2019

ГОДИШЕН ОТЧЕТ
ANNUAL REPORT

Сдружение „Съвет на жените бежанки в България“
"Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria" Association
Dear friends and followers,

The balance we made for the year 2019 is that we remained active and continued our unified efforts to help refugees and asylum seekers in their successful integration. Every year we ask the same questions: Did we manage? Did we realize our plans? Do we go forward and how?

For us the 2019 year was a very different and dynamic year. We have entered a new stage of development. CRWB's team was joined by young, ambitious and professionally well prepared new colleagues. The overall image of our activity has been renewed, we have expanded our participation in project activities. We completed the year with a sense of satisfaction that, in addition to providing regular humanitarian assistance, we are useful to our beneficiaries and providing improved access to social, health and educational services.

We are grateful to our partners from the NGO sector, the socially responsible companies and the numerous donors and volunteers for their support during the year!

Sincerely,

Linda Awanis
СЪДЪРЖАНИЕ
ГОДИШЕН ОТЧЕТ 2019
/01.01.2019 - 31.12.2019/

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"Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria" Association (CRWB) was officially registered as a non-governmental organization on 17.03.2003. It was founded by nine refugee women from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, among which is the current chairperson, Mrs. Linda Awanis. The association is re-registered in public benefit and is non-profit. The focus of the organization is to support the integration and adaptation of refugees and asylum seekers, regardless of gender, race, nationality, religion or ethnicity.

The team consists of: Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and “Fundraising and Advocacy” expert, “Social Mediation” expert, “Public Relations” expert, Accountant, Administrative Assistant, four Social Workers and five Cultural Mediators.
In the summer of 2019 our team increased with new addition from social workers, cultural mediators and administrative assistant. They are young, smiling, energetic and highly qualified! Their work in the organisation is related to capacity building for successful integration and improvement of access to social, health and education services for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

The CRWB team is further developing - participates in team and multidisciplinary meetings, working groups, intervisions and supervisions, events, trainings and conferences in the country and abroad.
OUR ACTIVITIES

Over the years, the CRWB has supported both refugees, as well as asylum seekers. CRWB provides information, translation and accompaniment to institutions, social and legal counselling, humanitarian and administrative assistance, social assessments and referral to relevant help. The association participates in celebrating important events, organizing trainings and initiatives to acquaint the local society with the refugee community. "The Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria" works actively towards the development of mutual tolerance, ethnic tolerance, understanding and solidarity. The main directions in the CRWB activities are:

- Programmes for direct work with refugees, asylum seekers and migrants;
- Expert and advocacy activities;
- Fundraising and publicity.

- Процедурни за директна работа с бежанци, търсещи закрила и мигранти;
- Експертна дейност и застъпничество;
- Фондонабиране и публичност.
How many people have we supported in 2019?

During the year the total number of persons who have received services through the direct work in CRWB is one thousand hundred and fifty (1,150) persons. The number includes persons with humanitarian or refugee status, asylum seekers, as well as legally resident third country nationals - women, men and children.

The countries from which our beneficiaries most often come are: 1. Syria; 2. Iraq; 3. Afghanistan; 4. Iran or are stateless.

There are several cases of people/families from: Eritrea, Turkey, Russia, China, Algeria, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Congo, Morocco, India, Yemen, Egypt, Somalia, Tanzania and Ghana.
Дарителска програма
Хуманитарната помощ, която бенефициентите ни получават, се състои 100% от дарения! Дарителските кампании през годината за подпомагане на семействата, получили международна закрила, както и на тези, търсещи закрила са - „Да помогнем на Малек“, „Международен ден на детето“, „Добре дошли у дома“, „Облечени в ДОБРО“, „Добре дошли в българското училище“, „Спаси живот!“, „Понякога малкото е много“. Изялно благодарение на солидарността и щедростта на индивидуални и корпоративни дарители бенефициентите ни получават: дрехи и обувки, домашен текстил, посуда и домакински уреди, почистващи и хигиенни материали, мебели, училищни пособия, книги, детски играчки, бебешки принадлежности и пр.

Сърдечно благодарим на всички дарители!

Donation Program
The humanitarian aid that our beneficiaries receive consists 100% of donations! The donation campaigns during the year to support families who have received international protection and those seeking protection were - "To help Malek", "International Children's Day", "Welcome home", "Dressed in GOOD", "Welcome to the Bulgarian school", "Save Life!", "Sometimes the little is much".
All thanks to the solidarity and generosity of individual and corporate donors, our beneficiaries have received: clothing and footwear, home textiles, utensils and household appliances, cleaning and hygienic materials, furniture, school supplies, books, children's toys, baby accessories, etc.

We sincerely thank all donors!
The companies which supported our activities in 2019 were: Mat Star BG, Avendi LTD, Red Ciudadana de Acogida de Leganes, Si Commercial 7, Pain d’Or, AIG Europe SA, Byersdorf Bulgaria, Kolev&Kolev, Euroins Insurance Group, Mexon, Experian Bulgaria, Ozone Entertainment, Panda Cooperation, Orgachim, Lavena, H&M, New Yorker, Jurie, SKRIN BG, Eurotex.

As well as the organizations: Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation, Bulgarian Red Cross, Tulip Foundation, BCause Foundation, Foundation for Social Change and Inclusion (FSCI), Holosophic Society in Bulgaria, International Council for Cultural Centers and "Drop by Drop" Association.

Thank you!
We thank the individual donors who separate from their belongings, means and time and donated on a daily basis! They supported us many times during the year: Abdullah Kodzha, Galina Bozveliyska, Ivan Konstantinov and others. In 2019 employees from several companies organized among themselves campaigns for fundraising, clothing, school supplies and/or helped our activity with volunteers work. We thank for the social commitment of the employees of: Accedia, Integral, Mobile Wave Solutions, AIG Europe SA, Equipex–SE7, VMware Bulgaria, Expirian Bulgaria, Financial Times, Ingram Micro GBS, Hewlett-Packard Bulgaria, Software Group BG, Melon, SKF, The Smarts advertising agency, IQ Media, Tillie, T.E.A.M., Rotaract club Sofia–Vitosha, Canape Connection, Plovdiv MSA–Events&Projects and the actors from the “BHALG” theatre!
Again during this year Mat Star BG was our biggest corporate donor! The total number of 1 228 pairs of new boots, shoes and sneakers donated throughout the year were distributed to children and adults refugees and asylum seekers, both living in accommodation in Sofia and in the State Agency for Refugees facilities with the Council of Ministers.

Timely humanitarian aid has brought a lot of joy, smiles and hopes, especially for children attending school or kindergarten. They crossed the school threshold with dignity!

And thanks to the generosity of corporate and individual donors, 98 refugee children received school materials through the "Welcome to the Bulgarian School" campaign.
And in 2019 we celebrated International Children's Day - June 1st! All the refugee children we welcomed to our office received a bag of favorite treats provided by Pain d’Or, AIG Europe SA and Si Commercial 7 (140 bags). The actors from the “BHALG” theatre made the youngest happy, organizing special visit for them to an entertaining theatrical performance in the House of Culture – Iskar. The year ended with another exciting tradition - the gift exchange. Thanks to the Foundation for Social Change and Inclusion (FSCI) our beneficiaries felt the spirit of Christmas again! 333 Christmas boxes rejoiced children and refugee families living in Sofia. And the volunteer Mihaela Sakayan initiated a creative workshop, which introduced the refugee children to the magic of the clay.
In 2019, we launched two online fundraising campaigns through the **GlobalGiving** and the **Platformata.bg**. The collected funds (respectively 1337.81 USD and 3 804 BGN) directly go in the CRWB Help for Refugees Fund. The fund is designed to provide timely assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in emergency and crisis situations. The funds received under the Help for Refugees Fund are, as a priority, spent to support:
- Unaccompanied minors;
- Pregnant and/or women who have recently given childbirth;
- Persons with health problems, chronic diseases, or disabilities;
- Single parents or large families.
We cover expenses such as: emergency medical examinations and testings not covered by the Health Insurance Fund; purchase of medications; payment from one-off fees for kindergartens to the job placement of parents; emergency accommodations in cases of homelessness.
In the period 16-19.12.2019, our team took part in the **German Christmas Bazaar – Sofia**, with its own stand for handmade knitwear and Christmas souvenirs. The collected funds of 732 BGN will be spent in favour of the CRWB Help for Refugees Fund. We thank the organizers from **DB-Events** for the opportunity to participate for another year in the bazaar!
Together with our NGO partners, we are developing a series of initiatives, among which are the group activities for women, men and children, supported by several of our main projects, funded by the UNHCR, UNICEF Bulgaria, TELUS International Community Board Bulgaria, Bulgarian Fund for Women, BCause Foundation, as well as with the support of the European "Asylum, Migration, Integration Fund" (AMIF) and the Ministry of Interior.

In 2019, the association implemented (separately or in partnership) the following projects:

2. Партньори по проект "Комплексна интеграционна подкрепа за легално пребиваващи граждани на трети държави" (водеща организация Каритас София), финансиран от ЕК, Фонд "Убежище, миграция и интеграция" (ФУМИ), МВР, период: 01.07.2019-30.06.2021


6. "Всички сме замесени от едно място", финансиран от Обществен борд на ТЕЛЪС Интернешънъл в България, период: 01.07.2019-30.06.2020

7. "Помощ за жени, бежанки или търсещи закрила и техните деца, в ситуация на риск от бездомност", финансиран от Български фонд за жените и Фондация BCause, период: 25.11.2019-31.05.2020


2. Partner in the Project "Comprehensive integration support for legally resident third country nationals", funded by EU Fund "Asylum, Migration and Integration" (AMIF), operated by the Ministry of Interior (leading organization Caritas Sofia), duration: 01.07.2019-30.06.2021


6. "We are all made of the same dough", funded by TELUS International Community Board Bulgaria, duration: 01.07.2019-30.06.2020

7. "Support for women, refugees or asylum seekers and their children, at risk of homelessness", funded by Bulgarian Fund for Women and BCause Foundation, duration: 25.11.2019-31.05.2020
8. Partner in the project "NEMO - Using the New Media in Education to Overcome Migrant Discrimination Online", (implemented by an international consortium of partners from Italy, France, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria), co-funded under the EU Commission AMIF Programme, duration 01.02.2019–31.01.2021

9. Partner in the project “EVERMORE - Enable, Empower, Engage Third Country National Women to Enhance Professional Opportunities”, (implemented by an international consortium of partners from Austria, Germany, Spain, Lithuania and Bulgaria), co-funded by the EU Commission Erasmus+ Programme, duration: 01.10.2019–30.09.2021
EXPERT AND ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Part of the organization’s expert activities is related to design and elaboration of specific trainings for work with refugees and asylum seekers, conduction of research and assessments, writing of methodology, guidance and reports. In the frames of the NEMO project: “NEMO - Using the New Media in Education to Overcome Migrant Discrimination Online”, a team of experts from CRWB conducted a qualitative research among students aged from 11 to 14 years, parents and teachers on topics related to online safety, distinguishing fake news, distinguishing stereotypes and prejudices against refugees and migrants on the Internet. The results, together with a literature review on the topic were presented in a Country Report for Bulgaria, prepared by CRWB and “Center for Sustainable Communities Development” Foundation. The research regarding the Bulgarian Internet environment shows the highest percentage of hate speech compared to other EU member states. The Bulgarian citizens are less inclined to communicate with migrants because of the relatively low number of migrants in Bulgaria. As a result it is less likely that the influence of prejudices and stereotypes to be reduced, and again this is expressed in the cyber space also.

The Report for Bulgaria is available on the project website: https://project-nemo.eu/
CRWB is actively developing its program for direct social work with refugees, asylum seekers and legally residing third-countries nationals. In 2019 the program is implemented within the project "Comprehensive integration support for legally resident third country nationals", funded by EU Fund "Asylum, Migration and Integration" (AMIF), operated by the Ministry of Interior. A team of social workers and cultural mediators was created, supported by an expert in methodological support and external supervisor. The clients of the organization are supported in terms of their adaptation in Bulgaria and their access to services through counselling and information, accompanying and translations to social, educational and health facilities. The clients also have access to an experienced psychotherapist and lawyer who consults in terms of rights and obligations.
Our cooperation with Sofia Bread House continued in 2019. The traditional joint bread making events between children from the refugee community and Bulgarian children aimed at faster integration and cultural exchange. The children drew with wheat classes and talked about topics that excite them: friendships in school, family, home, sports, holidays, traditions and customs, national cuisine, seasons. We are delighted that these events turned into a feast for the children and they always left with a smile and with the promises that next month we will be together again.

The project under the title “We are all made of the same dough” is financed by the TELUS International Community Board Bulgaria.

Сътрудничеството ни с Хлебна къща София продължи и през 2019 г. Традиционните съвместни месения между деца от бежанската общност и български ученици имаха за цел по-бърза интеграция и културен обмен. Децата рисуваха с житни класове и разговаряха по теми, които ги вълнуват: приятелствата в училище, семейство, дом, спорт, праздници, обичай, национална кухня, сезони, традиции. Щастливи сме, че тези съвместни месения се превърнаха в празник за децата и те винаги се тръгваха с усмивка и с уговорката, че и следващия месец отново ще бъдем заедно!

Проектът под наслов „Всички сме замесени от едно тесто“ е финансиран от Обществения борд на ТЕЛЪС Интернешънъл в България.
This year we actively continued our work of changing the attitudes of Bulgarian society towards refugees and persons seeking protection. On our initiative a series of television and radio participations of representatives from the organization in leading media were organized in order to raise awareness about the problems of refugees. We consider our mission to gain Bulgarian citizens, institutions, organizations and media on our side in support of social integration and the right to a decent life for those seeking or receiving international protection!

The book "Beyond the Barriers", authors: students in Book Publishing, Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. On the pages of the book you will find the fates of people from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia. Among them is Linda Awanis’ story.
WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT US

OUR BENEFICIARIES
“I am grateful for all your support in regards to the medical conditions of my children. You made both the possible and the impossible for us.” (single father of four children, widower, Syria)
“You were helping me throughout the whole year – the only organization where I feel safe and restful. I know that the things I need I can find with you and the things I need to talk about – I can confide in you.” (single mother of two children, Syria)
“Thank you for your endless patience, for your empathy and for being beside me in the difficulties I encounter.” (stateless woman, from Syria)

OUR PARTNERS
"CRWB works together with the UNHCR for more than 15 years and the last 9 of them the partnership has been made official via Cooperation agreement. During this long period of cooperation, the organization created by Linda Awani, gained its unique place in the process of adaptation and integration of refugees in Bulgaria: the CRWB social workers and cultural mediators patiently and with great professionalism go beside the people From Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan among the difficult way to their new life in peace, security and dignity. At the same time, in 2019, CRWB managed to attract to its mission a record number of followers, companies and Bulgarian citizens, who donated funds and time to make the refugees' way a little easier.”; Iva Partsaleva, Senior Protection Assistant, UNHCR

“UNICEF is partnering with CRWB since 2018 in the frames of regional project “Actions against gender based violence, affecting refugees and migrants in Europe”, funded by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, US State Department. In partnership with other organizations and specialists, the CRWB team provides information sessions to raise awareness among refugee and asylum seekers in the country regarding the risks of gender based violence. CRWB also provides direct psychological and material support to survivors of gender based violence – support, which is crucial in the process of overcoming trauma and integration in society for the asylum seekers and refugees in Bulgaria.”; Danny Koleva, Program Coordinator Child Protection, UNICEF Bulgaria

ASH THE TE BENEFICIENCES
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НАШИТЕ БЕНЕФИЦИЕНТИ
„Благодарен съм ви за цялото съдействие по медицинското състояние на децата ми. Направихте възможното и невъзможното!” (баба на четири деца, вдовец, Сирия)
„Вие ми помагахте през цялата година, единствената организация, в която се чувствам сигурна и спокойна. Знам, че нещата, от които имам нужда мога да ги намеря при вас и това, което имам нужда да говоря, мога да го кажа на вас.“ (самотна майка на две деца, Сирия)
„Много ви благодаря за безкрайното търпение, за съпричастността и за това, че сте до мен в трудностите, с които се срещам!“ (жена без гражданство, от Сирия)

НАШИТЕ ПАРТНИОРИ
„СЖББ работи с ВКБООН от повече от 15 г., като през последните десет години това плодотворно сътрудничество е спечело с договор за партньорство. През този ден в рамките на една организация, създадена от Линда Аванис, заема своето уникално място в процеса на адаптация и интеграция на бежанците в България: социалните работници и културни медиатори на СЖББ търпеливо и с много професионалност извършват редом с лицата от Сирия, Ирак, Афганистан трудния път към новия им живот в мир, сигурност и достойнство. В същото време, през 2019 г. СЖББ успя да привлече към своето дело рекорден брой съпътстващи, компании и обикновени български граждани, които караха средства и време, за да бъде този път на бежанците по-лек.“;
Ива Парсалаева, старши асистент по закрила, ВКБООН

„Уницеф си партнира със СЖББ от 2018 г. в рамките на проекта „Действие срещу насилието, основано на пола, засягащо бежанци и мигранти в Европа“, финансиран от Бюро „Население, бежанци и миграция“ на Държавния департамент на САЩ. В партерство с други организации и специалисти, екипът на СЖББ предоставя информационни сесии за повишаване осведомеността на общността на лицата, търсещи и получили закрила в страната относно рисковете от насилие, основано на пола. СЖББ предоставя и директна психологическа и материална подкрепа на жертвите на насилие, основано на пола – подкрепа, която е централно важна в процеса на преодоляване на травмата и интеграцията в общността на лицата, търсещи и получили закрила в България.“;
Дани Колева, програмен координатор закрила на деца, УНИЦЕФ България
OUR PARTNERS
"IOM Bulgaria and CRWB have developed good close cooperation and again they were partnering together in the past 2019. Collaborative activities were based on the discussions and the resolution of individual cases, including through the participation of IOM social workers in multi-disciplinary meetings organized by the CRWB. These meetings allow the resources of the different organizations to be united in order to provide support to families and persons at risk and with specific vulnerabilities."; Any Raykov, Senior Project Assistant, IOM Bulgaria

"For the past four years, we, from “Bread Houses Network”, have been working together with CRWB in a wonderful partnership for four years in a row. Thanks to their collaboration and support, we have successfully implemented our innovative methods contributing to the social empowerment of migrants, through organizing mixed educational events for children /from 4 to 14 years of age/ from the migrant and local community in order to improve their language and social skills.”; Milena Karakanova, Coordinator, Sofia Bread House

"CRWB are a credible partner and we can count on them to reach people who are in need of protection. The association is a beneficiary in the Fund for supporting women, survivors of violence. We count on the association for gathering and distribution of humanitarian donations also. Working with CRWB we face their professionalism and dedication to the cause. The team always finds the most precise and quick decision for each problem. Thank you for your partnership.”
Lyudmila Atanasova, NGO Program director, BCause Foundation
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