

# Enriching Lives, Unfolding Potential, Becoming Active Citizens



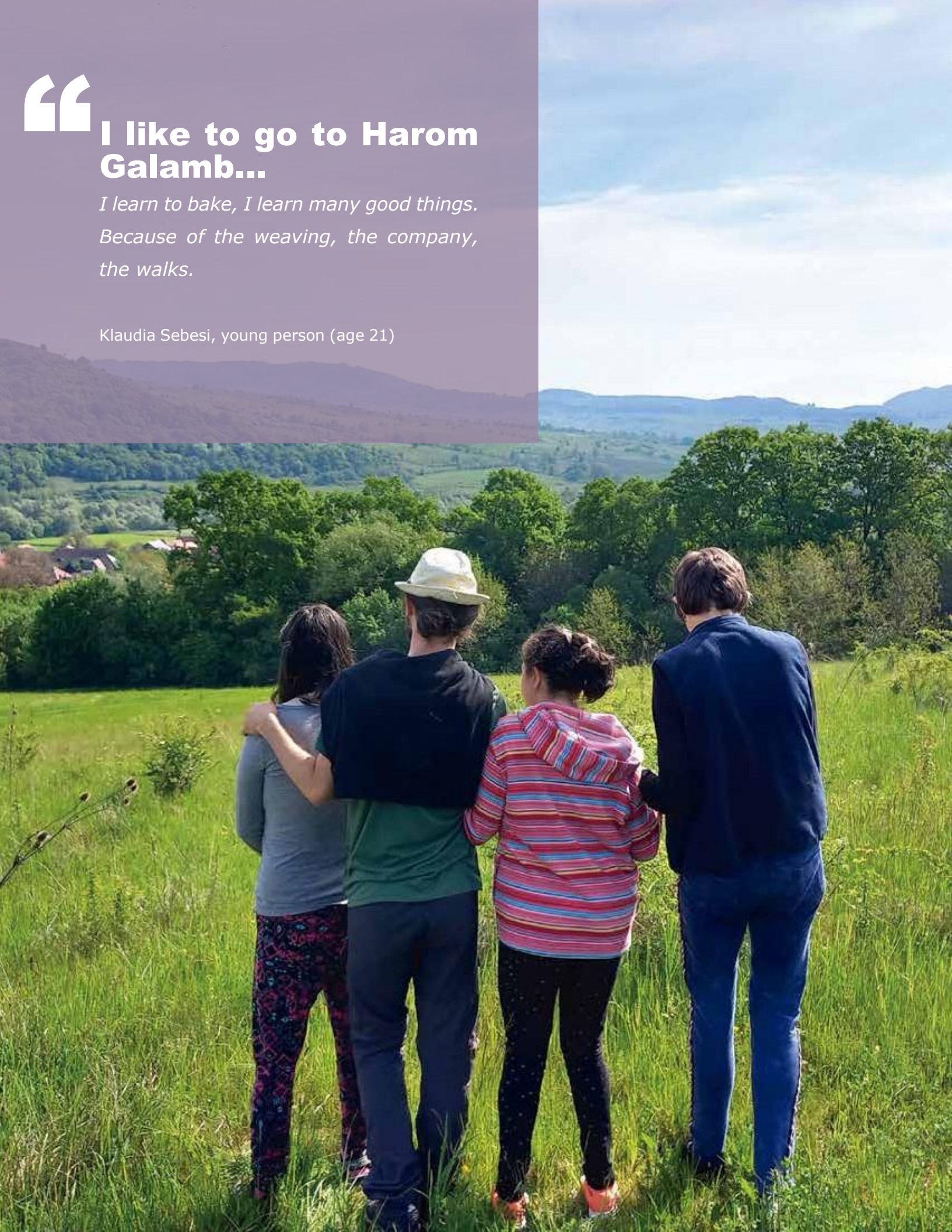


“

## I like to go to Harom Galamb...

*I learn to bake, I learn many good things.  
Because of the weaving, the company,  
the walks.*

Klaudia Sebesi, young person (age 21)





### **An introduction to Harom Galamb from Zsuzsa Filipov-Soó, Project manager:**

In 2009, my husband Mitko and I moved to Cairnlee House, which is part of a Camphill Community in Aberdeen, Scotland. Our intention was to gain a deep experience in community living and the life sharing model that Camphill offers for people with additional support needs, so we could begin a new initiative in my home country Romania. After learning so many new skills and with a wealth of experience, in 2020, we returned to Transylvania with our three children.

So much has happened since then:

We started small by using a renovated house on the land which had been bought for the Harom Galamb. We expanded into premises owned by the local church, renovating it to become a registered premises for our work. We are building a bespoke day centre on the land, paid for by the Romanian government and by generous charitable donations. This is expected to be completed in September 2024.

We are well on our way to providing services to 20 people day to day and supporting between 40 and 50 families.

In December 2023, we underwent an official inspection from licensing authorities and received full approval to continue operating its Day Centre. Since February 2024 we have been receiving fees for our beneficiaries from the county authorities which is a real milestone on our way to sustainability, which we will achieve as we offer our service to more beneficiaries.

We are inspected every month by inspectors from Harghita County and we have been praised for our person-centred planning approach which builds on the strengths of each person. Recently it has been suggested by the authorities that we could become a model project for other providers in the future.

Our aspiration, to become recognised as a member of the worldwide Camphill Community is on track, as we have been awarded affiliated membership of the Association of Camphill Communities UK.

Thank you. Zsuzsa



# The national and local context for people with disabilities

While there has been much positive change in Romania over the past 30 years, unfortunately adverse views towards people with disabilities remain largely deeply rooted in Romanian society.

Even though there has been some movement in recognizing the rights of people with disabilities, they remain low on the agenda for the Romanian government and low on the list of priorities.

Romanian Government statistics estimate there to be 846,000 people with disabilities. The World Health Organisation believes this to be an underestimation.

Harom Galamb has become one of the new services offering help to people with disabilities, in the knowledge that Government social assistance services for adults with disabilities provide a service for only 4% of people with disabilities.

Harom Galamb's emphasis on meaningful work recognizes that people with disabilities have a much lower employment rate than other people, and well below the average of other EU countries. **(88% of young people with disabilities aged between 16-34 are economically inactive).**

Harom Galamb is situated in a rural area and is therefore meeting another important need, as 90% of people with severe limitations in rural areas, who have not completed primary education, are inactive in work.

Harom Galamb's work, together with other social service providers, expects to make an impact on poverty levels in Romania which is judged to have the highest level of poverty of people with disabilities in the EU.

Together we can help our beneficiaries by enriching their lives, unfolding their potential, and enabling them to become active citizens

**Levente Gyerkó, Mayor of Kis- and Nagygálambfalva has said:**



*'It was a great joy for me when I heard about Harom Galamb being founded in our village. It's a good feeling that there are people in our times who think of those living with disabilities and they strive to support their integration into the society with the best of their knowledge. I was approached by Zsuzsa Filipov-Soó in 2018 with the initiative of the Day Centre. I welcomed the project in our village and assured her that I will do everything that is in my power as a mayor to support the success of the project. I believe that such a project is well placed in our village and that it will contribute positively to the village's life.'*

## The initiative

Harom Galamb is a grass roots initiative which has been organically growing since 2018, when the Association of Harom Galamb was registered. This work is actively supported by the highly qualified and experienced group of Trustees from Harom Galamb Scotland, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in Scotland.

A cornerstone in our pioneering work was the land bought by the Csiga Biga Foundation, who donated a 7540 m<sup>2</sup> garden in the quiet and sheltered village of Porumbenii Mici, in the Harghita County or Transylvania.

We have an orchard and land for growing organic vegetables and a courtyard where a little derelict house has been refurbished to serve as the first workshop space for the activities.

Since then, an architectural plan and building permission were agreed and approved and the purpose-built Day Centre is rapidly growing. This will have three activity rooms with the necessary facilities for hosting our beneficiaries for work and therapeutic activities.

Meanwhile, we host our activities in the building offered to us by the local church (see photo opposite)



## What we offer

In late 2024 we are working with 12 young adults with special needs. Beside this, we have been working together with a further 8 adults from a state-run sheltered housing and our weekly folk-dancing sessions attract 4 additional young people who join our regular group. This is where new friendships are made, and a social circle is formed supported by professionals and volunteers.

The young adults attend our day services on a weekly basis. The diversity of the meaningful work being offered is varied: wood workshop; weaving; wool processing; gardening; cooking and baking; food processing; household activities. In support of these we offer a complementary input of therapies (music and dance, art, psychology, counselling); developing social and communication skills; developing life skills and self-help skills; behaviour management; social integration and participation in the Harom Galamb Community and in the wider community.

We have invested a lot into our garden with the intention to develop it into a self-sustainable social enterprise for market gardening, where a vegetable box scheme and food processing can be set up, thus contributing towards the sustainability of Harom Galamb as a whole and at the same time creating more meaningful activities for the beneficiaries supporting them to become active citizens.

In addition, we host many special events where families can get together and take part in nourishing activities, share their concerns, and receive support from experts and each other.

Many local and international volunteers are involved in Harom Galamb. They enhance the quality of support we can give, and at the same time, become advocates for Harom Galamb as they return out into the world. We do this in partnership with the Youth Association from Transylvania ([www.ata-ro.eu](http://www.ata-ro.eu)).

In addition, we have developed a vast regional network with other civil and governmental organisations, professionals, and businesses.







## What our parents say about our day service

Parents are vital partners in the process of delivering day services. Here are some of the things that parents are saying about their experiences.



*For our children to be able to go to the Association of Harom Galamb means: Source of happiness, Learning, Development, Easier fitting into a community. For the parents the time, while they are at the activities, is a huge help and peace.*

Ilona Imecs, mother of Enikő Imecs







“ *What Három Galamb means for me?... In the very first place the acceptance, which is given to us by very few. Then the kind of help, that only they can give in the development of the person, the group, the relatives. Last, but not least, that little bit of free time for us parents, that we haven't had before.*

Olga Gábor, mother of Bettina



“ *Három Galamb – human, safeboat, a place, where she goes gladly and leaves with extra, with knowledge. Simplicity, humanity, trust, colorful, original, support, acceptance, faith, growth, teaching each other, love.*

Kinga Bajcsi, mother of Ágnes Bajcsi







*Dear Zsuzsa and Association of Harom Galamb Blanka and I, her mother, would like to tell you that we are very grateful for what you are doing for us. We like very much going to you, because of the homely atmosphere and because we can take part in many interesting activities. We adore our little house where we can be together, the orchard where we can work to our delight. I, as a mother, am grateful to you, for paying attention to my daughter, you are teaching her and work with her with true patience. I can see the development which is due to your wonderful work and commitment. Blanka can already pay attention for much longer time; she is much calmer and better listener. You are all doing a professional work. We are thankful to you, for you and for being part of your team. I hope you will hold our hands for long still and guide our steps, because we need this.*

*Ildikó Illyés, mother of Blanka Balázs*





## Here is what our architects Zsolt and Kinga Várday from the company 4ZET say and feel about Harom Galamb



While “stroking into the landscape” the building complex intended to be the home of Harom Galamb (Three Doves), a beautiful site hidden in the elbow bend of the Upper Street in Porumbenii Mici, we had the opportunity to reflect deeply as architects on the lives and worlds hidden in the shells of the soul. Is it a fully protected environment, radiating security and predictability, or a place that prepares you for life outside, setting up a ladder of challenges to be climbed? A temporary existence or a forever home, a world in the world? And finally, we understood that it is all of these things in one. We have been brought closer to knowledge with each conversation with Zsuzsa and all those who believe with her that there is always a way to a fulfilled life, if we persevere in the search.



The future community of Harom Galamb



## Our funding needs

With money already raised we have renovated in local style, a small workshop on site which provides a wonderful learning and social space. Also, a new garden greenhouse workshop and polytunnel. (See below).



Once completed, our Day Centre will be able to support between 12 and 20 young people at any one time enabling 40-50 different beneficiaries in total to attend the Centre at some time during each week. Each young person attending has an individualised personal plan which follows best practice models.

### Our two main fundraising targets

We continue to raise funds for 2 main reasons:

- a. **Day to day costs:** Between late October 2024 and July 2026, we need to raise £20k to ensure that the day centre and all of its activities can be sustained. The financial model is based on the numbers of beneficiaries when the day centre is available for use. Up until that point, we need to supplement the income received for each beneficiary from the county/government. The ratio required in Romania is one staff/volunteer to 1.59 beneficiary, which is very high.
- b. **New day centre: Furniture, fixtures and fittings** for the new day centre. These are being estimated to be in the region of £40k



**Please act now, our beneficiaries need your support.**

Thank you to each of you who have contributed in so many ways to support our initial phase of development. Without this we would not be where we are now.

However, for us to achieve our mission we need more support: please get in touch today and help us make the world of difference for vulnerable young people by supporting us to **enrich their lives, unfold their potential and thus enable them to become active citizens.**

Zsuzsa, Harom Galamb leader, and John Richards, Chair of Harom Galamb Scotland.



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