

# STOP VIOLENCE

## NEWSLETTER

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WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

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## WE BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO BETTER INFORM AND PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Prevention is the best way to reduce domestic violence. With this in mind, Women's Law Center entered into a partnership with libraries from Novateca Moldova Network of Libraries and the Police Women's Association to inform and offer useful advice about domestic violence to teenagers, young people and elderly from different localities of the country. Thus, since April, WLC lawyers, along with psychologists and police officers, travelled to Causeni, Telenești and Balti and discussed with the participants about the most common forms of domestic violence, protection measures and the institutions that must intervene to help victims. The format of meetings and messages were tailored to the audience, so that everyone could get answers to the questions they were interested in.

- ✓ Young people from Alexei Mateevici High School in Causeni district can easier identify the characteristics of a toxic relationship and know who can help in violent situations. Psychologist Sergiu Toma provoked discussions about love, boys' and girls' expectations in a relationship, how to express one's needs and establish boundaries. At the same time, colleagues from WLC and Police Women's Association spoke to young people about the forms and causes of domestic violence, and how police can and should intervene in such cases.
- ✓ In Telenești, the WLC and the Deputy Head of the Public Security Service of the Telenesti Police Inspectorate, Mariana Placinta, talked to the bene-

ficiaries of Novateca Telenesti network about domestic violence and brought specific examples of cases managed by WLC. This time women from the locality participated in the discussion group. They were keen to come up with suggestions and recommendations on how to reduce domestic violence. They analysed the manner in which society evolves and reached the conclusion that currently more information is available on that subject, and women have more courage to denounce perpetrators.

- ✓ WLC team has a very special day in the company of ladies from Balti. This time we talked to the elderly - a very vulnerable group exposed to domestic violence. WLC statistics shows that 35% of the victims supported by the WLC were ladies over 65 years of age. The ladies confessed that violence among the elderly was common in Balti. Most of the times, violence was applied by husbands or sons, and women, embraced by shame, did not have the courage to denounce the perpetrators.





## SOCIAL WORKERS WILL HAVE NEW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION GUIDELINES



**On 20 April, the Women's Law Center conducted consultations on Domestic Violence Intervention Guidelines for social workers.**

Professionals reviewed the draft document, discussed the possible improvements to the guidelines so that, once approved, social workers could act and respond to the needs of domestic violence victims. The guidelines include the procedure of identifying domestic violence victims and registering cases, assessing the risk and evaluating the case, reporting cases to professionals from other sectors (police officer, physician) and referring them to specialized services. The Guidelines also focus on key elements of cooperation between

different professionals to efficiently respond to cases of domestic violence.

The draft sectoral guidelines on the response of social workers were developed on the basis of the Global Standards and Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (ESGs) and represent the Government's commitment to align Moldova's practices to international standards.

The guidelines consultation and review was launched at the initiative of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova and was coordinated by the Women's Law Center with the support of UNFPA Moldova.





## DISABILITY AND GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The Council on Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Ensuring Equality accepted the complaint filed by Women's Law Centre and issued a decision that found disability and gender-based discrimination in access to justice in a case of a WLC beneficiary.

Two years ago, the WLC beneficiary was subjected to sexual violence by her father. The Prosecutor's Office decided not to initiate criminal investigation of this case on grounds that 'the injured party's statements needed to be assessed with reservations and could not be used as a basis for a conviction, because during the rape she was able neither to comprehend nor to perceive correctly sexual violence and, hence, was not able to make statements on the case.'

WLC lawyer, Violeta Andriuta, challenged the Orders of the Prosecutor's Office as illegal and ungrounded, restricting the access of our beneficiary to justice. The court quashed the Orders and ordered the commencement of criminal investigation by forcing the prosecutor to remedy their violations.

Thus, the perpetrator is prosecuted criminally for both sexual violence and domestic violence. By its decision, the Council recommends that the Prosecutor General's Office take steps to prevent similar breaches to be committed by prosecutors. Since the Council's decision can be appealed in court, we will continue to monitor the case to make sure that the right to equal protection before the law is respected.



## CREATIVE WORKSHOPS - SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR WLC BENEFICIARIES

The creative workshops organized for WLC beneficiaries have become even more colourful these months. Armed with good mood and inspiration, they decorated glass vases, created Eco bags, learned how to pack gifts and live new experiences. The colourful mosaic turned alive, and our ladies gained the pleasure of creating something unique.

'I haven't crafted something so simple and beautiful since long ago. I forgot about worries, pain, time, and I was pleased to spend time with you', says a beneficiary.

Guided by curiosity and the joy of handcrafting, they created new memories together with Nataliya Shevchenko. There were three hours of creation — a mixture of colours and good mood — and at the end they got original decorative objects and the ability to craft their own accessories. The day was also special because we had the chance to wish the best and a happy birthday to a distinguished lady, assisted by us in the past year.



Indemn  
Am lăsat case frumoase  
Și ochii tristișor copii, nepoti  
Și am fugit de-acasă  
De violentul meu sot.  
Când trec ei pe lângă poartă  
Unde și de zi i-am așteptat  
Se opresc, întreabă înlăcrimați:  
-Mamă, bunică, unde ești?  
Abuzată-am fost sunt luptătoare  
În centrul pentru femei trist  
Unde lupt să am tărie  
Și-n suflet drumul optimist.  
Femei, ce ntrați pe ușa noastră  
Zărobite cu ochii-nlăcrimați,  
Fiți tari, luptați cu violența,  
Așfel și pe abele le ajutați.  
Catiusa

What is there in the soul of a wife, mother, grandmother who had left the aggressive partner? A storm of emotions conquers your life, you feel paralyzed, abandoned, and overwhelmed with regrets. Catiusa, a WLC beneficiary, expressed her feelings in a poem. After a marriage in which she had lived for her husband only, forgetting about her own dreams, in which she had endured everything only 'to please everyone', one day has come when she said - enough! 'I'm like the bird, leaving the cage to fly to the sun. I've left home, my native village, but now I am living my freedom. I managed to find a job and became independent', Catiusa confesses while she is putting on paper her 'Advice'...



## REPRESENTATIVES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES ARE PREPARED TO RESPOND MORE EFFECTIVELY TO CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**H**eads of Criminal Investigation Services in 32 districts of the country participated in training on best practices of police intervention in cases of domestic violence. The participants discussed specific cases and were challenged to identify forms of domestic violence, to come up with an action plan that would state measures to protect a victim, as well as possible difficulties that could arise in the investigation of cases. The head of the General Division for Criminal Investigation of the General Police Inspectorate under the Ministry of Interiors, Grigore Moga, mentioned the importance of the proper implementation of the current legislation, presenting the experience of other states where penalties for domestic violence are drastic and the victim safety is a top priority.

**C**riminal Investigation Officers and police officers from districts of Moldova participated in a training on domestic violence documentation on 16-17 May. Besides the theoretical presentations made by trainers Ghenadie Neamțu, Olga Spoialo and Arina Țurcan, the participants analyzed some case studies where they had to identify the victims and forms of domestic violence and to prepare a plan of actions envisaging victim protection measures. At the same time, police officers presented the difficulties and positive practices of the cases managed by them. Together with the trainers, they discussed about:

- notifying a case of domestic violence
- risk assessment and on-site intervention measures
- effective hearing of witnesses and victims
- application of protection measures
- documentation of breaches of protection measures

The trainings are organized by the Women's Law Center in partnership with the General Police Inspectorate of the Republic of Moldova with the financial support of the Swedish Embassy in Moldova and OAK Foundation.





## WLC PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE – ‘MARGINALIZED PEOPLE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT ETHICS’



In May, the International Conference ‘Marginalized People, Human Rights and Ethics in Development’ was held for the first time in Chisinau. Women’s Law Center was represented by Executive Director, Natalia Vilcu, who spoke to participants about gender violence, its causes and consequences in the context of Moldovan culture. In addition, two important studies made by WLC in the recent years - Men and Gender Equality and Costing of Domestic Violence - were presented to the audience.

Participants were curious to find out more about the scale of this phenomenon in Moldova, Government response and types of support provided to victims by NGOs.



The event was organised by the International Development Ethics Association with the support of several development partners. WLC has been recently included in the membership list of the Association and has access to information resources and latest research in this field.



## HOW DO WE PREVENT AND REDUCE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE PLACE OF WORK AND STUDIES?

Center 'Partnership for Development' and Women's Law Center launched on 29 May this year, at a press conference, the Information Note: *Sexual harassment in Moldova between law and reality*.

The analysis reveals that one in five women is subjected to subtle forms of sexual harassment at work, that serious forms of sexual harassment are perpetuated by bosses, colleagues and teachers, and only 15% of the victims have reported this.

During the conference WLC lawyer, Turcan Arina also spoke about the confusing regulations of the Moldovan law regarding the protection mechanism for victims of sexual harassment.

The lawyer claims that 'we have an ineffective mechanism for checking and sanctioning an employer who does not comply with the obligation to prevent sexual harassment at work. Unfortunately, there is no typology of sexual harassment, and the current legislation does not explicitly oblige educational institutions of all levels to adopt internal procedures against sexual harassment. The legal framework regulating this phenomenon has not changed significantly during the past decade, unlike the international practice'.

The analysis ended with a series of recommendations:

- review the existing laws and regulations in order to establish the responsible persons and delimit clearly the duties of the institutions in charge of preventing, investigating and combating sexual harassment
- include sexual harassment prevention, intervention and rehabilitation measures in national public policies
- broaden the mandate of the Council on the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Ensuring Equality
- input data disaggregated by gender and other relevant criteria in the databases of authorities mandated by law to keep records of sexual harassment cases
- include specific topics about all types of harassment, including sexual harassment, in the curriculum of prosecuting officers, judges and prosecutors
- reduce the incidence of sexual harassment by ensuring gender balance in leadership positions
- include, as a matter of strict necessity, provisions that directly reduce the manifestation of harassment at work in the collective employment agreements
- add in the Education Code provisions that will oblige educational institutions to adopt and implement internal procedures for prohibiting discrimination by any criterion and sexual harassment in the educational system
- empower the Ethics Council to handle sexual harassment cases
- empower the Student Senate to notify cases of sexual harassment, increasing thus the reporting level of harassment in the higher education system.



## THE RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS DISCUSSED AT THE REPUBLICAN SYMPOSIUM OF THE MOLDOVAN FORENSIC SERVICE

The Republican Symposium of the Moldovan Forensic Service was held on 30 May under the main title of *'Violence against women and child: best practice and the role of forensic medicine in solving the systemic challenges'*.

Participants in the event presented reports illustrating domestic violence from different perspectives: legal, social, medical. WLC lawyer, Turcan Arina, presented the best practices and the existing difficulties, and highlighted how important it is that forensic doctors make the forensic investigations without hiding any details and free of any prejudice. 'Forensic investigation in a case of domestic violence is a key instrument that determines the classification of the criminal case and the sentence to be applied by the judge', explained the lawyer.

It is also important to note that in 2017 the Women's Law Centre, in partnership with Forensic Medical Examination Centre organised trainings for forensic specialists on the efficient response of health system professionals to domestic violence. Thus, 63 forensic examiners analysed real-life cases to understand better their role in preventing and combating domestic violence.

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.





## WOMEN'S LAW CENTER PARTICIPATED IN THE 2018 NGO FAIR

Over 40 non-governmental organisations across the country participated this year in the Civil Society Fair. The organisations promoted their achievements, engaged visitors in interactive activities and urged them to join them in promoting their cause through volunteering.

The fair visitors participated in workshops and master classes, exhibitions of handicrafts made by people with special needs. The Women's Law Center Tent was visited by many nice people, who participated in a quiz-quest on domestic vio-

lence and gender stereotypes. They were rewarded with prizes with WLC logo and lots of good mood. We were glad that visitors were able to identify the forms and signs of domestic violence, knew who to ask for help, and would not tolerate such actions against them or against people close to them.

'It is for the first time when I take part in a contest. I am glad that you are active and help women who are in a deadlock. I used to be a victim of domestic violence, as well. I know what it means to get help at the right time', a visitor confided to us when holding the quiz question in her hand.

We were glad to see curious and courageous people answering the questions prepared by the WLC team. From university professors to adolescents, each one had a chance to learn more about domestic violence. Information materials, studies and reviews made by WLC over the years were distributed. If some were surprised to find out the forms of domestic violence, then others were prepared to debunk stereotypes in this area and explain why we are so tolerant of this phenomenon.

The NGO Fair was organized with the support of USAID under the Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society, implemented by FHI 360.





## NEW PROGRAMS OF READING AND ART THERAPY FOR WOMEN IN THE RUSCA PENITENTIARY



In the first half of 2018, Women's Law Center continued to implement the project for women in the Rusca Penitentiary. In addition to the usual legal and psychological counselling sessions, the WLC team started two new activities aimed at restoring the emotional balance of the detainees and at reinforcing their ability to understand and express emotions.

The reading and art therapy programs are carried out weekly in restricted circles, with a limited number of people. Women discuss about their dreams, disappointments, fears, pain and the importance of learning how to forgive own mistakes. Though simple at the first glance, the feeling of guilt becomes extremely difficult to handle when it invades your soul. With the help of the artistic materials prepared by psychologists Victoria Captari and Cristina Balan, the ladies took turns to express their emotions and overwhelming experiences, encouraged each other and found flashes of hope in each of the shared life experiences. This makes them more open to communication, to know each other better, to see the needs of the others, and to understand that everyone has memories, dreams, regrets and stories waiting to become alive.

So far, four art therapy sessions have been held, attended by 13 women and 4 reading therapy sessions, attended by 27 women.

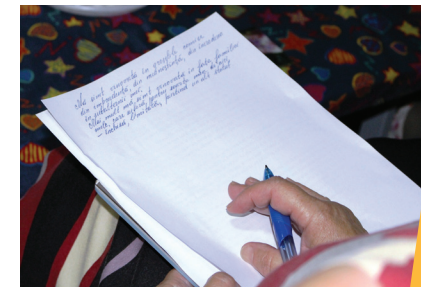
In 2018, WLC continues the individual counselling program. Thus, more than 150 detainees from the Rusca Penitentiary had the chance to discuss individually with the WLC lawyer to find an answer and solutions to their problems. They addressed with the lawyer issues like domestic violence, child custody, divorce, preparation for case representation in the court, preparation of the release file, preparation of the divorce file, etc.

The limited possibility to communicate with their children is a major problem for detained women. Most of the time, either ex-spouses, relatives or other family members do not ensure the children's right to visit their mother. In the first six months of the year, with the support of WLC lawyer:

- 4 women were released on parole
- 4 women were referred by the WLC lawyer for free state legal aid
- 4 children visited their mothers in prison
- 18 detained women received identity papers

WLC psychologists offered counselling to 18 women in Rusca Penitentiary. This support helped women overcome multiple traumas, disappointments and prolonged states of sadness or pain. Women began to rethink their past, daring to make plans for the future.

The activities carried out in the Rusca Penitentiary are part of 'Enhancing access to justice, legal aid and psychological support to women in detention' Project, implemented in cooperation with the Department of Penitentiary Institutions and with the support of the Swedish Embassy in Moldova.



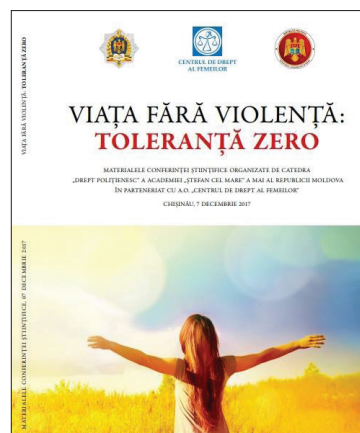


The Women's Law Center team was the host of Tajikistan delegation, which was on a working visit to the Republic of Moldova on 23-27 April. During the meeting, the 12 representatives of the President's Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan, and other Government institutions had the chance to learn more about the WLC work in protecting domestic violence victims, the WLC efforts aimed at aligning the legislative and regulatory framework to international standards and at fostering multidisciplinary cooperation between stakeholders in charge of preventing and combating domestic violence. The Tajik delegation was interested to take over the good practice and response patterns, and WLC remains open to cooperation helping reduce gender-based violence.

Colleagues from National Coalition 'Life without Domestic Violence!' - Stimul Center from Ocnita and Vesta Association from Gagauzia - made an exchange-of-experience and study visit to the Women's Law Center. We discussed how the WLC Specialized Support Service for Domestic Violence Victims provides legal, psycholo-



gical and social assistance to beneficiaries, as well as about violence prevention activities and the importance of working with the police.



A group of BA and MA students from 'Police Law' Chair of 'Stefan cel Mare' Academy conducted a series of research and analysis on domestic violence and presented them at a scientific conference. This event took place last year, under the '16 Days of Activism against Gender based Violence' Campaign. To encourage the work of young researchers, the Women's

Law Center and the campaign organisation committee decided to publish the works in the form of a compilation 'Life Free of Violence: Zero Tolerance.' This year, the papers were printed and can be found in the academy's library and on the WLC website.



Women's Law Center participated in the workshop organized by UN Women Moldova, as an implementing partner. In the coming years we will implement a project to further strengthen the capacities of law enforcement specialists to properly apply international standards in preventing violence against women and to develop the report on the compatibility of Moldovan legislation with the Istanbul Convention.

Executive Director of Women's Law Center participated in the regional workshop for NGOs on the implementation of the European Court of Human Rights judgments. The training took place at the European Youth Center in Strasbourg on 21-22 June and aimed at strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations



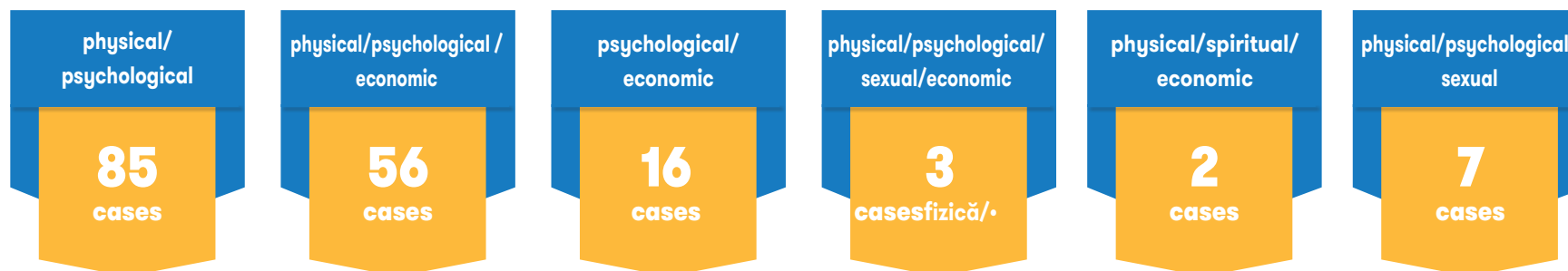
to oversee the implementation of the ECtHR judgments by the Committee of Ministers. There is little information available on judgement enforcement and how civil society organisations can act with maximum efficiency. This human rights defence mechanism is currently used to a very limited extent. The total number of files submitted by NGOs is constantly decreasing, around 70-90 each year. On the other hand, over 800 Government action plans and reports are submitted annually to the Committee of Ministers. There is, hence, not enough non-governmental analyses and outlook to ensure a balanced assessment of the situation. The workshop participants addressed a number of topics including ECtHR judgments enforcement, the role of NGOs in this process, best practices of preparing comments and strategies to support Rule 9.2, and strategies and tactics of advocacy used both in Strasbourg and at national level.

The workshop combined presentations by experts, exchange of knowledge and experiences between participants and group exercises.



# WLC ACTIVITY IN FIGURES. FIRST QUARTER OF 2018

In the first six months of 2018, the Women's Law Centre provided support to 223 victims of domestic violence. In 207 cases, women were victims of psychological violence, 158 suffered from physical violence, 88 reported economic violence. Sexual violence from life partners was noted in 14 cases, and spiritual violence was identified in 4 cases. Most of the times domestic violence had a complex form, so the following was recorded:



## ✓ Type of provided services:

**Primary legal aid:** Victims received primary legal aid in 145 cases, such as drafting applications and complaints addressed to law enforcement bodies or appealing against decisions of the official examiner. 48 protection orders were issued.

**Qualified legal aid:** Lawyers were appointed to represent victims' interests in 31 cases. 12 criminal cases, 3 administrative offence cases, 16 civil cases were registered, such as applications for divorce, establishing the domicile of minors, collection of alimony, forced hospitalisation.

**Psychological support:** A total of 68 victims received individual psychological support, including long-term psychological support in 9 cases. 29 psychological evaluation reports were issued.

**Social assistance:** 59 victims were provided social assistance - social counselling and vocational guidance. In 6 cases the victim was placed in a placement center.

## ✓ Beneficiaries' social profile:

**Area of residence:** 175 victims were from urban area and 48 - from rural area. Most of them had their domicile in Chisinau municipality. People from other districts also asked for help, specifically from: Anenii Noi, Calarasi, Cantemir, Cimislia, Drochia, Edinet, Falesti, Hincesti, Orhei, Soroca, Stefan-Voda, Ungheni, Tiraspol, Vulcanesti.

**Age:** Most domestic violence victims were 25-34 years old (28%), followed by +65 year old (22%) and 34-44 years old beneficiaries (20%).

**Education:** 176 victims had secondary education (including incomplete secondary or specialised secondary), while 47 - had higher education.

**Occupational status:** 133 women were unemployed or had their work suspended due to the childcare leave. At the same time, 90 employed victims were registered. 171 were mothers taking care of their minor children.

**Victim's relationship with the perpetrator:** In 115 cases the victim had the status of (former) domestic partner/wife. Violence among relatives was found in 7 cases where the victim had the status of parent (mother/father), in 7 cases where the victim had the status of daughter/son, and in 3 cases where the victim had the status of sister. Violence among in-laws: 1 case where the victim had the status of a daughter-in-law, 1 case where the victim had the status of a mother-in-law.

The victims contacted the WLC at the advice of police officers, social workers, lawyers, psychologists, maternity centres staff, other organizations working in the field, former WLC beneficiaries, or by email.

A total of 1602 domestic violence victims  
have been assisted since 2012.

# THE IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT THROUGH THE EYES OF WOMEN BENEFICIARIES

Thanks to the economic empowerment project implemented with the financial support of the International Women's Club, the beneficiaries of the Women's Law Centre had the opportunity to see their dreams come true and walk confidently towards their future. For one year we were there for nine women who wanted to rewrite their own history by investing in their education and personal development, who had the courage to leave their comfort zone and to overcome the challenges ahead of them. Each case has an impressive and admirable life story behind it. To present you the emotions, worries and hopes of these women, we documented in pictures the implementation of the entire project. The camera captured their own world, a world that is different – a world dominated by courage and the desire for change. We invite you to see how our beneficiaries went through this once-in-a-lifetime experience and listen to the messages they send to those who supported them in difficult times.

**VIORICA SPINU** – graduated from the College of Medicine a few years ago. She wanted very much to work in the field of medicine, but the circumstances forced her to reset her priorities. When she was proposed to attend the courses of therapeutic and paediatric massage, it did not take her too long to decide. 'The courses of therapeutic massage that I attend represent a good opportunity for me to resume my professional activity or to start something on my own. I received in April the graduation certificate for the first level, which I completed successfully. I have two children who are 2 and 4 years old, respectively. Unfortunately, my daughter has dysplasia, and these courses will help me with her rehabilitation and of course, with earning an income to support my family. I am very grateful to this project. Thank you for helping and supporting me.'



**ANA LUNGU** – has a passion for handmade things. She likes to create, combine colours, give free rein to imagination, and overcome her own limits. This is what she did under our project. Guided by a mentor, Ana learned to create some of the most complicated works – from glass painting to decorating

glasses, brooches and greeting cards. 'It was difficult at first, but I had the enthusiasm and the desire to do something new. This was something unusual for my hands. The workshops helped me gain more experience and be confident that I can make more complicated artworks.' Last year, Ana attended the Winter Charity Bazaar, where she showcased her bracelets. She works now on a new series of artworks she will exhibit at the next bazaar in December.



**ANA SCAFARI** – her story resembles that of hundreds of Moldovan women, who, for the sake of their children, for shame of what others might say or for fear of their partner, endure domestic violence for years. She had endured it for 12 years. During this period she gave birth to three children. 'It has been a year since I live alone. My life is different. With the three wonderful





children I have, we laugh, joke, play, we are not afraid of anyone.’ She was helped to gradually develop a small business of poultry breeding under the economic empowerment program. Initially, Ana felt insecure. She was not afraid of difficulties, but she was afraid she would not be able to handle it, and that the received help would be wasted. However, the desire to do something concrete and useful motivated her to accept to get involved in the project. People from the village know already where to buy fresh eggs, and for Ana this is an extra income she can support her family with.



**VICTORIA DANILA** – is a young entrepreneur who is fond of designing clothes for preterm newborns. In 2017, she participated for the first time in the Winter Charity Bazaar, organised by the International Women’s Club of Moldova, where she could sell her garments, but also establish relations with potential customers. Victoria received a grant under the project and she used it to purchase a sewing machine and a tailor’s dummy. She sewed small-size dresses using this machine. Gradually she diversified the collection of clothes for children up to 2 years old. I would like to thank the financiers from the bottom of my heart for their support, for the initiative to support women who have difficult times and motivate them to develop; for making them understand that they are not alone, that they can overcome any obstacle.’

**DIANA RUSU** – has been a beneficiary of WLC since 2015. She is a university lecturer. Under the project, she began to study English at the beginner level. When she first stepped into the classroom of Oratorica school, she was all excited and willing to learn new things. ‘I think that women have to study a lot and to learn foreign languages in particular. It



is good to have higher education, to be independent, to be able to make a living, without having to depend on their husband or parents. Education helps you express your opinion, have a voice, not tolerate violence.’

**CRISTINA MOTRICALA** – is a 20 year-old young woman who wants to make a career in fashion design. She is a positive, creative person and she is always ready for adventure. Under the project, Cristina got the chance to enjoy a better training. This year, she was proud to wear the graduation gown, and during the ceremony at the end of the year, her first garments were showcased to the public. ‘At the college I learned what teamwork is, how to help each other and how to live the student life to the fullest. I learned how to deal with difficulties. I gained new experiences. I remember those beautiful emotions I experienced when I designed my first ‘haute couture’ garment.



**MARIA SOCOLNICOV** is from Hincesti district and she is raising three children on her own, two daughters who are 9 and 8 years old respectively and a son who’s only 1 year and 9 months old. She needed a place to rent when she asked the help of WLC. The house of her parents was in such a bad condition that the walls could collapse at any time, and the winter was coming. The project found resources to pay the rent of a small house in the district for a period of six months and to buy wood for the cold period of the year. She started to work as a kindergarten nanny. Maria’s dream is to be able to provide her children with adequate living conditions and enjoy a happy life with them. A first step has already been taken. She managed to obtain the documents confirming she was the heiress to the parental home and she will use this opportunity.

**LIUBA ISTRATI** – repaired her house after the fire caused by her violent cohabiting partner. The conflict began right before Easter. ‘On that day we were working in the garden. He got drunk and started to hit me. He broke me a rib. I went to the police barefoot as I was. When she got home, the fire was already extinguished. The neighbours came to help. They took out in the yard everything they could: clothes, furniture. But most of the stuff and four rooms were destroyed by the flames. The entire life’s work turned to ashes in a matter of minutes. The aggressor recognised his deed and was immediately arrested. She received material support under the project and she used it to buy materials to refurbish those four rooms that were destroyed by the fire.



## 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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### PARTNERS:

