

# STOP VIOLENCE

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WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

nr. 26 (2021)

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## CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM REPRESENTATIVES TRAINED TO PROVIDE A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



In September the criminal justice system representatives from the Criuleni, Cimislia and Soroca region participated in the training dedicated to the coordinated response of professionals to domestic violence. The event is based on the findings of the study 'Assessing Criminal Justice System Response to Domestic Violence Cases. Soroca, Criuleni, Cimislia and Comrat regions'. Therefore, the activities were developed to respond to the training needs identified by the assessment, to improve the understanding of the phenomenon, the knowledge and application of the law, the protecti-

on and intervention mechanisms based on a coordinated response from the criminal justice system.

'During this training we have the opportunity to understand better the elements underlying the collaboration and communication between professionals from the four regions participating in the assessment. I am sure that it will be an interactive process and we are glad that professionals want to be a component part of the coordinated response and to get involved in identifying a common response model', mentioned Victoria Muntean, Project Manager at UNDP Moldova.

The training is organised in a participatory way, bringing together judges, prosecutors, criminal investigation officers, official examiners, medical examiners, probation officers and lawyers to discuss the challenges of the criminal justice system and good practices in providing assistance to victims of domestic violence.

'On behalf of the Women's Law Centre, I want to tell you that we are extremely honoured that



you have accepted our invitation to participate in the training. This means that you share the cause we opt for, you understand the phenomenon and you are dedicated to this topic. Without a constructive and reliable partnership, we cannot get the most from the actions we have proposed', said Mariana Buruiana, Executive Director of WLC.

The solutions identified during the trainings will help build a common response model that can be replicated at the country level and increase the access to justice of domestic violence victims.

A total of 8 such trainings are planned, which will be attended by 200 criminal justice system representatives from 4 response regions of the project: Soroca, Criuleni, Cimislia and Comrat.

The trainings are organised by the Women's Law Centre as part of 'Strengthening Efficiency and Access to Justice in Moldova' Project, implemented by the UNDP Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.



## 2021 SOCIAL HUB OFFERS NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN MOLDOVA

They are young, intelligent and eager to change the world around them. They are 15 and took on a new challenge – 2021 Social Hub.

They spent three days with dedicated trainers debating on sensitive topics such as gender stereotypes and domestic violence. They shared valuable ideas, engaged in activities that pushed them out of their comfort zone and learned something new about the psychological aspects of domestic violence, about the legal framework in this area and about the groundwork of project writing.

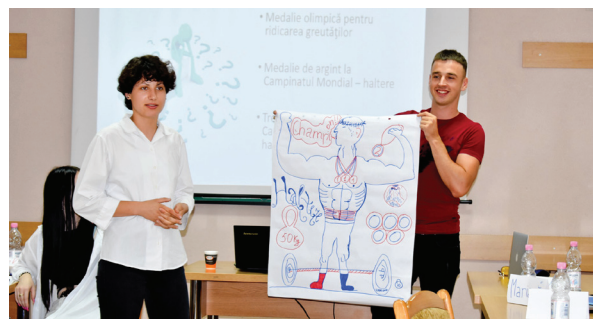
At the next stage, the young people identified project ideas meant to change views/stereotypes around gender-based violence and domestic violence. The planned activities will be implemented at grassroots level and will target issues specific to the age group and communities they belong to. Beneficiaries will include young people from high schools and colleges, couples, student associations and young people from initiative groups.

The selection of the most successful projects and the possibility to receive funding for their

implementation will take place in the next period.

We thank the participants for their creative ideas and the desire to contribute to the changes in the society.

SOCIAL HUB is a platform for young people, launched by WLC in 2020, where they get to talk, share their views and their experience of action taken in their communities to prevent gender-based violence, domestic violence and gender stereotypes. The initiative is financially supported by Sweden.



## JOURNALISTS ON THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FIELD

Journalists have an important role to play in preventing and reducing domestic violence. Their most important artillery consists of well-documented articles on subjects of relevance for the society.

For two days, 16 journalists working in print, TV, radio and online media talked about the types of domestic violence and what they look like, what issues the victims have to deal with in reporting cases of violence and whether they manage to break out of the circle of violence or not.

Together with the trainers, the journalists identified subjects that could become articles.

‘This training helped me realise that violence against women is not only about physical violence. Now I believe it is the responsibility of journalists to be more involved in talking about other types of violence, such as the economic and psychological one. I have also become aware of how important it is to interview victims in the right way, to prepare them for the interview, to explain the purpose of



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the feature article. I feel I am much better prepared to write on domestic violence’, said the journalist Elena Boboc from TV8.

Together with subject-matter professionals, journalists learned how to cover gender equality and domestic violence in a multidimensional, equidistant and solution-oriented manner.

The discussed topics explained the psychological-social profile of a victim and a perpetrator, challenges that victims have to deal with when reporting cases, the perpetuated stereotypes, including in the media, and how journalists can change the emphasis in documenting and covering this topic.

The training program is organised by the Women’s Law Centre in collaboration with the Independent Journalism Centre of Moldova and with the support of Sweden.



# THE FORENSIC REGULATION WAS ADJUSTED TO OFFER MORE PROTECTION TO VICTIMS

For several months, a group of national experts have developed a series of proposals to amend and supplement the forensic regulation assessing the severity of bodily injury or health of the person. The specialists represented such institutions as Forensic Medicine Centre, the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Moldova, the General Division of Criminal Investigation of GPI, the General Police Inspectorate of the Republic of Moldova, the Forensic and Judicial Expertise Centre, representatives of civil society and academia.

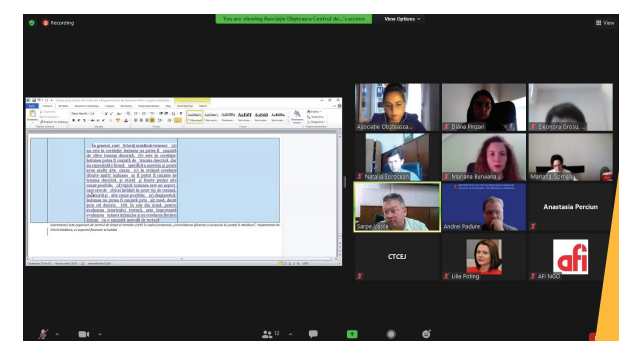
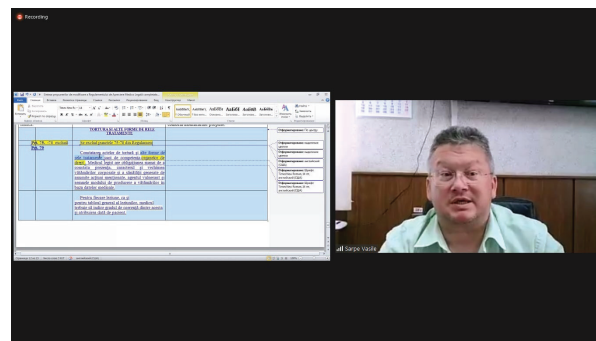
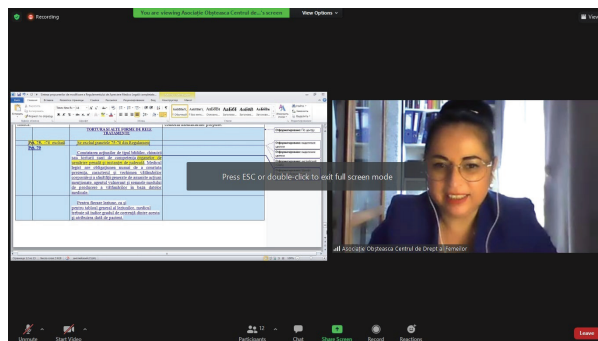
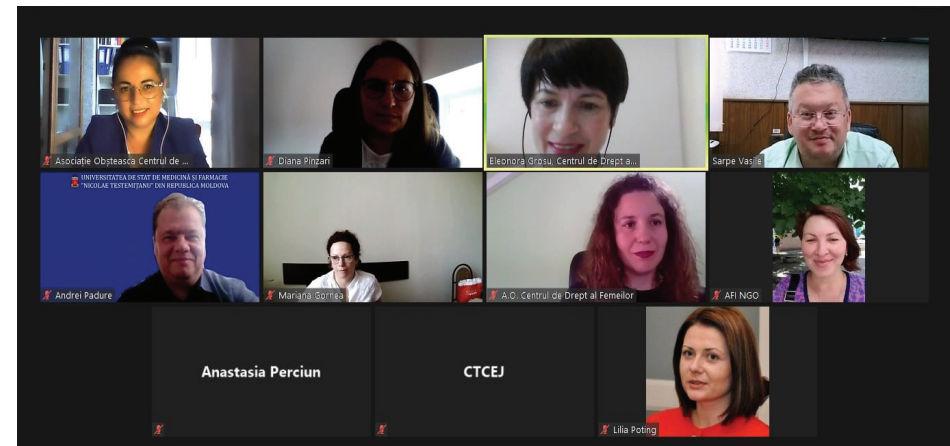
The amendments take into account the needs of domestic violence victims and clarify the situations which medical examiners found difficult in qualifying the bodily injury. At the same time, they will prevent the loss of evidence and will guarantee victims' access to justice.

The issues subject to review include:

- the situations and cases the medical examiner is obliged to report to the law enforcement bodies
- the possibility to examine victims of domestic violence beyond the working hours, at place of residence or even during self-isolation, for victims who are unable to visit the medical examiner.
- elimination of challenges with appreciation whether it is disfigurement of some parts of the body or not, clarifications which were missing until this moment.

- certain types of abuse (such as asphyxia or electric shocks) do not leave obvious traces and will not leave if they are applied with a certain degree of caution. Therefore, the introduced amendments will contribute to the assessment of post-traumatic mental disorders as bodily injury.

The series of consultative meetings and the whole coordination process was organised by the Women's Law Centre, implemented by the UNDP Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.



# LIBRARIANS-COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

At the two-day training, 45 librarians from all over the country learned more about the complexity of domestic violence. Together with trainers Sergiu Toma and Arina Țurcan, the participants discussed a victim's challenges in such situations, the role of the society in normalising violent behaviour, the superficiality we are tempted to treat these cases and, last but not least, how the librarian can help these women.

The participants reproduced a few domestic violence cases by means of sculpture. They were thus able to empathise and express accurately the thoughts and



states of the characters. The experience helped understand new things about domestic violence:

- 'I used to think of the victim and perpetrator as if they were at the same level. Now I understand that their profiles are different.'
- 'I used to believe that dealing with domestic violence is simple. You just pick up the phone and call for help. Now I understand this is a very complex matter. I will look deeper into it.'
- 'I didn't know there was economic violence and what it looked like.'

Following the trainings, each librarian will carry out activities to prevent domestic violence in the community from which he/she comes.

The workshop '*Librarians – community resource for victims of domestic violence*' is part of the cycle of activities carried out by WLC and the Association of Librarians of the Republic of Moldova based on the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2020 and funded by Sweden.

## BENEFICIARIES OF IMPULS SMALL GRANT PROGRAM WITH NEW RESULTS



Community-based stakeholders from Stefan Voda district were trained in prevention of domestic violence. Social workers, professionals from the Social Assistance and Family Protection Directorate, Mental Health Community Centre and the representatives of the Police Inspectorate of the district discussed some complex cases, and identified solutions and possible multidisciplinary response.

The training focused on understanding the phenomenon, promoting gender equality, strengthening teamwork skills and using tools to work with victims and perpetrators.

This training was organised by Vadim Tarna, President of the National Association of Experts and Social Workers of Moldova, beneficiary of Impuls Small Grant Program financially supported by Sweden via WLC.

A group of women from Tiraspol and Bender participated in a training dedicated to women's rights and legal protection in cases of domestic violence.

Together with Janna Vilihovaia, lawyer and expert, the 18 participants had the opportunity to discuss in a safe space about their experiences,

received answers to their questions on this topic and were informed about the prevention of gender-based violence. The women expressed gratitude for the high quality training and the acquired knowledge, which give them confidence of being able to protect themselves and their children.



The training 'Legal information for women on access to legal instruments to prevent domestic violence' took place on 28 August and was organised by Alexandra Martinenco, beneficiary of Impuls Small Grant Program, implemented by the Women's Law Centre with the financial support of Sweden.

The members of the multidisciplinary teams from over 10 districts of the country discussed the difficulties encountered in solving cases of domestic violence.

Social sector professionals analysed how individual care plans are developed in their regions and how they can be improved, identified gaps in the system in terms of inclusion and monitoring of victims of domestic violence after leaving the placement centre.



The purpose of the meetings was to improve the response and to meet the primary needs of victims and their children.

The activities were carried out and coordinated by the Centre for Assistance and Protection, under 'Strengthening the skills of multidisciplinary teams in implementing the policy of preventing and combating domestic violence' project, supported by Impuls Small Grant Program.

Psychologists, lawyers, social workers, directors of member organisations of the National Coalition 'Life without domestic violence' participated in two training sessions held under the title: 'Specificities of response to sexual abuse against children'. Together with trainers, professionals improved their knowledge and skills to identify sexual abuse and learned how to refer and report such a case. They also discussed and clarified the role of social services, how to address correctly a case of sexual abuse in multidisciplinary teams, according to the intersectoral mechanism. The project was implemented by Veronica Teleuca, beneficiary of IMPULS Small Grant Program.

## MOLDOVAN PARALEGALS TRAINED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Paralegals from the Republic of Moldova are consolidating their knowledge on the assistance provided to victims of domestic violence. It is for the first time when these specialists have the opportunity to participate in a training on this topic.

For two days, 19 participants and trainers Sergiu Toma and Arina Țurcan discussed about: forms of violence, power and control, the dynamics of domestic violence, the psycho-social portrait of a victim and a perpetrator.

The actions of the paralegals were analysed through role play exercises, focusing on primary legal assistance provision to and adult victim and elements to take into account when the victim has multiple vulnerabilities.

There are 52 paralegals in the Republic of Moldova, in 50 communities of the country.



These specialists inform and advise community inhabitants how to solve their legal problems.

The training was organised by Women's Law Centre in partnership with the National Association of Paralegals of Moldova, under 'Capacity building of the justice sector representatives in the efficient application of domestic violence legislation' project, with the support of UN Women Moldova and Sweden.



## TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS IN MIXED GROUPS



From February to August, 270 employees from the National Public Security Inspectorate of GPI and the Criminal Investigative Division have strengthened their skills in identifying, investigating and solving cases of domestic violence and in enforcing the law.

For the first time, trainings were delivered to mixed groups of professionals – sector police officers and criminal investigation officers and provided an effective platform for communication, information exchange and cooperation on domestic violence cases.

The purpose of this format is to help professionals understand the action perspectives of their colleagues and to integrate a response model focused on the needs of domestic violence victims.

Participants from the 32 districts of the country deepened their knowledge on topics such as:

- Legislation of the Republic of Moldova in the area of domestic violence

- Factors that generate and maintain violence
- Power, control and dynamics of domestic violence
- The psycho-social portrait of a victim and a perpetrator
- Important aspects for the legal classification of domestic violence crime
- Peculiarities of investigating cases of domestic violence
- The response algorithm and ensuring the protection of victims in cases of domestic violence.

The trainings were possible thanks to 'Capacity building of the justice sector representatives in the efficient application of domestic violence legislation' project implemented by the Women's Law Centre in partnership with CIPAL and with the support of UN Women Moldova and Sweden.

# ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN POLICE AT A NEW STAGE OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During a workshop, members of the Association of Women in Police (AWP), developed the 2022-2025 AWP Strategy and the 2022 Activity Plan with the support of their partners. Thanks to this effort, the association will have a mission and a well-defined vision, with activities focused on achieving the proposed objectives:

- promote the gender equality principle in the Police
- provide support to Police employees in solving problems at work
- increase the share of women in the Police force by promoting the profession
- strengthen the professional capacities of women police officers
- attract more women to the institution, in particular promote them to management positions.

The Association of Women in Police was created on 14 June 2017 based on the documents submitted by an initiative group. The Association has now 320 members, employees of the Police. The Women's Law Centre has supported the work of AWP from the very beginning and we are glad to stand by their side in the process of consolidating and developing the organisation.

The workshop was organized by AWP with the support of the Women's Law Centre and the financial support of Sweden.





### Police representatives from Sweden visiting WLC

The Swedish Police Delegation paid a visit to the Women's Law Centre. We presented to our guests the operation of the WLC on prevention, protection of domestic violence victims and multidisciplinary cooperation. At the same time, we exchanged views and outlooks on advancing the police response to domestic violence and legislation improvement.

We thank the representatives of the Swedish Police for the good practices brought as an example and the opportunity to learn from the experience of this country.

### Colleagues from 'Necuvinte' Association, Romania, presented their best practices

Women's Law Centre team together with members of 'Necuvinte' Association from Romania, Si-



mona Voicescu, Executive Director, the Founder of the 'Necuvinte' Association and Alina Iordache, Communication Expert and Trainer of non-formal education methods in gender equality and domestic violence contexts, shared their experiences and good practices. Discussions addressed topics such as external communication and digital tools to promote the organisation in new media.

Methods of non-formal education in gender equality and domestic violence contexts were presented during the mentoring session. Participants shared their ideas on developing services for vic-



tims of gender-based violence and domestic violence, and partnering with the health system and forensic medicine.

They also explored new opportunities in promoting organisational sustainability, as well as fundraising activities and partnerships with businesses.

We thank the guests for these days full of positive emotions, new knowledge and qualitative discussions. We rely on an efficient and long-term collaboration with Necuvinte Association.

### Sharing experience with Kyrgyzstan professionals

WLC lawyer Arina Turcan and Nighina Azizov, Program Coordinator on the elimination of violence against women, UN Women Moldova, participated in an exchange of experience and good practices event, organised by UN Women Kyrgyzstan.





During the activities, our colleague shared with the participants from Kyrgyzstan the experience in assisting victims of gender-based violence in Moldova, in particular the intersectoral cooperation and provision of legal and psychological support services in domestic violence cases.

Arina Țurcanu: 'The people I met in Kyrgyzstan were incredibly hospitable, friendly and curious to learn as much as possible about the existing legislation and practices in Moldova, on preventing and combating domestic violence. I had the opportunity to meet many people who work hard to ensure that every woman/girl lives safely and has her dignity respected. I am grateful to the organisers for giving me the opportunity to participate in these workshops.'

The event was also attended by representatives of the Kyrgyz authorities, local NGOs, service providers and representatives of UN agencies in Kyrgyzstan.

### Fact-finding meeting for our colleagues from Transnistrian region

Specialists, civic activists and volunteers from the Transnistrian region working in protection of the human rights and child victims of domestic violence, attended a fact-finding meeting and exchange of experience at Women's Law Centre.



The purpose of the meeting was to find out the centre's work principles and cooperation between: lawyer, social worker, psychologist, vocational guidance specialist. They also discussed about cooperation with authorities and the importance of involving NGOs in advocacy and awareness raising



campaigns. Only the joint effort of authorities and civil society can help prevent and combat domestic violence.

The activity is part of the UN Joint Action to Strengthen Human Rights on both Banks of the Nistru River, supported by Sweden.

### Alternative Report on the Universal Periodic Review

Women's Law Centre, together with NGOs that promote protection of women's rights and contribute to decreasing domestic violence in the Republic of Moldova, have prepared the Alternative Report on the Universal Periodic Review Process (UPR).

The UPR is a unique mechanism for reviewing human rights progress by the UN Human Rights Council in all 193 UN Member States and takes place every 4-5 years.

This year the report describes the progress made by our country in terms of preventing and combating gender-based violence. WLC recommendations are based on the challenges faced by women in accessing justice and assistance and protection services.

In 2016, Moldova was evaluated for the second time and received over 200 recommendations, followed by an official commitment at the country level to develop a new National Plan on Human Rights and implement it in practice.



You have  
the right to  
live safely!

## WHO ARE WE?

**WOMEN'S LAW CENTRE (WLC)** is a non-governmental organisation founded by a group of women-lawyers from Moldova. WLC advocates for equality between women and men in the public and family life and helps prevent and combat domestic violence and gender-based violence against women.

This newsletter is Founded by Sweden and OAK Foundation



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