

Beyond Gender

The newsletter of the Peace Corps Romania Gender and Development Committee

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NGO Highlight

SOCIETATEA DE ANALIZE
FEMINISTE



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Society For Feminist Analyses AnA is an independent nongovernmental organization, focusing on theoretical and applied activism to improve women's status in Romania, promotion of research regarding women's social stand in contemporary Romanian society, introduction of women's studies and of feminism in academic curricula and public discourse.

AnA, the Society for Feminist Analyses has finalized the project, *Integration vs. separation. For a gender-friendly activism*, the main goal of which had been training Romanian

NGO representatives with a view to integrating a gender approach into their activities and projects. The concrete project stages focused on: baseline research conducted to assess the degree of integration of gender-related issues in Romanian NGOs' programs and activities, so as to elect appropriate fields of activity and types of NGOs to be included in the training program; development of condensed and attractive training curriculum (program topic-based information, education, communication materials, personalized for the types of NGOs included in the training stage); design and implementation of a TOT-followed training program to include 40 NGOs (and approximately 100 persons); produce publications (print and electronic: training materials, virtual tour, best practice guide, special issue of AnaLize review).

The estimated impact of the project is: increase in number of persons boasting an advanced civic spirit, who would advocate for, introduce, and apply, in their specific fields of activity, women's strategic and practical needs; a larger number of projects in which gender should be explicit; a gender-oriented NGO network.

Initiated and applied by a team of AnA - Society for Feminist Analyses, the project was possible through PHARE funding, as part of the Civil Society Program, NGO training and partnership project development component.

(Persons and NGOs interested in obtaining additional information can contact Florentina Olteanu, AnA secretariat: ana_saf@anasaf.ro, tel./fax 021 252 49 59).

by Daniela Draghici, GAD Board Member



Members of AnA.

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GAD Update

from President Jacquelyn Jancius

GAD board Spring meeting! The GAD Committee met on June 6th and tackled development issues of upcoming GAD projects: Gender Festivals, Journalism Symposiums and fundraising campaigns. We were also updated about standing committee events for the GLOW/TOBE camps and the 16 Day Anti-Violence Campaigns.

This spring, GAD met in Timisoara with the assistance of the Italian Cultural Center. The meeting included presentations by Anastasia Pop of Asociatia pentru Promovarea Femeii in Romania (Timisoara) and Zita Farkas from the Gender Studies Department at the University of Timisoara. Our hope is to continue this participation with future GAD projects.

Openings for new GAD board members! This fall GAD will seek 6 new PCVs from Group 20 to become board members. At the last meeting, the board also decided to include information on the GAD applications related to applicants' gender and location in Romania. The goal is to diversify the body of board members to inspire gender balance and more equal representation from all parts of Romania. Currently, we do not have board members from the southern or eastern regions of Romania and we are concerned about reaching out to communities in those areas.

GAD Slush Fund! The board set a goal of raising \$1,000 by June 2006 to replenish the slush fund. GAD has fundraisers including the cell phone recycling program, GAD calendar and GAD-sponsored events. By raising funds, we are able to support GAD activities, publications and some small requests for sponsorship.

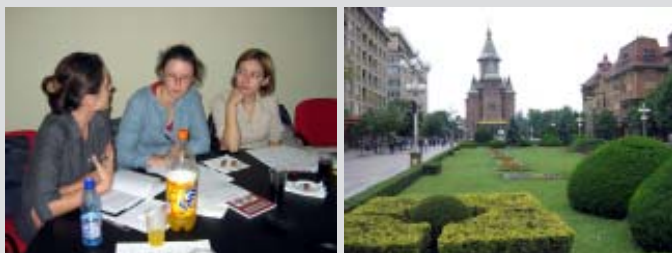
Recently, the US Embassy donated over 30 mobile phones to PC Romania. Peace Corps allowed GAD to recycle those phones to Group 20, which is helping us to reach our fundraising goals! We'd like to thank the US Embassy for its donation and also PCVs who are COS-ing and donating their phones to GAD.

From the existing slush fund, the board helped support the Society for Gender Equality (SEG) in Suceava, in order to assist this organization on a summer project called "Education for Change" and on the publication of a booklet for children called "Map to Equality Land." Distribution of these materials will be available through GAD members and Peace Corps Volunteers.

As you can see, there are many exciting projects to get involved with! GAD can use your assistance and cooperation in projects that promote gender equality in Romania. Join us either through our yahoogroup or attend a GAD meeting. The next GAD meeting will be in Sighisoara on October 8th and we hope to see you there.



Pictures from the June
GAD meeting in Timisoara.



Gender Sensitivity Training

GAD will offer a 2-day "Gender Sensitivity Training for Social Work Professionals who have clients that identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual or Transgender (LGBT)" in September 2005. This training is specifically to target misconceptions by Romanian social workers or psychologists related to clients that identify with LGBT. The training is open to 24 participants from across Romania. Transport, accommodation and meals are all included and FREE of charge to the participants.

If you would like to attend this training or know someone that would benefit from this training, please contact Tudor Kovacs or Jacquelyn Jancius at LGBT_Training@yahoo.com for an application. Applications are also available on the GADRomania yahoogroup under "Files" and "LGBT Sensitivity Training."

Deadline for applications is August 31, 2005.

Ladyfest Timisoara: A Day of Expression, Education and Action for Men and Women

by *Bori Kovacs and Ruxandra Costescu*

The first Romanian edition of “Ladyfest” – an international feminist festival dedicated especially to the arts and to social activism – aimed to create a space designed for women and their creative work, a space to come together and talk, teach one another, and discuss; to get acquainted with what other women do and why they are determined to engage – even if sporadically – in grassroots movements and “field” work. We tried to address the lack of bands with women playing instruments in different music scenes, the lack of independent art exhibitions held by independent female artists, the lack of a diverse public space dedicated to women, especially in the arts and social activist realm, and last but not least the lack of communication and collaboration among feminist organizations and women active in their communities.

The festival meant three days of workshops, exhibitions, screenings and live concerts that attracted a diverse public. One of our conclusions was that in the Romanian public space, the notion of an event such as Ladyfest is completely exotic. The audience was divided into two big categories. First, there were people (mostly women, but also men) who came during the day to participate in workshops and to meet



Participants gather during one of the festival's many workshops.

other women active in feminist grassroots organizing. They were really our main target group, and they participated as organizers, artists and activists, sharing information about their own activities and planning future projects and activities together. They were few, but they found an extraordinarily welcoming place for their ideas and got involved at all levels, most volunteering lots of time and help towards ensuring that the festival ran smoothly. The other category was made up of those who came to the fest solely for the live music (most of them were men). They were little interested in the art and exhibitions, or the film screenings. Though we were glad that both men and women participated throughout the three days of the festival, we knew that the people who came especially to see the bands had little (or less) to do with a feminist perspective on society and the need for a female space where women could come together to express themselves and share ideas.



This mix of people makes us wonder how to find a balance between putting on an event with maximum exposure and participation - which has the potential to attract and inform a large number of people - and one focused on fostering discussions and connections within a smaller group of truly interested people. We believe that everyone in the community should be able to participate. But it is essential to have policies for the event that underline its characteristics and its basic mission.

The reactions and comments from participants were extremely positive. The most significant thing for everyone was that they felt a new impulse for projects and initiatives on gender issues, and that the fest gave them new ideas, new resources to work with. The complete review of the festival, which among other things includes the detailed program and a list of conclusions we drew for the next Ladyfest Romania (planned for 2007), can be read at: <http://romania.indymedia.org/en/2005/05/838.shtml>; all the important info can be found on the fest's site (soon to be rebuilt): <http://ladyfest-ro.pimienta.org>.

The Apuseni Experience

by Ioana Lucaci

What is the connection between GLOW, TOBE and AE as acronyms? AE stands for “Apuseni Experience,” an ecotourism and adventure tourism program developed in the Apuseni Mountains, in north-western Romania. Apuseni Experience was started by the Center for Protected Areas and Sustainable Development – Bihor, an NGO working for the sustainable development of Bihor county, with special focus on the Apuseni Mountains. The Center has cooperated with Peace Corps since its founding in 2002.

Apuseni Experience is one of the best tools you can use to support your GLOW/TOBE camps. With Apuseni Experience you can take part in ecotourism programs designed specifically for you as an individual or for large groups.

GLOW/TOBE Support Activities

Suncuius, a village 70 km from Oradea, is the perfect place for Peace Corp Volunteers to organize GLOW/TOBE Camps. For accommodation we propose “The Castle,” managed by the Territorial Administration of Camps and School Tourism from Bihor, offering both indoor accommodation and camping possibilities, as well as traditional Romanian food.

The Center for Protected Areas has already supported more than 10 GLOW camps, the majority taking place in Suncuius, and offers rappelling, rock climbing, caving, and hiking activities. It can provide special equipment for both outdoor and indoor activities. All of our guides are certified and have extensive experience in outdoor activities involving children.

Gârda village is another possible location for GLOW/TOBE camps. It is situated in the famous country of the Moti, in the Aries valley. It is accessible by bus from Turda, Cluj or Oradea.

Usually, participants are accommodated in the mountain chalet, “Casa Speo,” with food prepared by a private cook. The activities offered by Apuseni Experience in this area include rock climbing, caving, and hiking.



Our past experience with Peace Corps has shown that GLOW camps can be really fulfilling experiences for the participants, both due to AE’s well-established program and the quality of its implementation methods. The administration and the chosen location of the camps also play an important role in their success.

Apuseni Experience is happy to work with Peace Corps Volunteers in order to help achieve the success of GLOW and TOBE camps. If any Volunteers are interested in supporting local NGOs in organizing these camps for young people in the Bihor and Cluj areas, please contact Be Prepared Association in Oradea at 0745-134-545 or beprepared@everyday.com. For organizing camps anywhere in Romania, you can contact the Romanian Scout Association (Cercetasii României), located in Bucuresti, at tel. 021 3122321 or contact@scout.ro.



For more information about Apuseni Experience please contact the staff in Oradea:
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The Team I Do Not Want To Forget

by *Simina Iovanovici, Volunteer APFR 2000-2003*

My story starts in 2000. Like any other sophomore student who wanted to do more than school, together with some of my colleagues I answered the challenge of being part of the Association for the Promotion of Women in Romania. I had no idea then of how satisfying it would be, how many pleasant surprises I was going to enjoy, and how many extraordinary people I was going to meet. The people that I met there are going to be a part of my soul for the rest of my life because each of them taught me something. The entire team taught me what it means to believe in a right cause, how important it is to believe in what you are doing, and, most of all, to cherish the ones you choose to fight with.

The Association for the Promotion of Women in Romania [APFR] is an NGO based in Timisoara with a noble mission, just like many other NGOs in Romania. However, this name for me means something else, because for three years I worked with the people there to attain that mission. The programs and activities there are meant to educate society through the promotion of governmental policies that aim to increase the quality of women's life in Romania. More simply, APFR aspires to change the lives of women who do not believe in change. I met women who were afraid to dream and I was there when their dreams came true. I met women afraid to look at themselves in the mirror and I helped them become more beautiful. I met women who thought that the pain they felt in their soul was normal and I helped ease that pain. APFR offers numerous services: psychological and legal counseling, professional orientation, art-therapy, social integration of convicted women, mentorship, and improving the potential of women through courses on human resources or business. I cannot forget the phone line for women and girls, victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse.

One reason why I love this organization is the respect given to Volunteers. The services mentioned above and many others are offered with the help of these extraordinary people that dedicate a few hours out of their schedule to help. These people bear a noble name: VOLUNTEERS. I do not believe that any of the Volunteers will ever forget the voices of the women that thanked them for simply being there to listen to their problems. I still hear them, although it has been two years since I left Timisoara. What can be more beautiful than the feeling at the end of the day that you managed to bring back a smile in the life of a simple person, ignored by others?

Every day I think about those that I left in Timisoara and I wish that each of you meet such people. I can promise you that your life will be richer, for friendship, honesty, unconditional assistance, dignity, appreciation, and courage are all cherished by my dear friends at the Association for the Promotion of Women in Romania.

Monitoring Gender Stereotypes in Romanian Media

*A survey conducted as part of the UNDP project
"An Integrated Approach to Gender Balanced Political Empowerment and Participation"
by Daniela Draghici, GAD Board Member*

For Romania, gender equality is part of international commitments made already (CEDAW – Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Beijing Platform for Action – of the Fourth World Conference of Women, Millennium Development Goals Declaration) and a pre-requisite for European Union integration. Even though progress has been made in adopting an adequate legal framework (Law no. 202/2002 on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men), the de facto situation needs to be ensured to respect principles of equal rights and opportunities, especially with regard to political participation. After the 2000 elections, the central representation of women reached a record of 10.3% (in comparison with 5.5% in the previous legislature) while the local representation has even lower figures (3% for mayors, 6% for local counselors and 5% for county counselors). The November 2004 elections did not change significantly the situation in terms of percentages – at central level they are still around 10% for women and 90% for men. The problem of a lack of balance remains the same.

In order to address the issues outlined above, UNDP, in consultation with donors and the Romanian Gender Network, prepared this project, which AnA - Society for Feminist Analyses has collaborated with, that aims to achieve a gender-balanced participation in political life by promoting and creating an enabling environment for a wider and more active involvement of women.

Partners of this project are: the Governments of Canada, Switzerland and Israel, the Romanian Parliament and the Commission for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, and selected NGOs. For detailed information please visit AnA's website at www.anasaf.ro and www.gender-balance.undp.ro and read the project newsletter.

What's Going On?

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

GAD is holding a fundraising photo contest for this year's calendar fundraiser. The theme is "Women and Men in a Changing World." There will be two different size calendars (A4 and 14.5x20cm). Photos must be taken in Romania and at least 300dpi in size. E-mail pictures to: gadromania_photos@yahoo.com by August 15th.

September: LGBT Gender Sensitivity Training *(highlighted on page 2)*

This 2-day training will target misconceptions by Romanian social workers or psychologists related to clients that identify with LGBT. The training is open to 24 participants from across Romania. Transport, accommodation and meals are all included and FREE of charge to the participants. E-mail: LGBT_Training@yahoo.com.

October 8: GAD Meeting in Sighisoara

Mark your calendars! All are welcome!

Ongoing GAD Projects and Contact Information

Media Symposium Expansion

Simona Zanfir
simona_zanfir@yahoo.com

Due to the success of the initial event, coordinators are trying to organize additional Gender Representation in the Media symposiums throughout Romania in 2005 and 2006. Please contact Simona if you would be interested in assisting with this worthwhile project.

Membership & Outreach

Simona Zanfir
simona_zanfir@yahoo.com

The tentative deadline for the next round of GAD applications is quickly approaching and we have lots of places to fill! Please e-mail Simona for an application and more information.

Gender Equality Fests

Camelia Blaga
camelia_blaga@yahoo.com

The first Gender Equality Festival, held in Sibiu December 2004, was a hit. Therefore, GAD is planning to expand it to other Romanian cities this fall. Please contact Camelia if you are interested in helping or in bringing a Gender Equality Festival to your town!

Note from the Editors



Dear friends,

Our first issue as editors brings some slight changes not only in layout, but also in ideas. There are a lot of people around us that do amazing things themselves or within their organization. It is time for everybody to meet them. It is time for all of us to know who is doing what and who we can share ideas with. Let's not forget that one of GAD's objectives is networking.

That is why, starting with this issue we are going to present an NGO on the first page. For this issue we chose AnA - the Society for Feminist Analysis, whose website is a valuable source for information, statistics and surveys. Read AnA's presentation, check the website, get in touch with its representatives and work together! We thank all those who contributed articles to this issue, especially to Simina Iovanovici, who wrote a moving article about her experience as a Volunteer in a gender focussed NGO.

We encourage you to send articles and share information about any gender-related topic and also to submit pictures for the photo contest. If you have any ideas, if you like or hate the new layout, let us know. The newsletter's e-mail is waiting for your comments.

Have a relaxing summer,

Jan and Simona

CONTACT US!

Send all
comments,
questions, or
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