

A woman with long red hair and glasses is smiling and holding a baby. The baby is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and orange pants. The woman is wearing a black and white patterned top. In the background, there are other people, including a woman in a yellow shirt and another in a dark blue shirt. The setting appears to be a room with green walls and a wooden door.

Sveti Mina

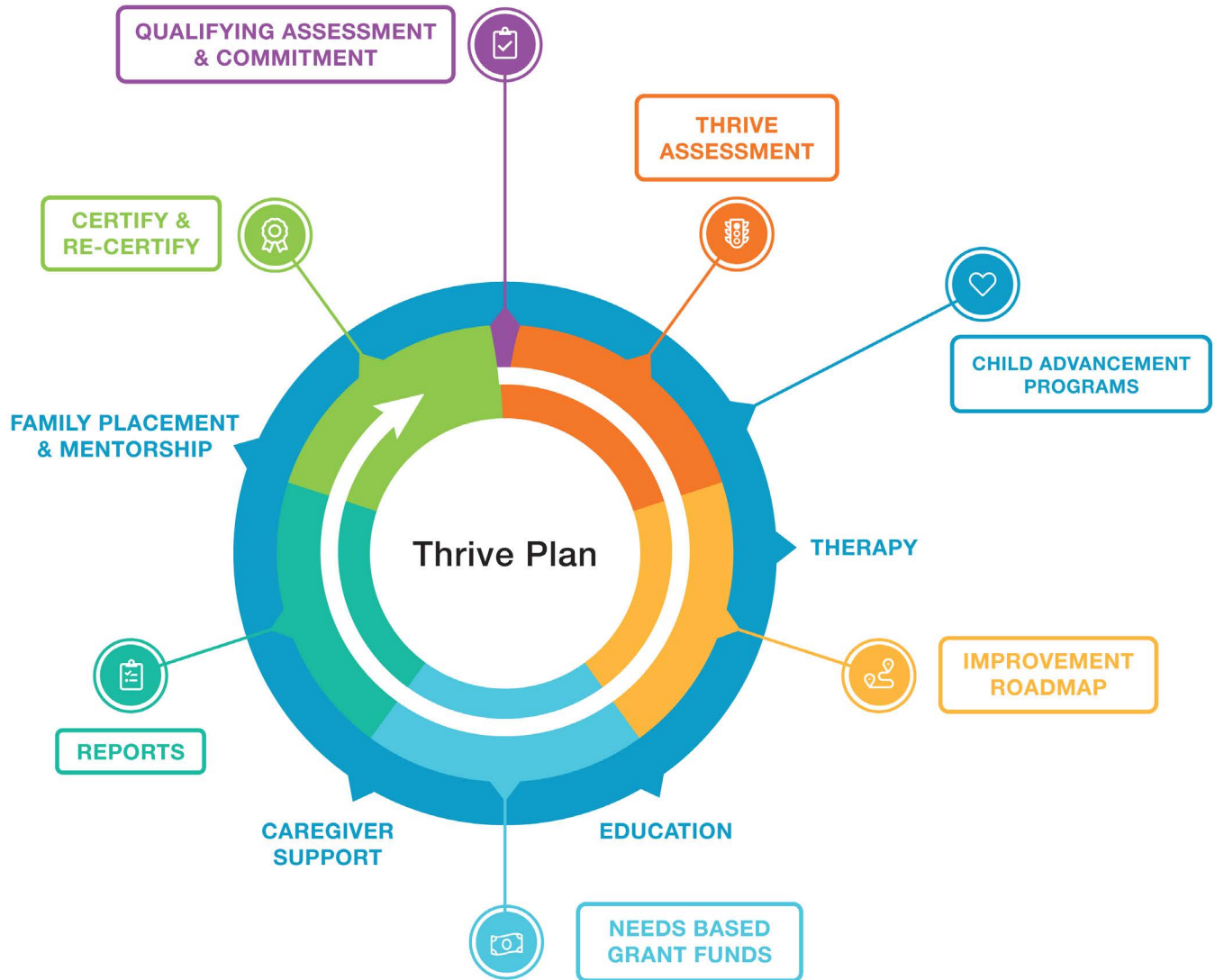
Bulgaria

IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

October | 2022



The Thrive Plan





Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to “Lifting 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. Once an initial Thrive Assessment is completed, an Improvement Roadmap (IR) is built with the orphanage leadership after reviewing the results. In order to provide children with better outcomes, orphanage 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. Following the recommendations of the IR, the home progresses on the road to certification.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the Orphanage Leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most orphanages, the certification process takes a year. ACHF is deeply committed to our orphanage 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 orphanage leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Orphanages that achieve certification will be recertified annually as they use the Thrive Assessment and build a new IR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then shares that information with donors, highlighting the orphanage's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with orphanage leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.

Table of Contents

2 OVERVIEW OF ORPHANAGE

2 Background

3 Mission

3 What Makes Orphanage Unique?

3 Long-Term Vision



4 THE THRIVE ASSESSMENT

4 What is the Thrive Assessment?

5 Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage

12 Strategic Initiatives



Overview of Orphanage

Background

Sveti Mina is a family-type care center (FTCC) for children and youth who require constant medical supervision. It is part of a larger social complex located at 22 September Street #46, Montana, Bulgaria. The entire complex is accessible for children and young people with disabilities.

- Each child/young person has his or her own room with a single bed, a private bathroom, and personal space for belongings.
- The kitchen is fully furnished for food storage and preparation, and the dining area has sufficient tables and chairs for all children.
- There is a “family room” where all the children and young people can gather during the day.
- The offices for staff are appropriately equipped and secure.
- A secure storage unit is available.
- There is an outdoor play ground.

Sveti Mina has the capacity for eight children from 0 to 18 years old. The eight children living at Sveti Mina all have severe disabilities, such as cerebral palsy and brain damage.

The director of the FTCC, Galina Ilieva, is an exemplary leader and manager. Sveti Mina currently hires 6 permanent caregivers, 6 nurses, and 1 doctor, who work in shifts to provide 24-hour care. Staff turnover has been very low, which provides continuity for the children.

Good connections and partnerships:

Sveti Mina has benefitted from American and Bulgarian partnerships. Since February 2022, they have partnered with One Heart Foundation. Several other Bulgarian organizations also donate food and diapers, and some provide funds to improve services for the children. This kind of support allows Sveti Mina to continue functioning smoothly and provide a normal, happy life for the young people in their care.

Mission

Sveti Mina's main goal is to provide continuous 24-hour medical and individualized care and support in an environment as close to a family home. Their vision includes:

- Increasing available medical services and continuing to provide high quality, cutting-edge care for children with disabilities;
- Researching the individual needs of the children and preparing care plans tailored to the needs of each child;
- Providing up-to-date staff training

Galya and her team members are dedicated to maintaining and improving the standard of living and care in a unique "family style" atmosphere that offers personalized care in conditions that are both attentive and supportive. The staff is committed to raising happy children by providing them with excellent housing, proper nutrition, healthcare, and education. To realize this mission, everyone at Sveti Mina treats the children with respect, models appropriate behavior and provides support to help each child reach his or her full potential.

What Makes This Orphanage Unique?

The management and team are a very important part of the family at Sveti Mina. Caregivers, nurses, and doctors are motivated and have chosen to remain at Sveti Mina to provide the children with security, continuity, and a real "family."

Because of the excellent conditions at home, including this sense of community, there has been no staff turnover over the past few years.

Long-Term Vision

Over the next ten years, Galya hopes to improve the buildings by finding funding for renovations. She would also like to identify developmentally appropriate toys and activities for the children.

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

Over the next two to three years, Galya would like to improve the outdoor play areas to create an excellent environment for children with disabilities.



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 all people's 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.

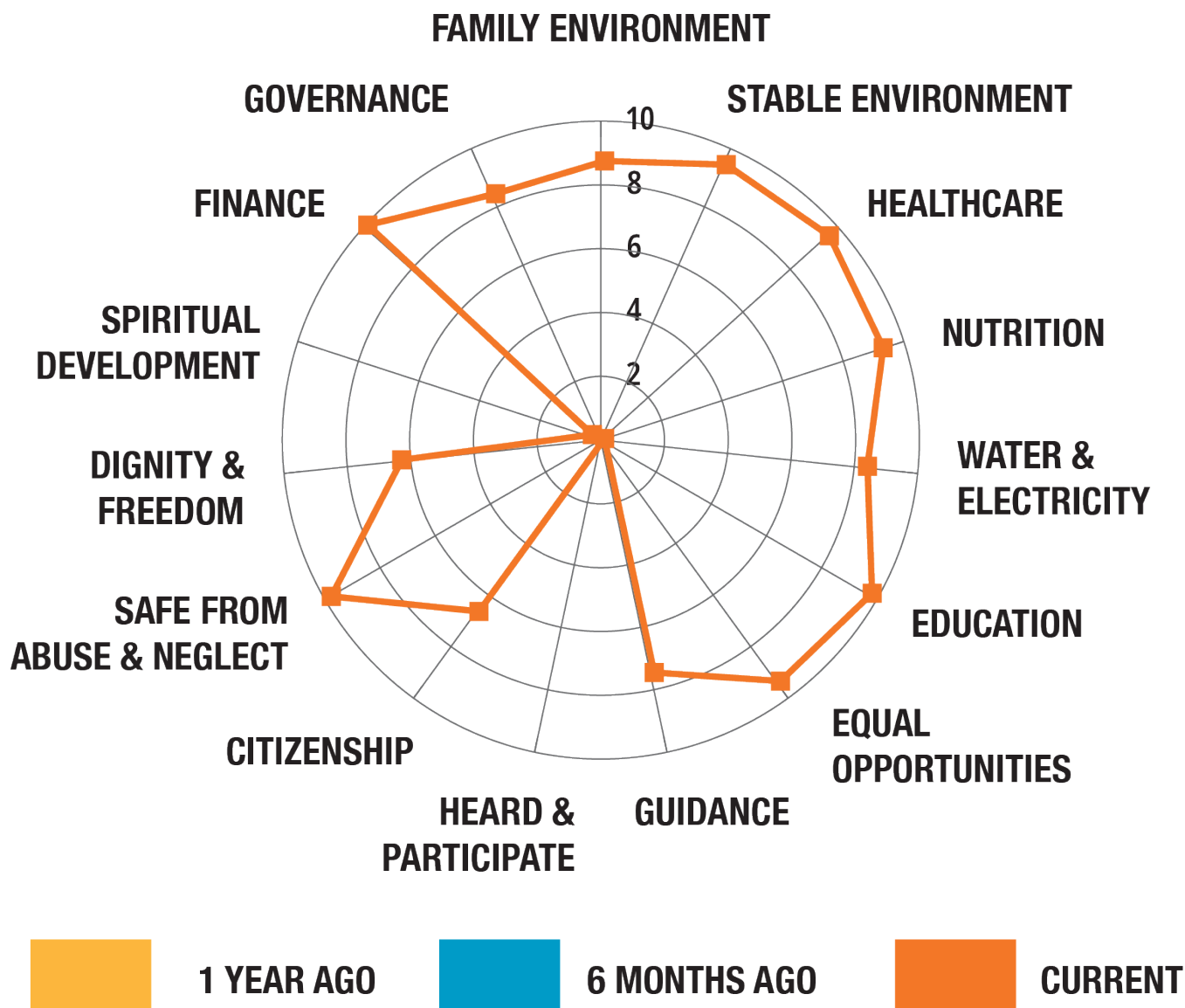
Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation (miraclefoundation.org), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights for 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 orphanages. We have codified all 12 Rights, as well as a Finance, Governance, and Human Resource standards, resulting in a total of 15 Rights of the Child used by ACHF. 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 Orphanage Improvement Roadmap and individual Child's Hope Plans, will measure and help obtain these rights for each child.

Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage





Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at a **THRIVING** level. A team of six caregivers works eight-hour shifts, ensuring that the children and young people receive full-time care. Galya and her team have created an excellent family and home environment that creates a sense of stability for the children, even though the caregivers work shifts. The achievement is rare in Bulgaria.

Although many children have biological families, only about 50% have regular contact with their parents. Galya tries to encourage visits when appropriate, but it is a complicated situation that depends on the family and the social services department.

No steps have been identified/required at this time.



Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at a **THRIVING** level. Galya and her medical personnel and caregivers try to communicate with the children lovingly and caringly. They participate in activities at meals- and playtime and strive to have positive contact with the children daily. For example, they love celebrating birthdays, name days, and national holidays with the children.

No steps have been identified/required at this time.



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **THRIVING** level. Children have access to basic medical and dental care, and their caregivers help them learn good health and hygiene habits as their health situation allows. The home is clean and in excellent condition.

It is very important to the administration that good recordkeeping practices are followed. If a child arrives without all the necessary documents, documentation is immediately begun and maintained.

Although children have eye exams, this does not happen every year. Children also do not undergo orthodontic examinations because they are expensive and non-essential.

No steps have been identified/required at this time.



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **THRIVING** level. The FTCC provides high-quality, nutritious, and tasty food, which is supplied by a catering company according to the ages and needs of the children. The menus are developed by a nutritionist. The children receive adequate protein intake, as meat (pureed) is served weekly. The FTCC also accepts donations of commercially available food, such as pureed baby food.

Even though Sveti Mina does not maintain a commercial kitchen, the staff would like to receive food handling and hygiene training.

- ☐ Sveti Mina would like to be able to provide staff training on food handling and hygiene.



Right to Clean Water and Electricity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. In general, the facilities are in excellent condition. Although the water is potable for all needs (drinking, washing, cooking, etc.), Sveti Mina would like bottled or spring water available since the water in the region is highly chlorinated and is dangerous for the children's health.

- ☐ Purchase of two water dispensers. The price for one dispenser is in the range of \$100-200



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **THRIVING** level. All eight children have severe disabilities which require constant care. The children do have access to tablets for educational purposes, and a teacher works with them daily. Their educational progress is tracked by a special committee. One of the children, who is in 11th grade and studying computer science, receives tutoring from a teacher who works with him daily. Although the children cared for at Sveti Mina are severely disabled, the staff strives to provide educational opportunities as appropriate.

- ☐ Secure donations for their library, either through donations or by participating in a program that provides this kind of support.
- ☐ Identify volunteers to help with lessons and reading.

Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **THRIVING** level. Because the children are very severely disabled, it is difficult to identify ways to receive equal opportunities as typically-developing children. Galya and her team want to identify ways to offer the children more choices in their daily lives, if possible. Often, this is dependent on the capacity of each individual child.

The next Thrive will have more applicable questions about the unique circumstances of this home.

No steps have been identified/required at this time



Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. Although it has been difficult to articulate ways in which the children at Sveti Mina can meaningfully participate in guidance situations, Galya and her team would like to investigate the possibility of providing therapeutic counseling as appropriate. See below - Right to be Protected from Abuse & Neglect.



Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Although Sveti Mina was not scored in this section, they would like to begin developing individualized plans for each child, including (as far as possible) goals for the child's future. The next Thrive done will have more applicable questions about the unique circumstances of this home.

- ☐ The FTCC would like individual plans for each child, outlining their future goals.



Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Sveti Mina is at the **SUSTAINING** level. National and local holidays are celebrated, with the children participating as much as possible. The home and yard are kept in good condition. Caregivers model responsible citizenship and are currently identifying ways in which the children can participate in these aspects of social life.

No steps have been identified/required at this time.



Right to Be Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **THRIVING** level. The staff treats children respectfully and does not use corporal punishment, not only because it is prohibited by law but also because they do not believe in this method of interaction. There is an atmosphere of calmness and love for the children in the home, which the director and all other personnel strive to maintain. When there is a need for a psychologist, the FTCC requests one so the children can get support. The director and personnel also talk to the children about rules and boundaries, appropriate sexual and romantic behavior, self-esteem, and managing emotions, according to their mental and emotional level of understanding.

For Sveti Mina to continue at a thriving level, support is needed from therapists and psychologists both to work in the home with the children and to train the staff.

- ☐ Sveti Mina would like support from psychologists and therapists - a therapist's salary is about \$600 USD per month.



Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at a **SURVIVING** level. The staff ensures that the children are treated with dignity and respect. Each child has his or her own bed, and sheets and blankets, and other laundry items are kept clean. Children are bathed when needed, and their teeth are brushed regularly. In addition, the staff receives training on safety protocols.

Although there are toys, games, and activities for the children, Sveti Mina would like to ensure that there are sufficient supplies for all of the children. They would also like to develop the outdoor play area to be more inclusive and accessible.

- ☐ Galya will get an offer from a contractor for how much it will cost and the amount of time the project will take. She will begin working on a schedule for this project.



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **SURVIVING** level. Because of the severity of disabilities that most children have, they have not participated in religious or spiritual opportunities. However, any child that wishes to may participate in religious holidays or any kind of spiritual guidance that would be appropriate. The next Thrive Assessment will have more applicable questions about the unique circumstances of this home.

- ☐ Sveti Mina would like to provide appropriate spiritual and religious materials and facilitate religious opportunities for the children as appropriate, including visits to a local Orthodox church for religious holidays if they desire.



Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **THRIVING** level. The FTCC is very meticulous with tracking income and expenses, and all documents are maintained and available for review or audit. Tax returns are filed on time each year as required by the government. In addition, the home has documents for each child and strives to maintain correct data and documentation. The director and staff have a weekly meeting to discuss the most urgent situations in the home and propose solutions to their challenges.

For St. Mina to remain at a thriving level, the director must be trained to create a comprehensive annual budget in which everyone participates together, thus integrating all areas and services of the home into one budget with a comprehensive vision and understanding.

- ☐ The director would like to receive training on creating a comprehensive budget.



Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Sveti Mina is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. The home meets all licensing, auditing, and management requirements. There are regular daily and weekly staff meetings at the home. The activities and duties of all staff are clearly defined, and they have all the legal documents supporting their activities in the home. Galya and her team have received sufficient training in their roles, and there is a plan for continuing education and training to ensure quality childcare. All staff members have a file that is continuously updated.

To move to a thriving level, various learning initiatives could take place, including attachment, child development, increasing child-centered participation, and leadership meetings.

- ☐ The above-mentioned learning initiatives could be held throughout the year.

Strategic Initiatives

SPECIAL PURCHASE

PROJECT SUMMARY	Purchase of diapers, wet wipes, baby food, and 2 cribs.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$750 USD

PLAYGROUND RENOVATION

PROJECT SUMMARY	Sveti Mina would like to renovate the yard and playground area with adaptive playground equipment, benches, and green areas.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$5,000 USD

