

PRESENTATION

of “IZGREV-29” CHITALISHTE, village of OPANETZ

The chitalishte performs its activities in a village 3 km away from the district and municipal centre—the city of Pleven. Over 1800 people live in the village. In the 2-storey building of the chitalishte there are a library, a hall with 200 places, a coffee-club with 120 places, dressing-rooms. The public library serves over 250 readers, who visit the library about 3000 times per year. A youth club of volunteers “Friends of Library” operates actively and support the organization and conduction representing the everyday life and the history of the village.

The chitalishte is active in promoting amateur art. In the children’s dance formation there are 20 participants, who present their art product at festivals and art events in the region. The Woman and Children Folklore Group has 30 participants and is involved in recreating local customs and rituals and performs in the village and around the region.

A Children’s Music School operates in the chitalishte with according classes, as well as a Chess Club, a Table-Tennis Club and a Leisure Time Club serving the young people in the village.

The chitalishte is working on projects financially supported by international and local donors. The chitalishte is a member of the Pleven Chitalishte Community Fund Association and is regularly applying for funding under the calls for proposals issued by the Fund in support of local initiatives. Thus was the project “If you have a goal you will find the road” implemented. In the course of the project the most urgent needs of the rural community have been assessed, concrete problems have been identified and solutions have been found to raise the quality of life of people in Opanetz. As a result of the project, together with the local mayoralty and the Pleven Municipality two open-air kindergartens and a playground for children and young people in the village have been constructed.

Our chitalishte was one of rural chitalishte which took part in the project “To change our life ourselves” administered by the Pleven Chitalishte Community Fund and supported by the Democracy Commission of the Embassy of the United States of America. This project thought the chitalishte activists methods for assessing the public opinion, for conducting community forums and for advocacy and lobbying, which we applied in practice in the course of project activities. As a result of the project a Youth Club, that still functions in the chitalishte.

Our chitalishte has been a key partner of the Pleven Chitalishte Community Fund for the project “Together against loneliness”, financially supported by the Small Grants Scheme of the World Bank and focusing on involving volunteers in socially important and of public benefit activities. The main beneficiaries of the project were the elderly people, who apart from access to information gave start to a programme called “Neighbours’ Mutual aid” where the neighbours of chronically ill, lonely and with difficulty to walk old people, undertook to take care of them and to lend them support.

At the moment our chitalishte is working on an innovative project “A support for the old people in the village of Pleven municipality”, funded by the Cooperating Netherlands

Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe. Through this project we are transferring our experience in working with old people in need and are introducing new services to the community: administrative, social, healthcare and psychological support services for the people of third age.

We have long-lasting and effective partnerships with local mayoralty, local kindergartner, local school and representation of local business. These partnerships were the basis for the successful implementation of our small projects, financially supported by the Pleven Chitalishte Community Fund: “We is more than me and you” (focused on people with disabilities in the village) and “With the goodness of the yule-log” (focused on preserving the community’s cultural traditions and on enhancing a dialogue between generations).

We are especially proud with our work with Roma children, which we attract through culture and art activities. We are also paying attention on the socially deprived groups in the community. Another aspect of our work is the provision of information and other services. Our team is constantly developing its capacity for effective chitalishte management through participation in trainings.