

STOP VIOLENCE

NEWSLETTER

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WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

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TRAINING MANUAL “IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE” WAS PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

On 6 March 2019, the Women’s Law Center and the National Institute of Justice launched the Training Manual **“Implementation of Legislation on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence”**. The manual aims to strengthen the capacities of prosecutors and judges in the Republic of Moldova to ensure an effective and coordinated response to cases of domestic violence.

His Excellency, Ambassador Derek Hogan, noted that the training manual would be a valuable reference for legal professionals and that it was crucial that victims had access to a fair, efficient and transparent justice system.

The manual describes the root causes of violence, the link between domestic violence and gender inequality, provides guidance on knowledge and enforcement of international standards and national legislation, details how to implement protection measures, and explains how to investigate cases of domestic violence.

“This training manual will certainly reinforce the implementation of legislation on preventing and combating domestic violence and will ensure the judiciary coordinates with the prosecutors, the police, and the nongovernmental organisations its response to cases of domestic violence”, said Natalia Vilcu, WLC Executive Director.

Women’s Law Center coordinated the development of the training manual and appreciated the involvement of the National Institute of





Justice during the process. Also, the Women's Law Center is grateful to the authors for ensuring that the information meets the training needs of justice sector representatives.

The training manual was developed under Strengthening the Response Capacity for Domestic Violence Cases of the Prosecutor's Office and the Judicial System of the Republic of Moldova Project, with the financial support of the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Department of the US Embassy in Moldova.



The training manual may be accessed electronically at: <https://bit.ly/2NMuMuH>

NIJ TRAINEES PARTICIPATED IN A TRAINING ON JUDICIAL PRACTICE IN CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



During 21-22 March, judges, prosecutors and investigative officers from over 10 districts of the country participated in trainings in the judicial practice of examining domestic violence cases. The trainers:

- discussed the causes of domestic violence and the psychological portrait of a victim and a perpetrator
- presented criminal law aspects in preventing and combating domestic violence
- analysed case studies on investigating domestic violence cases

- debated the problems that arise in the court hearings of domestic violence crimes
- reviewed ECtHR case-law on domestic violence
- analysed how victims of domestic violence are protected and supported.

Training participants were the first to receive the Training Manual 'Implementation of Legislation on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence'.



The training was conducted by WLC in partnership with National Institute of Justice and the financial support of the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Department of the US Embassy in Moldova.



During 21-22 February, around **40 judicial assistants, court secretaries, and prosecutor consultants** attended a two-day training regarding judicial practice of examining domestic violence cases. The trainers spoke to the participants about criminal law aspects in preventing and combating domestic violence, the problems that arise in the court hearings, ECtHR case-law, and psychological aspects – causes, traumas, needs – of domestic violence.

The training was conducted in collaboration with the National Institute of Justice and with the financial support of US Embassy Moldova.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS WILL WORK ACCORDING TO REVIEWED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS



For several months, health and social assistance professionals from the pilot districts of Hincesti, Falesti, Orhei, Cahul and Causeni have been working according to the new operating procedures approved by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection.

These procedures aim at improving the mechanism of professionals' response in cases of domestic violence. They describe the response steps when identifying a case of domestic violence, and also detail the way of referring and collaborating with the other system stakeholders.

After the piloting, Women's Law Center organised focus groups with family doctors, social workers and police officers from the aforemen-

tioned districts to discuss the challenges encountered and issues that can be improved. During these meetings, suggestions to be included in the operating procedures and tailored to professionals' experiences were identified.

The new sectoral standard operating procedures were developed and piloted at the initiative of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova with WLC support and UNFPA Moldova financial assistance.



PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REACHED UNGHENI AND CAHUL



The project to inform the general public from different communities of the Republic of Moldova reached Ungheni and Cahul. It was a warm meeting where legal experts and psychologists spoke to women about domestic violence. The psychologist launched the challenge to analyse the stereotypes regarding domestic violence.

He explained cycle of domestic violence and the manner forms of domestic violence can be identified. The severity of the cases presented, through the lenses of the lawyer's experience, raised indignation in the room. The cases where the husband blinds his wife, rapes his daughter with disabilities, or installs cameras in the whole house to watch what his wife is doing seem almost unbelievable.



Beyond the legal and theoretical aspects of the phenomenon, professionals talked about trust and security, fear and shame. These reasons, rather than emotions, keep most women in abusive relationships. These are what we have inherited, along with other gender stereotypes, causing the victims to endure and forgive, generation after generation, for the sake of children, family, village.

The WLC experts were happy that the participants were curious, told their own experience and condemned such behaviours.

Meetings take place every month, in partnership with the Novateca network of libraries and the support of Sweden and OAK Foundation.

ART THERAPY HELPS WOMEN IN PENITENTIARY NO 7 TO FIND RESOURCES TO OVERCOME DIFFICULT EMOTIONAL STATES

Imagine that you have in front of you a set of plasticine and you have to reproduce the happiest moment of your childhood. What colours would you choose? Who would be present in your memories? Where were you? How did you feel? The pictures move one after the other, and women in the art therapy group in Penitentiary No 7 glued piece by piece, colours, shapes, thoughts, until they made sense. Their stories reflected their first swing, the first puppy brought home, the pigeon nesting at the balcony of the apartment, the first holiday at sea and the dolphin that approached the boat, the torturing days spent at the hospital, but being with the father, any black thought and pain went unnoticed.

Enabling beautiful memories, positive experiences is an important resource for those in detention, especially when they faced back in time

traumas such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or abandonment. Guided by psychologists Victoria Captari and Cristina Balan, women started discussions that helped them rethink certain events, find the power to look harsh realities in the face and acknowledge how liberating self-acceptance and desire for change can be.

This exercise allowed the women to open the door of gratitude and understand that wherever they are, their loved ones will always be with them, that these memories are always there, and they can enrich their time, day, life.

The art therapy is part of the psychological support service provided by WLC in partnership with the Institute for Family and Social Initiatives and Sweden's support.



WOMEN FROM PENITENTIARY NO 7 KNOW ABOUT WLC SERVICES AND HOW TO ACCESS THEM



Women's Law Centre together lawyers and psychologists held a new information session for women in Penitentiary No 7. The meeting was quite unusual and went beyond unilateral discussions. Psychologists Victoria Captari and Cristina Balan managed to make women interact and engage, by addressing painful topics most women prefer not to speak about, though the soul cries out and demands to be heard.

With the help of a text illustrating the case of a WLC beneficiary, the story of a woman subjected to domestic violence and who eventually managed to rebuild her life was discussed. Many of the women identified themselves in the cases discussed, and the tears were the proof



of certain regrets, of a suppressed pain, of the hope that things may change if there is will and inner strength, support and courage. And if one has this resource as a treasure, there, inside, no one can confuse him/her.

On this occasion, women were also informed about WLC services and urged not to remain indifferent when they hear, know about or see cases of domestic violence.

The psychological support (counselling, art therapy and reading club) and legal counselling is possible with Sweden's financial support.

DISCRIMINATION AT THE WORKPLACE THROUGH VICTIMISATION

The Council for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Quality accepted the complaint filed by Women's Law Center and issued a decision that found discrimination at the workplace through victimisation in the case of a WLC beneficiary.

The Council recommended the employer to develop an internal regulation containing provisions on non-discrimination and equal treatment at the workplace, and train the employees to this end.

The victim contacted the WLC to receive legal assistance and psychological support because she was subjected to sexual harassment at the workplace. A criminal case is examined in court on this case and the judgment is to be pronounced soon.

The story of our beneficiary was also recently presented at 'Don't blame on clothes!' exhibition, where we wanted to combat the stereotypes in our society regarding the phenomenon of sexual violence.



NU DAȚI VINA PE HAINE!

#HearMeToo

VIORICA

„Eram angajată la primărie. Chiar din primele zile, domnul primar a început să-mi facă avansuri cu tentă sexuală, care ulterior s-au transformat în maltratări și abuzuri psihologice. La început obișnuia să mă cheme la el în cabinet, cu întrebări stupide: de ce vin așa devreme la serviciu, de ce fusta mi-i așa de lungă, că el va impune dress-code la serviciu, ca să vin cu fustă scurtă. Mă incomoda cu asemenea abordări. Am ajuns până la a mă ascunde în birou ca să nu dau cumva cu ochii cu el. Trăiesc într-o tensiune continuă, care mă împiedică să-mi restabilesc ritmul normal al vieții. Uneori îmi vine să urlu și să îmi fac ceva. Nu sunt vinovată cu nimic, dar sunt pedepsită în asemenea hal. M-a terorizat cum a vrut și cum a putut, a încercat să-mi distrugă reputația și să-mi păteze numele în fața colegilor.”

În cazul Vioricăi, calvarul nu s-a încheiat. Chiar dacă nu poartă nicio vină este nevoită să alerge prin instanțe și să-și apere demnitatea. Nu-i vine a crede că trece prin acest coșmar numai pentru că i-a respins intențiile lui sexuale.

„I was working at the town hall. From the very first days, the mayor began to make sexually suggestive moves on me, which later turned into maltreatment and psychological abuse. First he used to call me in the office with idiotic questions: why did I come so early at work, why was my skirt so long. He would impose a dress code on me and asked me to wear short skirts at work. I felt uncomfortable by such suggestions. I started to hide in the office so I could avoid him. I lived in a constant tension that prevented me from restoring my normal life rhythm. Sometimes I want to scream out loud. I'm not guilty of anything but I'm punished in such a way. He terrorized me in every possible way and he even tried to ruin my reputation.”

In the case of Viorica, the assault is not over. Even if she is not guilty of anything, she has to run between courts and defend her dignity. She can't believe she's going through this nightmare just because she rejected his sexual intentions.

«Я пришла на работу в примарию. С самых первых дней примар начал делать мне предложения сексуального характера, которые впоследствии перешли в преследование и психологическое насилие. Сначала он вызывал меня в кабинет с глупыми вопросами: почему так рано на работе, да почему юбка такая длинная, говорил, что введёт на работе такой dress-code, чтобы я всегда ходила в короткой юбке. Всё это меня здорово смущало. Дошло до того, что я стала прятаться по офису, лишь бы только не попадаться ему на глаза. Я живу в постоянном напряжении, которое мешает мне восстановить нормальный ритм жизни. Бывает, хочется закричать и что-то с собой сделать. Я ни в чём не виновата, а получается, как будто за что-то наказана. Сколько он меня терроризировал как хотел и сколько пытался очернить мою репутацию, запятнать моё имя перед коллегами!»

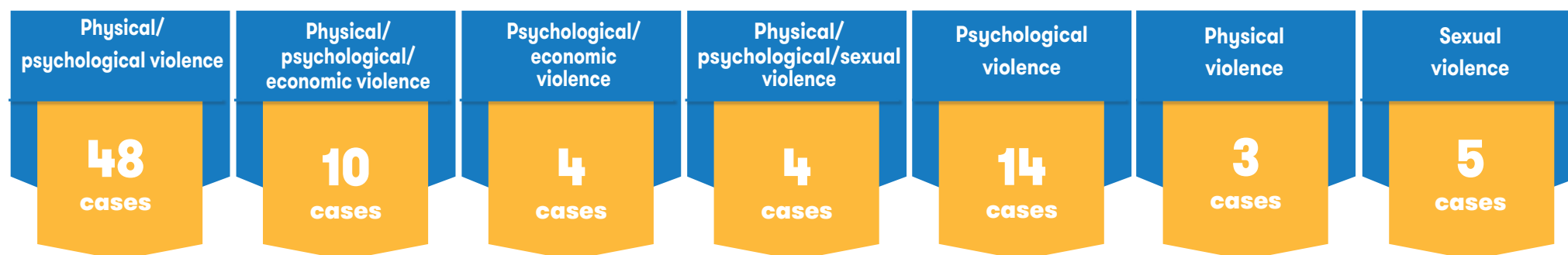
Для Виирики мучения ещё не окончены. Не будучи ни в чём виноватой, она должна ходить по инстанциям и защищать своё доброе имя. Ей до сих пор не верится, что весь этот кошмар она заслужила только тем, что отвергла сексуальные домогательства шефа.

* Nume schimbat

UNFPA
CENTRUL DE LUTĂ
AL FEMEI
UNITE
NATIONS
WOMEN

WLC ACTIVITY IN FIGURES. THE PERIOD JANUARY-MARCH 2019

During January-March 2019, the Women's Law Centre provided support to 95 victims of domestic violence. In 14 cases, women were victims of psychological violence, 5 suffered from sexual violence, 3 reported physical violence. Most of the times, domestic violence has a complex form: physical/psychological – 48 cases, physical/psychological/economic – 10 cases, psychological/economic – 4 cases, physical/psychological/sexual – 4 cases. During this period, applications for the issuance of 17 protection orders were drafted.



PROVIDED SERVICES:

- the victims received **primary legal aid** in **93 cases**, which included the drafting of applications, complaints to law enforcement bodies or appeals against decisions of the official examiner. 10 protection orders were issued.
- in **7 cases** the WLC lawyers provided qualified legal aid by representing the interests of the victims in court in 2 criminal cases, 3 contravention cases (complaints about committing crimes/contraventions) and 2 civil cases (divorce, establishing the domicile of minors, collection of alimony).
- 25 victims** received individual psychological assistance, 9 victims were issued psychological assessment reports.
- 40 victims** were provided social assistance and career counselling and guidance.

BENEFICIARIES' SOCIAL PROFILE:

Area of residence: 53 victims are from the urban area and 42 from the rural one. Most of them have their domicile in Chisinau municipality. Age: most domestic violence victims are 25-44 years old (53 beneficiaries), followed by +65 years old beneficiaries (18 cases).

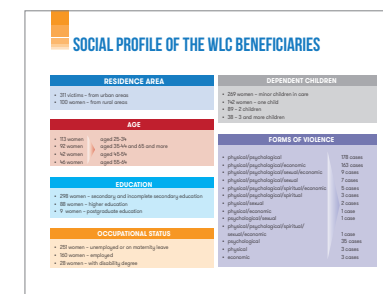
Level of education: 57 victims have secondary education (including incomplete secondary or specialised secondary), while 23 have higher education.

Occupational status: 41 women are either unemployed or are on childcare leave. Another 22 women are employed, while 66 are taking care of minor children.

Victim-perpetrator relationship: in 71 of the recorded cases, the victim was the (former) partner/wife. In 6 cases, the victim was the parent – mother/father, while in 6 cases the victim was the child – daughter/son.

Victims contacted the WLC being advised by police officers, social workers, lawyers, psychologists, maternity centres staff, other organisations working in the field, former WLC beneficiaries, or by email.

2018 WLC ACTIVITY REPORT



In 2018, we continued to promote the rights of women and support the victims of domestic violence. Many of you will find yourself among the participants in public awareness events or training sessions, or maybe you were part of the focus groups and public consultations organised during the year. We continue to believe that the major change can only be achieved with the involvement of all relevant professionals, decision makers and the community we are part of. We expect new challenges and new achievements in future. We urge you to stand by and promote together the case of victims of domestic violence!

You can find the online version of the report here:

Romanian version – <https://bit.ly/2D3iSbS>

English version – <https://bit.ly/2D4tiI5>

STUDENTS FROM 'ION CREANGA' THEORETICAL LYCEUM ORGANISED A RAFFLE TO HELP A WLC BENEFICIARY

In March we were reached by a group of students from 'Ion Creanga' Theoretical Lyceum in Chisinau wishing to donate some money. They organised a raffle and collected MDL 2,530. WLC helped to identify a family that received the students' support. A.I. is WLC beneficiary, and in addition to domestic violence, she has also been fighting for her life in recent years. The doctors diagnosed her with stage IV cancer. The woman was grateful for their charitable gesture and wanted to send her best to the students.

We thank these wonderful young people who come up with initiatives that make us believe in the force of good. The raffle is at its first edition, and the Easter Caravan is the next activity. We wish them success and we encourage them to remain as persevering and involved!



A group of Master degree students of Judicial Psychology program at Moldova State University visited the Women's Law Center, being curious to find out more about our projects and services offered to victims of domestic violence. We discussed with young people about the support given to women in Rusca Penitentiary, the economic empowerment of victims and the causes of the difficulty of breaking the circle of violence.

ANOTHER KIND OF MARTISOR, TOGETHER WITH WLC BENEFICIARIES

White with red make a flower, or a martisor, or a necklace. At the hand-made workshop, WLC beneficiaries crafted beads perfect to wear on spring days. This was another activity where the skill of hands helped them discover long-forgotten talents. The result? Good mood, self-confidence and a beautiful memory, worn as an accessory for life!

‘For two hours we spend our time with beautiful people. I’m glad I can devote this time to myself and hand-made crafts. The things we craft here are not easy to do. Sometimes I can hardly follow the pace of my colleagues, but the result deserves any effort. It’s a genuine pleasure to see what beautiful things our hands can create. I’d like to thank the team that organises these workshops and gives us the opportunity to experience new things’, said a workshop participant.

Hand-made activities are supported by Sweden and OAK Foundation. They are held monthly and are designed for WLC beneficiaries.



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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