

July-September 2015

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Dear Partners and Supporters,

2015 is a special year for us at Teach For Bulgaria – this year marks 5 years since the initial launch of the organization. We have learned a lot in the past 5 years about the diverse root causes of educational inequity in Bulgaria. Today, we realize more than ever that to achieve access to quality education for every child in our country, a wide coalition of stakeholders and motivated leaders need to work in multiple directions with a

shared vision and aligned effort.

Teach For Bulgaria identifies three fundamental challenges in our school system, which contribute to educational inequality. First, there is a lack of a clear shared vision and goals on the local and national level with regards to the output of education – what it is that we really want our students to know, be capable of doing and believe as a result of their time in school. Second, across educational institutions, the principles of transparency and accountability for resources invested and results achieved are not embraced. Last, but not least, there is insufficient human resource capacity – the sector desperately needs more professionals with the necessary skills, mindsets and knowledge required to reform our schools into 21st century educational institutions.

Within this context, Teach For Bulgaria has gained valuable experience, has developed know-how and has nurtured a community of leaders who understand these challenges and are prepared to confront them. As a result, we now recognize that our role spans beyond bringing the most talented and motivated young professionals to schools for a period of 2 years as a foundation for their long-term personal and professional investment in education. We have the capacity and the responsibility to build on their leadership by: inspiring and training others with the successful school-based practices our community generates; aligning various partners around our shared vision for student success; influencing schools and other stakeholders to introduce new practices we have found effective; identifying and supporting high-potential social entrepreneurs and educational leaders.

To this end, in the past quarter we have launched an open call to our alumni to establish new strategic initiatives addressing some core needs in the underdeveloped educational ecosystem in Bulgaria. In just 3 months, already 2 initiatives have been launched to this end:

- A *School Consulting and Training Agency* which consult and train school leadership teams on ways to improve the results of students on a school level and beyond. They already ran a pilot project this summer which you can read about in the next section.

- An *Education Advocacy Group* which brings together stakeholders from different sectors to stand for a shared long-term vision for the quality education Bulgarian schools should provide. The group will conduct and collate critical analysis of the state of education, will effectively communicate key data to the wider public, disseminate best practices, and provide recommendations to policy makers.

You all play a key role in making positive change happen through your relentless support, partnership and belief in our cause. Thank you sincerely for your support!

Regards,

Evgenia Peeva, CEO

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Success Stories

Summer Career Camp

In July, three of our foreign language teachers, Radostina Boycheva (ESL teacher, Sofia), Pepa Anignostova (German language teacher, Pirdop) and Petya Zheleva (German language teacher, Panagyurishte) organized a Professional Orientation Summer Camp for students from grades 9 to 12.

Radost conducted a survey in her school, focused on students' perceptions of their future careers. When asked what careers they believed were realistic for them for the future, over 90% of high-school students saw themselves as low-skilled workers, taxi drivers, cashiers or hairstylists. Accordingly, Radost wanted to expose students to alternative career paths. With her colleagues, she launched the project focused on introducing students to a wide range of professional paths, universities, successful companies and nonprofits.

Students started their journey by sharing what they expected from the project and set their own personal goals for the projects. Special activities and tests helped them define their strengths and career aspirations. Towards the end of the academy, all students prepared and presented their personal development plans and were ready to be mentors and co-

organizers of the 2016 edition of the Professional Orientation Summer Camp.

During the nine days, they visited three universities, the headquarters of six leading organizations in the field of IT, business development and education, and spoke with experts in these companies with very diverse backgrounds. In addition to that, the students learned a lot about opportunities to study abroad and met young professionals from different fields ranging from dancers and musicians to CEO of startups, engineers and doctors.

The project brought together about 20 students from Sofia, Samokov, Bozhurishte and Panagyurishte. It would not have been possible without the financial support from Telerik and Bulgarian Society in Dundee University.

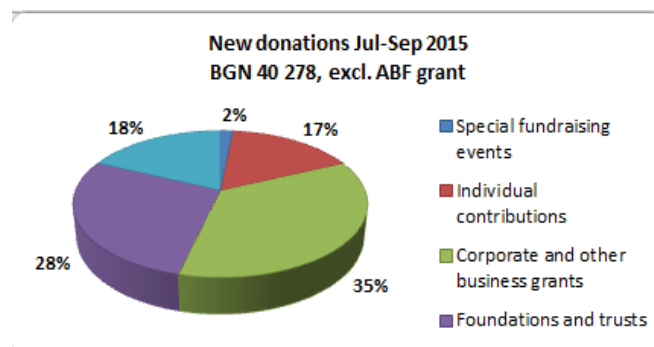
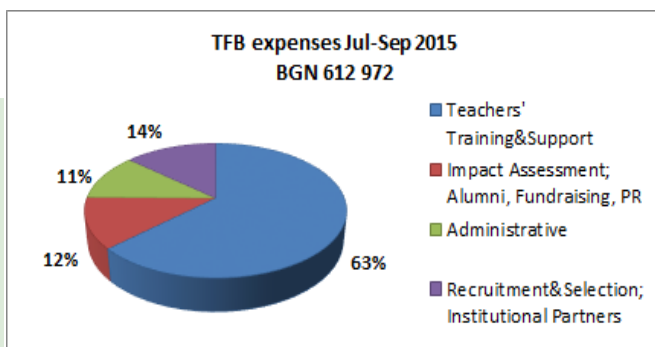
"It was such a great experience for me! I will never forget it." – a student wrote in the feedback survey – "I would most definitely sign up for it again because it helped me become so much more aware of who I am and what I want!"



On the road to school turnaround

Five Teach For Bulgaria partner schools made their first step towards a turnaround - a process of changing the leadership model in order to ensure the success of every student. The teams of the schools attended an intensive one-week training focused on school leadership as a part of the Erasmus + project School Leadership Toolkit for Accelerating Achievement, led by eight Teach For Bulgaria alumni. Teach For Bulgaria is one of the partners in this European project that aims to implement best practices in school turnaround from the UK to five European countries. During the training, the school teams started to rethink their school vision, personnel management, school & team structures, excellent teaching, and communication strategy. Now, every school has a bold vision, shared with the community, and they are already putting into action the tools developed during the training. The project team is going to support them in this journey throughout the school year by providing coaching and timely feedback.

Financial snapshot



Organizational Report

Recruit talented professionals to become motivated teachers: During this quarter, the Admissions Team at Teach For Bulgaria officially launched the new recruitment season for new teachers and began pursuing our ambitious admissions goal: to start the 2016 school year with 130 TFB teachers. The Admissions team worked together with the Development and Marketing teams to launch the „Будителите днес“ ([“Buditelite Dnes”](#) or [“Today's Enlighteners”](#)) recruitment marketing campaign. In order to gain maximum exposure and reach channels, which would normally be extremely resource-intensive, TFB collaborated with Nova television network, Darik Radio and Metroreklama. The three partners will provide TV airtime, radio-time and outdoor advertising space.

Place TFB teachers in needy schools: TFB started the new academic year with total of **96 teachers teaching at 55 partner schools** situated in eight regions in Bulgaria. This year we managed to expand our partnership network with **14 new schools** situated mainly in villages and small towns, 3 of which are in an entirely new region – Razgrad. We are incredibly proud of our 2015 cohort and of expanding our reach to Northeastern Bulgaria. The main goal of our teachers' placement campaign this year was to maximize the number of teachers placed at schools in communities outside of relatively well-off urban centers. As for the teachers that are placed in Sofia and major cities, we targeted schools with lower academic ranking, either situated in the periphery of the town or close to the segregated neighborhoods whose population has lower socio-economic status.

Support and evaluate TFB teachers' success: In this quarter, the Training and Support team organized the Summer Institute for 66 teachers from Cohort 2015. By the end of the intense training 89% of teachers were either meeting or exceeding our standards for lessons execution and 96% for planning. During the first week these numbers were 70% and 87% respectively. In the past quarter, the Training and Support Team started working on the content and design of two joint masters programs with Plovdiv University (PU). Our goal is to integrate TFB trainings with the PU curriculum thus allowing our teachers to obtain a master's degree upon completion of the program.

Ensure alumni remain engaged with teaching and education: During this quarter, 5 of our alumni took on leadership roles in the launch of two of the three strategic initiatives, focused on tackling persistent challenges in the education sector. The initiatives, namely the Regional Education Partnerships for Long-Term Results, the Education Advocacy Group, and the School Consulting and Training Agency, are spearheaded by our alumni, and backed by financial and professional support of Teach For Bulgaria. As of September 2015, two of our alumni are vice principals, making positive change at the school level.

Development and Fundraising.: During the quarter, one of the biggest priorities was securing renewals with all partners whose contracts expired at the end of the school year. We are proud that all of our partners acknowledged the impact we had in their communities and recognized the results of our teachers' work. As a result, all of our partners renewed their support for our cause. Additionally, we held a number of meetings with businesses in Razgrad, our newest region, where we managed to secure a funding of BGN 40 000 from BG Agro, Pilko, Mlin, Amilum, Agrochimconsult and Antibiotic. This is part of our new strategy for engaging businesses on a regional basis through a local champion. We are excited about the results achieved and we plan to use the same approach in the coming months to expand into new regions.

2014/2015 Honor Roll

The 2014-2015 Honor Roll presented below includes all Teach For Bulgaria donors for the period of Oct 1, 2014 – December 31, 2015. Teach For Bulgaria highly appreciates the generosity and support of our contributors.

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Thank you for helping Bulgarian children obtain excellent education!

Teach For Bulgaria Team