



Ivan Vazov

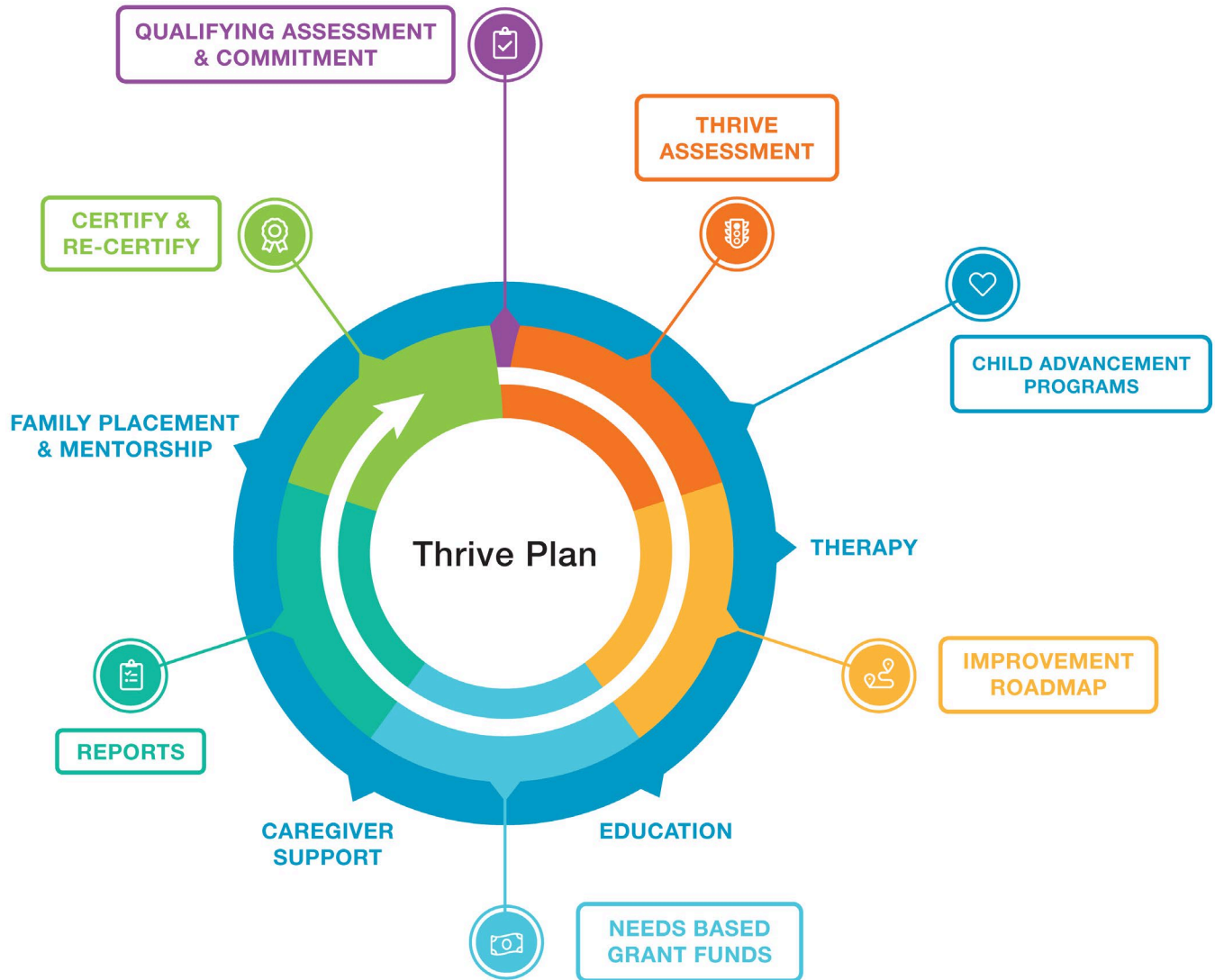
Sofia

HOME IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

September | 2022



The Thrive Plan





Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to “Lift Orphans from Surviving to Thriving.” We are dedicated to programs that offer long-term success. Through vetted relationships and clear priorities, we help connect donors to programs that are already working.

Each Improvement Roadmap (IR) is built with the home's leadership after reviewing the results from the Thrive Assessment. In order to provide children with better outcomes, the leadership prioritizes initiatives and works with A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) to create a plan for the next six months and beyond. The result is a document that allows donors and other parties to clearly see how they can contribute to improving the environment that will allow orphaned children to thrive.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the home's leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most homes, the certification process takes a year. ACHF is deeply committed to our partners, and we demonstrate that commitment through grants made to help achieve strategic initiatives, coordinating with a network of partners to help address needs, and building strong, ongoing relationships with the home's leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Homes will be recertified annually, using the Thrive Assessment and building a new IR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then reports back to donors, sharing the home's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with home's leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.

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Overview of Home

Background

Ivan Vazov is a family-type care center (FTCC) located in Sofia, Bulgaria. The home was converted from a traditional orphanage to an FTCC in August 2015, as part of the project called “Chance for the Children.” Since December 2015, Ivan Vazov has been under the leadership of director Galina Malinova.

The building consists of two floors. On the first floor there are two rooms with three beds each, and on the second floor there are 3 rooms with 2 beds each and 2 rooms with 1 bed each.

Currently, 11 children from 7 to 18 years old live in the home. Of the children, 2 have mental disabilities (one mild and one severe). The home has 7 permanent, long-term teachers/caregivers who have worked there for several years--there is very minimal staff turnover.

In 2019, Galina won the Manager of the Year award. She is a true leader and gifted manager of the FTCC. She runs the home in a very efficient way, which is good for both the children and the staff.

The director and caregivers at Ivan Vazov work to provide appropriate opportunities for the children. These include instruction in art, classes in financial management, and drawing lessons. Also, the children are provided with seaside holidays and various camps in the summer and even ski trips in the winter. Galina has built relationships with various charitable organizations to provide these opportunities for the children.

Good connections and partnerships:

Over the years, Ivan Vazov has benefited from both American and Bulgarian connections. One Heart Bulgaria has been in partnership with Ivan Vazov ever since the foundation of the FTCC.

Several other Bulgarian organizations also donate food and provide funds for children's art activities and vacations. Thanks to these partnerships, services and facilities for the children have been improved. This, in turn, allows the FTCC to continue to function and offer appropriate experiences to children in their care from 2017 to the present day.

Mission

The mission of Ivan Vazov is to continue to maintain and improve the standard of living and care in the FTCC, with a special focus on developing an authentic “family type” atmosphere. To achieve this, Galina and her team are seeking to raise happy children by providing them with everything necessary for their education and learning, including excellent housing conditions, appropriate nutrition, healthcare, and education.

In order to accomplish this mission, Ivan Vazov offers the children more than just the basic necessities of life. Galina and the caregivers treat the children with respect, teach them how to behave properly, and seek to provide support to help each child to realize his or her full potential.

The main goal of the FTCC is to ensure a quality of life that guarantees the full physical, emotional, and cognitive development and social inclusion of each child in the natural environment for him or her, by providing individualized care in conditions that are gentle and supportive.

What Makes Home Unique?

The leadership and staff are a wonderful part of the “family” at Ivan Vazov. The staff are motivated and desire to stay and provide longevity and constancy for the children, which is a unique situation for FTCCs and orphanages in Bulgaria. Ivan Vazov is a great example of a home that creates the feeling of a real family for the children.

Also, because the conditions at the home are excellent and there is a sense of community, the turnover of caregivers has been zero for the last several years.

Long-Term Vision

Over the next ten years, Galina hopes to achieve the FTCC's full potential of housing 15 children, which is the maximum number allowed by law, including housing for children who have transitioned into adulthood but would like a place to stay temporarily while they're at school or moving towards housing independence.

In order to reach this vision, Ivan Vazov needs help from organizations such as One Heart Bulgaria and A Child's Hope Foundation.

WHAT PIECES OF THE VISION DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS?

Galina would like to improve the facilities by installing window locks throughout the building in order to create a safer environment for the children. She also wants to renovate the kitchen so that there are better conditions for cooking and eating.



The Thrive Assessment

What is the Thrive Assessment?

The United Nations (UN), an international organization, has worked tirelessly to find ways to promote a better quality of life so that basic needs are met. In 1959, the UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, and nutrition.

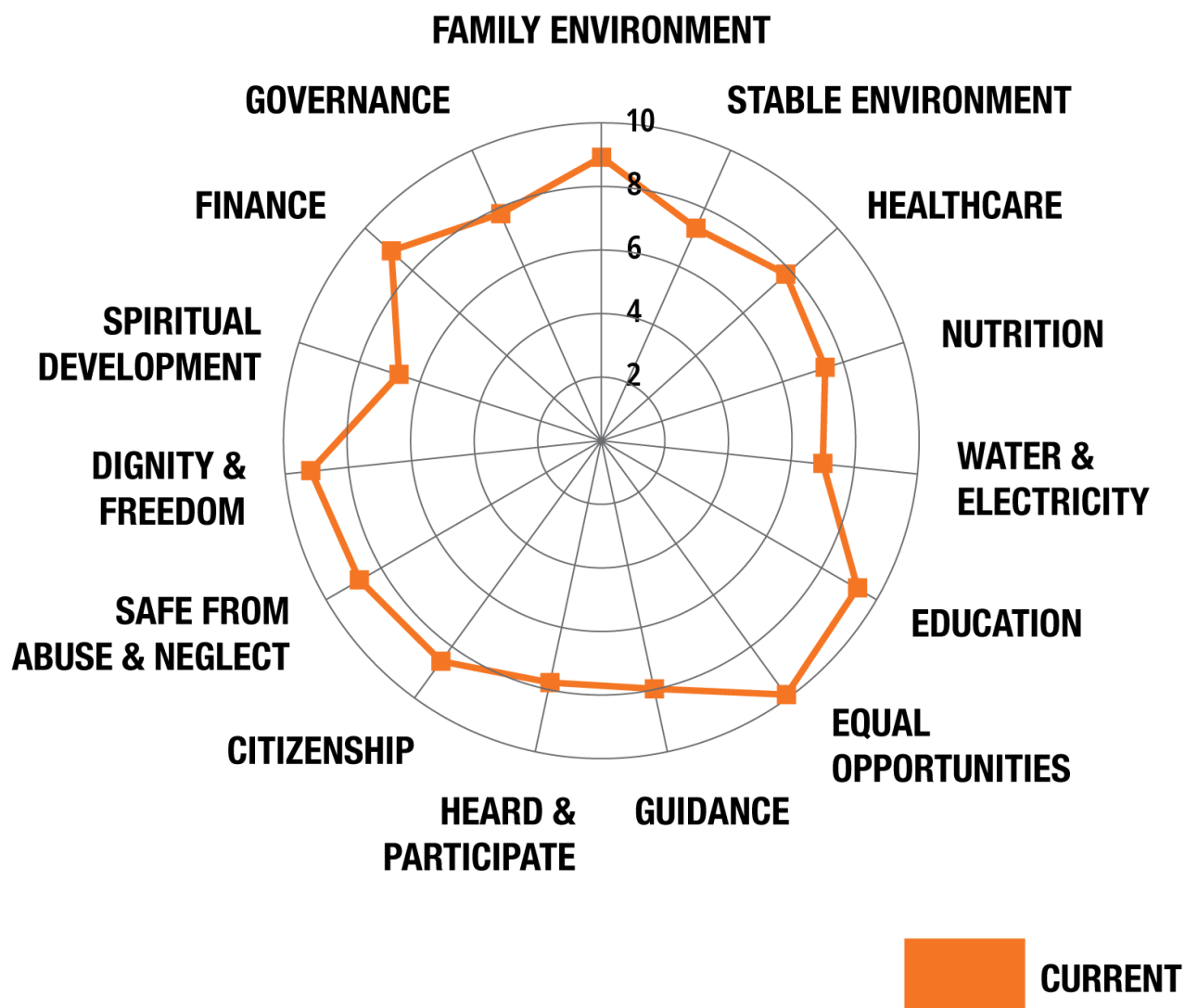
Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation (miraclefoundation.org), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights to the children in their care. This Thrive Scale not only gives child care facility leaders a picture of how they're doing, but specific and practical steps to improve.



With permission, A Child's Hope Foundation has revised The Thrive Scale to make it adaptable for homes. We have codified all 12 Rights, as well as a Finance, Governance, and Human Resource standard, resulting in a total of 15 ACHF standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future.

The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months to chart the progress of each standard. It, along with the Improvement Roadmap and individual Child's Hope Plans, will measure and help obtain these rights for each child.

Current Thrive Scale for Home





Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **THRIVING** level. A team of caregivers work eight-hour shifts, ensuring that the children receive full time care. Galina has developed such a good work and home environment that the caretakers have remained constant over the past several years and provide a sense of constancy to the children, even though they are not there 24/7. This is unusual in Bulgaria.

Although many of the children have biological families, only a few children have any kind of regular contact with them. Galina tries to encourage visitation where appropriate, but in the end this is a complex situation that is dependent on the family and the social services department.

No steps needed/identified at this time.



Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. Galina, Hristo, and the caregivers try to interact with the children in a loving and nurturing way. They engage in joint activities like mealtime and playtime and strive to have positive contact with the children every day.

Discipline is an issue, not because it is harsh in any way, but because the staff are obligated to follow rules set for them by government agencies and have little latitude to develop appropriate disciplinary measures. For example, one of the older children steals items (tablets, a laptop and money) from the home and other areas, but the police cannot or will not do anything about the situation and Galina lacks the authority to enforce discipline. Although Galina doesn't want to lock her room, since she is trying to foster a family-type atmosphere, she sometimes has to lock up rooms or items in order to protect them. Other children have been engaged in hoarding food, which has resulted in the food being locked up.

Although there is therapy available, most children do not want to participate, and the directors are unable to compel them to participate.

- ☐ Maintain fund support for payment of services of psychologists and therapists for trainings



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. The children have access to basic medical and dental care, and the caregivers help them learn proper health and hygiene habits. The facilities are all appropriate and clean. Ivan Vazov keeps good records, and if a child arrives without records, the home immediately starts a file and maintains it.

Although the children receive vision screening, this does not happen on a yearly basis. Children do not receive orthodonture, since it is so expensive and is considered nonessential. Although the children are encouraged to brush their teeth twice a day, they struggle to enforce this.

No next steps needed at this time.



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. The FTCC provides very healthy, nutritious, and tasty food, with a high standard of cleanliness and nutrient balance, according to what children need for their healthy growth. The food is delivered by an external provider, and the director and caregivers cook for the children at the FTCC.

Although food is plentiful and nutritious, the director is not sure that the children are receiving enough protein, and so would like to engage the services of a nutritionist, who can offer input and information about optimal diet requirements. This will help ensure that the children get proper caloric intake and protein. Ongoing training in food handling and hygiene is also important for the FTCC staff.

Although the kitchen facilities are clean, there are renovation issues which need attention.

- ☐ Provide staff training on food handling and hygiene
- ☐ Kitchen renovation, including fixing the cupboards so food can be stored appropriately - USD \$500
- ☐ Identify and consult a nutritionist to assess current menus



Right to Clean Water and Electricity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. The home has drinking water for all needs (drinking, preparing food, washing, etc.). Although the water in general is considered safe for drinking, it would be good to have a water dispenser for bottles with mineral and spring water.

The facilities are generally in good shape, except for the basement, which has water damage from recent flooding, which they are unable to address at this time. In order for safety concerns to be addressed, the facilities would benefit from installation of window locks and blinds.

- ☐ Buy two water dispensers
- ☐ Window mechanisms (locks) in order to increase privacy and safety - USD \$1,270
- ☐ Blinds for the windows for safety and privacy



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a **THRIVING** level. Most of the children attend school consistently throughout the academic year. Some of the children take English classes, computer, art, and finance education workshops as extracurricular activities.

To maintain the thriving level, the director will need to create, with all children, continuing education or training plans for after graduating from high school. Although the FTCC has a library, the children are not interested in reading. Finding a tutor or volunteer to help interest the children in reading programs would be helpful here. Updates to the library that include books the children are interested in would help them develop a love for reading and make use of the library facilities.

- ☐ Procure more books for the library, either through direct donation or as part of a program
- ☐ Find volunteers for tutoring and reading

Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a **THRIVING** level. Children can participate in extracurricular activities such as English lessons, computer classes, financial education, and arts and drawing classes.

To maintain a thriving level, the FTCC needs ongoing funding for children to participate in extracurricular activities, such as excursions, dance, music, crafts, and sport. This would cost about \$30 USD per month per child for approximately 11 children.

- ☐ Have monthly funding of \$940 USD per month to pay for extracurricular activities for 11 children



Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a THRIVING level. The home has sufficient caregivers who are trained to work with and guide children. The director Galina and caregivers provide guidance on an ongoing basis. The children also have access to a therapist, but on a need-only basis, and not on a weekly or monthly basis.

To maintain the Thriving level, the home should have access to a therapist on a weekly basis. Also, the FTCC will have to implement a life skills development plan and education or training plans to work with adolescents over the age of 15, to support them in their independence when they leave the home.

- ☐ Provide a therapeutic support on a weekly basis
- ☐ Deploy Child's Hope Plans



Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at a **SUSTAINING** level. The children at the home can make decisions about what they wear or do in their spare time. Some of the children like drawing and painting, while others enjoy playing video games and watching TV. They also have a say in what they eat, and make suggestions when selecting the food to be purchased and the menu for the following week. The children also have a say about vacation plans, leisure time, etc.

To move from Sustaining to Thriving, the home needs to model and train children's committees so they can develop leadership. For this initiative no funds are needed, but the staff would need templates and training from a counseling expert to teach them how to conduct such meetings.

- ☐ The home would like to have individualized plans for each child and their goals and future



Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **THRIVING** level. All children have been assigned age-appropriate tasks and are expected to perform them as assigned. Also, all children are taught how to make restitution for wrongs and are involved in designing and maintaining their own environment, which creates a sense of dignity. They understand the importance of responsibility and the role they play in their home. The children are supported by different organizations, volunteers, and donors, who, in addition to teaching subjects such as arts, finance, computer science, and English, also talk to them during their classes about social responsibility, motivation, personal goal setting, and values. Through these teachers, as well as through the director Galina and the caregivers, children also learn about everyday life, responsibilities, and occupations in life outside the home.

To continue to maintain the Thriving level in Ivan Vazov, adolescents over 15 years of age need to continue to develop daily living skills that can be learned from a mentor within the home and the support of therapists.

- ☐ There are no next steps until the individualized child plans are completed



Right to Be Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **THRIVING** level. Staff treat children with respect and avoid physical punishment not only because it is forbidden by law, but also because they don't believe in this method of punishment. At the home there is an atmosphere of peace and love for children, and the director and all caregivers strive to maintain it. Whenever there is a need for a psychologist, the home requests one and the children can receive support. The director and caregivers also talk to the children about rules and boundaries, proper sexual and romantic behavior, self-esteem, and emotion management.

In order for Ivan Vazov to remain at the thriving level, support is needed to have therapists and psychologists working at the home, providing training to children and staff.

- ☐ Obtain support of psychologists and therapists - about \$600 USD a month



Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **THRIVING** level. Children are treated very well, and the home encourages that children to be kind to each other, and belittling, unkind comments and bullying are corrected immediately.

Children also have the right to privacy, and they don't have nicknames that are derogatory or that threaten their psychological integrity. The director and caregivers teach the children good manners and respect for others.

To maintain a thriving level, the home director must provide additional opportunities for children to do more activities outside the home. Depending on the age-appropriate activity, caregivers or volunteers would be involved.

No next steps needed at this time.



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. Children do not have the opportunity to be a part of a spiritual community. However, they are free to practice communal prayer daily or other spiritual rituals, and the home celebrates major religious holidays such as Easter, Christmas, and “name days” (which are part of the Bulgarian liturgical calendar and are celebrated much like a birthday) of the children, the director, and the caregivers. The only spiritual and religious material and books that are available and accessible is the Bible. The director and caregivers are excellent role models for the children, because they provide examples of love and respect.

In order to move to the THRIVING level, the home could provide more spiritual and religious materials and more opportunities for visiting a church and for service. An important aspect here would be learning about the historical role the Orthodox church has played and also the variety of religious and spiritual options that are now available.

- ☐ Provide appropriate spiritual and religious materials.
- ☐ Visit the orthodox church on religious holidays.



Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **THRIVING** level. The home is very meticulous with tracking their income and expenses, and all records are maintained and available for review or audits. Income tax filings have been filed according to government requirements on time every year. Also, the home has records of each child and strives to maintain proper data and documentation. The director and caregivers meet weekly to discuss the most urgent situations of the home and propose solutions to their challenges.

In order for Ivan Vazov to remain at a thriving level, the director has to be trained in creating a full annual budget where everyone participates collaboratively, thus integrating all areas and services of the home into a single budget with a comprehensive vision and understanding.

- ☐ Train the director on annual budget creation.



Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Ivan Vazov is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. The home complies with all licensing, audit, and governance requirements. They have regular daily and weekly staff meetings. The activities and roles of all the staff have been clearly defined, and they have every legal document supporting their activities within the home. The director and caregivers have received sufficient training in their roles, and there is a plan in place for continuing education and training to ensure quality care for children. All staff members have a record, which is continuously updated.

In order to move to the thriving level, there are various training initiatives that could take place, including attachment, child development, increasing child-centered participation, and leadership meetings.

☐ The above-mentioned meetings could be facilitated throughout the year.

Strategic Initiatives

INSTALLING WINDOW LOCKS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Galina would like to improve the facilities by installing window locks throughout the building in order to create a safer environment for the children.
ESTIMATED FUNDING	<\$5,000

RENOVATING THE KITCHEN

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	Galina would like to renovate the kitchen so that there are better conditions for cooking and eating.
ESTIMATED FUNDING	< \$5,000



Improvement Partners



Hope • Life • Future for Orphans

One Heart Bulgaria

OI CATEGORY

DATE STARTED

One Heart Bulgaria was founded in 2003 in order to improve the lives of children living in Bulgarian orphanages. Since that time, they have impacted thousands of children through their programs and initiatives. Visit www.oneheart-bg.org for more information!



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**A CHILD'S
HOPE**
FOUNDATION

