

# STOP VIOLENCE

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WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

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## WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS, IMPLEMENTED IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, AND HOW THEIR EFFICIENCY CAN BE IMPROVED?

Many discussions have been held during the past years about economic empowerment programs for girls and women with different social opportunities, who need support to launch and develop their own business. To assess the efficiency, impact and ways to improve these programs, the Women's Law Centre and Expert-Grup Think Tank, with the support of the Embassy of Sweden in the Republic of Moldova, developed the study: [Assessing the impact of support programmes for women's economic empowerment](#).

The Study states that, in the Republic of Moldova, women's economic empowerment programmes are at their initial stage, focusing mainly on the professional and economic empowerment of women, and that there are only a few programs addressing the needs of girls and women from vulnerable groups.



*'An important element for the success of such programmes is related to the capacity to motivate women from vulnerable groups. Often these girls and women have to deal both with the employers' stereotypes and with their own inner perception that they will fail, that they are not able - ideas fostered by the attitude of people around them, from their families to schools and communities',* said **Diana Cheianu, co-author of the Study.**

During the years, the Republic of Moldova took a number of measures to ensure the economic rights of women and men, with the 2020 Gender Inequality Index developed by the World Economic Forum positioning our country the 23rd out of 153 states. However, the Moldovan women are still facing a series of inequalities.



*‘The women’s rights are violated and they have limited access to economic opportunities. We hope that the recommendations formulated in this study will help design and develop new initiatives and programs of economic empowerments, taking into account the needs of girls and women from vulnerable groups, so that they enjoy financial stability and autonomy, decent work and a violence-free life’*, **Mariana Buruiana, Executive Director, Women’s Law Center** said at the launching event.

Ensuring gender equality, both nationally and globally, is a priority for the Swedish Government. *‘Our goal is to mainstream gender in the bilateral support provided to different countries and, in the Republic of Moldova we assume an active role in promoting gender equality. Sweden implements a series of development programs in the Republic of Moldova, aimed at market economy development and increasing the trade with European Union. These programs will focus in particular on supporting business women. First, this is a way to compensate for the existing unequal representation of women and men; second, an inclusive approach leads to a more innovative and more competitive economy’* stated **Anna Lyberg, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Sweden in the Republic of Moldova**.

The study authors developed a series of recommendations on increasing the efficiency of economic empowerment programs for all women, including from vulnerable groups, intended for development agencies, the Government and education system.

The study was conducted between May and November 2020. The analysis is focused on the projects and programmes for supporting and empowering women, including from vulnerable groups. In particular, the study focused on the programs implemented and/or funded by ODIMM, EBRD, UN Women Moldova, UNDP Moldova, ADA Moldoova, EBA, Prime Capital, BRD, TAKEDU ONG.





## MARIANA BURUIANA WAS APPOINTED AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WLC

*At the beginning of this year, the position of Executive Director of WLC was taken by Mariana Buruiana. Mariana is a Master in Management and Sciences of Communication. She has also the title of public policy expert. Over the years, she acquired working experience in the governmental sector, in the development of public policies and important legislative acts in the social field. As a social counsellor, Mariana facilitated the activity of sectorial working committees, national commissions or councils, for example, the National Council for Child Rights Protection, the National Commission for Consultations and Collective Bargaining, etc. We invite you to read about the WLC scope of work and the organisation's priorities in the interview below.*



**What is the WLC scope of work and why is the organisation's mission important?**

I'm extremely honoured to assume the WLC mandate at the beginning of this year, but I have to admit that it is a torturous one due to the pandemic-related challenges and problems, and also extremely responsible given the multitude of problems that girls and women, victims of domestic violence, go through. The number of calls and requests for legal and psychological support doubled in comparison to the previous years. There is an increase in the number of emergency interventions, provision of shelter and social aid, and the WLC team makes every effort to stay close and provide care and professional support to domestic violence victims. In this context, the mission of the Women's Law Centre is critical in order to ensure the promotion and protection of women's rights and to help mitigate the domestic violence in the Republic of Moldova.

**Dear Mariana, please tell us a little bit about your activity so far?**

During the last 6 years I have worked in the non-governmental sector as a Program Manager at East Europe Foundation. I managed operational and grant programs targeting the rights and development of young people, mobilisation of communities and development of local services, support and integration of vulnerable people, human rights promotion and protection, confidence building and conflict transformation, supporting NGOs' platforms on both sides of the Nistru river.

As a member of the Council of Europe's European Steering Committee for Youth, European Centre of Expertise for Youth, and the European Commission and Council of Europe Youth Partnership, I also have a broad experience in developing social policies, focusing on education and youth at the international level.

### What do you think are the priority directions of WLC?

We will continue to promote and protect women's rights as human rights and help the national system in the reform launched as an institutionalised response based on women's needs and the victim-centred approach. Our Strategic Development Plan for 2019-2024 focuses on four areas of intervention: Prevention, Protection, Research-based policies, and Organisational development. Each area of intervention includes the following strategic development objectives:

1. Raise public awareness about violence against women
2. Build the capacity of professionals in the justice, social assistance and health care sectors
3. Develop and consolidate services provided to victims of violence against women
4. Develop policies through direct contribution, lobbying and advocacy on the basis of evidence from research and analyses
5. Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation, including in diversifying the services focused on the girls' and women's continuously changing needs.

### What do you propose to do along with the WLC team in the next years?

As a day care centre, we will keep providing support to girls and women victims of domestic violence, considering the beneficiaries' individual needs. We intend to strengthen the holistic approach of our legal, psychological and social assistance services and expand the projects that help prevent and mitigate domestic violence. Advocacy for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention remains a priority for us. We will continue to raise public awareness, and particularly to explain and dispel the myths related to the provisions of the Convention and we will organise public information campaigns about the value and benefits of ratifying the Istanbul Convention, which

actually aims to grant the right of citizens to a dignified life, free of violence. We will also focus on supporting, and social and economic empowerment of women as a measure for eliminating the economic dependence on the perpetrator and orienting towards a decent life, free of violence. In the next years, WLC will also support women in prison by providing primary and qualified legal assistance, psychological and social support for detained women with young children.

All our actions and interventions are inspired and outlined by the WLC mission to ensure the promotion and protection of women's rights and to contribute to the prevention and mitigation of domestic violence in the Republic of Moldova.



## THE SITUATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS DISCUSSED IN THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



In March we had several additional occasions to advocate for women's rights promotion. Ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) was an extremely topical issue this year, as well.

The Women's Law Centre, together with representatives of member organisations of the National Coalition 'Life without Domestic Violence', participated in the meeting held by the Committee for Human Rights and Inter-ethnic Relations and discussed the purposes and provisions of the



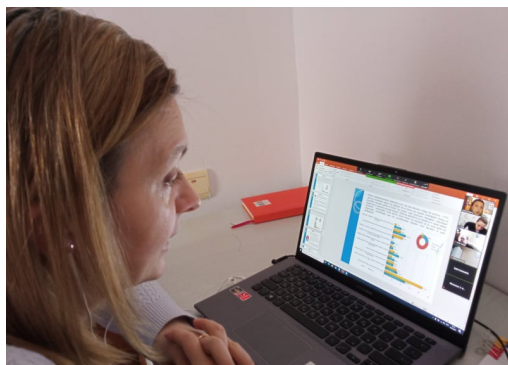
Istanbul Convention, reasons to ratify it, as well as the existing myths about this international treaty.

At the same time, representatives of the civil society spoke about the benefits offered by ratifying the Convention to domestic violence victims and the society, as a whole, and the steps to be taken by our State towards ratification.

The Republic of Moldova signed the Istanbul Convention on 6 February 2017, being the 44th state to sign the Treaty.



## THE PROJECTS OF THE IMPULS PROGRAM HAVE NEW TARGETS



On 19 March 2021, during an on-line in-service training organised by the Integrated Law Enforcement Centre, **Mariana Carabanov** presented the results of the **'Perceptions of women in the police on the phenomenon of sexual harassment'** study. It is a consultation and dialogue platform with police women on their perception of the phenomenon and how it can be prevented. By organising trainings regarding this subject we reiterate the commitment not to tolerate any behaviour that harms the dignity of the person and creates an intimidating and hostile environment, including in police services.

The initiative for conducting this study belongs to Police Women's Association, with the support provided under the IMPULS Small Grant Program, funded by Sweden and implemented by Women's Law Centre.

In order to achieve sustainable outcomes, two other grant beneficiaries will be provided support under the IMPULS Program. Mr **Andrei Pădure** intends to help prevent domestic and gender-based violence by developing a methodological tool necessary to the trainers in the **'Domestic and gender-based violence'** training conducted within SUMP 'Nicolae Testemitanu'. The methodical study will explain how to carrying out the course (location, duration, training methods) and will provide a practical toolkit (case studies, role plays, group exercises, assessment tests) to be applied during the lectures and seminars.



**Alexandra Martinenco** coordinates the assistance program for women in crisis situations at 'Rezonans' Centre from the Transnistrian region. The activities planned by Alexandra will help prevent domestic violence in Transnistria, providing the women who are victims or possible victims with access to relevant information, interaction with subject-matter specialists and information on the legal protection tools for such cases.

The final purpose is that participants in these activities know how to defend their rights and what to do to change their situation, motivating them to build a future free of violent relations.

## THE POLICE EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATED IN A SERIES OF TRAININGS IN ORDER TO EFFICIENTLY RESPOND TO CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A number of trainings for male and female sector and criminal investigation police officers were organised this February. The courses are for the first time organised for a mixed group of professionals in order to enhance the cooperation and the mutual understanding of police response to domestic violence. At the same time, our goal is to improve the identification, investigation and settlement of domestic violence cases and application of appropriate intervention and protection mechanisms. In the next period, when the epidemiological conditions allow, 12 two-day training sessions will be organised for about 300 police employees.



The activities are part of the **'Capacity building of the justice sector representatives in the efficient application of domestic violence legislation'** project implemented by WLC in partnership with JLETC and supported by UN Women Moldova and Sweden.





## ‘BEING A TRAINER DOES NOT MEAN TO ONLY COME WITH THE KNOWLEDGE YOU ACQUIRED. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO FEEL THE AUDIENCE.’

**Oxana Manea** is a senior criminal investigations officer in the Analysis, Planning and Training Department under the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation. She has been working in police since 2008, and as a criminal investigation officer – since 2014. Ten years ago, when she just began her career, it was difficult for women to get a job in this field. Oxana remembers that it was neither typical for women to want such a career, nor accepted in the society. Today things have changed and certain stereotypes remained in the past. This year, Oxana was for the first time involved as a trainer in the domestic violence trainings for police officers. You can read about the emotions she experienced, the message for her colleagues and what motivates her in the daily work in the following short interview.

### How was it for you to be a trainer?

It was very interesting and exciting at the same time. I felt a great responsibility towards junior officers who did not have this experience yet and I had to transmit them the information correctly, so that they would act according to the law in the future. Knowing that more experienced trainers were by my side was very helpful. I felt their support when the emotions were overwhelming. They intervened with certain details and additions.

### How did you prepare for this role? What helped you develop the skills required?

I participated in many trainings over the years. When I was preparing for this training I read once again the subjects and notes taken during the ToT training that I attended the last year. I remembered the trainers' advice and I understood that theory was not enough. Your presence, the way you communicate, how you answer more difficult questions and situations was also important. How to present information to the participants in a useful, interactive and interesting way. It is important



to feel your audience, to interact with the participants, to understand where the information is clear and where details are needed. It is very important to establish contact with your audience.



### What is your message for your colleagues who participate in training?

To participate, without any doubts, in these trainings because they will get information that cannot be found in other sources. Psychological violence and its correct documentation are largely discussed. During the training there is an exchange of experience among the participants, as well as between participants and trainers. The trainers come from related fields of activity and draw our attention on how to examine cases more qualitatively. Different professionals talk about the same problem – preventing and combating domestic violence.

### What would you recommend to your colleagues who want to become trainers?

To study. You have to know well the subject in order to share it with your colleagues and it is important to have experience in the field. For me it is a benefit to have interacted with many victims, I saw their behaviour and how they react, I know how to help them and what I have to do.

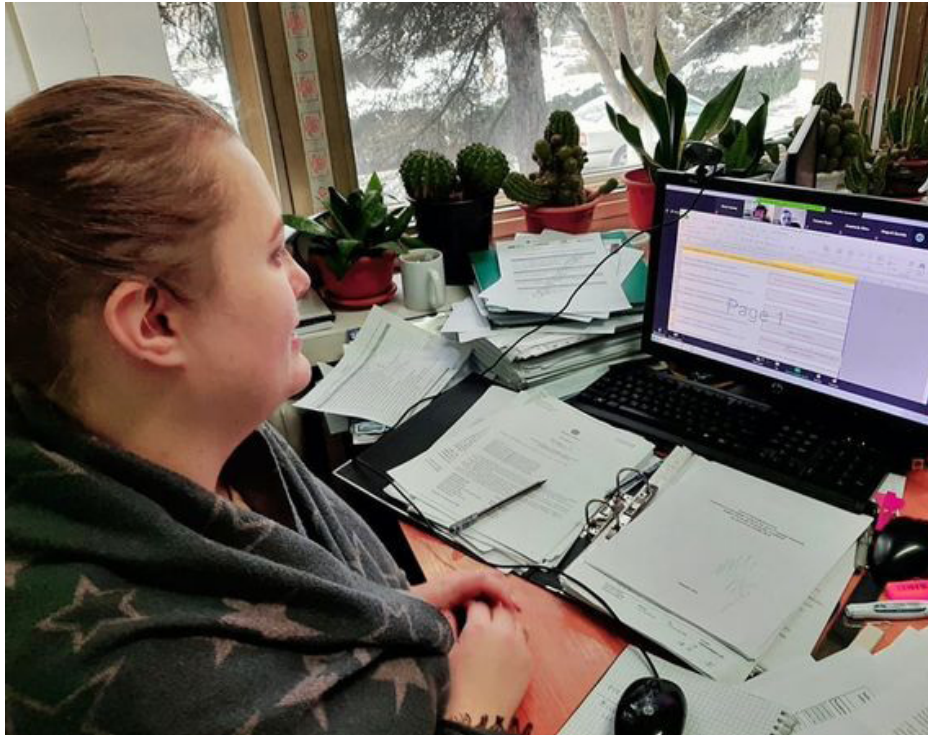
### What motivates you to continue along this path?

The outcomes of my work are the strongest motivation. When I had to work on criminal cases and saw the final result, that I could help the victim, I felt great. When you work on cases of domestic violence, your attitude is very important. A woman needs to be listened and believed; she needs to understand that someone wants to help her.

**Both the trainings and the ToT course are part of '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 JLETC and with the support of UN Women Moldova and Sweden.**



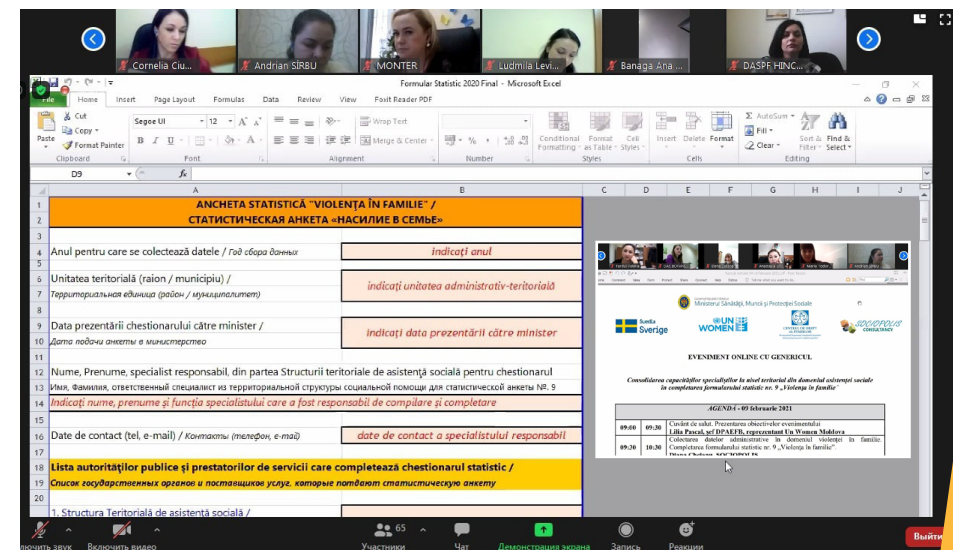
## THE SOCIAL WORKERS WERE TRAINED TO CORRECTLY COLLECT INFORMATION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



This was an expected and very necessary training for social assistance professionals at the local level. Its goal was to build the professionals' capacity in terms of collecting administrative data on domestic violence. How to fill in the statistical form No. 9 'Domestic violence' was explained step by step.

Failure to keep records of the cases used to be a great difficulty. The social worker provided the necessary services, referred the victims to other professionals when necessary, but there was no record of the job performed. The Territorial Social Assistance Structures will be able to correctly systematize and interpret the domestic violence data, thus helping improve the system response to domestic and gender-based violence.

The trainings were carried out by WLC and SOCIOPOLIS Consultancy in partnership with MHLSP and with the financial support of UN Women Moldova and Sweden.





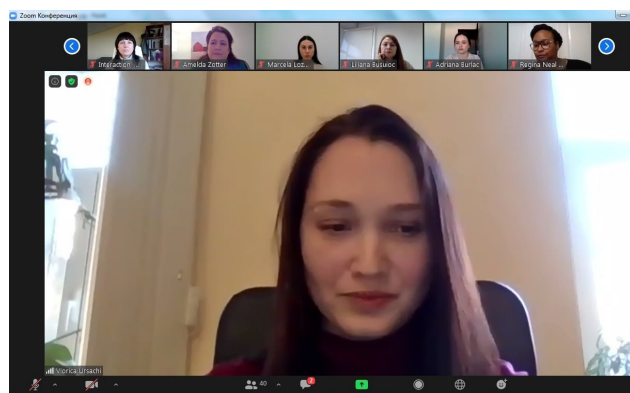
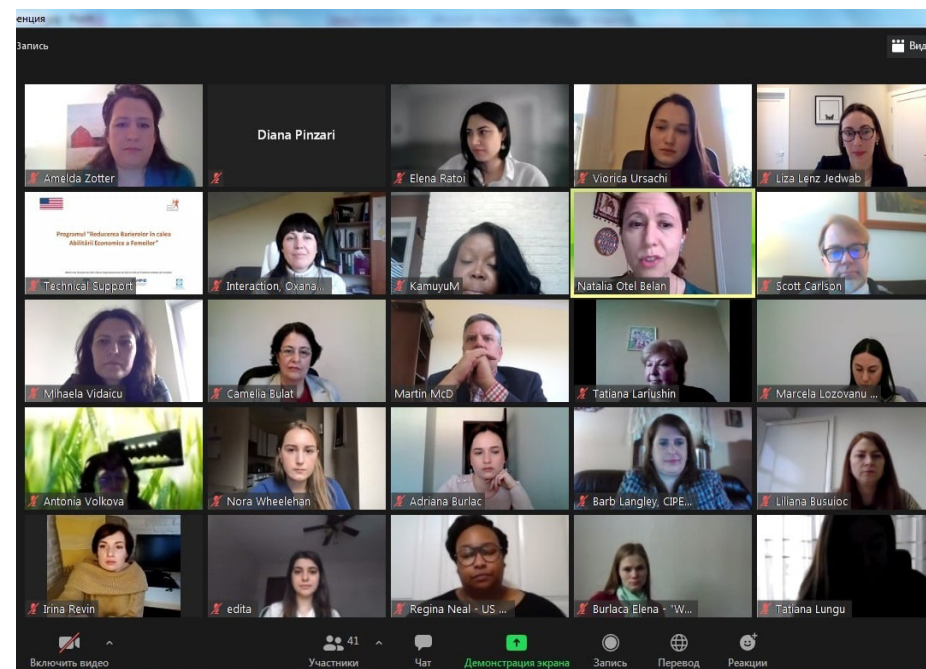
# ABA ROLI MOLDOVA AND THE PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP LAUNCHED A NEW ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

**‘Reducing barriers to women’ economic empowerment** Project was launched early this year. It aims to help building the institutional capacity of ten associations of business women and NGOs that work in protecting women’s rights.

The organisations will have a better understanding of how to mainstream gender, inclusion and cooperation in their programs and services, so that they contribute to economic empowerment of women.

Another project objective consists in fostering joint actions of business women associations and NGOs that promote women’s rights, which could lead to establishing an Alliance for Women Empowerment, with a governing secretariat, a mission, a visual brand, an advocacy plan and a strategic plan to guide their activity during the project and after its completion.

The project’s local implementing partners are WLC and the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Economic Policies.



## WOMEN'S LAW CENTRE ACTIVITY IN FIGURES

During **1 January – 31 March 2021**, WLC provided support to **213 beneficiaries**. In comparison to the same period of the previous year, in 2021 the number of requests increased significantly — by about 60%.

**Primary legal aid:** of a total of 213 beneficiaries, **105 women** were provided with support in drafting documents — including drafting applications and complaints addressed to law enforcement bodies or appealing against decisions of the official examiner. **47 protection orders** were issued, and in **7 cases** the emergency **restriction order was issued**.

**Qualified legal aid:** Lawyers were appointed to represent victims' interests in court in **10 criminal cases** and one administrative case. Most of the criminal cases refer to domestic violence, rape or sexual acts and the failure to comply with the protection order.

**Psychological support:** A total of **29 women** received **individual psychological support**, including long-term psychological support in 13 cases. A number of 36 psychological evaluation reports were drafted.

**Social assistance:** **14 victims** were provided **social assistance** — counselling and vocational guidance. In 4 cases, the transfer of the victim into a placement centre was facilitated, and 2 women received material aid.



**Type of violence committed:** in **75% of the assisted cases**, the beneficiaries report to be victims of more types of domestic violence simultaneously. In **91 cases** physical and psychological violence prevail, followed by physical, psychological and economic violence — **14 cases**. In other nine cases, sexual violence combined with other forms of violence was reported.

### BENEFICIARIES' SOCIAL PROFILE

**Area of residence:** most victims are from the urban area.

**Age:** most domestic violence victims are **25-44 years old (109 women)**, followed by **45-65+ years** old beneficiaries (**74 women**). In the first quarter of this year the number of 65+ years old victims increased by about 40% and the number of requests from **18-24 years** old victims — by 33%. Six beneficiaries are minor.

**Education level:** **191 victims** have secondary education, while 18 have higher education.

**Occupational status:** **72 women** are unemployed, 16 have their work suspended due to the childcare leave. At the same time, 37 employed victims, and 23 women who reached their retirement age were registered.

**Relation of the victim with the perpetrator:** in **136 cases** registered the victim is the (former) domestic partner/wife of the perpetrator. A number of 16 cases referred to violence between relatives, the victim being the parent, and in 12 cases the victim was the son/daughter.

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

## REDIRECTING 2% TO HELP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS HAVE A SAFE LIFE

Dear friends, now is the period when you can redirect 2% of your income tax for a cause that is close to your heart. If you want to support women who want to live a life free of domestic violence, and their children to be safe, redirect those 2% to the Women's Law Centre.

**WHAT DO WE DO?** We help over 600 women annually to receive free:

Legal aid

Psychological  
support

Social assistance and support  
during the crisis period

Assistance in the process of  
economic empowerment

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?** State in your tax return the following tax identification number: **1009620003366** and redirect **2%** of your income tax.

## 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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