness; children with disabilities are unable to access crucial therapies and education, and adults with learning disabilities remain in institutional care.

- The three main causes for children being separated from their family and entering public care are poverty, abuse and neglect, and disability.
World bank 2015.
- Approximately 5000 children leave institutional care each year, being vulnerable and risking poverty and/or social exclusion.
Unicef and Romanian Ministry of Youth and Sports 2015-2020



WHO WE HELP AND HOW

Services for Children with Disabilities



Providing vital services for marginalized and deprived families. Giving access to therapies and specialist education for children in 3 day-centres.

Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities



Support and care for adults with learning disabilities to live a fulfilled life within a community.

Tackling Poverty Through Education



Community-based education and social support programme for families, breaking the cycle of rural poverty.



Youth Services



Pathway of care for young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds and institutions.

Child Services



Loving supportive family life for vulnerable and neglected children

WHAT WE ACHIEVED IN 2019

FAMILY HOME

Loving and supportive family life for vulnerable and neglected children. The children are supported to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment with a trauma informed approach.

“My time with FARA made me into the man I am now, a good man, happy and satisfied. Thank you very much for all the help, love and care I received”

IMPACT

- 12 school pupils
- 3 students at university
- 3 young people in employment
- 1 student was awarded a prize at the “We support performance” Event, organized by the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection in Suceava
- 2 young people over 18 moved out of the Family Home for independent life with employment and homes of their own
- 57 day trips



Residential care for adults with learning disabilities from a childhood living in state institutions, offering a loving, supportive life. Giving the adults a chance to flourish and to develop their social, spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing.

“The adults feel at home, the therapeutic activities help them to discover communication skills, community activities help them feel accepted, involvement in home activities and the garden gives them a feeling of independence, and caring with gentleness, patience, and love make them feel nurtured.”

Carmen Netedu

IMPACT

- 15 day trips
- 1320 hours of gardening, painting and craft activities
- 50 hours spent at a community centre solving manual skills
- 1 pilgrimage
- 3 months of peer visits to adults with disabilities in the community
- 3 day project celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- 6 month project with local school increasing community involvement



YOUTH SERVICES

Residential service for young adults at risk of homelessness or from state care offering counselling, training for employment and independent life skills for up to two years.

“I am still growing into a well-educated and responsible adult. Soon I will go on my own path. I will always keep FARA in my heart and in my soul.”

IMPACT

- 48 young people employed
- 10 young people in training
- 18 young people in education
- 32 young people left the programme for an independent life
- 30 young people were offered support on issues including health, accommodation, parenting, accessing community resources, legal situations, work related issues, interpersonal relations and conflict management.



SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Therapy Centres providing, free of charge, therapy, and special needs education to children with complex needs from marginalised and deprived families. The 3 centres care for more than 200 children a week, providing physio, speech, and sensory therapies for children with a range of disabilities.

“St. Teresa’s Centre is my soul family, it has been the best support and help for me and my child. I have no words to thank them for everything they have done for my child.”

IMPACT

- **672** families received family support packages
- **77** children received regular physiotherapy
- **73** children took part in activities in the community
- **121** children received speech therapy
- **111** children received group therapy
- **197** children received sensory therapy
- **52** children integrated into mainstream education
- **266** parents received counselling



TACKLING POVERTY THROUGH EDUCATION

Community-based education and social support programme providing children with free daily hot food and resources to support them in completing their kindergarten and primary education.

“FARA is a new family for me, here I learn many things, such as writing and reading. Before I got here I did not know how to read or what school was. FARA is the most beautiful place for me.”

IMPACT

- **44,200** hot lunches for primary school children (year round, excluding August)
- **120** families received support packages during the school holidays
- **15,575** snacks for the Kindergarten children
- **200** children receive daily extra tuition support
- **200** families receive counselling throughout the year
- **75** households benefitted from a ‘medical caravan’ introduced in October 2019
- **264** families, with a total of 421 siblings of the FARA beneficiaries, received support packages (including: school supplies, clothing, food, personal care, cleaning, medicines)
- **100** winter jackets supplied
- **5** secondary school children received support with securing accommodation near school campus, liaising with teachers, monitoring attendance, clothing, personal hygiene & food
- **200** back to school packs
- **45** school uniforms
- **289** children and their 421 siblings received Christmas gifts



FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Highest peak in Europe

As a Romanian living and working in London Edward Dijmarescu was keen to raise money for children in his home country, and so he got in touch with FARA. Edward's goal was to summit Mount Elbrus in Russia standing at an impressive 18,510 ft. The climb went well, and Edward's training and preparation paid off. In total Edward raised £2,285.44.

"I feel we all have a social responsibility to help others less fortunate than us"

A year of challenges

In 2019 Hannah set herself a challenge, 12 events in 12 months. Hannah's dedicated commitment, interval training and gym sessions meant she successfully completed eleven 10K runs and one half marathon to finish the year off with a bang.

"FARA is close to my heart, I appreciate what I have and saw this as a great opportunity to give something back"

Charity bike ride

Silviu Chirila is a regular fundraiser for FARA; in 2017 he cycled from London to Bucharest, in 2018 he took part in the Bucharest Swimathon and held a New Year's Eve fundraiser. In 2019 Silviu celebrated his birthday by cycling from Bucharest to Constanta on the Black Sea coast, raising money for FARA at the same time.

"I now feel part of the family. I keep choosing FARA when fundraising as I have a great belief in their mission, I feel that more disadvantaged children should have a better chance for a normal life."

Birthdays on Facebook

Facebook fundraising grew throughout 2019, with a very positive £4,325.00 total.



Family Support Appeal

Family sits at the heart of FARA and so in June 2019 we launched the Family Support Appeal, focussing on helping to prevent family breakdown, to assist families in creating a stable, loving environment where the whole family can develop and prosper. The appeal raised £1,512.77.

Kindness at Christmas

In 2019 our Christmas appeal focussed on children living in poverty. A life of poverty means children are more at risk of being separated from their family, entering public care and remaining poor in their adult life due to inequalities of opportunity. £1766.71 was raised.



FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- Launch of the Care Leavers Project, working with children from the age of 14 living in state-provided care settings in the Satu Mare region, preparing them for when they leave care. This will aim to meet the need upstream in order to have a positive impact on the future downstream.
- A new Home For Life will be opened so as to meet the growing need. As the process of deinstitutionalisation continues more and more adults with learning disabilities will need a loving, nurturing home, and FARA is well placed to provide this kind of care.
- Development of a Day Centre for people with disabilities in the community. The centre will be a place of support for the adults and their family, providing activities and services including occupational therapy and psychological support to help people flourish, create friendships and live a more fulfilled life.
- Family support hubs in rural areas in Suceava County.

As of March 2020, due to the Covid pandemic, future developments are under review.

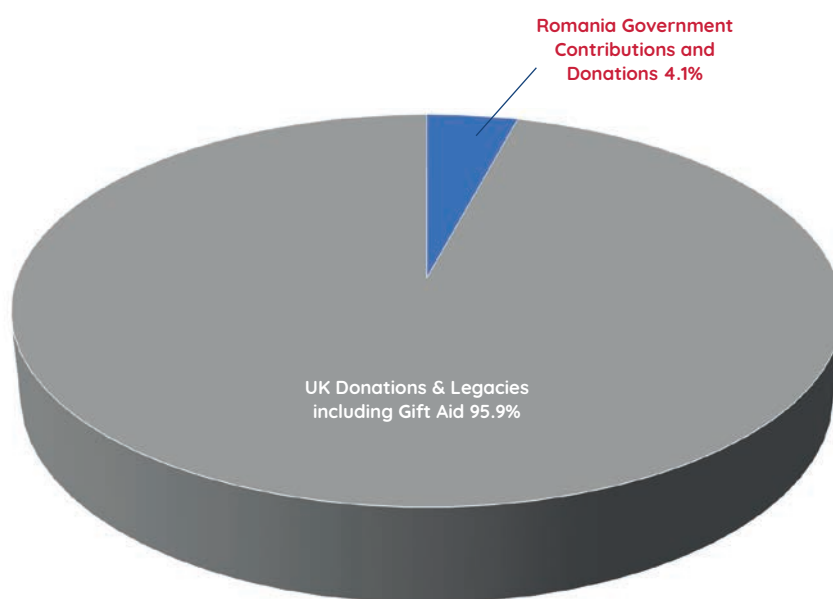


INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2019

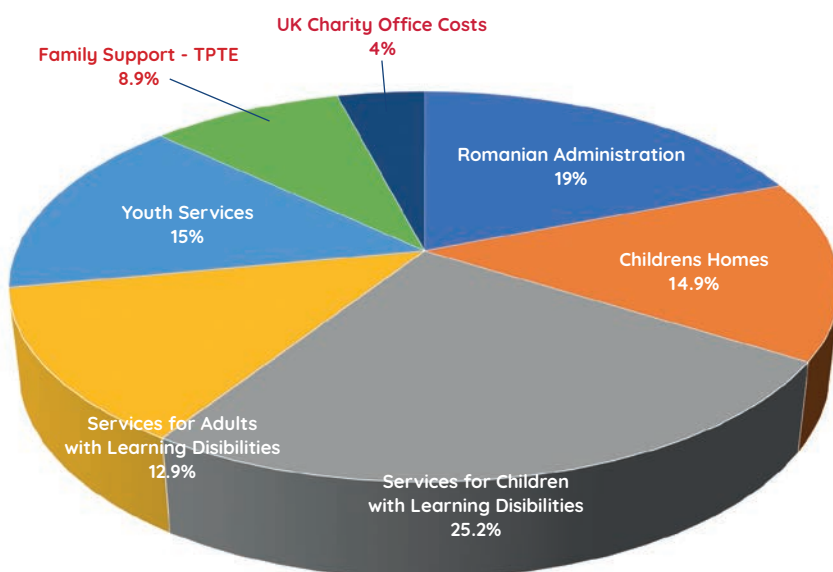
In 2019 FARA received 4.1% of its funds directly from Romania while also benefitting from subsidies in kind through partnerships with local social services. However, it continues to rely heavily on funds raised in the UK. Obtaining direct contributions continues to be a struggle with decreasing donations from UK trusts, regular donors and sponsors due mainly to the difficult economic climate.

FARA's chain of charity shops in the London area continues to provide the majority of funding for our programmes in Romania. FARA is extremely grateful to the following for their generous support in 2019: Mara Society and Proofpoint Marketing.

HOW WE RAISED FUNDS IN 2019



HOW WE SPENT FUNDS IN 2019



RESERVES POLICY

The position on cash reserves is reviewed at each Trustees meeting and the reserves policy is examined annually when the financial statements are being finalised.

The crucial measure of the Charity's ability to continue its care provision in Romania is its level of liquidity cover. Accordingly, in reviewing and establishing the reserves policy, the Trustees have considered both the requirement to set aside funds for the long-term future support required in Romania, together with the short-term requirements for readily realisable assets should the economy not behave as forecast. It is acknowledged that the income from the Charity shops, which provides significant sums annually, carries risks and can be affected by a sudden downturn in economic conditions.

The Trustees have therefore considered it prudent to retain, as a minimum, cash reserves in excess of one year's projected charitable expenditure. This cash is considered as an integral part of the charity's overall investment portfolio. For the year to 31 December 2020 the net annual expenditure on the FARA Programmes in Romania is projected to be approximately £1.48m.

The Trustees recognise the long-term commitment of the Charity to an increasing number of children and adults in its care. FARA's responsibilities extend to three homes for adults with learning disabilities. These are permanent homes for the adults who will require a substantial amount of care for the rest of their lives, the running costs of which can be measured in excess of £20 million over the expected lifetime of the residents. The Trustees are able to earmark unrestricted funds for particular future charitable purposes in accordance with the Charity's objectives.

In light of the above, the Trustees took the decision that funds totalling £7.4m being the total value of the freehold property held in its wholly owned subsidiary and fund investments should be specifically set aside and designated for the longer-term commitment to children and adults who are likely to remain within the Charity's care for the duration of their lifetime.

The Trustees anticipate being able to add to this designated fund in excess of £.5 million in 2019 but the medium to longer term picture is a lot more unpredictable due to the COVID19 pandemic and the impact on the fundraising capacity of the Charity's High Street shops. The Trustees are very much aware of the fact that we can only address the enormous poverty by fighting it at grass root level. Empowerment of rural communities, education and the development of sustainable livelihood is essential to address the extreme poverty levels in rural northern Romania.

This requires a long term financial commitment and FARA will use its reserves to develop programmes in this area. The Trustees will continue to keep the reserves policy under regular review as the impact of the current economic conditions on the Charity becomes clear.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further financial information can be found in the document Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements for the Year Ending 31 December 2019. This can be obtained from the charity office at the address below or on the Charity Commission website or at Companies House.

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