

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### **Aims:**

**Our long term aim:** to stand up against the inequalities of society, shape attitudes, connecting it with the more and more popular sport, the cycling, organising peaceful actions.

Our further aim is to address the mainstream society through the media, reduce negative attitude, encourage donating in order to support marginalised groups (big families in deep poverty, Roma and homeless people, etc.). Expanding the volunteer team of Budapest Bike Maffia, developing the organisation constantly, focusing attention to actual social problems.

### **Our direct objectives:**

- making our awareness raising program more widespread, taking part in school programs focusing on the towns and communities in the countryside
- building network of local, self-helping communities
- promoting volunteering, and stimulate people and groups to be proactive
- concentrating on people in financial need, big families and homeless people

### **The method of implementation**

Our main activity is collecting donations and delivering them by bike to those in need. The implementation is characterised by innovation and novelty, which combines elements of social work with volunteering, donating and cycling.

The implementation methods of the organisation are also characterised by high degrees of flexibility, most important is the ability to react quickly, as we have the possibility to get in touch quickly and directly with the hundreds of volunteers and inform them about actual actions and events.

The number of volunteers (20-60 people) of the organisation varies at the different programs. The leaders of the organisation manage the tasks. The volunteers and students who are on obligatory community service take part in preparing and delivering the food and raise funds.

#### **a. Fundraising and support**

Our volunteers have been collecting donations at different markets and delivered them by bike since 2012. The families are chosen by the help of family welfare service. Instead of the occasional support as we did at the beginning, we react to the families' needs parallel to the creation of the portfolio. The tasks of the volunteers are: getting in touch with the customers, collecting donations and delivering the goods by bike to the people in need. Keeping in touch with the supported people has also become part of our work recently

#### **b. Community cooking**

Community cooking is one of our regular activities. We get together at the advertised place and time on a Saturday twice a month, and we cook 100-130 portions of food in average from the donated ingredients. As soon as the food is ready, we put them in boxes and deliver them by bike to homeless people. Similarly to most of the actions of BBM this

is also easily tracked and transparent, every donor or helper can see at once, where their donation goes.

c. Vitamin commando

Besides our (bi-)weekly events, our most enthusiastic bikers get together and deliver the food we received in our warehouse to the people who live on the streets two or three times a week. These are mostly healthy, natural packages full of vitamins (vegetables and fruit); they are put together from the weekly donations of civilians and vendors.

d. Saving food

In addition, due to our speed, it happens regularly that we deliver leftover sandwiches from a conference or the buffet of an office to the people in need. Both our donors and volunteers are disturbed by the fact that much food is thrown away so they are always ready to take the edible food to those in need.

e. Community space and storage room

BBM has its own storage room that is provided by Élesztő (a bar). We can store big amounts of durable food, clothes or other donations here. We can use the storage and the community areas, too, we get prepared for the Vitamin Commando here.

f. Campaigns to raise social awareness

We regularly organize events and campaigns which focus on those in need - two groups we mainly support: homeless people and poor families - and the importance of personally acting against this. With these events we are trying to show that interpersonal relationship is key, and anyone can help to shorten distances.

In the winter of 2016-2017, as weather grew colder and colder, the original goal of our Crisis event was to offer direct help for those in need. Besides the regular bicycle delivery, we intended to involve another NGO (Age of Hope) and with their help, to visit the homeless using cars, in order to be more effective. The other idea was to shake up the donors and make people socially more sensitive. We learned during the past years that after Christmas, people become somewhat indifferent and are less likely to donate. However, when the Crisis event launched, people joined together for the cause in such numbers that, as one news site (24.hu) put it, „it was similar to that after the toxic red sludge spill (2010) or the refugee crisis.”

g. One more sandwich

In this project, we are joined by high school students in order to help the homeless, and to support daytime, night time or temporary shelters which do not provide meals for their residents. The basic idea is: once a weeks, the students of participating high schools bring one extra sandwich with them, then they collect the sandwiches which we pick up and deliver. We keep a record of the number of sandwiches distributed this way so we can precisely follow how many we receive and can give away. In 2016 we received over 27,000 sandwiches, 480 kg fruits and 250 kg desserts.

## **The results of the project**

Last year, in the course of about 30 big events, we delivered about 100-120 hot meals with the help of approximately 40 people per week. 200-300 of our volunteers prepared and distributed more than 4,000 portions of meals, using solely donations. The Vitamin Commando had over 103 events when they delivered hundreds of kilograms of fruits and vegetables, over 10,000 sandwiches, 280 blankets and pieces of warm clothing, and 250 thermal blankets. As the number of our volunteers continuously grows, there are about 40 regulars in the Commando.

One of the most important results of our work is that more and more people join us all the time, and people are becoming more sensitive to civil movements and community projects. Because of our work, people gained trust again in charitable organizations.

The fact that we have developed a working relationship with the people living in the street, that they trust us and count on us, shows the success of our projects. Our blogs and social media sites have over 20,000 followers, and we use these platforms to inform them about our events, campaigns and news about our activities.

### **The organisational background of the project and its budget so far**

The project has been funded only by private donations. Most of that is the voluntary work of the organisers and participants, it took full work time of one organiser and 20 people helped regularly every week. The volunteers and supporters offered services to the community so the location of the events didn't cause a financial problem either.

We can continue fund raising and distribution the same way but we need new sources for development and for bigger events. As the organisation became an official association, we met new costs that need to be covered, too.