



**NEWSLETTER TO SPONSORS  
OF SECURED CHILDHOOD**



## GREETINGS FROM ALBANIA!

**W**e're happy to share with you some great things that are happening with the children of the prisoners that you're supporting. Your help is so useful for them. This year we're very encouraged that all children attended school regularly. We had our monthly visits to their homes and met with their parents. We've given parental advice on how to deal with children and teenagers and how to help them during school period. We've given extra help for several of our children in different subjects such as math, English ect. For 3 children especially this has been very successful and has given a visible improvement in school process and marks too. We had 3 very useful trainings on hygiene for children together with their sisters and brothers and for their parents too. Several of them live under very bad hygienic conditions. We discussed with children about good hygiene and home maintenance to give them ownership over their own life. Over 50 children together with their brothers and sisters have

attended summer camp this year. Children took part in games and activities, Bible lessons, friendship and more. They got to know new friends there. We are thankful the impact of this project. Through it we can impact the whole family. We are happy to connect them with local churches that strengthen their life even when the project ends. Hairdresser course is provided for one of our children. He was about to end the program due to his age. So it was very helpful for him to have a profession. We are thankful that children have the possibility to get in contact with faith and can hear the good news of salvation. A new year has started and we have lots of plans and activities. We've just celebrated Easter and now we are planning for summer camp, parenting training, Christmas celebration and child rights training. Prayers are very appreciated for protection upon children and for their parents to know the importance of education for their children.

## TIMELY FOOD PARCEL

**V**anesa and her family live under very bad living conditions. Her father is invalid, and can't work. Her grandfather is in prison for theft and her mother can't find a proper job. The only support they have from the state is 30 euros per month, which is not enough to cover 3 days of food. When we went to deliver the food parcels at their home, they were seated in front of the table and were eating only bread without anything else. They didn't have anything else left home to eat. They were so happy to receive that food parcel, so they would have something to eat for the coming days. Her mother said: "Praise God, you have come in the right moment today. I feel like God has heard my prayers because even the bread that my children were eating I borrowed from our neighbors."



## CILJANA'S DIFFICULT LIFE

**C**iljana is 10 years old. She lives with her mother and her 2 brothers. They live together in a small room with no toilet inside, no running water, no windows, and no plaster. Her father is sentenced with 6 years in prison for forcing his mentally ill sister to beg. For Ciljana and her family life is very difficult. Her mother who is in lack of food and money started to beg too. It was so painful when we first visited their home. Ciljana's little brother was crying and asking his mother for bread with sugar in it, but she didn't have anything to give to him. Her mother told us that very often she would send Ciljana at school without eating anything. Through the food parcels that you support every month they can somehow have something on their table. We made a connection with local church, and they are supporting Ciljana with her school lessons. Her mother is so happy that Ciljana is making progress in school.



**Over 90 children were involved** in Christmas celebration last year. The purpose was to encourage children to “live life with a purpose and to fight for their dreams.” During this activity children have prepared a special program with songs, poetry and guitar performance. After that we watched a 3-D movie and enjoyed pizza at the end of the meeting. We delivered Christmas gifts for children and their brothers and sisters too.



**To assist children** of the program in developing their talents, we’ve organized some music and instrument courses. We have 6 children attending guitar, piano, and singing courses. They are excited about that and most of them have performed in front of the church in special Christmas and Easter meetings. As we can see in the photo, Aleks is trying to learn a new cord. We want to encourage them to give focus to things that have value in their lives.



**Easter 2017 was different.** All churches gathered as one body and marched together for peace and testimony in Tirana, capital of Albania. Some of our children with their siblings were involved in this activity. It was amazing to see them sing and be active during the program. The other children were invited in local churches’ activities performing with guitar, dance and choirs. Through this program they can have better examples for their lives.

## MARSIDA'S NEW HOPE

**M**arsida is 13 years old and she lives with her grandparents and her 2 brothers and sister. Her parents were in crises with each other. Her father was very jealous of his wife and under heavy depression and economic difficulties, and he murdered his wife. He is sentenced with 23 years of prison for that. At this shocking family situation children suffer the most. When we first visited Marsida in her home, she was traumatized, and she and her brothers and sisters couldn't talk. Little by little we visited their home and delivered the food packaged from your side. This was a good way to start with. More and more Marsida started to be friendlier with us. After that we made a good connection with local church in order to offer more friendship and emotional support for her. Now she is involved with the church and likes a lot to dance. She feels more secure now for her future and sees some hope in her life.



## LORENA'S FAMILY IS TOGETHER AGAIN

**L**orena is a smiling and lovely girl. Our chaplain that works in prison got in contact with her older brother, and we went to visit her in her home. Her parents were divorced. Lorena used to live with her father, because her mother left from years of abuses from her husband. This little girl had to take care of all households cooking and school. She used to wash clothes outside in the cold. The food packages were so helpful for them, because she cooked only beans. Together with individuals from local church we spoke and encouraged the father to think about his family and to be more tolerant with his children. Then their son that just got out of prison talked with his mother who decided to forgive her husband and return home. Now they live together as a family. Lorena now feels more complete with her family, and when we visited her, she just made a drawing for her sponsor. Her mother, smiling, told us: "Thank you for taking care for Lorena when I couldn't help her during her hard moments."





**Vangjeli is 13 yr old.** She has been in the program for 2 years. Her father has died and her 2 older brothers are in prison for theft and robbery. She lives with her mother. She likes to study, but English is difficult for her. We connected her with a local church and now she is part of free English courses organized by the church. As you can see from the photo, she really enjoys learning English. This will help her a lot in school.



**Through the program** we can make a good connection with children and the local church. We visit and deliver food packages once a month, which is not enough to get much contact with them. They need more attention and care. In collaboration with local church we've organized a weekly meeting for children and their families. They sing together, make Bible studies and lots of games, as you can see from the photo.



**Every time we organize a meeting** for our children, we bring the parents together and have informal encouraging talks with them. We ask one of our staff to prepare a specific theme, and bring it up in the meeting. In this way we use the limited time for building trust relations. In a similar way we speak with the parents when we do home visits. In this photo, parents are discussing how to deal and communicate with children and teenagers.



Role play during Hygiene training.  
how to call emergency number

## THE IMPORTANCE OF HYGIENE

Children of our project suffer from bad luck of their parents. After their parent goes to prison, they get stigma from the society and often their mates tease them at school. Some parents have committed crime because of the poverty and are sentenced for theft, murder or domestic violence. Most of them are very poor and don't have any school education leaving their family hopeless. Usually mothers alone can't find a job. Many Roma families provide daily food for their children only by begging. Poverty is reflected in their mindset and their homes too. Most of these poor families don't know or care about hygiene or household maintenance. We considered the hygiene training very necessary for children and their siblings. We contacted 3 doctors that offered their help voluntarily to give training on this. Because of long distance between the children, we decided to have 3 trainings in 3 different cities. Over 120 children together with their sisters and brothers participated in these training. The aim was to teach children about hygiene, how to care and clean their body, how to give first aid for others when needed. Children were very active during the training. They heard about mouth/teeth hygiene and how to deal with cold, heat and dehydration. Then they did role plays on different situations according to the theme in cases of food suffocation and burns. They were good simulators. "This training was very helpful for us as parents too," expressed a parent at the end of the activity. First we thought to separate children from parents, but then we realized that they needed it so much. For many of them it was the first time to hear about so many things about hygiene and its importance. Amazing impact! At the end of the training we prepared a hygiene package with toothpaste for all participants, including brush, soap, shampoos, towel etc. They were happy to receive it. A cocktail gave time to get to know each other more and share some new experiences. You were part of it!

## WITH YOUR SUPPORT:

- 99 children/their families receive a food parcel every month
- 94 children attend school regularly
- over 100 children took part in hygiene training, summer camps and Christmas and Easter activities
- Over 50 Roma children and their families attend church and home groups.



## THANK YOU FOR BEING A SPONSOR!

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