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Annual Report



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WELCOME



Raluca Negulescu-Balaci Executive Director

They say that it takes 21 days to form a new habit. I don't know whether this is true, however, I strongly believe that the first three years are crucial when it comes to the activity of an organization. We have just completed them – confidently, with hope and courage. We were guided by an array of feelings and emotions, that most of the time were conflicting, but we kept going and happily reached the end of this period of time. We successfully took roots both in Romania and in India and now we wish to provide all the conditions for them to grow as strong as possible.

This year was also one of adaptation, and we had been striving to carry on the projects we started, regardless of the pandemic situation. Although the digital inclusion is a priority for us, our experience in the communities has shown us how valuable the hybrid contexts are, where the intersection between online and face-to-face meetings offer the children in poor families the best educational opportunities and are a source of joy. And one of the greatest joys of this year is the successful organization of summer camps, a moment when our community reconnected in person, after 2020, when most interactions took place online. The children participating in our programs were happy to meet the volunteers and they spent quality time together.

In 2021 we looked far ahead, however, we also looked behind, at what we could have done better. We sought to learn from the experience of the previous years and improve our intervention – in order to get the most powerful impact, adjusted to the needs of our programs' beneficiaries. Despite the pandemic context and the restrictions in place, all our three programs went on: Future Acceleration Program, Nurture Teachers' Potential and Early Education Forward, and our intervention meant not only expanding to another geographical area in Romania or including new recipients in our programs, but also concluding new partnerships or getting involved in new initiatives. You will find more details in the following pages.

Our volunteers gave us a reason to be extremely happy. They have been supporting us throughout the 2000 volunteering hours, generously offering their time and knowledge to the children. The volunteers' involvement encourage us to expand our programs, both geographically and content-wise.

Before I leave you to read our 2021 annual report, I would like to thank all the people who are part of this beautiful story: the foundation's team, volunteers, mentors, donors, Board members and partners, and last but not least, to the children and to their families. Together, with everyone's effort, we will successfully foster the change we so much need in the world.



Manifesto


We set off in January 2019, with a vision of a world defined by compassion, where we build the best educational context for children from poor families in Romania and India. It was then that we sowed the seeds of our first plans, unaware of what would happen just one year after we made our first step in the world. 2020 was about courage, about mobilization. We adapted to the pandemic, responded fast and found valuable solutions within a short time, in order to continue to support the children and families participating in our programs.



But here we are in 2021, with extra challenges brought by the pandemic in the lives of the children in our programs. We consolidated our educational interventions and we adjusted them to an unstable educational context that further deepened the educational gap for the children we work with. What did we achieve? We expanded our intervention – both geographically and in terms of approach, we strengthened the relationships with our strategic partners, with volunteers and the children included in the programs, we entered into new partnerships and explored new possibilities to amplify the impact of our interventions.



Programs

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Future Acceleration PROGRAM



„He really got better at Maths and Romanian! I really did not expect that!”, the mother of S. in Mihăileni, Botoșani, said.

This program, which is our flagship intervention, is meant to identify 11 to 16 years old children living in the vulnerable communities in Romania and India and provide them with an integrated support package in order to mitigate the risk of school dropout and stimulate their potential in the long term.

Therefore, we built a holistic approach which fosters the children’s motivation in education and takes over the burden of poverty and marginalization, through a 360 degree support package consisting in: monthly scholarships, learning activities, clothes, school stationery supplies, health monitoring, digital equipment necessary to children in order to attend online activities.

Our partners in Romania who helped us throughout 2021 unlock the children’s extraordinary potential are:

- Policy Center for Roma and Minorities — Bucharest, Ferentari
- Inimă de Copil Foundation — Galați
- Bună ziua, Copii din România Association — Vaslui
- Pro Patrimonio Foundation — Botoșani and Olt

2021 was the year when we expanded our roots to a new community in Olt county. Together with Pro Patrimonio team, we held discussions with the schools, and we welcomed the first 20 participants in the programme.

With the support of our strategic partners in India, Dream a Dream, we offered support not only to the children enrolled in the programs and to their families, but also to other children affected by the pandemic and to their teachers. Throughout 2021 we offered support to over 5000 children in India and we offered 200 scholarships.

We carried on

We began the year safely and wanted all the children in our communities to have everything they needed for the second school semester.

We endeavoured to make the tutoring classes as useful and enjoyable as possible for the students. And, although it was difficult for them to interact online and stay focused during lessons, our activity assessment questionnaire revealed that over 80% of the children see the online lessons as being useful and very useful. We offered 1,500 online private tutoring classes throughout the year.



With the support of 8 volunteers from UiPath, we continued to organize the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) workshops for the children attending the program.

We provided healthcare services to the children enrolled in the program, such as health tests, eye, dental, gynaecological and nutrition examinations. On top of the support provided in Bucharest,

we offered preventative healthcare services to the children in Cluj, Botoșani, Galați and Vaslui, via the mobile caravan.

Together with our partners at Zâna Merciluță, we continued to organize webinars about dental hygiene and travelled, with our mobile caravan, to the communities in Cluj, Galați, Vaslui and Botoșani.



We adjusted

After a long pandemic period, the children started to increasingly feel the need for socializing, interacting in person and having fun with their friends. Due to the health-related pandemic restrictions, we were unable to organize one camp with all the children, however, we managed to organize six camps, one in each community. “Everything that happened during the camp was nice, I am looking forward to the next camp”, one of the 200 children attending the camp said. Workshops about communication, programming, teamwork, leadership, interactive robots, science experiments, exploring the virtual reality world – all these moments were appreciated and eagerly awaited by the children. “What I loved during the camp

is that we were all congratulated, although the outcome of our work was not quite the expected one”, another participant added.



We witnessed the extraordinary journey of the “Acasă - My Home” documentary and were happy to see the impressive number of awards received in the numerous competitions it participated in. And although it did not make the shortlist for the Oscars, there was great satisfaction in seeing that the story of Enache family (which is representative for so many families in vulnerable situations) was told to such a wide audience. We continued to support the family materially (monthly scholarships, school stationery supplies, clothing etc.) and in terms of social integration.

We created

Together with the British Council, we organized several online photography storytelling workshops to help the children improve their English.

Together with Salvați Copiii România (Save the Children Romania), we offered the children “Ora de net” (The Internet Hour) sessions, in order to help them become aware of the risks they are facing with online environments. Online safety and fake news were the main topics. “We no longer know what is true and what is not true. I truly believed that all the information I find online is true, because someone checks it before posting it”, one of the students participating in this sessions said. The 9 sessions that were organized were attended by 150 children in the Future Acceleration Program.



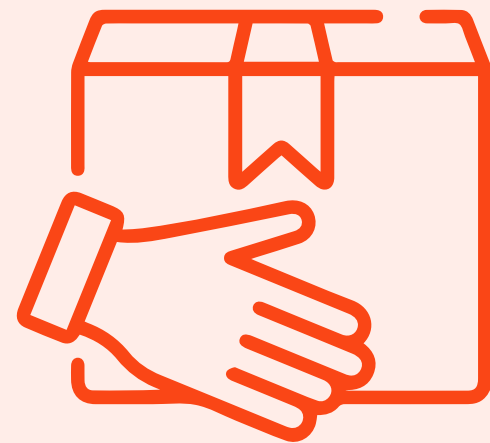
Most of the time, children in vulnerable communities lack role models and perspectives that inspire them. This was the reason why we organized, together with 6 UiPath volunteers, several online meetings called “Inspirational Speakers”. During the 9 sessions that were held, the speakers told the children about their job, their career path, the challenges they met, their failures and successes. “I liked that you were honest with us. I wish you great success in your job!”

Outcome 2021

in Romania



We helped 349 children in the 6 communities in Romania where we intervene.



Overall, we offered 12 tonnes of parcels, of which over 2.6 tonnes of school stationery supplies, 5.7 tonnes of food, 2.7 tonnes of hygiene products and 1.1 tonnes of clothes.

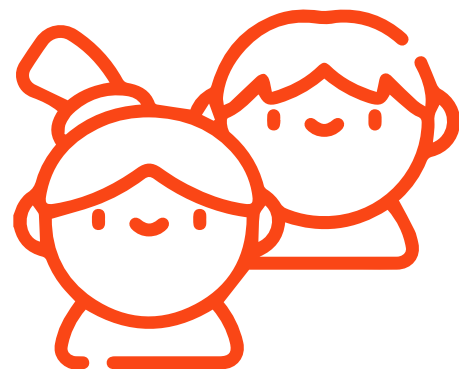


The children attending the programs received health-care services — over 300 medical examinations for eyes, teeth and nutrition.



The children spent 16.775 hours in online tutoring classes and 3.065 hours in non-formal education, of which 1.020 only in Digital Skills development workshops — RPA for Kids, Ora de Net or RoboHub.

In India



We supported over 5000 children.



We offered 200 scholarships.

Future Acceleration

PROGRAM STORIES



Ciprian Tehei, 44, is the foundation's local coordinator in Cluj. He's been working with and for children for 22 years: from foster care centres or in rural areas, where he has engaged in community development activities.

For three years now, he has been constantly in touch with the 36 children in the foundation's Future Acceleration Program and with their parents. He feels that his work here has already taken root. He likes the fact that he can help set up the safety net, which he thinks is built around every child that is part of the scholarship program. "We are setting up that safety net and it is up to us to instil in children and in their parents the desire to do more, to escape and overcome the vulnerabilities they were facing when entering the program."

The children and their families that Ciprian looks after have experienced some difficult social situations, sometimes on the verge of survival. "I often wonder if I could ever face all these struggles," says Ciprian, "they managed to cope with them, even if they were left with scars, with wounds that are still oozing, it hasn't been easy on them. But they carry with them a life experience for which I value and appreciate them, but also a burden, which is like a terribly

heavy load and can pull them down. It can hold them captive in that cycle of vulnerability.”

For instance, one of the children is part of his family’s third generation of people who are trying to break the vulnerability and poverty cycle. Ciprian couldn’t have succeeded in helping this boy stay in school, attend the tutoring lessons, dream about what he wishes to become, if he hadn’t worked alongside with his family. “We help them make changes that don’t scare them off and boost their confidence,” Ciprian says. Both the teenager’s grandmother and mother grew up in foster care, and when Ciprian first met them, they were all living in a makeshift basement. The boy’s father had died a few years ago, and his grandmother and mother were doing the best they could with this shelter.



The place was not something that could have been renovated, so he had to find another living place for the family to move to quickly. The boy even said that he no longer wanted to go to school because his classmates laughed at the mildew smell of his clothes. Ciprian and the social workers from the city hall managed to find an apartment for them, and the Directorate of Social Work has undertaken to pay their rent for three years.

Ciprian stood by them in the days when they moved into the new house. He helped them set up the TV and the table where they would eat together. “Things have just been falling into place,” says Ciprian; “they sent me a video for Christmas with one of the ladies baking homemade cozonac (a traditional sponge cake). It is a level of trust and some kind of relationship, which, in this context, comes on top of what we offer through the scholarships. We build a partnership, trust, respect, responsibility, as that’s what’s missing in their lives.”

Other children come from single-parent families, in which the mothers are raising them all by themselves after having managed to survive domestic violence. “These ladies have had the strength and courage to break that cycle, to run away from their communities, to start everything all over again, while being afraid and traumatized,” says Ciprian, “because when I met them three years ago, we couldn’t even have a talk that made much sense, because they were extremely emotional, they burst into tears and they were so tensed that I could literally feel their nerves”.

In one of these cases, the mother was repeatedly assaulted and miraculously escaped. Her son was left with feelings of guilt, on the one hand – because he didn’t defend his mother – and feeling of regret, on the other hand, because he had to leave the place where he had lived. The 16-year-old boy is now in psychological counselling through the program, as he had a hard time dealing with his trauma.

There are other families living in poor communities on the outskirts of the city, sometimes in makeshift little houses. This results in a dependency which does not help them move forward. But, the mother of one of the girls enrolled in the Foundation’s program in Cluj became so responsible that she herself enrolled in the “Second Chance” educational program to carry on with her studies. With the same help from the city hall for three years, she rented an apartment and moved out of the yard where she was living. She has recently scored another victory as she also got her driver’s license. Ciprian is proudly telling her story, saying that “she got herself out of that place and knowing that you have your own space, that you

are not stuck in the same phase over and over again, matters a great deal”.

Whenever he talks about the support given to the children’s parents, through his work as a local coordinator, Ciprian makes a comparison: “It’s pretty much the same as planting your ski pole, you never put it down, you just incline your body as if you were leaning into it. But you don’t actually do it, it’s just that it’s important to know that there’s someone there to rely on.”

Ciprian believes that support work is priceless for children and their families. “It makes me feel useful, and if I can make a difference, no matter how small, or if they turn their lives around to a certain extent and I had something to do with it, it means that I haven’t lived for nothing and that my life wasn’t meaningless.”

Becoming a footballer is the biggest dream of I., an 11-year-old boy who sees himself as “an ordinary kid, who’s sometimes well-behaved and other times naughty”. He is a midfielder, but he does just as well as a goalkeeper, and he would like to play for Romania. So he practices in the garden, on the grass, to avoid any injury, the skills he sees in Cristiano Ronaldo, his favourite football player.

Whenever he’s not playing ball, he goes hiking with his friends on the surrounding hills or rides his bike. He also plays in the yard with his two brothers, ages 6 and 13, or watches cartoons on YouTube, while snacking on a bag of popcorn. He’s close to his siblings and enjoys playing with them a lot more than with his classmates. “Home is better. Even if there are many children to play with at school, it’s not the same as playing with your siblings, getting along with them.”

He is well aware that school is important, as “knowledge is power and he can’t get very far without education.” “I need to learn both Romanian language and Mathematics, so that I can become someone.” After returning home from school, he eats his lunch and attends the tutoring lessons that he and 20 other children from Branet and Osica villages are taking online, through the Future

Acceleration Program: Monday is for Mathematics and Thursday is for Romanian language. “They’ve helped me a lot so far. At my last test, I got an 8 in Romanian Literature and a 7 in Grammar.”



He likes the teachers that are tutoring him because they explain things clearly and they don’t yell. They’ve also taught him how to do addition and division or make longer sentences. He is well capable of logging into the online lessons on his tablet all by himself and he even gives a hand to his neighbour, N., whenever she’s experiencing any technical issues. He enjoys playing adjective or Math games during tutoring lessons, and he also likes to draw.

But most of all, he loved the camp he went to in August 2021, one of the Foundation’s actions in which the children from the community in Olt county participated for the first time, after being included in the program last summer. For two days, children from the two villages participated in several non-formal activities, together with the UiPath Foundation team and UiPath volunteers, which took place at the Neamțu Mansion in the village of Olari, a historical monument which is currently undergoing a process of rehabilitation by the Pro Patrimonio Foundation, the Foundation’s

strategic partner for the intervention in Olt county. “It was so nice, I’d do anything to go there one more time,” I. recalls, who was particularly fond of the Robotics and Music lessons. They also played football, and his favourite memory is meeting the Nutty Professor, who did cool science experiments by adding dust to a solution which ended up exploding, and even took a picture with him.

“The camp is magnificent and it helps children change, because they have the chance to meet reliable adults,” says Laura Barbu, the local coordinator in Olt. “They’ve come into contact with emotionally balanced adults, who are well aware of what children’s needs are, that they need to be heard, to be seen. Then, they moved on to tutoring lessons, where the teachers are different, in the sense that they are careful and they don’t raise their voices. Children thus learn that there’s a better way, they learn to respect each other, to respect themselves and value their own needs and to ask for respect. The upside of interacting with adults seems very important to me.”

I.’s father, who’s 44 years old and earning his living as a fiddler, has also noticed his progress in school ever since I. enrolled in the tutoring lessons. “It seems like his grades have gone up a notch compared to how they were before.” In the winter, when they spent most of their time indoors, he enjoyed listening to his son’s online tutoring lessons, “to learn a couple of things as well”, so he couldn’t help but notice that the teachers explained everything very clearly and calmly. He sometimes tells I. to put more effort into school work, to push himself harder. “There’s a saying in life: whenever you think you’ve reached your limit, remember that you always have a little more in you. You have to strive for better.”

He’s struggling to raise his three children all by himself, with the help of their grandparents. He is very proud of his three sons, who get along well and help him around the house. Whenever he has some spare time, they go out for smoothies or play in the yard. “I do my best to keep them entertained as I don’t want them to miss their mother. I didn’t want to walk out as I’d rather struggle than waste my life. If I got to be the father of these children, I’ll never give up on them. I love them so much and they really make me happy.”

If his dream of becoming a footballer doesn’t come true, I. would like to earn his living as a fiddler, just like his father. There’s no steady income, but from spring to late autumn, when the season ends, he gets to book even four gigs a week, so this is how he manages to save for the wintertime. “It’s the ant’s principle: you spend your summer saving for winter. If you’re a little reasonable, you can hold on to the money.”

I. wants to finish school, then graduate from high school in the nearby town of Balș, get a job and raise money to build his own house. “We all strive for the best and we want what is best for our children, but also for us”, says his father, who wishes nothing else than the best possible future for I. “But this is also up to him, to his calling or skills. I hope they understand that life is hard and that they end up showing responsibility for everything they do.”



As her school starts at 8 AM, M., a chatty and curious 11-year-old girl, wakes up at 6.30 AM, sometimes even before her mother. She likes to get to school before everyone else, so she gets dressed, has

breakfast, and then walks off to the secondary school. Her favourite subjects are Romanian language, Biology and English, which is taught by her form teacher, who is patient to explain the lesson, so M. has the time to understand it and that's why she likes her. Her desk mate, N., is also her best friend and they share everything together. They help each other with homework, watch funny videos on TikTok, and if any of them buys a croissant from the store, each one of them gets half of it. "This is what we always do."



Last summer, M. enrolled in the Future Acceleration Program, alongside other 20 children from Branet and Osica villages in Olt county, the newest communities included in the UiPath Foundation programs. M. and 13 other children live in Branet village, a vulnerable community, with many single-parent families, such as hers, with very few job opportunities for parents and future prospects for children. Her mother, who works in the city of Balş, in sanitation, is one of the few with a steady job; the others rely on seasonal work, child allowances or grandparents' state pensions.

Through the Future Acceleration Program, pupils from the two villages get to participate in weekly online tutoring lessons in Romanian language and Mathematics, which help them catch up,

reduce achievement gaps and learn to get around the digital world. They are also provided with a monthly scholarship and participate in non-formal activities that take place at the Neamtu Mansion. For such projects to take root and have a long-lasting impact, it is important that the whole community is involved. The Pro Patrimonio Foundation thus aims to give back to people the historical monuments undergoing restoration under its supervision, by turning them into educational centres for children.

M. really enjoys the tutoring lessons included in the program, because the teachers have lovely voices, they explain everything well and engage her in the online classroom, which is not often the case at school. "If I don't know how to solve an exercise, they help me become better at understanding it and working it out. Whenever there is a problem with her Zoom session or her tablet freezes and she needs a restart, Laura Barbu, the local coordinator, is there to help. She says that, for these children, "tutoring lessons are, somehow, a way of social networking. They can't wait for the lessons to start, they are so eager and enthusiastic to log in, they open up so much, they are actually present."

M. also speaks fondly of the camp she went to last summer, at the Neamtu Mansion, even though she had a cold at the time and missed down on day one. She had fun doing water experiments with the Nutty Professor, she enjoyed the Robotics and Music lessons, and the fact that she was able to make new friends.

Laura Barbu believes that by engaging these children in such activities, we are giving them a chance to discover their skills and creativity. "There are contexts in which everyone discovers themselves and, hence, they become bolder, more daring. You can already see the effects, which is much more impactful to me besides the information and knowledge they gain. This is also reflected in their behaviour at school, as we can already notice small changes amongst those who were acting a bit violent."

Laura says that some of the children are capable of understanding that this program offers them a huge opportunity and make the most of it. "They are so aware of the chance that has been given to them and so responsible that they even call me to assure them that

the tutoring lessons are not taking place, as they don't want to miss a single one. I am literally amazed by their level of responsibility."

After getting home from school, M. is all for helping her mother and grandmother with household chores: she does the dishes, sweeps the floor and she's up for it whenever they let her spray the cleaning solution on the windows. "It helps me relax and relieve stress." Her mother, whom she says she is close to as if they were "two sisters", has taught her how to be a better person and keep herself out of troubles.

She also likes to chill out by drawing, reading a book Laura gave her, *The War That Saved My Life*, or playing on the tablet; she especially enjoyed playing a game in which she learned about the solar system. But "most of all" she loves to play with her four kittens. "I am head over heels for them. Every time I come home, whenever I'm sad, just seeing them cheers me up."

D. is 12 years old, he is in the sixth grade and his life is all about sports. He enjoys cycling around the neighbourhood, playing football and basketball in the schoolyard. He loves tennis, which he played for several months at school, just before the pandemic. At the time, the tennis instructor let them borrow the rackets and they used to play in the school's huge gym, D. remembers nostalgically. "He is a very responsible boy and he has behaved well ever since he was a little child," his mother says.

They live in the Ferentari neighbourhood, in a small house, in the same yard as their extended family, just five minutes away from school. The place is tiny so they live all cramped up, but it's all they can afford and they are grateful, because "other people have nowhere to sleep", says Fănuța, D.'s mother. She's 45 years old and has been the sole provider for the family for several months now, as her husband has serious problems with his spine and can't work any longer. Fănuța works at a restaurant-cafeteria in the neighbourhood, where she does everything: cleaning, doing the dishes, cooking, from 7 AM to 4 PM. It pays little, so she sometimes earns

more by doing extra cleaning work in the owners' house, once every two weeks.

She spends many hours at work, so she's glad that D. has a schedule he is committed to. He has been going to and coming back from school all by himself for some time now and he doesn't just hang around after classes. He either does his homework or turns on his laptop to log in for the Romanian language and English tutoring lessons. He likes computers so much that he has been setting money aside to buy himself a laptop.



If it weren't for the tutoring lessons and the monthly scholarship that D. has been given through the Future Acceleration Program since 2021, she doesn't know how she would have managed to get by with her boy. "D. is a bit different than your typical boy, he spends most of his time at school, then he does his homework, he hardly ever hangs around on the streets", says his mother.

The 12-year-old boy manages his scholarship and allowance money all by himself, buys his clothes and shoes. "If it weren't for this scholarship that has been given to my little boy, I wouldn't have been able to deal with everything. He has a scholarship, so he can

buy himself clothes and shoes. The people from the Foundation even help him with notebooks”, says Fănuța.

His best friend is a classmate, who was actually the one who told him about the UiPath Foundation program. His schoolmate kept telling him how much he has improved due to the tutoring lessons and how happy he would be if he joined him. They had to wait for the call from the foundation for a while; D.’s mother says, smiling, that her son used to ask her when they would receive the news from the Foundation, “looking quite sad”. He’s glad to be part of the program, as well as to have his friend next to him. “Whenever we do something together, it feels better,” says D.



D. says that the tutoring lessons are useful to him because they really help him understand the concepts and improve his English. His lessons in class wouldn’t help him just as much. The teachers giving the tutoring lessons always tell them that they can ask anything they don’t know, and that’s reassuring. “The teachers are British”, says D., “They speak English differently and now I’ve started to understand things better”.

“Those tutoring lessons are helpful to me, too”, says his mother, laughing. She hasn’t been able to help him since he made it to middle school, so she is grateful that “the ladies help him a lot so, whenever he doesn’t know something, they help him, by going back and explaining everything all over again to him. They are great.” She was very confident in allowing him to go to the Mogoșoaia Foundation camp last summer, because “he’s all grown up now, he has to be able to get by in life on his own”. D. says that the trip helped him relax and he believes that it is important for any pupil to enjoy such nature outings.

“He is an outgoing child that is always willing to voice his opinion, which I find quite interesting”, says Cătălin Olteanu, D.’s mentor in the UiPath Foundation program. The children from Bucharest and Cluj have regular meetings with a designated mentor, from the UiPath company team, so that they can talk about jobs, hobbies, or go out with or play with.

D. dreams of working in IT. His mother says she doesn’t wish anything else for her boy except what he wants and makes him happy. She also hopes that the scholarship will be granted to him as long as he is in high school as it is an important means to keeping him properly dedicated to his education.

During regular meetings, S. talks, next to other children, about emotions and communication, teamwork, or, separately, about what she would like to do next. These individual discussions also included a personality test that can reveal some professions that would suit her. This is an initiative for the children in the Future Acceleration Program launched by the UiPath Foundation, which aims to help them think about their future and prospective career paths that they would like to pursue.

As they are all closely related to each other – career dreams; how do you feel at home?; what do you feel every day? – analysing their emotions and talking them out plays an important part in these meetings. These discussions helped S., who is quite a

sensitive person, understand that it is possible to take “no” for an answer, that she can keep her emotions in check. For instance, S., who is now in the 10th grade at a high school majoring in trading, is no longer nervous when it comes to folk dancing routines that she has been performing in ever since she was in the 6th grade.

The Mathematics competition was another opportunity for S. to acknowledge and get used to her emotions, which she perceived as a pleasant experience, that helped her get used to the tests, considering the assessments that she was going to take in two years, at the end of high school, but also as a stressful one. She was worried that she was missing out on other classes to prepare for Maths. She hadn’t even been able to solve all the exercises, which startled her a bit, but in the end she was able to calm down and remembered that she was in a class majoring in trading.

S. is still at the age where she wonders what she wants to do next. During vocational counselling meetings, but also during her meeting with Olimpia, the local coordinator of the program, a member of the “Heart of a Child” Association, S. talks about the fact that she would like to become a kindergarten teacher. On the other hand, she also likes the idea of becoming an accountant or an entrepreneur. Even if she hasn’t made up her mind yet, it’s good for her to sit with a group of people and look into these options.

S. joined the Future Acceleration program three years ago. Her first group interaction was at Cheile Grădiștei camp. It was quite unforgettable for S. because she made many friends with whom she got along, including from Bucharest. There was also a pool in which they played and a hill that they had to climb three times a day to get to the place where meals were served. They watched movies, chilled down and even did some working out.

In her early beginnings into the program, the tutoring lessons in Romanian language, Mathematics, then English, helped her improve a lot for the national evaluation that she was going to take at the end of the 8th grade. “They came in very handy, because I couldn’t afford to pay for her tutoring lessons and everyone was doing so for their children”, says her mother. There were also tutoring classes hosted by the school, but there were times, and mostly

during the pandemic, when they took place and other times when they didn’t.

If asked about her going-away plans, S. will tell you that she wants to explore Iași, where her middle sister, who is actually a role model to her, is currently in college; Bucharest is her second option. Galați is still too familiar and close for her to consider, if she wants to make a change. Irrespective if she is envisaging smaller or larger changes, she puts aside her monthly scholarships from the program to buy herself a cell phone, to begin with, then clothes or textbooks and to have money for meals at school or even for trips, in a family where her mother takes care of the household and looks after her and her sister, who is working from home, and where her father works in construction day in and day out.



She has always been a well-behaved child, says her mother, “but ever since she joined the foundation’s program she has engaged in an extracurricular activity that makes her feel better, and the fact that she has also been given a scholarship brings her the extra financial means that we could have never afforded to give to her anytime she needed to go out with her classmates or participate in other activities.”

S. gets along well with her mother and she knows that she can talk to her anytime, if something is bothering her, “and we’ll see

what the situation is about and how we can address it.” For instance, anytime she feels different to the children at school, when she sees that some have more possibilities, that they are “all dressed up” or get more pocket money than her. Her mother encourages her to get over it and be strong, because she doesn’t need more, as she has something to eat at home. Her mother and sisters also encouraged S. to join the UiPath Foundation program. The headmaster had told them that she would enrol a few children, several of whom then dropped out. S. was also about to turn down the opportunity. “I convinced her by telling her that the headmaster must have chosen her to participate in the project for a reason. She chose you because you do well in school.” It was the first time that someone in their family was given a hand from the outside, even her sisters told her that they didn’t have such an opportunity. “So you must jump at the chance.”

And if S. is happy with her trading modules, so is her mother, who listens to her, while doing the groceries, talk about products or the things she’s learned about consumer profile. “If I see them standing on their own feet, having a job, I couldn’t be happier; go and study, I told them, because I don’t need any of you outside (caring for the animals or cleaning the yard); mind your own business. That’s your job for now.”

If it were for her to describe her son to someone who doesn’t know him, C.’s mother would say that he is a quiet, shy, shut-in boy who has always minded his own business. She believes that it is also due to his way of being that C. was selected to be part of the Future Acceleration Program launched by the UiPath Foundation, because “he has been working hard at school and he was well-behaved”. C.’s mother thinks back, above all, to the camp that her son went to in 2019 and which she hopes will take place once again someday. “We didn’t take them out on any trips, I had nowhere to take them; they didn’t go to camps, nor to the seaside, nor to the mountains, I couldn’t afford it nor did I have the time for it”, as I had four children

to raise and a sick husband at home. “Maybe he can see a bit of the world”, C.’s mother hopes, “not just the village, the commune, all away to Bârlad and then back home.”

C., now in the 10th grade at a high school in Bârlad, has been part of the UiPath Foundation program ever since he was in the 8th grade and the camp he went to in 2019 is one of his most precious memories as well, when it comes to the early beginnings. And this is due to the fact that there were lots of sweet treats, because they had a pool, because he was able to participate in a talent show with a magic trick with cards that he was able to pull off. At that time, Alina recalls, in a get to know each other game, C. said that the initial letter of his first name also comes from “charismatic”, which was also the way in which the people around him had already perceived him.

C. is one of the 35 children from the community in Vaslui who are part of the Future Acceleration Program. There are specific contexts considered for this area which include, among others, isolated households from the hills, families who rarely visit the city, maybe just for emergencies, areas where the minibus cannot reach, parents who withdraw their children from school because they can no longer support them financially.

In addition to the local burdens, the busy year and the pressure of a national exam, the tutoring lessons in Romanian language, Mathematics and English included in the UiPath Foundation program helped C. to take his time and think carefully about the topics on many occasions. “As far as the Maths class is concerned, the tutoring lessons were a good way for me to better understand the subject, to brush up on and improve my knowledge for school.” The Romanian language tutoring lessons were dedicated to writing poem commentaries and doing application exercises.

C. was also fascinated with a photography course initiated through the Future Acceleration Program, where they were given film cameras. “I was taking photos of everything I wanted, of everything I thought was worth it”, says C., “and then we had to talk about it in class, in English, and that was interesting.” We talked about what the photos were meant to capture, about the feelings

they give rise to in children. It was the first time C. had gotten his hands on a camera and he thought that was “super cool.” At first, he didn’t know how to take photos, he pressed the button but something wasn’t right. He then got used to it and ran out of film as there were so many things he wanted to catch on his camera. He even went with his friends out in the fields sometimes; or through the woods. He took pictures of the houses, flowers, animals, dogs, cats, goats and “everything around.”

C. did another thing for the first time two years ago, when the volunteers from UiPath company gave him access to a platform where he could practice his programming skills by playing with a robot, which is supposed to execute his commands, no matter what. “We could make the robot click on something, control the keyboard or enter on Youtube without too much effort.”

C. is passionate about computer science and this is why he chose to pursue theoretical studies in sciences in high school, majoring in Mathematics and Informatics. Another stop in his technological path is the smaller-scale camp near Bârlad that C. also remembers he went to in 2021, alongside the children from the community in Vaslui, where several resonant things happened. He participated in a workshop where one could make sounds with all kinds of devices, “I even learned that you can make sounds using plants,” says C., “you just had to press on a petal.” Then, there were the virtual reality glasses that he got to put on for the first time.

In addition to all this technology, soft skills, which should be engaged and trained up in a series of vocational counselling meetings, are also important. C. talks about a group he got to join, in which participants were discussing about a train with several stations and about the fact that it was stopping at each station, for focused explanations. “We talked about ways of improving our self-confidence, communication languages, teamwork, how to be a good listener, what studies or qualifications are required for a certain job or how to think long term about something.”

C. also acts to obtain the same long-term results by putting his monthly scholarship from the program aside, for when it will be

time to decide which faculty to opt for after graduating from high school. If in the eighth grade he had not imagined that he would get here today, in the high school - where he is currently studying, in the UiPath Foundation Program, he is now enjoying his level of self-confidence.

He is shy, but he can handle it, as his mother likes to say. “On weekends, he spends his time helping me with household chores, chopping wood, collecting drinking water from the well, helping out in the kitchen; he is also my go to person whenever I need help with my cell phone.” C.’s mother is pleased she was able to give her son a start in life. “If he gets off on the right foot, he is aware of the fact that he has to carry on, to do no harm, not to steal or cause any trouble. Mind your own business, I told him, and choose what is best in others.” She has always encouraged her children to go to school. “If you’re feeling sick, take a pill, don’t just sit around as you’ll miss on something and you will no longer be able to understand the lesson; as much as he can, as far as he is capable of reaching. I’m glad that my son was also able to join the foundation’s program, as I never even imagined such an opportunity is out there.”



Early Education FORWARD



All children need to be supported from an early age, in order to thrive in their environment just as plants need watering in order to bear fruit.

This is what we aim to achieve via our Early Education Forward programme, meant to provide access to high quality early education to the preschool children in the vulnerable communities where we intervene. No matter how much we wish that education is equal for all, reality shows that some children are disadvantaged. Since 2020, the percentage of children at risk of poverty increased by 50% - 1 in 2 children in Romania are confronted with poverty. We endeavour to bring them the hope of a better future, which means preventing, as much as possible, the educational gap they risk to have when they begin primary school, a gap which might even lead to abandoning school. We are also looking at all the sources that help them grow, and one of the most important sources is the teaching staff, whom we give access to training and support opportunities that help them adjust to the current educational demands more easily. Furthermore, we contribute to equipping school premises with high quality educational resources.

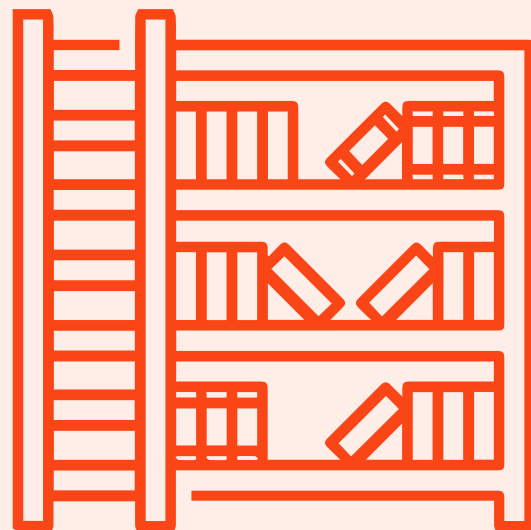
Our strategic partner in this programme has been the OvidiuRo Association ever since 2019. Their mission, with which we also resonate, is to make pre-school education accessible and efficient to all the children in Romania, particularly to the children belonging to vulnerable groups.

Together, we brought the association's project, "Fiecare copil merită o poveste" (Every Child Deserves a Story) to our communities in Botoșani, Galați, Olt and Vaslui. The aim of the project is to make sure that all the children are ready to learn to read when they begin primary school.

Outcome 2021



Over 13,000 children received books within the “Every Child Deserves a Story” project, carried out in Botoșani, Galați, Vaslui counties.



We offered 85 GrădiBiblioteci (Kindergarten Libraries) to the kindergartens in the villages in Botoșani, Galați, Vaslui counties.



Over 1,000 teachers attended the online training sessions.



We organized 30 “Șotron” (Hopscotch) summer workshops, to help children stay connected to learning activities even during their holidays.

Nurture Teachers' POTENTIAL

Our strategic partnership with Teach for Romania continued in 2021 too, with the same goal: to support the teachers working in vulnerable communities, by giving them access to modern and up-to-date teaching methods and resources.

Within this partnership, we are supporting 20 teachers enrolled in the Teach for Romania programme and their integration into the public schools located in disadvantaged areas. On top of the access to educational activities meant to support teachers develop key skills (leadership, resilience, critical thinking, strategic thinking), and to mentoring and coaching sessions, these teachers also received micro-grants which they planned to use in order to implement relevant and impactful projects in the communities where they teach.

Another component of our partnership is “Teaching as Leadership” – a project where we provide support to 30 teachers in Bucharest and 4 counties - Galați, Vaslui, Botoșani and Cluj, by offering training sessions that help them tailor their teaching techniques and methods to the students’ specific needs.

2021 was also the year when we partnered with Teach for Romania in order to launch EDU-START (www.edu-start.ro), the first tool to assess the students’ social and emotional skills, in a school environment. All the teachers in Romania from primary and middle schools can use this tool free of charge, in order to see how much students trust themselves to get good outcomes, manage their emotions, relate with others and pursue their goals.

With the help of EDU START, teachers can look at 4 dimensions: determination, self-regulation, social awareness and self-efficacy. Thus, they will have a comprehensive, perceptual view on the students with regard to certain behaviours, skills or abilities which they have or learned.



46 teachers graduated the Teaching as Leadership program



8,850 children have been indirectly supported by the teachers in the Teach for Romania program.

Digital literacy



Primul test de Literație Digitală pentru clasele I-XII este acum disponibil în platforma Brio.

Testează-ți gratuit competențele digitale de secol XXI!



TEST DEZVOLTAT
ÎN PARTENERIAT CU



PARTENER DE
IMPLEMENTARE



According to a recent Eurostat report on the digital skills of young Europeans (16 to 24 years old), Romanian youth rank last in the EU. 56% of the Romanian young people have basic digital skills, versus 80% - the EU average.

These numbers, combined with our experience when we planned to establish the digital knowledge level of the children attending the programs, made us realize that there is no standardized tool enabling us to make this measurement. As we wanted to change this reality, we partnered with Brio, the ed-tech platform measuring educational attainment, which is approved by the Ministry of Education.

Together, we set out to develop the first standardized digital literacy assessment tool. It consists of online tests that measure the digital skills of young people aged from 6-7 years to over 18 years and that can be used for all the students in Romania, free of charge.

”Launching the beta version of this standardized tool is a key moment of our partnership with Brio, and our purpose is to use it in order to measure the students’ digital skills nationally. This tool will be available, free of charge, to over 2.8 million students in Romania. To stay dedicated to our goal of supporting the children in disadvantaged communities, we will endeavour to ensure that this tool is visible and accessible to the students and teaching staff in the vulnerable areas and communities, where the existing educational and social gaps were worsened by the pandemic situation”, Raluca Negulescu-Balaci, Executive Director of UiPath Foundation says.

The tests measure the students’ skills in relation to their interaction with various devices and software, under various scenarios: school, home and family, friends and hobbies. Digital literacy can be monitored, measured and developed via teaching interventions, and it is for this reason that this tool supports secondary and primary teachers too, as they can use it in the classroom in order to assess the students’ skills. Tests are developed in line with the regulations of the European Digital Competence Framework created by the European Commission and comprise several difficulty levels, corresponding to the digital skills which each child should have, for all age levels.



Our response against COVID-19

Donated By



To The People Of India



The foundation's third year of activity was also the second year of the global pandemic. A year even more difficult than the previous one, but which did not destroy the faith, willingness, generosity and power of action of our tireless community.

Together for #OxygenForIndia

People's involvement anchored us to the present moment and made our roots even stronger, both in Romania, and in India, where the health crisis led to approximately 400,000 COVID-19 cases in one day. Together with the global community of UiPath employees and the UiPath company we mobilized quickly and in only one week we managed to gather the money we needed to fill two planes with oxygen tanks for the people in India, who were seriously affected by COVID-19.

Outcome

385

UiPath employees
donated

1.2

million dollars

total contribution

over

250,000

hours of oxygen

Volunteering and mentoring





Another difficult, devastating year, when people became less energetic and got even more tired in their everyday life; however, the volunteers chose to continue to support us.

Our activities are carried out together with the UiPath volunteers, who are enthusiastic and dedicated employees helping in the achievement of the foundation's mission every day, and whose involvement play a key role in all our projects. They support us unreservedly in all the fields and all the departments within their area of competence, being it technical, administrative, legal, design, web development or translation.

The volunteers helped us distribute the food and sanitary products to the families affected by Covid-19 in Romania, who held the Robotic Process Automation workshops, the "Dream Management" training sessions or the inspirational Speakers sessions for the children enrolled in the Future Acceleration Program, to whom they spoke about their personal experiences, about how they overcame the difficult times they faced before they achieved their goals. "Thank you for sharing so much information with us and for telling us about the sad events in your life!", one of the children participating in the program said.

On top of being trainers, volunteers themselves are also participants in the various development programmes. Even since getting enrolled in this community, they are trained by professionals on how to communicate with children and constantly support them when they are facing dilemmas in their relationship with the teenagers they are mentoring. Another important training in 2021 was the one about social and emotional skills, organized together with Teach for Romania, where employees understood their role in the volunteering programme in a better way.

However, the most eagerly anticipated and most appreciated moments are the Christmas activities or the summer camps, where the UiPath employees play an active role throughout the year and which they love just as much as the young participants.

Outcome

70

UiPath employees

2,000

hours of volunteer work

Our supporters

Besides the volunteers, we have a whole team of supporters helping us in sport events. In August 2021, over 460 employees of UiPath company, together with members of their families, participated in the UiPath Foundation Marathon 2021, an initiative of UiPath, where they helped us promote our mission: offering access to high quality education for children.



The mentoring programme

The mentoring programme rolled out in Romania and in India was meant to inspire children and offer them the opportunity of interacting with people who might become a role model for them, as well as to develop their non-cognitive skills: teamwork, problem solving, decision making, leadership skills, identifying their own interests and abilities. The development of these skills is being

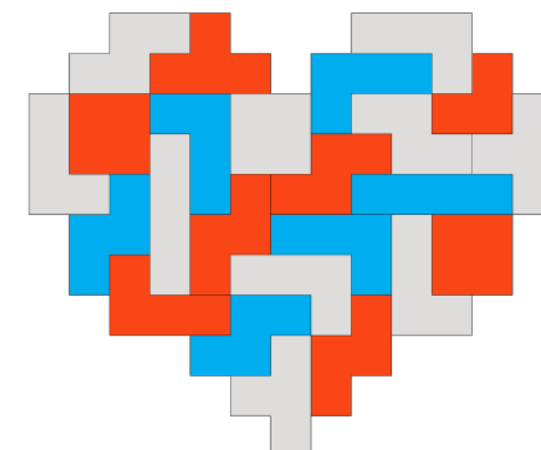
monitored during two years of intervention, the first mentoring year being focused on project-based learning, whilst in the second year, the children, supported by mentors, are to discover their interests for a certain career.

In 2021, the mentoring programme was implemented by using a project-based learning approach that can be related to current or past events. Whatever the topic, the project develops the mentees' self-confidence. Mentors and children worked in teams (two mentors and two mentees) and the children became more active by solving minor problems or situations. The projects were entertaining and interactive and encouraged mutual learning. The mentoring programme was adjusted to the pandemic situation and incorporated online and face-to-face interactions.

In order to ensure that the project delivers the best possible outcomes and to support mentors with the help of our partners from “Noi orizonturi” Foundation, we created “Ghidul mentorului” (The Mentor's Guide), a complex document meant to provide step-by-step guidance to the mentors in their journey with the children, which they can refer to whenever they wish to get some inspiration.

In Romania, we currently have 8 mentors in Cluj and 36 mentors in Bucharest.

In India, the mentoring program was carried out with the support of the Dream a Dream organization, until June 2021, and involved the participation of 15 mentors and 30 children enrolled in our program.



Who are



UiPath Foundation Board

Vargha Moayed, *Chairman of the Board*

Andreea Baci, *Member of the Board*

Corina Puiu, *Member of the Board*

Liana Tîrcă, *Member of the Board*

Ştefan Cibian, *Member of the Board*

Luciana Lixandru, *Member of the Board*

Global Advisory Board

Akila Somasegar

The foundation's team

Raluca Negulescu - Balaci, *Executive Director*

Cătălina Raţă, *Programs Manager*

Bogdan Mihăescu, *Finance Manager*

Codruţa Iovănaş, *Communication Manager*

Denisa Colţea, *Social Media Specialist*

Andreea Pănoiu, *Programs Coordinator*

Mina Gălii, *Local Coordinator Ferentari*

Ciprian Tehei, *Local Coordinator Cluj*

Andreea Irimia, *Programs Officer*

Irina Lonean, *Monitoring and Impact*

Assessment Consultant

Miruna Mihălcescu, *Executive Assistant*

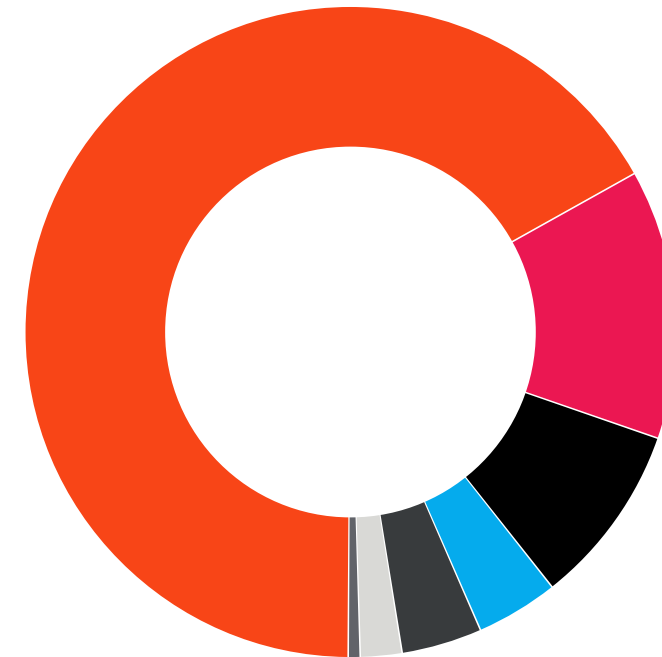
Gina Apolzan, *Volunteers' Engagement Specialist*

Financial

DATA

Total expenditure

\$3,399,737.00



67% Educational programs in Romania and India

13% Covid-19 emergency fund

9% Communication and sustainability

4% Management costs

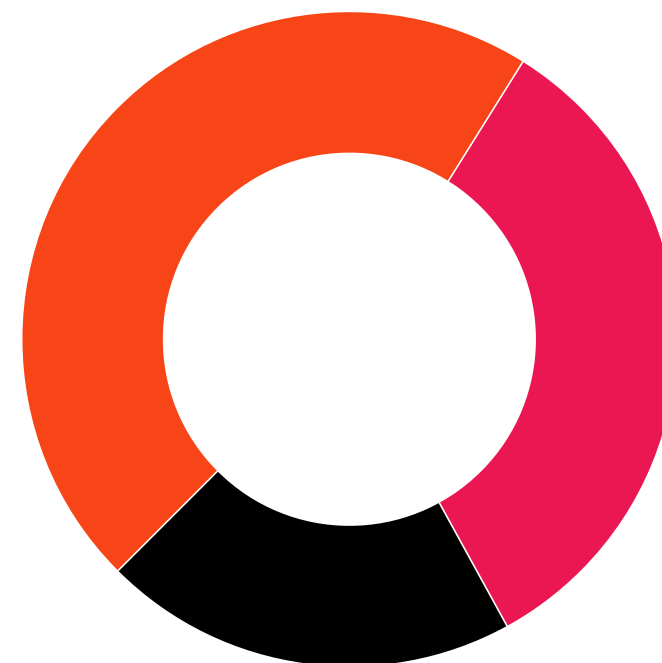
4% Administration costs

2% Unforeseen expenses

1% Monitoring and assessment

Total budget

\$4,169,956.00



45% Individual donors

34% UiPath

21% Reserve fund



Outro

Thank you for joining us in the journey through 2021, a year that was so important to the foundation. As you noticed, there are many projects we will develop in 2022 and we would like you to continue to be here, so that we can tell the story about them together.

We are not going to disclose too much, we are only whispering to you that one of them will be developed in partnership with NABU, a US organization and OvidiuRo, and that its goal is to launch a reading application for children. Our shared dream is to help the most vulnerable children and their families have access to literature from an early age. Furthermore, we want to instil in them values such as diversity and inclusion through this genre of books, specifically created for them.

Another project is Own Your Path, by which we plan to carry on the “Future Acceleration Program” mission. The program is meant to offer educational experiences to young high school students coming from disadvantaged families by: scholarships, covering their maintenance costs, school experiences, access to a digital education platform.

We have already said too much, but please keep yourself updated with our latest activities:

uipathfoundation.com

[facebook](#) / [instagram](#) / [linkedin](#)

