



ANNUAL REPORT

BULGARIAN FUND FOR WOMEN



2015



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INTRODUCTION

The year 2015 was crucial for the Bulgarian Fund for Women – a period of transition, (re)evaluation, rethinking of the way the organization functions, strategizing, restructuring, restarting and rebranding. When the new team (the Director and the Communications & Fundraising expert) officially started their work in May, the then current situation of BFW can be described as mainly negative. The challenges we faced the first 3-4 months of the transition period were several and resulted from the scarce activities of the Fund in the past 3 years – no financial stability or organizational capacity, no visibility, minimal public recognition, almost no partnerships, no vision for development, administrative problems, problems with previous corporate donors and unfinished projects, technical problems and one of the most important challenges – the Bulgarian Fund for Women had lost its role of an equal partner in the WFs networks – INWF, WFN as well as its image of a trustful grantee for GFW, Mama Cash and others. Despite all these challenges, the team saw the huge potential of the organization due to its unique mission and activities – raising money, giving grants and building a women's movement. Our short term goals were to solve effectively all problems and start working for long term results, which we did simultaneously. After a year of very active work we can say that we have a clear vision for development, described in our Strategic plan, we increased our organizational and financial capacity, we became visible and widely recognized on a local and national level, the unfinished projects were successfully finished, and slowly but steadily we are rebuilding our image of an important player in the WFs networks and of a trustful grantee. Of course, we are fully aware that all these processes are not finished yet and will take more time than one year. On the other side, we evaluate our transition period as very successful and strong kick off for the Bulgarian Fund for Women's new identity.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Team – during the period 2015-2016 the team of the Bulgarian Fund for Women consisted of a full time Director, full time Communications & Fundraising expert, part time Accounting & Administrative officer, part time Coordinator (in charge of Avon project and paid by it) and 3 trainees– 2 school girls in the first half of the year and 1 student in the second half. We also work with volunteers for specific tasks like translation, photo shooting, other types of support.

Board of Trustees – at the end of June 2015, after interviewing different women in different capacities, we finished the process of forming of the new Board. Currently, there are 5 women in the Board – Stanimira Hadjimitova, founder of Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation and of the Bulgarian Fund for Women; prof. Rumiana Stoilova – director of the Institute for Research of Societies and Knowledge within the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – who had conducted numerous researches on gender issues; Vanya Karaganeva – chief Security expert in the Bulgarian National Assembly; Rumena Tareva – government & NGO expert with 20-year experience in developing and implementing (EU) projects; Liliya Elenkova – director of the National Youth Forum, entrepreneur and expert in youth and educational policies. The Board meets once a month with 80% presence on every meeting.

Strategic plan – during May 2015, the team worked on developing a new 4-year Strategy and in June, together with the new Board of Trustees, we finalized the document and agreed on implementing it. It gives the overall direction of development of the Bulgarian Fund for Women and sets the thematic priorities the organization focuses in its work.



Board strategy – in June-July 2015, the BFW team developed and proposed a Board strategy for guiding the Board in its work and clarifying the members' different roles. Also, indicators for evaluating the Board by the team were proposed and in September 2015 the strategy was adopted.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Strategy

In June 2015, a comprehensive communication strategy was elaborated (in Bulgarian) for the next 4 years in accordance with the organizational goals, which includes total rebranding of BFW with a new logo, new website, new slogan and messages, new image of the organization, new methods for fundraising, new channels for communication, etc. The strategy includes the steps for the new vision for BFW and the new unique image of the organization; precise target groups and messages; monitoring and evaluation; KPIs, etc.

Communication Channels

Website - The new website has Google Page Rank 4/10, according to the PageRank Checker. **27 pieces of news** were written and published on the website from May 7th, 2015 to April, 20th, 2016. Almost all of the information is bilingual (BG and EN), thanks to the translations made by the team, trainees and volunteers. The website is undergoing some major upgrades, in order to answer the organization's increased needs.

The website features a new **Blog section** (in Bulgarian only), which is dedicated to women's issues and rights in order to raise awareness on the topic and stimulate authors to reflect through gender lenses. From February 2016 by now, we have received **13 genuine texts**.

Social Media - New social media channels were created and successfully maintained. BFW has an official **FB page** (which attracted **2220 followers** by now, starting from 400 likes in May 2015), **FB profile** with almost **5000 friends**, active **Twitter account** with **208 followers**, newly made **LinkedIn profile** with **548 connections** and a **LinkedIn company page**, as well as a **YouTube Channel**.

Media Relations & Monitoring - Regular press information was sent to the media, which resulted in hundreds of publications about the BFW. We have established media partnerships with the Bulgarian National Television, Dnevnik.bg (online quality media channel), Cosmopolitan Journal, Sportal.bg and Woman.bg (both niche online media).

Since the beginning of June 2015, we have started our own media monitoring and press clipping. For the period May 2015 - April 2016 there are **169** publications in the Bulgarian media (some important can be found [on the website](#)): **123** online, **20** print, **15 TV** and **11 radio** appearances, interviews in talk-shows and reports, in regard with BFW's initiatives and events. The number and type of publications for each event are clarified below.

Events

BFW organized 3 own events and was a major partner in another 2:

Why (we) invest in women?, July 2nd, 2015 – an opening discussion, on the occasion of the restart of the work of the BFW. It took place at the Home of Europe and special speakers were the Head of the Cabinet of the Minister of Labour and Social policy, the Chargé d'affaires at Norwegian embassy in Bulgaria, the Chairwoman of the Council of Women in Business and CEO of Siemens Bulgaria, the Director of the Institute



for Study of the Societies and Knowledge of Bulgarian Academy of Science and the Executive Director of Bulgarian Fund for Women. Publications: 14 online, 2 print, 1 TV.

[#Every4th: see the true face of violence](#) – celebrating the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women, launched in the Bulgarian National Assembly, November 25th, 2015 – the event was opened by the vice-chairman of the National Assembly and organized with the support of the MP Mariana Todorova. Special guest was the ambassador of the United Kingdom to Bulgaria. Publications: 63 online, 8 print, 5 radio.

Equal Start, March 10, 2016 – together with Raiffeisenbank Bulgaria and H. Stepich Foundation, BFW organized an event on the occasion of 8th of March, which gathered women and their children from vulnerable and multiple discriminated groups: victims of domestic violence, refugee women, Roma women, women from social institutions. It consisted of motivational and psychological sessions and trainings. No information was distributed, due to the sensitivity of the participants.

[Walk a Mile in Her Shoes](#) (link in BG), March 13th, 2016 – BFW was one of the major organizers, together with the Information Centre of the European Parliament in Bulgaria. Walk a Mile in Her shoes is an annual men's march to stop rape, sexual assault & violence against women, which took place after the International Women's Day. The director Nadejda Dermendjieva opened the event. This year's focus was the signing and ratification of the Istanbul Conventions on behalf of Bulgaria. Furthermore, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes provided a platform for women from especially vulnerable groups such as refugees, LBT Women and women with Roma origin to articulate and discuss specific needs and problems, connected to domestic and sexual violence under the lens of marginalization. Publications: 23 online, 2 print, 7 TV, 3 radio.

[Screening of The Mask You Live In](#) (link in BG), March 17, 2016 – The film focuses on the masculinity stereotypes and their negative effects on men. The screening was initiated and solely organized by the BFW, although as a part of the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes campaign and with the financial support of the Information Centre of the European Parliament and with the partnership of the National Palace of Culture, where it took place. The screening attracted more than 120 guests (the full potential of the hall provided). Publications: 7 online, 1 TV.

External and partnership events

- BFW representative took part in the workshops organized by the Women's Leadership Laboratory in June 2015.
- BFW representative took part in Gender Project for Bulgaria conference on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the organization (the Director was among the panelists).
- BFW representative took part in the official celebration of the 4th of July organized by the US embassy.
- BFW's director was among the speakers at the International NATO conference "Women, Peace and Security: What They Do, Why It Matters" on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of UNSC resolution 1325
- BFW's director was among the speakers at the International conference under the theme of „Institutions, Media and Society United in Combating Violence Against Women“, organized by Women Lawyers Association on November 26-27, 2015, with regard to November 25th, declared by the UN as the International Day for Eliminating Violence Against Women.



- BFW partnered Sofia Queer Forum 2015 and its initiative '[Circus! My different family](#)', which gathered art expressions of weird, quirky or peculiar understandings and experiences of the social construct and ideal of a family.
- BFW was official partner of the event of the Technical University of Sofia [8 Successful Alumni Women](#), where Gergana Kutseva addressed the participants, on the occasion of IWD.

Campaigns

[#Every4th](#) – On the occasion of the international UN campaign “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence”, we created a revolutionary, yet controversial campaign, based on the assumption that if every 4th woman in Bulgaria is a victim of violence, then every 4th man is a perpetrator. Its aim was to raise the question “Do we know which is the true face of violence?” and to shift the focus from the victims to the perpetrators. The campaign “Every4th” focuses on the way we think and talk about violence against women without realizing the damages we may cause when we blame the victims for what they have gone through. It is high time we realized that in a world without perpetrators there will be no victims. Therefore, the campaign “Every4th” aimed to encourage oppressors to look for professional help, in order to change, and victims to look for protection without feeling shame or guilt. The campaign was created pro bono together with the digital agency *E-act* and consisted of several elements: creation of a website with information and facts about domestic violence and violence against women, [video spot](#), which was viewed from more than **920 users** and aired on the Bulgarian National Television. Calls to action included: signing of a petition for the ratification from Bulgaria of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (**365 people** signed it), and an art contest “Draw the real face of violence” (21 visuals from 13 artists received). The aim is to use the visuals for fundraising purposes and an exhibition is forthcoming.

FUNDRAISING

In the period April 2015 – April 2016, we focused our work on researching different types of potential donors, businesses in Bulgaria and their CSR programs and good practices for fundraising. Also, we are currently developing a Fundraising strategy and an Action plan, together with concrete proposals for the companies we have chosen to approach.

Below, you will see our fundraising activity in the last 12 months separated in several major categories:

Projects

Filia – we applied to filia in July 2015 with our project “Fempower: The Feminist Incubator” and were approved for receiving 8000 euro. How we used the money you can see in the section Grantmaking.

Corporate

Raiffeisenbank – we were approved for the program “Choose to Help” of the bank and fundraised 9 000 BGN from the employees of the bank. How we will use the money you can read in the Grantmaking section.

Telus International – we were approved from the Telus Foundation and received support in the amount of 6 400 BGN. How we plan to use the money and continue our work with Telus you can read in the Grantmaking section.



Avon – Avon is our biggest corporate donor. From 2012 to 2015, we have received 300 000 BGN (\$175 500) from the company for the “From Love to Life” project focused on raising awareness among women about breast cancer. In 2012-2013, technical equipment for breast cancer examinations was donated by BFW and Avon to 10 hospitals in Bulgaria. In 2014-2015, 10 000 free examinations for women had to be made in the 10 cities.

Individual donors

The total sum we fundraised from individual donors is 2 877 USD and it includes DMS messages send for our campaign for the shelters for victims operated by the organizations in the Alliance, bank transfers, online donations and a sum saved from previous membership for the Million Women for Million Goodnesses movement.

Other

The exhibition “Every4th” – during our campaign “Every4th” we made a contest for artists and designers titled “Draw the real face of violence”. We received 21 images with which we will made an exhibition and produce bags and cups which we will sell for charity.

In-kind

For the period we are reporting for, we also fundraised and received in kind donations in the total amount of 12 556 USD. The donations include 4 new PCs (600 USD) from Tulip Foundation, 1 laptop (200 USD) from CNSys Computers, 1 Canon color printer and scanner (100 USD) from an individual donor, software from Microsoft through the Techsoup program (4 874 USD), 1 page in Cosmopolitan Journal for our “Every4th” campaign (3 295 USD), 2 airings of our clip for “Every4th” (136 USD, special price for NGOs) on the Bulgarian National Television, free development of the campaign “Every4th” by the E-Act Digital Agency (2 840 USD) and the work of 3 trainees (511 USD).

GRANTMAKING

In the period 2015 – 2016, we gave grants in the amount of 61 000 BGN (34 660 USD). Our other donors, together with OAK, were/are Avon, Raiffeissenbank, Telus International, filia die frauenstiftung and we also received individual donations.

OAK – 18 000 BGN (10 227 USD)

The funds secured from OAK we spent for 14 small grants in 2 cycles. In May 2015, we opened our first cycle of grantmaking and supported 10 projects with 10 small grants (1000 BGN = 568 USD). We received 29 projects from 28 organizations across the country. 50% of the grantee organizations were situated outside Sofia.

In November 2015, we opened our second cycle of grantmaking where only the 10 organizations approved in the first cycle could develop projects and apply for grants. We supported 4 organizations with 4 grants in the amount of 2000 BGN (1136 USD). Unfortunately, only one of the organizations was situated outside Sofia.

All projects were evaluated by the team and the Board of the Bulgarian Fund for Women. All selected projects are in line with our mission, vision and priority areas of work.



Avon – 32 000 BGN (18 182 USD)

In 2015, we received a donation from Avon for the project “From Love to Life”. The one fourth of the sum was part of a bigger donation to 10 NGOs outside Sofia, who worked as local coordinators of local campaigns for attracting women to make free examinations for breast cancer. The other one third of the money was given to 10 hospitals in the 10 cities of the NGOs as a payment for the examinations. More than 8000 women across Bulgaria went through examinations.

Raiffeisenbank – 9 000 BGN (5 114 USD)

In July 2015, BFW applied for the “Choose to Help” programme of Raiffeisenbank Bulgaria – their instrument for CSR. We developed a project for supporting 6 shelters for victims of gender based violence, operated by 6 organizations members of the Alliance for Protection from Gender Based Violence. Our project was among the 20 projects approved out of more than 200 submitted. The money, which we will donate to the shelters, will help them buy refrigerators, blankets, new wallpapers, etc. Our target is 12 000 BGN (which we expect to fundraise soon), so that we can donate 2000 BGN to each center. Also, the real fundraised sum is around 10 000 BGN, including individual donations and DMS messages.

Telus International – 4 000 BGN (2 366 USD) for grantmaking out of 6 400 BGN (3 940 USD) for the whole project

In 2015, the company Telus International founded the Telus Foundation Europe in Bulgaria. In July, BFW submitted a project and we were among the 20 organizations selected for funding. Through this program we will restart half of the Gender Equality Youth Clubs established during our Youth Program (2009 – 2013). The aim is to focus the attention of young people participating in them on reproductive rights, sexual education and early marriages through training and also to support 6 NGOs coordinating the clubs. Next year we will apply again for continuing the project and will probably receive funding for restarting the other half of the clubs.

Filia die frauenstiftung – 5 000 BGN (2 841 USD) for grantmaking out of 15 600 BGN (8 863 USD) for the whole project

In 2015, we received a grant from filia in the amount of 8000 EUR for our project Fempower: The Feminist Incubator. In April 2016, we gathered 12 women from 12 Bulgarian NGOs and trained them in gender and feminist issues and increased their capacity for making websites, lobbying, project writing, communicating with media and donors, etc. In May 2016, they will develop their own projects for empowering women and we will support one of the projects/organizations with a grant of 5000 BGN.

Individual donations – 5064 BGN (2 877 USD)

In the reported period 2015 – 2016, we fundraised from individual donors through social media, mail marketing and personal meetings. In this sum, we also include money raised in the previous years from the Million Women for Million Goodnesses movement. The money is received from bank transfers, online donations and DMS messages. 1200 USD from the whole sum went for donations from our side (for the shelters for victims) and with the rest we covered some expenses.

The report was written by:

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