

STOP VIOLENCE

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WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

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ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME FOR SURVIVERS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Women's Law Center, in partnership with the National Platform of Women from Moldova, are implementing an economic empowerment programme aimed at survivors of domestic violence. The activities include both training sessions for professionals in the field and a range of career counselling and professional development workshops, which will support beneficiaries with re-employment. The activities are intended for 5 pilot districts – Soroca, Bălți, Hîncești, Telenești and Ștefan Vodă and will help professionals strengthen their knowledge in order to ensure a proactive response in the process of economic empowerment of survivors. The final objective is to contribute to the development of 5 economic empowerment programmes, adapted to the peculiarities of each district.

The first meetings started with practical exercises regarding the intervention of professionals both in the crisis and in the post-crisis stages. The need to develop a roadmap of the beneficiary was identified, from accessing essential services until the steps she can take to become economically independent (retraining courses, professional development courses, guidance regarding employment).

The key word in this complex process is the COLLABORATION between state institutions and prioritising the needs of beneficiaries.

The survivors of domestic violence who take part in the personal development workshops have the opportunity, through this programme, to be part of a community of women who desire to improve their skills on efficient communication, emotion and behaviour management during conflict situations, to turn mistakes into learning opportunities. Besides



the fact that women are involved in self-knowledge and self-esteem strengthening exercises, girls and women carried out study visits to the regional employment offices, vocational schools and potential employers from the locality they reside in.

The activities are part of the Economic Empowerment of Women Survivors of Gender-Based Violence programme, implemented by Women's Law Centre and the National Platform of Women from Moldova, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, with assistance from UN Women and the financial support of Sweden.



STANDING TOGETHER WITH REFUGEES – INVOLVED CITIZENS. COHESIVE COMMUNITIES.

Since May 2022, refugees, refugee host families, representatives of local and regional public authorities, institutions and organisations involved in the response to the refugee crisis benefit from the support and counselling of the mobile multidisciplinary teams created by Women's Law Center, with the support of OXFAM. Ten mobile teams made up of three specialists each (legal expert, social worker and psychologist) will reach 30 communities in 20 Moldovan districts to offer specialised support and assistance to Ukrainian refugees.



'Involved citizens. Cohesive communities.' is a new project implemented by Women's Law Center, with the support of Oxfam, aimed at identifying and contributing to meeting the needs of Moldovan communities hosting Ukrainian refugees.

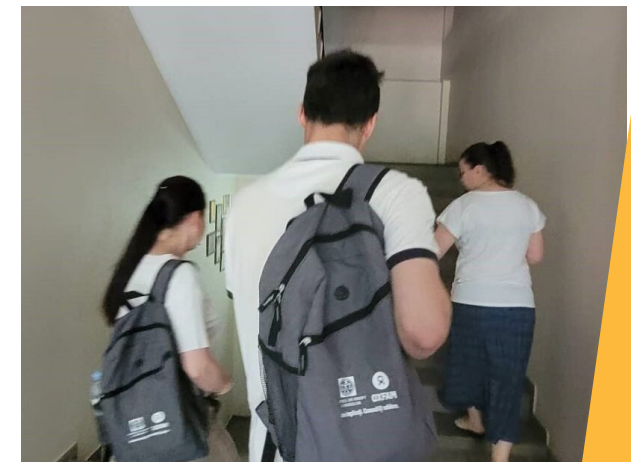
In the first stage, 10 mobile teams received training, while the second stage involved field activity.

Priority issues identified during the discussions with refugees and host families:

- Emotional trauma related to the war and the separation from family members
- Health issues, limited access to healthcare services and medicines
- Lack of accommodation, of the possibility to rent a place and maintain it
- Difficulties in obtaining the documents related to the refugee status
- Not having a job and a stable income
- Isolation and lack of communication

In June 2022 we have the following results:

- **9 mobile** teams set up and trained
- **27 local** experts involved
- **78 visits** to beneficiaries
- **101 localities** involved
- **471 refugees** received assistance





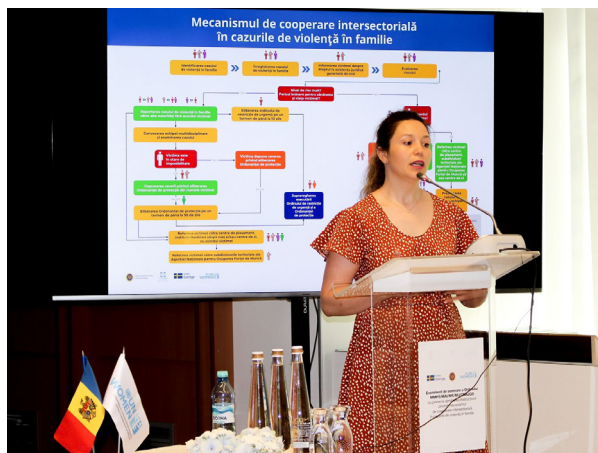
The project 'Involved Citizens. Cohesive Communities.' is implemented by Women's Law Center, with the support of Oxfam, to prevent and respond to cases involving gender-based violence in the context of the refugee crisis in the period April 2022-April 2023.

We will offer:

- **Legal**, social and psychological support for refugees and the host population
- **Individual** financial support to solve urgent problems of the refugees
- **Response** initiatives for common needs in 20 localities hosting refugees
- **Referrals** to the support system for difficult cases
- **Dissemination of information, prevention of gender-based violence** and protection for marginalised persons



SIGNING OF THE GUIDELINES ON THE INTERSECTORAL COOPERATION MECHANISM REGARDING CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



An event that is extremely important for the whole community working in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence took place in June 2022.

The line ministries, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the National Legal Aid Council signed an order on the approval of the Guidelines on the intersectoral cooperation mechanism regarding cases of domestic violence.

This means that all actors that have attributions in this field will cooperate to ensure the protection, safety and the realization of the rights of

victims of domestic violence and to enhance the mechanism for monitoring domestic violence perpetrators, including by reducing their aggressive behaviour. The mechanism is applicable for adults.

'I would like to express my gratitude for reaching this stage together. The guidelines signed today are the result of the involvement of the professionals in this field, of the community that offers services, of development partners and of the survivors of domestic violence. We were able to develop this document due to the engagement

of women who overcame domestic violence, by taking into account their experiences in interacting with different institutions and services.' - Mariana Buruiană, Executive Manager, WLC.

Women's Law Center assisted the authorities in developing the intersectoral mechanism and reaffirms its commitment to continue supporting the implementation of this tool.

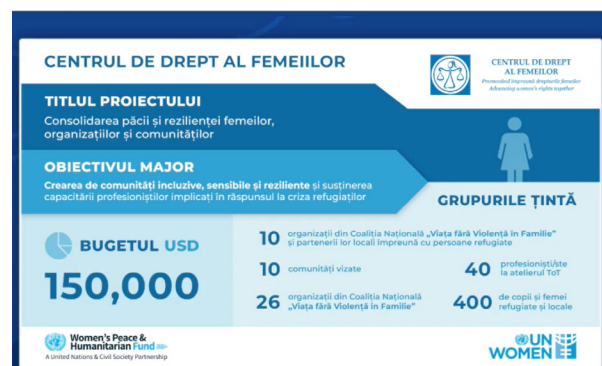
The event was organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, in partnership with UN Women and WLC, and with the financial support of the Government of Sweden.



WOMEN'S PEACE AND HUMANITARIAN FUND SUPPORTS MOLDOVAN COMMUNITIES



Since the beginning of the refugee crisis, women's organisations used all their internal resources to help women and children who are Ukrainian refugees. However, the need to integrate refugee women who are planning to settle on a medium, long or unlimited term in the communities on the territory of the Republic of Moldova is extremely important.



This is why a partnership agreement was signed with *Fondul Femeilor pentru Pace și Asistență Umanitară* that will implement the project ‘Peacebuilding through the resilience of women, organisations and communities’. Mariana Buruiană, manager of WLC, presented the mission of the project and encouraged civil society organisations to apply for the grants available for communities.

‘Though this project, we will reach 10 communities. Together we will identify the needs of the local population and will create opportunities for those hosting refugees, but also for refugee women and their children’.

During the project, local professionals will take part in a training on managing crises and communication during crises, on strengthening communities that are sensitive to people’s



needs and community mobilisation, on integration and intercultural programmes for children, women and communities. This training will offer additional knowledge to local professionals and will encourage them to adopt various strategies in their work.

Estimated results

- **10 grants** offered to organisations
- **10 local** communities targeted
- **400 refugee** women and their children will be integrated in communities
- **40 professionals** will take part in trainings

The project will be implemented until December 2022. The project ‘Peacebuilding through the resilience of women, organisations and communities’ is implemented by Women’s Law Center, in partnership with the National Coalition ‘Life Without Violence’, with the support of UN Women and financed by Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund..

A COMMITTEE WHICH WILL ANALYSE FEMICIDE CASES WAS SET UP

Annually, in Moldova, 40 women die as a result of the violence they are subjected to. In order to prevent such cases, the *Commission in charge of monitoring and analysing the cases of domestic violence resulting in victims' death or severe harm to bodily integrity* will be functioning under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The first meeting of the Commission was held in April and during it the analysis criteria, terms and the information that needs to be analysed during the next meeting were determined.



The need to set up this commission was also one of the recommendations included in the first National Analytical Study on Femicide in Moldova developed by WLC, with the financial support of Sweden.

Relevant data from the study

The authors of the study analysed 50 femicide cases that took place between 2016-2019. It was found that femicide cases were committed in 28

districts, including in municipalities. In most cases, the femicide is committed in the victim's home.

- The oldest victim of femicide is a 94-year-old woman. Her son strangled her with a scarf because she refused to give the perpetrator money and didn't cook for him.
- The little girl killed for crying was 6 months old. Her father, who was drunk, got angry and punched her several times. The child died before the ambulance arrived. The little girl is the youngest victim of femicide.
- In one in five femicide cases, besides physical violence, psychological and economic violence were also present.

The analytical study on femicide shows that the age of the perpetrators is between 35-64 years. More than half of the perpetrators consume alcohol, which is a trigger in femicide cases. In only 2 out of the 50 cases protection orders were applied. Although the men were convicted for domestic violence, in none of the 50 cases were they forced to take part in probation programmes for reducing violent behaviour.

What Can We Do?

In order to prevent femicides in Moldova, the authors of the National Analytical Study on Femicide drafted a range of proposals:



- improve the quality of services dedicated to victims of domestic violence
- monitor perpetrators by using bracelets
- proactive involvement of sector police officers and criminal prosecution officers in taking the necessary measures for the protection of the victim
- perpetrators who consume alcohol should be forced to take part in a treatment programme
- harsher punishments for domestic violence perpetrators
- train members of multidisciplinary teams
- dissemination among professionals of information materials which will ensure the referral of victims to specialised services
- ensure the functionality of the Commission in charge of monitoring and analysing the cases of domestic violence resulting in victims' death or severe harm to bodily integrity.
- revise internal intervention guidelines by adding femicide risk assessment tools
- revise the regulatory framework to increase punishments for perpetrators

NEW CASES HEARD AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS



■ The European Court of Human Rights is currently hearing three new cases on the inaction of the Government in cases of domestic violence and gender-based violence. The victims are beneficiaries of WLC and are represented at the Court by the lawyer Violeta Andriuța. The Government will present before the ECHR the State's position on the following three cases:

- ✓ Vieru V. vs Moldova
- ✓ D.R. and A.C. vs Moldova
- ✓ Covganeț vs Moldova



The articles invoked by the applicants are related to:

- lack of action shown by authorities in examining the dozens of complaints on domestic violence
- ineffective investigation of domestic violence complaints and failure to convict perpetrators
- gender-based discrimination in examining domestic violence complaints.

For more details, access the link – <https://bit.ly/38D1oWo>

■ The European Implementation Network has launched the report on the monitoring of ECHR decision implementation for gender-based violence cases, which also includes the experience of the Republic of Moldova. Violeta Andriuța, a lawyer at the Women's Law Centre, was involved in monitoring the group of cases C.M. and T.M. against Moldova.

The purpose of the communications to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe was to offer alternative information on the implementation of the general measures in the group of cases C.M. and T.M. v. Republic of Moldova. The group of cases T.M. and C.M. v. Moldova is related to the fact that the positive obligations under articles 3, 8 and 14 were not respected and describes the way authorities managed the applicants' complaints on domestic



violence – <https://bit.ly/3LPjmTC>

WLC will continue its involvement in monitoring the implementation of ECHR decisions because we perfectly understand that the ratification of the Istanbul Convention is a new beginning that requires a lot of time and effort to ensure that each woman and child affected by domestic violence benefits from proper protection from the authorities.

NEW BENEFICIARIES OF THE IMPULS SMALL GRANT PROGRAM

A new round of implementation of the Impuls projects was launched this year. The new grant beneficiaries are active in the prevention of and intervention in domestic violence cases and plan to carry out a series of activities with the purpose of promoting zero tolerance towards this phenomenon.



■ **Maria Muruianu** is the trainer who will contribute to the implementation of the project 'Clinicians fighting gender-based violence'. The project is aimed at the students from the Law Faculty of the Moldova State University. They will get acquainted with this phenomenon from different perspectives: notions, types, examination and prevention procedures and will take part in discussions, analyses and debates. The trainers will present issues related to gender-based violence at the national

and international level, inclusively notorious cases which were broadly presented in the international media. A separate module is dedicated to the provisions of international acts and to simulating court proceedings, both for civil cases, with the issuance of a protection order, and for criminal cases.



■ **Ina Grădinaru**, vdeputy manager of the Artemida NGO from Drochia is coordinating

the prevention, assistance and counselling programmes for the victims of domestic violence. As part of the IMPULS program, she will implement the project 'Accessible Specialised Services for Women and Girls Affected by Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence' in the northern part of the Republic of Moldova. This project will contribute to supporting the community of survivors of gender-based violence and domestic violence through the participation of women and girls in support groups organised in the Drochia district. The purpose of the project is to improve women's and girls' access to essential, safe and appropriate specialised services in order to end gender-based violence and domestic violence.

■ **Inna Chiriliuc** is a trainer who will take part in the implementation of the project 'Challenges and Issues in the Work of Criminal Prosecution Officers in Investigating Cases of Gender-Based Violence'. Approximately 200 criminal prosecution officers will benefit from training in the field of violence against women and



domestic violence. The importance of the trainings is determined by the prevalence of this phenomenon in the contemporary society, by the new forms it develops, as well as by the need to respond to any attempt to violate a person's rights and guarantees based on gender. The aim of this project is to identify solutions for different problematic situations that the representatives of criminal prosecution authorities are faced with when investigating cases of domestic violence and sexual violence, to eliminate incorrect practices and to understand the legal intervention mechanism in order to respect the overriding principle of ensuring the protection of the victim

TRAININGS FOR PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD

■ Police subofficers from different localities in the Republic of Moldova were involved in interactive activities, discussions and debates on cases from the day-to-day work in order to strengthen knowledge on and better understand domestic violence, ensure effective protection for victims, but also prevent different types of domestic violence. The representatives of law enforcement authorities found out from the trainers:

- how to ensure a proactive response in preventing domestic violence
- how to identify and combat violence
- what types of services the victim needs and what the referral process is
- how to issue an Emergency Restraining Order
- what are the strategies applied when investigating the offence and who the actors responsible for offering a coordinated response to the victims of domestic violence are.

The training is organised by WLC, in partnership with the Integrated Law Enforcement Training Centre.

The project is funded through the Programme for Combating Domestic Violence, supported by the Oak Foundation funds. The programme is implemented in Moldova through a partnership with the Association for Community Relations from Romania.



Approximately 90 professionals, forensic pathologists and mid-level medical staff from across the country, working for the Center of Forensic Medicine (CFM), took part in the training workshop: *'Presentation of national and international good practices in identifying and documenting domestic violence cases'*. The workshop aims to strengthen the intervention abilities and the quality of the services offered by specialised doctors to victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Mariana Buruiana, Executive Director at Women's Law Centre – 'The activity we conduct at WLC makes us believe every day that prompt and efficient response of professionals often determines the faith of cases of domestic violence. Each of you have participated in consultations and helped to create a response algorithm. Thank you for your effort and for accepting the invitation to participate in this training, to increase your knowledge and improve the quality of response in cases of domestic violence.'

Veronica Cangea, Project Coordinator, UNDP Moldova – 'The forensic documentation is unqu-

estionably important when it comes to domestic violence cases. Over the years, various efforts were made to improve and adjust the response instruments of professionals in such cases. The obtained results, including this workshop, were possible due to the cooperation between institutions and organisations. That is why we hope participants will make the most of this training.' FMC was and still is an important partner in terms of adjusting the response regulatory framework, its expertise and the training of professionals in the field. 'A modern society cannot exist without a mechanism for preventing the phenomenon of domestic violence. I urge my colleagues to use this opportunity, to be curious and willing to learn, including from the experience of other countries, about how to improve the quality of our services', stated Vasile Sarpe, FMC Director.

Trainers – **Andrei Padure, Head of Department of Forensic Medicine of SUMP 'Nicolae Testemitanu'** and **Kurt Trübner, Research Associate at the Institute of Forensic Medicine, University Hospital Essen from Germany**, le-au oferit participanților informații tehnice și le-au prezen-



provided to participants technical information and presented hypothetical scenarios of cases of domestic violence. Also, they analysed potential response strategies in cases of violence, followed by focus group discussions.

'The message we want the colleagues from Moldova to remember is that most mistakes are made when the case is not documented accurately. That is why interdisciplinary cooperation is important. When you are not sure about a diagnosis, it is good to consult other specialists in order to have a full picture. We are the lawyers of vulnerable people, of those who cannot defend themselves, who cannot talk yet and say what happened to them', mentioned **Kurt Trübner, trainer from Germany**.

The workshop was part of a series of activities 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.

Florina Șalin,
asistentă medicală
CML, Orhei




Până acum, la training-uri participau mai mult medici experți. De când participăm și noi, pot spune că suntem mai implicate. Suntem atente la ce i-a scăpat medicului. Poate nu a reușit să-i dea o broșură, un număr de telefon. Întrebăm dacă beneficiara are contactele polițistului, asistentei sociale, medicului specialist, a unui centru specializat. Avem grijă ca victima să fie informată. În Orhei, din 10 adresări pe zi, 8 sunt cazuri de violență în familie.

Nicolae Rusu,
șeful secției
medico-legale, Soroca



Este un training util pentru că putem vedea și practica altor țări. Noi ca specialiști avem obligația de a documenta cazul de violență în familie cât mai bine, pentru a ajuta justiția să pedepsească corespunzător agresorul. Orice abuz nepedepsit nu trece de la sine, ci se agravează și capătă forme severe. Aș vrea să îndemn colegii să fie cât mai receptivi, atenți la documentarea cazurilor, pentru că fiecare detaliu poate fi o probă importantă la dosar.

Kurt Trübner,
formator din Germania



„Mesajul pe care vreau să-l transmit colegilor din Moldova este că cele mai multe greșeli se fac atunci când cazul nu este documentat cu acuratețe. De aceea este importantă cooperarea interdisciplinară. Când nu ești sigur de un anumit diagnostic, este bine să consulți și alți specialiști, pentru a avea un tablou complet. Noi suntem avocații persoanelor care sunt într-o poziție vulnerabilă, care nu se pot apăra sau care nu pot încă vorbi și spune ce s-a întâmplat”



■ The representatives from the Criuleni, Cimislia, Soroca and Comrat region participated in the training dedicated to the coordinated response of professionals to domestic violence.

Forensic doctors, prosecutors, judges, criminal investigation officers, sector police officers, lawyers providing state-guaranteed legal aid and probation officers helped to carry out the training in a cooperative, productive atmosphere, with focus on good practices, experience exchange and coordinated efforts.

Trainers managed to engage the participants in role plays and analyses of domestic violence cases, so that to bring to light the challenges the professionals from criminal justice system face. We speak about gender stereotypes, understanding of the phenomenon, the knowledge and application of the law, the protection and intervention mechanisms based on a coordinated response.

‘The activities organised by the Women’s Law Centre help us to better understand the pheno-



menon of domestic violence. Following the discussions we have with the colleagues from the prosecution office and police, together with the experts in the field, we noticed that the documentation of cases of domestic violence is more reasoned and the protection of victims became a priority for law enforcement bodies’ – Alexandr Curtev, lawyer and participant in the training, from Cimislia.

‘At present, out of 15 thousand reports on cases of domestic violence, only 860 end with criminal prosecution, and the number of conviction sentences ruled by courts in relation to perpetrators is even smaller. Behind these statistics there are many days of work of our colleagues from the police, prosecution office and forensic medicine. The activities organised by the Women’s Law Centre help us to better understand the logistic problems in the system in order to avoid the procedural errors in the future and ensure a better protection of victims as well as to make the perpetrators accountable. We want to provide the results the society waits, which became more responsive to the phenomenon of domestic



violence.’ Andrei COLBAS, Vulcanesti Police Inspectorate.

The trainings were organised on the basis of findings and recommendations of the ‘Evaluation of the criminal justice system’s response to cases of domestic violence in Soroca, Criuleni, Cimislia and Comrat districts’ study, carried out by WLC under ‘Strengthening Efficiency and Access to Justice in Moldova’ Project implemented by UNDP Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.



RESULTS OF 'STRENGTHENING EFFICIENCY AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN MOLDOVA' PROJECT



In order to summarize two years of activity, the representatives of the criminal justice chain gathered to discuss the validation of a coordinated model to respond to domestic violence.

Most of the participants provided support to carry out the study 'Evaluation of the criminal justice system's response to cases of domestic violence in Soroca, Criuleni, Cimislia and Comrat districts'. Its results underpinned the mixed trainings carried out over the past two years, which in the end helped to crystallise a coordinated response mechanism.

The professionals engaged – judges, prosecutors, probation officers, lawyers, criminal prosecution officers, representatives of the Foren-

sic Medicine Center – spoke about the good practices, about the challenges of the system, tested a work mechanism based on cooperation, observation of the response from different regions, lessons learned and about how to replicate the appropriate solutions.

The algorithm that was discussed during the workshop will be adjusted according to the suggestions from the participants and will serve as benchmark in the activity of the representatives of criminal justice chain.

We are grateful to our development partners, UNDP Moldova and to the relevant authorities that were engaged in implementing the project and to Sweden for the provided financial support.



EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE AND GOOD PRACTICES IN THE AREA OF FUNDRAISING

WLC director, Mariana Buruiana, attended the edition XVIII of the National Fundraising Conference held in Bucuresti under the title – Fundraising from good to great.

This year edition was about professional development, workshops and a master class during which the participants found out about the latest trends in fundraising, about how to increase the efficiency in fundraising, how to built trust and choose methods or directions that fit to the organisation.

‘The world is constantly changing and our organisation needs to be trusted in order to do our job every day and in order to be able to adapt rapidly to unfavourable situations or changes. Protecting the dignity of our beneficiaries, authentic relationship and response to increasing needs of girls and women are essential to us. All these must be in balance with the organisational well-being that gives answers to questions such as: Why do you exist? What are you doing? What are the emotions you offer and receive? In



order to succeed in this aspect of fundraising, it is important to have a strategy based on the mission and vision of the organisation and a talented fundraising team engaged in the process. My message on behalf of Women's Law Centre is 'Together we can contribute to the common good' and mutual trust and support is vital to humanity. It doesn't matter who and how they give, what matters is that there are people who give. We cherish a lot our partnerships and people who help us to be better day by day in this humanitarian mission.' – Mariana Buruiana, Executive Director of WLC.

The edition XVIII of the National Fundraising Conference was organised by the Association for Community Relations from Romania with the support of FAN Courier Foundation and Lidl Romania.



NEWS IN BRIEF • NEWS IN BRIEF • NEWS IN BRIEF • NEWS IN BRIEF • NEWS IN BRIEF • NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Together with social workers from Costesti, Ialoveni district, we identified the needs and the possibility to help the refugees in the settlement. The preparations lasted several days. Procurements, packaging, distribution by age and sex so that at the end all the things reach the destination. We visited two centres from Costesti that host refugees from Ukraine. This time 155 packages with underwear for 76 women and 79 children (girls and boys) were disseminated.

Together with the colleagues from the National Coalition 'Life without domestic violence' we will reach other settlements where support is needed.

We are grateful to donors UN Women and Sweden for the responsiveness and engagement. Thanks to them we can respond promptly to primary needs of refugee women and their children.



■ During his official visit to the Republic of Moldova, the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, had a meeting with Elena Botezatu, Executive Director at 'La Strada' International Center and Mariana Buruiana, Executive Director of Women's Law Center.



They discussed about the need to raise the awareness regarding the phenomenon of sexual violence and its prevention in the context of a humanitarian

response, as well as the need to create the social cohesion and to integrate the refugees in local communities from Moldova.



More details about the visit and about the meeting – <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1117962>



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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