

## Subcarpathian Association for Active Families (PSAR) 2023 Factual Report

### Subcarpathian Association for Active Families

KRS 0000578780

**Address:** 3 Maja 9, 39-120 Sędziszów Małopolski, Poland

#### Association Board:

- Monika Marković, Chairwoman of the Board
- Małgorzata Kiełbowicz, Vice-Chairwoman of the Board

**Association mission:** To enable each person, in all their uniqueness, to benefit fully from what the world has to offer and to make full use of their resources to contribute to the development of that world.

#### Main areas of the Association's activities:

1. Promotion of culture and cultural heritage, cultural education,
2. Human rights, in particular children's rights and gender equality,
3. Humanitarian aid.

### Summary

In 2023, PSAR continued and developed its activities in the areas of culture, human rights and humanitarian aid. Throughout 2023, Center for Psychophysical Development TUTU and the "School That Connects" projects were conducted for the benefit of Ukrainian refugees and their integration with Polish society. We continued the so-called "girls' projects" in the area of gender equality. We carried out a large and very innovative cultural project "Subcarpathian Culture Without Barriers", in which we cooperated with five municipalities in the region.

We have established, strengthened or developed cooperation with other NGOs, UN agencies, educational and cultural institutions, and regional and local authorities.

We joined the National Coalition for Child Protection (KKOD) and the NGO Forum "Razem".

The project of psychological support for Ukrainian refugees received a very prestigious award for the quality of project management - Polish Project Excellence Award.

## PROJECTS

### Center for Psychophysical Development TUTU

**Partner/donor:** Project HOPE / UNHCR

**Duration:** 1 Jan.-30 Nov.2023 (Project HOPE), 01-31 Dec.2023 (UNHCR)

**Budget:** USD 535 044.15

In 2023, the activities of the TUTU Center, which was opened on May 23, 2022, were continued and developed. Until the end of November, TUTU was financed by Project HOPE. At the end of the year, that organization limited its activities in Poland and therefore did not extend the expiring partnership agreement with PSAR. PSAR negotiated with UNHCR to transfer savings from the "School That Connects" project, which enabled financing the activities of the TUTU Center in December 2023.

**In 2023, a total of 3,742 people used the services of the TUTU Center. 70.% of this group were minors, 72.6% Ukrainians, 64.3% women and girls. The total number of psychosocial interventions was 17,084.**

Center for Psychophysical Development TUTU

- It is a bright space with an area of 300 sq m. in the Plaza-Rzeszów complex. It is equipped with toys, games, furniture and therapeutic tools to best meet the needs of our guests.
- Employs Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking counsellors, psychologists and therapists,
- Provides mental and psychosocial support to approximately 500 beneficiaries per month, with most of them visiting TUTU more than once,
- Specialists at TUTU use a work model based on pre-diagnostic observation of children, identification of children showing disturbing or sensitive symptoms, and internal or external referral to obtain more specialized help,
- Main services provided at the Center:
  - Safe space for children,
  - Identifying children at risk and referring them internally and externally to appropriate specialists,
  - Individual and group therapeutic classes for children and adults (including art therapy and music therapy),
  - Relaxation classes,
  - Controlled Multisensory Environment Room (Snoezelen),
  - Educational, integration, motivational and/or support workshops and events,
  - Information and counselling.

### **New TUTU Center - renovation of the premises**

**Donors:** Project HOPE and UNHCR

**Duration:** 01 Oct.-31 Dec. 2023

**Budget:** PLN 186 514.37 PLN

PSAR was looking for premises to which the TUTU Center could move after leaving its previous location at 65 Rejtana St. Finally, we rented premises at 17 Dąbrowskiego St. in Rzeszów. The lessor is the City of Rzeszów. The premises have an area of 138 sq m and are located in the city center, opposite the park.

The premises were in poor condition and required general renovation, including adapting it to the needs of persons with disabilities. The renovation was carried out thanks to funds obtained from organizations supporting other PSAR projects: Project HOPE and UNHCR.

### **School That Connects**

**Partner/donor:** UNHCR (through the umbrella of Empowering Children Foundation - FDDS)

**Duration:** 1 Jan.-31 Dec. 2023 (prolonged for 2024)

**Budget:** PLN 1 164 451.38

The project was launched on October 1, 2022 and was initially conducted under the umbrella of Première Urgence Internationale. Due to the reduction of PUI activities in Poland, from Jan. 1, 2023, the role of project operator and the intermediary between PSAR and UNHCR was taken over by FDDS.

As part of the project, two pairs of specialists from Poland and Ukraine (a psychologist and a pedagogue), supported by the coordinator, worked in schools with students, their parents and teachers. They conducted a series of workshops in the area of managing emotions, resolving conflicts, and building mental resilience. They also held individual consultations with children and their parents, if they recognized such a need. The same specialists also worked at the Protection Hub in Rzeszów, designing and conducting classes for children while their parents participated in other activities. An external anti-discrimination trainer conducted training for teachers in her area of expertise.

**In 2023, 16 Rzeszów schools took part in the project. Support was provided to 1,754 children, including 1,408 Polish and 389 Ukrainian. 264 teachers were trained. In the Protection Hub 908 people were supported: 741 children and 167 adults.**

The project supports schools and Polish-Ukrainian groups in their everyday functioning through:

1. recognizing various needs and difficulties of children from Poland and Ukraine,
2. improving teachers' competences while working with Ukrainian and Polish-Ukrainian school groups.
3. improving communication between children, teachers and parents.

### Students

Goal: Improving communication in the mixed Polish-Ukrainian groups. Students get to know exemplary solutions that help build relationships in the classroom. They learn to engage in dialogue and discussion about opportunities for cooperation in school environments, which are becoming more and more diverse nowadays.

1. workshops related to functioning in the school environment: integration, conflict resolution, recognizing and dealing with one's emotions.
2. individual consultations, during which specialists focus on the work with a single child.
3. mediation as needed between students, teachers and parents.

### Teachers

Goal: Equipping teachers with tools to collaborate with culturally and socially diverse groups of children and youth. Teachers learn how to recognize bullying and discrimination, how to counteract them, and how to approach cultural differences with understanding.

1. certified anti-discrimination and inclusive workshops with elements of safeguarding,
2. individual consultations, during which we focus on identifying and solving emerging difficulties,
3. mediation as needed between students, teachers and parents.

### Parents

Goal: Expanding knowledge about developmental regularities of children and adolescents, methods of conduct, ways to deal with difficult situations.

1. workshops related to the development of parental competences,
2. consultations during which we focus on identifying and solving emerging difficulties,
3. mediation as needed between students, teachers, and parents.

### Girls ConnAction

**Donor:** Active Citizens Fund – Regional (EEA Grants)

**Duration:** 1 Dec.2021-31 Mar.2023

**Budget:** EUR 27 469.91

Completed in 2023 the project was intended to help girls develop their social competences, set clear boundaries and cope with difficulties and improper treatment that they have to face.

It was addressed to a group of girls aged 15 to 18, from the Podkarpackie voivodeship and was conducted in the form of workshops, educational trips and social initiatives. 24 persons took part in it.

The workshops expanded knowledge about prejudices and inequalities that affect girls and taught them how to deal with those issues efficiently, as well as provided knowledge about important female historical figures.

### **Girls Are Building**

**Donor:** Active Citizens Fund – National (EEA Grants)

**Duration:** 1 Dec.2021-31 Mar.2023

**Budget:** EUR 67 78.00

Another one of the so-called "girls' projects" was aimed at teenagers aged 12-15 (24 persons) and educators (16 persons) working with teenagers of this age. It also ended in 2023.

Its aim was to counteract discrimination and violence against young girls and to increase the competences of educators and people professionally working with young people. It contributed to the participants feeling empowered, learning how to use their potential and learning the tools with which they can protect and build self-confidence, as well as support others.

The summary of the project consisted of:

- Four social initiatives carried out by educators related to anti-discrimination and gender equality, presented in the form of workshops and events for the local community. **A total of 159 people took part in them.**
- Social campaigns carried out by teenagers, the aim of which was to influence public opinion, especially the authors' peers, in areas that are important to them. The topics selected by the participants were:
  - “Conversation = Life” – supporting people with mental difficulties,
  - “Young voice has power” – active participation in public life,
  - “Words have power” – counteracting peer bullying.

The campaigns were published online. **The estimated total number of recipients exceeds 174 000.**

### **Polish-Ukrainian Sisterhood**

**Donor:** Active Citizens Fund – Regional (EEA Grants)

**Duration:** 01 Nov.2022-31 Mar.2024

**Budget:** EUR 114 995.20

„Polish-Ukrainian Sisterhood" is also an empowerment project for teenagers (24 persons) and their educators (16 persons). What distinguishes it from the previous ones in the series is that half of the participants are Ukrainian women, and the program takes into account to a greater extent the issue of discrimination based on nationality.

The project aimed to:

- draw attention to the problem of discrimination and nationality- and gender-based violence,
- increase the ability to respond to aggressive behavior, harm, lack of respect for boundaries, abuse, etc.,

- develop knowledge about the mechanisms of discrimination due to cultural differences and show the negative effects of discrimination on the entire society,
- teach project participants, in a practical way, how to solve crisis situations, how to build dialogue based on democratic values and how to support the most vulnerable groups.

The project included:

- **Sisterhood Festival** (March 2023), an open educational event where a space will be created for interactive activities, new knowledge and reflection on exclusion in everyday life,
- workshops for girls and educators related to nationality- and gender-based violence,
- the camp – a 7-day training conducted by highly qualified trainers on topics related to discrimination and preventing it.

In 2024 the project will be completed. Participants will complete the design and carry out:

- social initiatives related to anti-discrimination and gender equality presented in the form of workshops, events for the local community (examples of initiatives: theater, film, photography, happenings, etc.),
- social campaigns aimed at encouraging public opinion to discuss women rights.

### **Subcarpathian Culture Without Barriers**

**Donor:** Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway, as part of EEA and Norwegian Grants

**Partner:** NorSensus Mediaforum (Norway)

**Duration:** 14 Nov.2022-30 Apr. 2024

**Budget:** PLN 2 208 099.22

“Subcarpathian Culture Without Barriers” is an international project aimed at supporting and developing local culture and preserving cultural heritage in Podkarpackie municipalities. The following communes qualified for the project: Czarna (near łańcut), Kołaczyce, Świlcza, Narol, Niwiska. Artists, cultural activists and officials involved in the cultural life of these towns had the opportunity to participate in a series of training courses, workshops and a unique study visit in Norway.

The aim of the project is to learn and implement modern methods of promoting culture. We want the residents of the municipalities participating in the project to have access to tools supporting their artistic development and cultural entrepreneurship.

### **Key elements of the project:**

- Social diagnosis – Analysis of needs and expectations regarding the use of local cultural heritage among commune residents and representatives of local business.
- Training – Workshops for specialists from the cultural sector conducted by Polish-Norwegian experts. covering the topics of design thinking, project management, culture management, etc.

- Study visit to Oslo - Three-day experience aimed at expanding knowledge about innovative cultural projects and establishing valuable contacts in the industry.
- Cultural Entrepreneurship and Audience Development strategies – Creating personalized development strategies that integrate cultural entrepreneurship and local audience development.
- Cultural events – Innovative cultural events in five Subcarpathian municipalities. A unique opportunity to discover local cultural heritage in a modern setting and in accessible way. The first one took place in 2023 in the Świlcza municipality. It was called "Świlcza Christmas carols according to tradition". 320 people participated in it. The remaining four events will take place in 2024.
- Final conference (2024).

As part of the supplementary funding, PSAR obtained additional funds to develop the project (EUR 97 289.50), which in 2024 will result in, among others, publishing the original board game "Subcarpathian Mosaic" which will promote the regional historical and cultural heritage.

## PARTNERSHIPS

PSAR continued and/or established cooperation with many organizations and external entities. The most important of them are:

1. **Project HOPE** – an international NGO based in the USA, focused on medical support and psychological health of those affected during humanitarian crises. Project HOPE financed the activities of the TUTU Center.
2. **UNHCR** – UN agency financing the "School That Connects" project and supporting the TUTU Center.
3. **Empowering Children Foundation (FDDS)** – the largest Polish organization in the field of protection of children's rights, operator in the "School That Connects" project and partner in KKOD.
4. **NorSensus Mediaforum** – Norwegian NGO, partner of PSAR in projects financed by the so-called Norwegian Funds.
5. **Pomosty Foundation** – a sister organization based in Rzeszów, with which PSAR cooperated in all its projects.

In 2023, PSAR joined two NGO coalitions:

1. **National Coalition for Child Protection (KKOD)** - Established by 15 organizations (including PSAR) on the initiative of FDDS, aims to improve the child protection system in Poland through joint advocacy, mobilization and social education in the field of protecting children against violence through joint educational campaigns, institutional and competence development of member organizations in the field of child protection, developing standards of child protection activities, and exchange of information and experiences.

2. NGO Forum "Razem" - Forum Razem for Poland and Ukraine is an initiative serving aid organizations. The forum aims to provide wise, inclusive support to organizations working for refugees from Ukraine and the Polish communities hosting them.

As part of its humanitarian activities, PSAR was an active and regular participant in coordination meetings, in particular the Podkarpackie Coordination Group managed by UNHCR and nationwide Working Groups in the sectors of MHPSS (psychosocial support), Child Protection, and Protection, as well as working meetings of the NGO Forum "Razem".

## ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Despite decreasing funds for assistance to refugees, PSAR managed to maintain employment levels in 2023. At the end of 2023, PSAR employed 35 persons. 11 of them were Ukrainians, most of them refugees.
2. PSAR has developed and strengthened cooperation with other organizations. In particular, we have become important partners of UNHCR in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship and in the areas of education and psychosocial support.
3. The "Subcarpathian Culture Without Barriers" project, the largest part of which was scheduled for 2023, is by far the largest cultural project implemented by PSAR and therefore strengthens the chronologically first area of PSAR activity.
4. PSAR rented a new premises with an area of 138 sq m. for the needs of our activities. The premises have been renovated and adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities.
5. PSAR employees have undergone numerous training courses tailored to their personal needs and the needs of the association, including: providing psychosocial support, violence prevention, project management, financial and labor law, etc.
6. PSAR obtained funds to continue the activities of the TUTU Center (WHO) and launch the Integration Youth Club (IOM). Both projects will start in 2024.

## MEDIA

PSAR was active in social media in order to reach beneficiaries, research their needs, inform about its own activities and promote them, and achieve advocacy goals. Many materials were bilingual or even trilingual (Polish, Ukrainian, English). Materials about PSAR and specific projects of the Association were also published in local and regional media.

- **PSAR website:** [www.psar.pl](http://www.psar.pl)
- **Facebook PSAR:** <https://www.facebook.com/podkarpackiestowarzyszenie>
- **Facebook Center TUTU:** <https://www.facebook.com/centrumtutu>
- **Instagram PSAR:** [https://www.instagram.com/stowarzyszenie\\_psar/](https://www.instagram.com/stowarzyszenie_psar/)
- **Instagram Center TUTU:** [https://www.instagram.com/centrum\\_tutu/](https://www.instagram.com/centrum_tutu/)



## AWARDS

Center for Psychophysical Development TUTU became the **Bronze Finalist of the Polish Project Excellence Award** competition in the "Organizational Projects" category. The justification given by the competition organizer, the International Project Management Association (IPMA), is as follows: *The project is a proof that open and charismatic leadership builds teams capable of meeting great challenges, and magnificent, long-lasting results. The applicant implemented the project in an exceptional way in terms of speed of action and effectiveness of achieving the assumed goals in a crisis, non-standard situation, with a high level of stress and expectations of many stakeholders and public opinion.*

Account prepared on 30 Mar.2024

Accepted by the PSAR Board on 03 Apr.2023