

STOP VIOLENCE NEWSLETTER

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WOMEN'S
LAW CENTER

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Quarterly newsletter lists the activities of the Women's Law Center in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women within the period of April - June 2017.

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It is for the first time in the Republic of Moldova that forensic doctors are trained to respond efficiently to domestic violence cases.



The forensic doctors from all across the country attended in May a two-day training regarding the efficient response of health system professionals to domestic violence. The training was organised by WLC in partnership with the Forensic Medical Examination Centre.

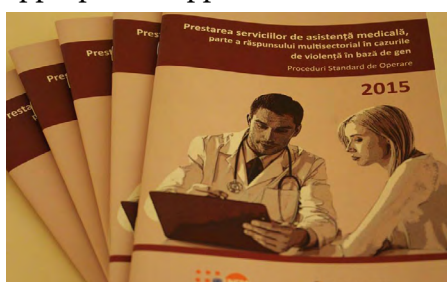
Surveys showed that women trust health professionals more and would rather speak particularly to them about the acts of aggression. Therefore, health professionals are in an exclusive position to provide to domestic violence victims medical care, vital information and appropriate support in critical situations.

ations.

“Health professionals are among the first to come in contact with women victims of domestic violence when they seek medical care. It is thus very important that health professionals respond and act in a

way as to make the domestic violence victims feel significantly better and safe”, said Angelina Zaporojan-Pirgari – director of Women's Law Centre – during the training.

At the training, the medical examiners learned about the key national





onal and international standards, about psychological and behavioural aspects, and improved their skills of communicating with victims. Thus, the 63 medical examiners worked on the basis of real-life scenarios to understand better their role in preventing and combating domestic violence. The participants presented response strategies, followed by group discussions.

“Never before have forensic doctors attended such a training. Knowing how to tackle domestic violence cases in a way as to prevent and fight this phenomenon is of crucial importance”, stated An-

drei Padure, Deputy Director of the Forensic Medical Examination Centre.



The training was conducted on the basis of the Guidelines for Health Professionals, approved by the Ministry of Health. The key topics of the Guidelines cover aspects of Moldova's legislation in the area of domestic violence, health professionals' response to domestic violence cases, the role of health professionals in identifying and referring cases, the multi-disciplinary response to domestic violence cases.

This training represents an important step in building the medical examiners' capacity to respond to violence cases and is also part of a greater effort of WLC to strengthen country's multi-sectorial response to the domestic violence phenomenon.

A national strategy promoting gender equality via communication for behavioural impact is being developed now



The Women's Law Centre organised a workshop for key ministries, civil society and opinion leaders representatives from 10 to 14 April 2017. The international expert Dr. Everold Hosein – Chair of the COMBI Institute, USA – took part in the workshop, with the support of OAK Foundation. The workshop participants developed concepts of

Communication for Behavioural Impact (COMBI) in the area of gender equality.

During one week, the approximately 30 participants gained new skills in behavioural objective setting, market analysis and segmentation. They learned about how marketing principles work in the

area of communication, about the importance of being exclusive in one's activity. The working groups came up with ideas to combat the stereotypes typical of our society and promote equal sharing of housework or the taking on of behaviours that contribute to diminishing the phenomenon of violence in Moldova.



‘The COMBI training was one of the most challenging communication trainings, where I had the chance to assess my communication skills on the one hand, and apply, on the other hand, communication tools which led to a behavioural impact at international level. We got the answers to our questions. Moreover, I developed certain behaviour analysis and observation skills, which I need when communicating with the target groups,’ said Elena Nofit, one of the participants in the COMBI training.



Alina Gaina, another participant in the workshop, said this was an workshop where much was learned and acknowledged. “We worked on the basis of real-life examples, which helped me understand the information better. I use now in my activity the knowledge I acquired at the workshop. What I remembered is that the changes happen gradually and that before doing something for someone, first ask yourself whether that person needs it. I also liked the metaphor about how to approach target groups: first, pick up the apples from the lower branches of the tree, then move to the top.”

The discussion and analysis are as for the workshop were established on the basis of the IMAGES Sociological Survey entitled “Men and Gender Equality in Moldova”, launched by WLC in December 2015. The survey found that gender-related stereotypes are widespread in the society and that “only one in four fathers participates on a daily basis in childcare; about 90% of men and 80% of women believe the most important thing for a woman is housework and cooking for her family; while about 27% of men and 17.5% of women believe that a woman must tolerate violence in order to keep the family together.”

The data from the IMAGES Survey will help us design a national communication campaign to push forward nationwide the changes in terms of gender equality. The campaign will promote behaviours that contribute to equitable housework sharing and will increase fathers’ participation in bringing up their children. Many fathers in Moldova have now the possibility provided by law to take a paternity leave, which allows them to participate actively in the life of the child from the first moments of child’s life.



The women survivors of violence from Rusca Penitentiary No 7, are provided legal and psychological counselling services by WLC



The Women's Law Centre initiated a new project meant for the women in Rusca Penitentiary No 7, who committed violent crimes in their families. In May, the first information meeting was held, which brought together 30 women of different ages and occupations, mothers with children and grandmothers. At the event, the participants were told about the activity of WLC and about the possibility to be provided legal and psychological counselling.

"Every woman has here her own story. Some of them were beaten by their fathers, brothers during their childhood or adolescence, others – by husbands, cohabiting partners. Some of them regret having endured violence for years, thinking that the man is the master of the home, others did seek the help of police, but help did not come. In such conditions – with neither support, nor hope, trying to defend themselves from violence – they committed severe crimes. Living in penitentiaries has major consequences on women's personal life: complicated relations with family, physical and moral exhaustion, is what Eleonora Grosu – WLC Program Coordinator, said.

By this initiative, WLC provi-

des women greater access to justice, adjusting its services to the specific needs of each of them. The information, support, legal and psychological support services will contribute to empowering these women for them to have a safe and violence-free life. Once released, it will still be possible for these women to enjoy the support and assistance of WLC.

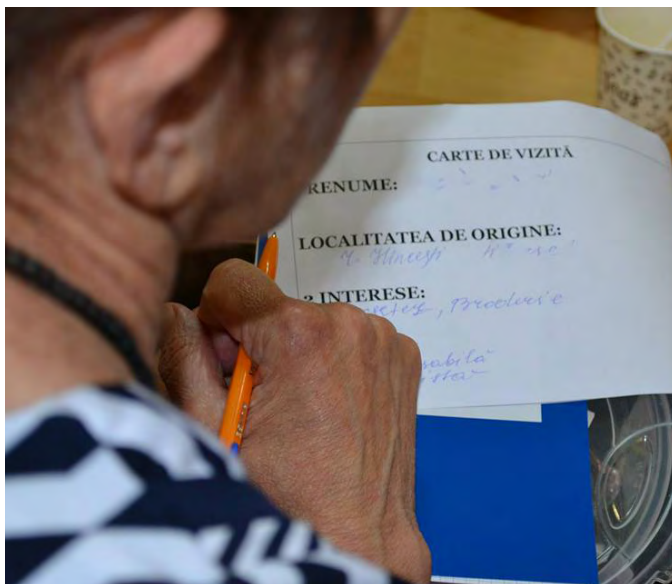
During June, about 30 women were given legal aid, measures were taken to have court decisions regarding reinstatement of parental rights reviewed. The team of psychologists

assisted women in dealing with the many challenges generated by their complicated situation.

"The world of justice is complex and requires a lot of effort and patience. I believe that my role as a lawyer is to answer to the questions of legal nature, asked by women from penitentiaries, who have been victims of domestic violence or committed a crime because of the domestic violence acts", said Arina Turcanu, WLC lawyer.

The team of psychologists, coor-





minated by Sergiu Toma, provides psychological counselling to those who need it and have the courage to ask for it. "As a psychologist, my role is to be there for them and give them the possibility to know themselves better and to discover new meanings for what is happening to them at present or what happened to them in the past. Every day that takes you

closer to your goal is not only a day when you wait, but also a day when you change, just like the sun and moon change places... It is not going to be easy and not at all as one would imagine... but the change will happen... When you step closer to what you've been waiting for, that's when you'll feel happiness, fear, concern and everything... Be ready to

continue your way towards who you really are!", is how Mr. Toma encouraged the beneficiaries.

This project is conducted in partnership with the Penitentiary Institutions Division, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Judges, prosecutors and investigation officers were trained to combat domestic violence in Moldova

The training in examining cases of domestic violence was held by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) in partnership with Women's Law Centre (WLC), with the financial support of the US Embassy and the OSCE Mission in Moldova, Swedish Government and OAK Foundation. The course was attended by 22 judges, prosecutors and investigation officers from Bender, Briceni, Hancesti, Balti, Soroca, Criuleni, Edinet, Ungheni, Ialoveni. The course was delivered by a group of NIJ trainers, representatives of the General Prosecutor's Office, Supreme Court of Justice and WLC lawyers.

The training aimed at enhancing the capacities of justice sector stakeholders to respond properly to domestic violence cases.

The key sessions of the training addressed topics like the legal fra-

mework and civil and criminal law aspects, the new legislative provisions for preventing and combating domestic violence, investigation of domestic violence cases, issues that emerge during trials, ECtHR case-law regarding domestic violence, protection, assistance and support services for victims. Many interactive exercises were also included on the agenda.

This training is part of a greater effort of the Women's Law Centre and its partners to prevent and combat domestic violence, which also included the development, in partnership with the National Institute of Justice, of a course material for judges, and the organisation of 5 other trainings in 2017.



The role of the legislative reform aimed at combating violence against women was discussed by the Members of the Parliament, policy-makers and representatives of the civil society at regional level

The delegation of the Republic of Moldova participated during 12-14 June 2017 in the Regional Conference entitled 'Making laws work to end violence against women and girls', organised by the Romanian Chamber of Deputies and Inter-Parliamentary Union, in cooperation with the US organisations: Global Rights for Women and Vital Voices Global Partnership.

Plenary panels and two break-out sessions presenting the good practices in civil and criminal justice system response to domestic violence were held during three days.

Angelina Zaporozhan-Pirgari, director of WLC, spoke in plenary panel about WLC's work practices and about the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration in law reform, policy making and monitoring implementation at the national level.

'The impressive reform of the legislation aiming to combat domestic violence and violence against women that we managed to implement in Moldova was possible thanks to solid partnerships with the MLSPF and MIA, to knowing in-depth the issues in the system and thanks to our vision about providing protection and access to justice to all women



victims and their children, who have had hard times because of violence. The fact that the Emergency Restraining Order was introduced and that state-guaranteed legal aid is provided for by the law for victims of violence, makes us one of the pioneers who implemented such a reform in South-East Europe' said Mrs Zaporozhan-Pirgari.

Moldova's progresses, made by introducing the Emergency Restraining Order (ERO) as a method of domestic violence prevention and proactive police intervention in such situations, were particularly appreciated.

The event was attended by parliamentary delegations, civil society representatives, governmental officials and experts involved in developing, passing and implementing laws in the area of domestic and sexual violence. In total, the 20 countries participating in the conference – members of the Council of Europe, among which Austria, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Albania, Monaco, Macedonia – managed to strengthen an international discussion platform focused on domestic violence and violence against women.



WLC continues to build the capacity of police officers in the Republic of Moldova for a prompt and efficient response to domestic violence cases

The head of the Public Security Service, the heads of Criminal Prosecution Sections, were trained in applying the Emergency Restraining Order (ERO) – a victim protection measure, introduced recently in the legislation to enhance the protection of victims and prevent acts of violence.

‘We want to make uniform the action taken by police officers as regards the ERO, both when it comes to fact-finding and to prosecution. Thanks to the support of our key partner – Women's Law Centre, many police officers from all across the country were trained. Moreover, each police officer was given a booklet with methodological guidelines about how the police is to act to prevent and stop domestic violence cases, which will make it easier for the police officers to apply appropriately the law in force,’ said Ghenadie Neamtu, Lieutenant Colonel in police, Head of the Community Interaction Section from DG Public Security of the General Police Inspectorate.

‘As partners of the General Police Inspectorate, what we wanted to achieve via these trainings, was to inform police officers regularly about the legal amendments in the area of domestic violence, so as for them to respond promptly and efficiently and ensure uniform approach. On



the other hand, we make sure that victims will be provided qualified assistance, because the focus lies on the collaboration of the police officer with other system stakeholders. The key message of the workshops was to prioritise the rights of domestic violence victims, and ERO allows us to increase the safety of women who have gone through domestic violence,’ clarified Eleonora Grosu – WLC Program Coordinator.

Vasile Poloboc, Deputy Head of the Public Security Service from the Stefan-Voda Police Inspectorate, believes that the training was useful because he learned about how to document correctly domestic violence cases and about domestic violence victim protection measures, considering the newly-introduced ERO. ‘It was in Stefan-Voda that the first ERO was introduced and I saw that it is a useful tool for the police to use be-

cause, in this way, we have the required levers to act at the initial phase already, to prevent violence from escalating and provide better protection to victims.’



From 16 March to 31 May 2017, the police issued as many as 490 EROs. The training sessions were attended by police officers from Chişinău, Ialoveni, Hancesti, Bender, Straseni, Calarasi, Orhei, Nisporeni, Cimislia, Basarabeasca, Anenii-Noi, Causeni, Stefan-Voda, Criuleni, Dubasari, Edinet, Drochia, Comrat and Cantemir.

The training workshops are part of the training programs conducted by Women's Law Centre in partnership with the General Police Inspectorate of MIA, in order to provide legal aid to victims and make sure the police responds efficiently to cases of violence. The trainings, the printing of booklets with guidelines were supported by the U.S. Department of State, the OAK Foundation and the Swedish Government.



The second stage of public consultations regarding the National Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy

Women's Law Centre coordinated the second public consultations workshop regarding the 2017-2022 National Strategy to Prevent and Fight Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence.

At this stage, the estimative costs of implementing each of the actions were presented and discussed. At the same time, the stakeholders identified the need to adopt a monitoring and evaluation logical framework, which would allow assessing the progress of Strategy implementation, as well as identifying and overcoming possible barriers. They also stressed the need to establish a Secretariat under the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, which would support the Inter-Ministerial Council for Violence Prevention and Combating during the process of Strategy coordination and implementation.

The National Strategy to Prevent and Fight Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence focuses on informing the public about the severity of this phenomenon, promoting zero tolerance to all forms of violence, fighting gender stereotypes and preconceptions, enhancing the legal and regulatory framework and aligning it to the international standards, implementing relevant best practices and improving the activity of stakeholders with domestic violence subjects.

The need to develop this document ensued from the last recommendations made to the Government of the Republic of Moldova in 2016, on the basis of the report on the Periodic Universal Review of human rights.



THE RIGHT HELP AT THE RIGHT TIME CAN CHANGE DESTINIES

Sometimes, to break the vicious cycle of violence it is important to get the right help at the right time. Olga was close to losing her children, as their father limited her access to visits. WLC provided legal support and obtained a temporary meeting schedule, on the basis of which the mother could see her daughters. Now she spends 4 of 7 days a week with her daughters and can offer them her love and care. The WLC team visited Olga to help her take care of her twins.



Case resolved successfully. Violence victim protected and perpetrator imprisoned.



Several weeks ago the Women's Law Centre received a thank-you letter from a beneficiary. She expressed her gratitude for the efforts invested and assistance provided step by step. Our purpose was for Mrs Lidia, aged 78 years, to be safe and enjoy a quiet life.

She used to live in the same apartment with her son Valentin, aged 43 years. He had been unemployed for many years, was a heavy drinker, and had been previously convicted for sales of drugs. As he did not have a stable source of income, he used to ask for money for alcoholic beverages from his mother, Mrs Lidia. When she refused to give him money, he would beat her with cruelty; threaten her with death or sexual aggression. To protect herself she would run away. She didn't have where to go and didn't want to bother her relatives. Hence, she used to sleep on the street or at

the railway station.

Whenever she returned home, her alcohol-intoxicated son would chase her away, telling her: "go back where you've been so far", "I'll strangle you while you sleep" and many other similar threats, enough to make her sleep with her close on and her door locked, in order for him not to attack her.

Mrs Lidia contacted the Women's Law Centre on 26 December 2016, at the suggestion of her daughter Maria, who also was passing through a difficult period in her life

and could not provide accommodation for her mother.

The Center provided to her psychological, material and legal support in order to obtain the necessary protection and represent her in front of criminal prosecution bodies. A protection order was issued on 29 December 2016, and the perpetrator was forced to leave the joint home. Valentin did not want to leave and continued to subject his mother to physical violence. On 11 January this year, Mrs Lidia was placed, as a matter of emergency, in a placement center for domestic violence victims.

During this period of time, the WLC team filed complaints to the Police Inspectorate for the violation of the protection order and use of physical violence against Mrs Lidia. Thanks to the WLC lawyers' efforts, the perpetrator was detained and arrested, and subsequently the court condemned him to 1 year and 8 months of imprisonment in a semi-closed penitentiary.

Mrs Lidia is well now, she is taking care of her garden and feels safe. She would like to have a long-term safety plan, as she is positive that Valentin will return home once released.

THE RIGHT HELP AT THE RIGHT TIME CAN CHANGE DESTINIES

The domestic violence cases, brought to the attention of WLC, are handled with maximum responsibility. Yes, sometimes it is more difficult than we imagine, at other times it takes time to achieve the desired outcome, but whenever we receive such messages we know it is worth making all the efforts. We thus get more and more motivated:

"I would like to thank a lot the founders and donors of the Women's

Law Centre for their contribution to ensuring the protection of victims in the Republic of Moldova. Thank you personally for your involvement in overcoming the violence that has been affecting my family for a while now — violence that was growing more intense each day. The prompt and professional response to my request, the provision of information services, representation of my and my children's interests in the court helped settle successfully the

case. God gave me a helping hand via this Center, in particular via the special support offered by Arina Turcan, and now we can sleep calmly and are not afraid of tomorrow any more. I highly appreciate in particular the qualified and free assistance, currently provided by Women's Law Centre, as well as everything you do for the whole society and for our future. With gratitude and appreciation, Florea Olimpiada and the children

From April to June 2017, 104 women, victims of domestic violence, contacted WLC for legal and psychological assistance. The WLC intervened by offering psychological support, facilitating placement in a shelter, providing support in obtaining protection orders, and representing the victims in civil and

criminal cases. Physical violence was noted in 83 cases, psychological violence – in 101 cases, economic violence – in 57 cases, sexual violence – in 8 cases, and spiritual violence – in 7 cases. Approximately 55% of the beneficiaries that seek the support of WLC are mothers with minor children. The victims

contacted WLC after having been told to do so by judges, police inspectorates, lawyers, psychologists, maternity centers, as well as upon the recommendation of acquaintances, former WLC beneficiaries or on the basis of information found in the internet.



Women's Law Centre and the International Women's Club of Moldova have concluded a financing agreement to support women and children, survivors of domestic violence. The project will be implemented during one year and will support seven WLC beneficiaries. The Project will assess carefully the cases and, depending on needs, will buy equipment to start up a small

seamstress business and cooking devices, will provide support to finish specialised technical education, and will cover the cost of treatment for children. The Project aims at helping women that broke the violence cycle and need support, including financial, to start a new life.

Useful resources for professionals

The professionals working with domestic violence victims can find a series of information resources on the website of Women's Law Centre - www.cdf.md, which will help them improve their interventions in cases of domestic violence. The most recent resources include the Standard Operating Procedures for police officers, nurses and providers of psychological support.

Prestarea serviciilor de asistență medicală,
parte a răspunsului multisectorial în cazurile
de violență în bază de gen
Proceduri Standard de Operare

2015

Prestarea serviciilor psihosociale,
parte a răspunsului multisectorial în cazurile
de violență în bază de gen
Proceduri Standard de Operare

2015

Prestarea serviciilor de către poliție,
parte a răspunsului multisectorial în cazurile
de violență în bază de gen
Proceduri Standard de Operare

2015

MenCare Global Meeting - for an equal partnership in the family

MenCare Global Meeting, which took place on 8-10 June 2017 in Belgrad, Serbia, joined professionals from worldwide, interested in involving fully fathers in the family life, in particular in taking care of and educating children. The meeting offered a new perspective on gender equality and on combating domestic violence.

“Eventually, after years of analyses and researches, an equal partnership in the family was found to be the only solution for a harmonious and happy relationship that brings joy to everyone: men, women and children. And their involvement in taking care of and educating children brings value added to fathers, meeting their need for love, appreciation and fulfillment. These principles should be implemented in the Republic of Moldova, as well, in order to decrease the burden from women's shoulders and fight the existing gender stereotypes”, told Dorina Andreev, independent expert who represented WLC at the Global meeting.

At the event, they presented the



results of **2017 State of the World's Fathers: Time for Action** report, based on about 100 studies, with data from almost all world countries, aimed at showing why gender equality promotion worldwide has stagnated. The report draws several main conclusions:

- Globally, on average, the time women spend daily in caring for the home and children is still about three times what men spend.
- Many men want to be more involved in the lives of their children. Even in countries where

men's involvement in childcare work is limited.

- In the United States, one survey found that 46 percent of fathers said they were not spending enough time with their children, compared with 23 percent of mothers.
- The study showed that the majority of men and women alike disagreed with the outdated notion that “it is best if men work and women take care of the home and children”.

Serbia established officially a Day of Remembrance of murdered women victims of violence



The Serbian Government declared the 18 May as Day of Remembrance of murdered women victims of violence. The WAVE network collected for this purpose 8000 signatures and filed a petition with the Belgrade authorities. The date of

18 was chosen because in 2015, as many as 7 women were murdered in acts of violence at the hands of their cohabiting partners, within 72 hours.

The petition of WAVE was supported by the members of the Serbian Government, of the Parliament, as well as by the representatives of local authorities, mayors, members of independent public institutions, trade unions. The petition was supported the most by women from 25 cities and municipalities.

The WAVE network also request-

ed for an Oversight Committee monitoring femicide nationwide to be established. This committee would publish a report with statistics regarding the number, age, sex of the victim, the type of relationship with the offender that committed the murder, as well as information regarding the punishments for criminal offences. The task of this Oversight Committee would be to collect, analyse and check the data nationwide and work out femicide prevention measures. Every case needs to be looked into thoroughly, in order to identify protection gaps and to improve and develop prevention measures.

The European Union signed the Istanbul Convention

The European Union signed, on 13 June of this year, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The 28 EU Member States expressed, thus, their willingness to commit to the provisions of the Convention. This is also a proof of the fact that the EU acknowledges the importance of the Istanbul Convention as a tool establishing the global rules in this area and, thus, it consolidated its position internationally.

So far, 23 states ratified the Convention, including 14 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden). The other 14 EU Member States signed



the Convention.

On 7 February 2017, the Republic of Moldova became the 44th country to sign the treaty.

Note: The Convention requires that comprehensive policies to be adopted, efficient mechanisms to prevent, eradicate or at least reduce violence against women and domes-

tic violence be implemented.

Once the Istanbul Convention is ratified, the national authorities commit to ensure services to protect victims and their children, as well as to provide refuge; round-the-clock hot lines, legal aid and medical care, and to create a mechanism for domestic violence victims to receive compensations, etc.



Who are we?

Public Association "Women's Law Center" (hereinafter – WLC) is a non-governmental organization, established in 2009.

The purpose of WLC is to ensure women's rights from gender perspective, both in the process of elaboration and implementation of the law.

WLC carries out activities aimed at preventing and combating domestic violence, provides direct legal and psychological assistance to the victims of domestic violence. WLC advocates for equal opportunities among men and women in public and private life, is a credible partner of the government and civil society and participates in elaboration of public policies.

WLC ensures Secretariat of the National Coalition „Life without Domestic Violence (hereinafter National Coalition). National Coalition comprises 18 non-governmental organizations and public institutions active in preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women.

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