

Montana On A Mission

Romania Report

How A Romania Trip Came About

Kitty Rickert and Kim Baker traveled to Romania in May of 2017 with the Jesus Film Prayer Journey. Staff from Global Church Ministries (GSM) took them on a tour of ministry work throughout Romania. They visited the village of Uncesti in North Eastern Romania to hear about a church plant and be a part of showing Magdalena.

When Kitty and Kim heard about the particular needs of the village, they immediately thought of Montana On A Mission and our water projects.

Background Information

Costel is a pastor in the village of Uncesti. Costel grew up in the village but left the village for work in the city. Even though he had a very great job in the city his desire was to return to the village to plant a church. At a great personal cost, he resigned from his job and moved to the village.

He has planted a very small church and started a foundation to help care for the food, water, and health needs of the community. Each Saturday he hosts all of the children of the community for a kid's ministry time and a meal.

He faces resistance from the Romanian Orthodox Church. When they tried to show Magdalena (Jesus Film) in the villages the priest called to police. The Mayor interceded because Costel does so much for the community and surrounding area.

The foundation currently raises ducks, chickens, pigs, and some other livestock for food and sales. Two large greenhouses are currently being built to provide additional food. They plan on growing tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers. The foundation currently has 9 members on the board, elected for 4-year terms. If something were to happen to Costel, the board would work on a replacement. Costel's family is very involved. His children work outside of the country; however, they help when they can. Costel also hires people from the village to help and pays them through the sales of the foundation. The foundation helps everyone in the villages without discriminating against Orthodox or non-Christians. Costel has a very good reputation because of the work the foundation is doing and because of his character and integrity.

There is no reliable source of clean water in the village. There are 3 hand dug wells that have a significant recovery time and are unusable during the dry season. The wells are shallow and therefore are unsafe for normal drinking without boiling the water. The well depths seem to be 30 feet or so, give or take. One well is private, shared by 6 families. They lock the gate during

the dry season, but people often steal water. The 6 families fight over water resources to the extent that the police are called when the conflict escalates.

They do try to catch water off of the homes, but there isn't enough rain to provide for the needs. There is virtually no potable water in the village and very few flushable toilets. Every family in the village is on welfare (approximately \$30.00/month). The families own land and get some income from the land; however, they are at the mercy of the companies who farm the land. The companies pay them based on production however there is significant corruption and the companies report what they want to report. The government seems to be part of the problem and support the companies over the people.

Poverty in Romania is concentrated in the more rural areas. Romania is the poorest country in the European Union; however, it is developing quickly. All of the development seems to be concentrated in the cities. Bucharest, Iasi, and other cities are bursting with activity and economic growth. Rural Romania is decades behind and reminiscent of 1940-50's America, although with greater poverty. The average rural family is living on an income of \$5.50 a day the highest poverty rate in Europe.¹

Needs

The primary need is for clean, usable water for drinking, cooking, animals, and gardens. Right now, the village is forced to travel 15-20km to get water during the dry seasons. The water that is available is unsafe for drinking without boiling.

There are obviously other needs (food poverty, education, ministry). Costel is doing an outstanding job of helping with all of the needs and the foundation has some level of outside support. They are currently building two large greenhouses donated from outside the country. Costel currently employs one man who was formerly homeless. He lives on the property in a small house/shed off the animal yard.

Hydroponics and Aquaponics don't seem to be an option right now. Aquaponics is being used near the black sea by YWAM (Youth With A Mission). Costel indicated that it hadn't been very successful in rural areas but didn't know much about it.

If Montana On A Mission were to help with a well the village would obviously be greatly blessed. Costel is very trustworthy and has a reputation of character and integrity. Costel is focused on planting a church but he is doing it in a way that meets people's physical needs regardless of whether they are in the church. Costel has a plan in place for people to receive vegetables and water. People contribute by working in the greenhouses.

¹ Donato De Rosa and Yeon Soo Kim, "Romania: Thriving Cities, Rural Poverty, and a Trust Deficit," *Brookings*, June 5, 2018, accessed April 12, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/06/05/romania-thriving-cities-rural-poverty-and-a-trust-deficit/>.

MOM would do well to have some kind of agreement in place to make sure that the foundation continues to allow everyone access to the well.

Cost Analysis

Two drilling companies visited the property. The second drilling company was outstanding. They have better equipment, solid plans, and compete and exceed on cost.

We cannot do Electronic Resonance on the property. The cost is prohibitive, and the company doesn't have the room to adequately survey the property. We are looking into other options. The drilling companies cannot make a guarantee but based on the landscape and experience believe water is accessible.

Estimated Costs

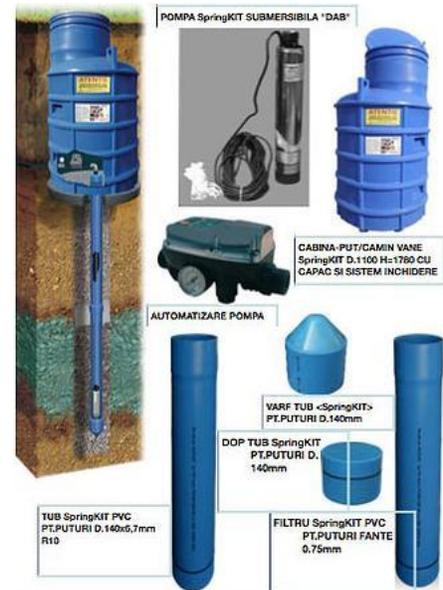
0 to 100 Meters (328') = 60 Euro (\$67.82)/Meter

0 to 200 Meters = 67 Euro (\$75.73)/Meter

0 to 300 Meters = 75 Euro (\$84.77)/Meter

\$60 for pump house

\$500 for Pump



Recommendations and Suggestions for MOM Involvement in Romania

We are very impressed with Costel and the work he is doing in Uncesti. It is very likely that we could raise money for this project without jeopardizing our work in the Philippines and Kenya.

We are also impressed with the ministry opportunities in Romania. Global Church Movements (Cru, Jesus Film, etc.) are doing incredible work. They are connecting with churches and church networks all over Romania by providing resources and helping with church planting efforts. In addition, they have ministries that reach out to business leaders, men and women, children, middle school, high school, college students, and more.