

## CSR activities report

2024

In 2024, BSOG continued its collaboration with the NGO Mare Nostrum and implemented the "*Delta Generation*" project as an upgrade of the previous VADUabil project. Delta Generation project continued by involving five communities: Vadu, Corbu, Jurilovca, Salcioara and Sfantu Gheorghe. These localities are located in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (DDBBR).

However, despite the undeniable ecological value of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve region, anthropogenic activity exerts a constant pressure on the natural balance, generating the need for strategic interventions to protect biodiversity and promote sustainable living.

The strategy implemented within the project followed a bottom-up approach, aiming to mold a new generation of environmentally responsible young people to become drivers of change in their communities.

By creating mechanisms to stimulate youth engagement, the project exploited a notable outcome of the 2023 edition: the training of a group of students as summer camp trainers. This basis has allowed the consolidation of a volunteering program, designed to act as an engine for sustainable local development.

The project consisted of several activities:

- Volunteering clubs
- Volunteer Clubs Gala
- #DeltaGeneration Summer School
- Dolphin Day
- Institutional development of partner schools
- Information campaign
- Christmas party

In addition, BSOG started to **rehabilitate DC83 Corbu Vadu road and Scolii street in Vadu**, 7.6km in total.

### **1. Volunteering clubs**

There were initiated 5 volunteer clubs Vadu, Corbu, Jurilovca, Sălcioara, Sfântu Gheorghe. The announcement went both to the students who were involved in previous editions of the projects supported by BSOG, and to others who were willing to get involved, with the help of the coordinating teachers.

Each club received 1-2 training and support meetings with the Mare Nostrum team. The information was covered in an interactive way and the meetings were structured to stimulate communication, pro-activity and teamwork.

The content was adapted to young people's level of understanding:

- Presentation of the project, the organizer and the funder
- Danube and Danube Delta: general data, fauna and flora, problems, importance, solutions
- Volunteering - what it is, what it entails, benefits
- Problems and solutions, for your own community
- Communication and teamwork
- Branding

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- Budget and resource management

Each club created its own brand identity, starting from the name (democratically chosen at the first meeting) and continuing with a logo designed by the students, these were printed on the club's promotional materials (t-shirts, badges, stickers; the bandanas were general, project only). In addition, each club created its own Instagram page, managed by 1-2 volunteers, under the careful supervision of Mare Nostrum PR. The 5 clubs:

The meetings with the Mare Nostrum team also resulted in a plan of volunteering activities for each club. Based on questions, which stimulated the team brainstorming process, young people were guided to identify issues in their community/school that they would like to address through volunteering activities.

Examples of volunteering activities:

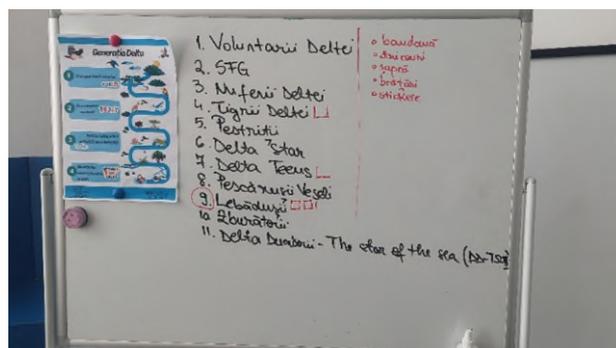
- sanitation
- planting
- helping poor families
- bird watching
- storytelling evening
- socializing meeting
- sports championship
- beach education campaign

This program was evaluated through questionnaires and creative methods, and the results showed a positive impact on young people's civic engagement, providing a sustainable framework for the continuation of the initiative.

To celebrate the involvement of the students, a festive gala was organized on 6 December at Scoica Land (Mamaia). The gala included the presentation of each club, artistic moments inspired by the project, socializing games, music and dance, a photo exhibition, as well as the awarding of the "Hero of the Delta" diplomas and medals.

*Figure 1 Pictures from the Volunteers clubs*

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## 2. #DeltaGeneration Summer School

In the first week of August, BSOG and Mare Nostrum organized a 5-day summer school for young people from the Vadu-Corbu area took place. The activity aimed to turn students into influencers for the Danube Delta through volunteering. The program included several working sessions, with both theoretical information and a lot of practical activities on various topics.

The detailed program of the summer camp:

- Inter-knowledge, energizing and ice-breaking
- Delta Generation Project
- Communication
- Personal resources
- Volunteering
- Active citizenship
- Identifying community issues
- Reflection
- Black Sea Dolphins
- Living Exhibition
- Gura Portiței Expedition

*Figure 2 Pictures from #DeltaGeneration Summer School*



### **3. Dolphin Day**

The Dolphin Day took place in August on the seafront of the Constanta Casino. In addition to the Living Exhibition, realized by the students participating in the Summer School, there was also a photo exhibition with the most representative moments of the Summer School, which passers-by could admire.

There was also a Black Sea dolphin observation and information point, where the Mare Nostrum team invited passers-by to familiarize themselves with these marine mammals. Interested people had the opportunity to learn about the steps for monitoring dolphins.

As part of the information point, a stand for the Adopt a Dolphin campaign was also set up, where participants had the opportunity to find out how they can support the organization's efforts to protect dolphins.

*Figure 2 Pictures from Dolphin Day*

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#### 4. Institutional development of partner schools

To support the partner schools, with the support of BSOG, Mare Nostrum organized a webinar on fundraising, tailored to the specific needs of each institution. Teachers also received further advice on how to apply the information.

In order to register, teachers filled in an online form, providing a detailed overview of the financial situation and projects in each school. Based on this information, the theoretical content of the webinar was tailored to the specific needs of the participants, thus increasing the likelihood of effective implementation of the knowledge acquired. To ensure an efficient and sustainable process, the Mare Nostrum team provided technical assistance and subsequent consultancy, thus facilitating the development and implementation of impactful educational projects.

As a result of this initiative, "Gheorghe Lazăr" Secondary School Corbu for a grant of 10.000 EUR, within the SHORE project - a Horizon Europe program, funded by the European Commission, which supports blue education initiatives.

In addition to the training activities, each school involved in the project benefited from EUR 500 worth of teaching materials, selected on the basis of the schools' specific needs.

#### 5. Information Campaign #VADUrabil

The information campaign continued in 2024. The Mare Nostrum team and volunteers from the Prigoriile Vadului club talked to tourists about biodiversity and the impact of human activities on the Danube Delta.

#### 6. Christmas party for the children of Vadu

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BSOG ended the project again with a Christmas party organized in Constanta for preschool and primary school children from Vadu. As in previous years, the children had time to explore the playground, they had entertainers and ended the party with pizza, cake and presents.

*Figure 4 Pictures from the Christmas Party*



## **7. Corbu Vadu Road Rehabilitation**

On August 12, 2024, BSOG started execution of the rehabilitation works for the 7.6 km-long communal road DC83, which serves as the primary connection between Corbu and Vadu, as well as the Scolii Street in the village of Vadu.

The DC83 Corbu-Vadu road is the only connection between these two villages and, until recently, had significantly deteriorated, with the last major consolidation effort having been carried out over 15 years ago.

The rehabilitation of DC83 road is an essential project that will bring multiple benefits to the community. First, it will improve accessibility and connectivity between Corbu and Vadu, facilitating local transport and reducing travel time. This will not only enhance the quality of life for residents, but also stimulate local economic development by facilitating access to markets, services and business opportunities.

Second, the rehabilitation of road infrastructure will contribute to increasing safety on public roads. In addition to creating a safer road surface, the installation of road signs are also important measures to reduce the risk of accidents and to ensure smoother and safer traffic. Also, the implementation of an efficient drainage system will prevent flooding, protecting the infrastructure.

In addition, BSOG, along with its MGD partners, financed all the studies and memorandums necessary for Corbu Commune to obtain all the necessary authorizations and approvals. BSOG organized the tender to identify the contractor of the works and concluded the construction agreement. At the same time, Corbu Commune covered the fees for the authorizations and approvals involved in the rehabilitation project and offered support to BSOG when needed.

The project, with a total estimated cost of approximately \$4 million fully supported by BSOG and its JV Partners, was scheduled to be completed by May 2025.

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At the end of 2024 the project was 64% finalized.

*Figure 5 Pictures from Corbu Vadu Road Rehabilitation*



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