

STOP VIOLENCE

WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

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Community projects contributing to the integration of refugees in host communities

Twenty-two local initiatives funded and implemented through the 'Involved citizens. Cohesive communities.' project have brought together locals and refugees who are committed to creating a more welcoming community.

Local initiative groups supported by the local government identified the needs of the villagers and the refugees, jointly developed an action plan, and got started. In more than 10 districts, sports fields have been set up and equipped, creation spaces for children and youth and sports halls have been equipped, a bicycle parking lot has been set up, and checkers/chess tables have been bought.

Locals and refugees settled in districts such as Ștefan Vodă, Orhei, Drochia, Strășeni, Dondușeni, Ungheni, Ocnița, Soroca, Florești, Bălți, Anenii Noi and Cahul will be able to actively spend their leisure time and interact in a safe space.

Communities that received grants to implement local initiatives have been identified with the help of multidisciplinary mobile teams providing legal, psychological and social support since April 2022 as part of the 'Involved citizens. Cohesive communities.' project.

Thousands of refugee families received informational support on financial assistance for refugees and hosts, obtaining refugee status, obtaining identity documents, enrolling children in educational institutions, and making appointments with specialised doctors.



The project is implemented by Women's Law Centre, with the financial support of OXFAM provided in the context of the refugee crisis, during the period between April 2022 and April 2023.

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Libraries – a safe space for the community during the refugee crisis

Libraries in Moldova have been equipped with safe spaces for refugee and women and children and host communities. Children, teenagers and adults alike can take part in interactive activities, drawing, crochet and decorative art workshops as part of the 'Libraries bring change to the community during the refugee crisis' project.

■ **At the Alexandru Donici District Public Library in Orhei**, several local and refugee women learned how to paint on glass. It is also here that the refugees learn Romanian. The lessons are taught by volunteer Ala Lupu, a teacher with extensive teaching experience. Refugee women learned their first words in Romanian to be able to discuss everyday topics with the locals.

■ **At the Palanca Village Public Library, in Ștefan Vodă district** visitors had the opportunity to paint autumn, a season full of brightness, richness and colour. The young painters' work was presented at a painting exhibition in the library.

■ **The Grigore Vieru Children's Library in Cahul** was turned for a few days in a real Guguță's hat. There, young readers from the community, as well as from Ukraine, read from the book on



Guguță's memories and made a hat for everyone to fit into.

■ **The Mihai Eminescu District Public Library in Fălești** became a space of creativity for children from high schools in the city and their peer refugees from Ukraine. In the activities children express themselves through shapes and colours and do not need interpreters.

■ The women in the Passion club at the **Iulian Filip District Public Library in Drochia** are always looking for embroidery designs to inspire them. They

exchange experiences in joint working sessions where they meet for group meditations.

■ **The B.P. Hașdeu Municipal Library in Chișinău** invited young Chișinău residents and their peer refugees from Ukraine to a discussion and debate on overcoming limits, based on the book 'Jonathan Livingston Seagull' by Richard Bach. Participants in the discussions learned what a parable of individual transformation is and how personal fear can be overcome.

■ **The Dimitrie Cantemir District Public Library in Ungheni** organized the art therapy workshop – 'Family time'.



Most impressed by the results of their work were the children who competed in creating paper figurines.

■ **The Mihai Eminescu District Public Library in Fălești** has created the Smart Women's Club 'Literature on Heels'. It includes refugee women and women from the community. The women aim to promote reading by discussing books that have made an impression on them. Club meetings are held on Sundays and are open to all readers in the district.

Similar activities took place in all partner libraries of the project 'Libraries bring change to the community during the refugee crisis', implemented by WLC, together with the Association of Librarians of the Republic of Moldova (ALRM) and with the support of IRC.



Psychological support and legal information provided to refugee women in the community



Dozens of refugee and host community women received psychological counselling at the libraries providing support for women as part of the 'Libraries bring change to the community during the refugee crisis' project.

The participants of the group sessions shared the dramatic stories that happened to them since the beginning of the war in Ukraine and their experiences in the Republic of Moldova. They talked about the difficulties and stress they face together with their children, as well as their relationships with their hosts from different institutions where they receive help. In their turn, local women, impressed by the stories of the refugees, showed their willingness to intervene to help them.



Psychological support was provided in partnership with the Institute for Family and Social Initiatives. IFSI specialists created a safe framework for dialogue where the beneficiaries developed their skills to adapt and integrate into society. For more complex cases support for additional individual therapy was provided within specialised services aimed at those seeking psychological support.

'Some people have managed to gain a high level of resilience, have found a job and want to communicate with people in the same situation. There are also people who are struggling financially and emotionally. They need support to find internal resources to overcome the rough patches they are going through', said Natalia Toma, psychologist.

Dozens of refugee women and women from the local community were trained in public libraries on how to prevent and combat gender-based violence and human trafficking.

'The goal of these trainings is to talk to the participants about gender-based violence and human trafficking and how to protect themselves in such situations', said Daniela Josanu, WLC coordinator and one of the trainers.



The participants exchanged experiences and the lawyer Arina Țurcan-Donțu gave the refugee women practical advice for the situations described in the activities.

'Some women become victims not necessarily out of ignorance, but because they didn't have enough courage and allowed themselves to be humiliated little by little until they couldn't save themselves', said one of the refugee women.



Psychological support and legal information provided to refugee women in the community



Another component of the project 'Libraries bring change to the community during the refugee crisis' is to train librarians in several communities across the country on how to intervene in case of identification of victims of human trafficking among refugees.

In a training workshop, participants developed their skills, from recognising to reporting trafficking cases based on victim profiles and identi-

fiers. The librarians also discussed how to intervene in risk situations of refugee women.

The workshop trainer, lawyer Tatiana Catană, is specialised in assisting victims of trafficking for many years now. She spoke to participants about trafficking for forced labour, organ trafficking, sexual exploitation and child trafficking.

The librarians learned about the powers of the authorities respon-



sible for preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, as well as about the assistance and protection services available to victims of human trafficking.

The activities of the project 'Libraries bring change to the community during the refugee crisis', implemented by WLC in partnership with ALRM and with the support of IRC are carried out in 10 libraries in 8 districts of the country.



Results of the IMPULS Small Grant Program

Challenges and successes

Preventing and combating gender-based violence has reached another level. Under the IMPULS Small Grant Program, 12 agents of change were trained to identify problems, develop and implement activities in communities, for professionals and victims of gender-based violence.



The agents of change were supported by the Swedish Embassy in Chişinău through the Women's Law Centre in the period from 2020 to 2022. Earlier they received trainings as part of the Advanced International Training Programme 'Prevent and respond to gender-based violence – strengthening agents of change', organised for professionals from Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The Republic of Moldova has been participating in this programme since 2018, and graduates include prosecutors, police officers, medical examiners, representatives of central authorities and civil society.

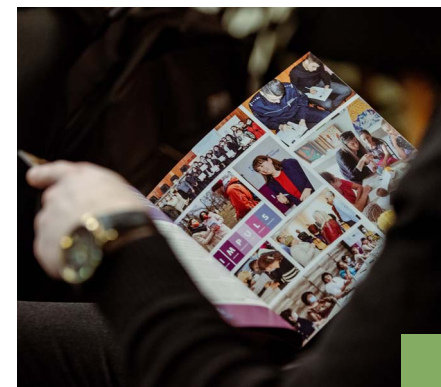
For three years, agents of change have organised several trainings and platforms for exchange of experience within 17 projects. Beneficiaries include police officers, psychologists, doctors, social workers, investigators, students, civil servants and victims of gender-based violence. In total there were over a thousand people from different communities across the country.

Mariana Buruiană, Executive Director of the WLC, said that gender-based violence is a consequence of inequality and a serious violation of women's fundamental rights.

'With the help of agents of change, through their attitudes, capacities and skills, we have given a boost to several

initiatives, processes and systems to ensure a dignified and safe present and future for girls and women. A future free from inequality and violence,' added the WLC director.

Katarina Fried, Ambassador of Sweden to the Republic of Moldova, praised the work of the agents of change for the new perspective they offer to their colleagues and to the communities they are part of. According to her, their knowledge and tools will be very important in the dialogue to make society safer for every member of it.



Results of the IMPULS Small Grant Program

Challenges and successes



'We need greater awareness, greater individual and collective responsibility to end violence. Our common idea is to empower as many people as possible to achieve amazing results, and agents of change through their ambition and determination can create a better world,' said Ambassador Katarina Fried.

Most of the projects carried out by the agents of change have focused on identifying the problems that cause gender-based violence and finding solutions to combat them. For three years, during IMPULS projects, dozens of psychologists, social workers, case managers and psychotherapists were trained to

identify and intervene in different cases of abuse.

Among the agents of change were several law enforcement officers. They addressed issues of training colleagues to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

In parallel to the trainings for specialists, a series of workshops, clubs and other activities for the final beneficiaries of the projects took place. Dozens of victims of gender-based violence discussed the effects of violence, ensuring economic independence and defence of women's rights and support for women subjected to violence of any kind.



SOCIAL HUB – the platform for involved young people!

This year's edition of the Social Hub Youth Platform has also ended. Together we celebrated their accomplishments, shared lessons learned and rejoiced for each project that was successfully completed.



For some young people, the activities carried out under the Social Hub Platform were the first of their kind. The conclusions shared by these young people are real life lessons.

- I felt how important it is to work in the community, to be part of a team
- I was surprised to get help from people I least expected it from
- I often wondered why I got involved, it seemed so hard, but the results of the effort started to show, I saw how the students became more responsive and I forgot about all the things that were hard
- I was worried that young people would not come, but I was surprised to see participants from different universities, young people eager to discuss and take part in the activities
- Children were so enthusiastic about this experience that they asked me if I would organise such activities again

- I really enjoyed working with extremely creative young people and was sad to see how some give up just because they don't have enough confidence in their abilities

We're happy to say you'll be hearing more from these beautiful young people. They are the messengers and promoters of gender equality and zero tolerance for domestic violence.

We are also grateful to the mentors Corina Erhan, Elena Lupan and trainers Sergiu Turcan, Arina and Daniela Josanu who stood by these young people. It is so important to support their enthusiasm and for them to inspire other young people, in their turn.

Social Hub is an initiative implemented by the Women's Law Centre, with financial support from Sweden.



CARE projects ensure social and economic cohesion

At the end of 2022, the Women's Law Center organized a *training workshop for members of local governments, women and men, implementing community-based initiatives to manage the Ukrainian refugee crisis*. The project implemented with the support of Care International and Sera Romania aims to support the emergency response provided to beneficiaries of humanitarian aid, by implementing five community initiatives that would ensure social and economic cohesion.



The topics addressed include identification of undocumented people, obtaining personal ID codes, preparation of marriage, death, birth and dissolution of marriage documents, referral to specialised central and local public authorities, case management from the perspective of psychological support, writing community initiatives, referral to specialised and integrated services.

In the framework of the 'Emergency response to the Ukrainian crisis' project, five libraries opened their doors



for Ukrainian refugees, women, men, girls and boys, to access useful information and necessary services in a safe and friendly space.

The 5 libraries from different regions of Moldova and 10 librarians organized information, guidance, orientation, referral, recreation and social inclusion activities to accelerate the process of recovery of refugees and their integration into society.

The focal points in the libraries were trained in humanitarian assistance,



Proiectele CARE asigură coeziunea socială și economică



case management, human rights, preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and irregular migration, access to psychological and legal services, access to information on documentation of humanitarian aid beneficiaries, communication in crisis situations and combating violence and gender-based violence.

The project provides a platform for local networking to strengthen the coordinated response to the refugee crisis.

Within the project 109 hygiene kits were provided to refugee families, accompanied by children and young people, based on their needs, includ-

ing hygiene kits, food, baby food, educational, cultural and recreational activities, distributed in eight regions of the country: Hîncești, Căușeni, Ștefan Vodă, Soroca, Anenii Noi, Șoldănești and Ialoveni.

During the project activities, five community initiatives have been developed and will be implemented from 2023 onwards, in order to ensure synergy between the local governments, the community population and the refugees, providing them with a climate of safety and protection.

Project funded by CARE through SERA Romania Foundation, CARE France and FONPC.



The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign

Traditionally, from 25 November to 10 December, activities are organised to raise awareness and inform the general public about the extent of domestic violence and promote a different kind of thinking and behaviour patterns. This year, for the first time, a fundraising event was also organised to support the economic empowerment of women who have experienced domestic violence.

THE FUNDRAISING EVENT - 'TOGETHER WE CHANGE LIVES'

A noble goal brought us together—changing the lives of women who have experienced domestic violence. It was with this in mind that our guests stepped through the doors of the National Museum of History.

The 5 paintings offered for auction now have new owners. The messages of these wonderful creations will please the eye and warm the soul of those who will have them around.

We will sum up the results and continue our work as promised, with dedication and transparency. **The funds raised from this event will be directed towards the economic empowerment of other women, beneficiaries of the Women's Law Centre.**

We are grateful to all the participants of the event who joined us, who participated in the auction, who bought the wonderful handmade products exhibited by the beneficiaries of the centre or who contributed with a donation to the cause of the event.

We thank the Prime Minister, Natalia Gavriliță, who reiterated her support and the importance of actions to prevent and combat domestic violence, so



that women and girls can benefit from full protection and quality services from the state.

We thank Karin Borovic, Head of the Development Cooperation Unit of the Swedish Embassy, Dominika Stojanoska, UN Women Representative to Moldova and Angelina Zaporozhan, founder of the WLC, for all their support provided over the years.

Thank you to our beneficiaries who took up the challenge and created magic. Their works reminded us how close the winter holidays were.

Thank you to the donors who made this event possible, the Swedish Embassy and the OAK Foundation, as well as our partners: Asconi Winery, Molinari and the National Museum of History.



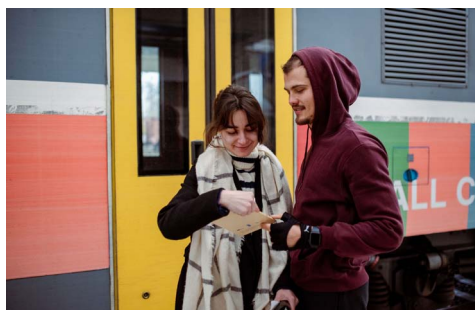
The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign



INFORMING

On trolleybus and bus routes in Chișinău, on trains and at the North, Centre and South bus stations, passengers received brochures containing useful information on domestic violence and the steps to take to seek specialized help.

Training sessions for professionals in the field helped update the knowledge on prevention and intervention in such cases, focusing on the interest and safety of the victim and her children.



A DIFFERENT KIND OF PATTERNS. A DIFFERENT KIND OF SPEECHES

Six motivational speeches were given during the second edition of the event 'A different kind of patterns. A different kind of speeches'. This year's slogan – People for People – focused on the importance of solidarity and mutual support during difficult times in life. Speakers from fields as diverse as justice, medicine, psychology and entrepreneurship shared their experiences, in order to raise awareness and promote the message of zero tolerance of gender-based violence. The speeches were promoted online and were watched by around 16 000 people.

- **Psychologist Alexandru Donos** kicked off the edition by urging the general public to take courage and seek specialised help when emotional states overwhelm them. 'Stop, don't blame the person in front of you. Take care of yourself and ask for help!' the expert urged.
- **Judge Maria Frunze** stressed the crucial role of the justice system in the state's response to domestic violence and the need to invest in education to reduce society's tolerance of this phenomenon.
- **The young activist from the north of the country, Stas Cebotari**, gave a motivational speech on how he managed to bring the issue of gender equality into focus in his community and why it is important to eliminate stereotypes and change views on equality among young people.
- **The Secretary of State of the Ministry of Justice, Nadia Burciu**, has been involved for more than 15 years in initiatives that directly or indirectly aim to support girls and women to have a safe and free life. In A DIFFERENT KIND OF speech, the expert spoke about how social transformation starts with the individual.
- **The medical examiner Natalia Toporeț** was interested in the human body from a young age. Over the years she

became an expert in a field where not everyone can withstand. Every day, at least ten women are examined by the medical examiner, eight of whom are victims of domestic violence. Of those eight, four could tell of at least one instance of sexual abuse by a partner.

- **The administrator of the Business Incubator in Ștefan Vodă, Adelina Barbăneagră** worked for many years abroad in Switzerland, the Netherlands and America, but decided to return home and make a change. So she joined the team of the Business Incubator in Ștefan Vodă. Adelina proved that the success of a business does not depend on gender, but on skills. In her speech, she told us about the challenges she faced, her responsibilities and how she manages to succeed.



Training workshop, exchange of experience and professional capacity building

At the end of 2022, psychologists, representatives of education and social assistance directorates from Ungheni, Ștefan Vodă and Căușeni districts and Chișinău municipality participated in a series of best practice workshops on how to provide psychosocial support to target groups in refugee centres, schools, social institutions. At the same time, they strengthened their capacities to respond effectively to the needs of all beneficiaries of social assistance and education services.

Through practical exercises and creative group activities, participants gained useful knowledge in interpreting the concept of 'well-being'; ground rules in knowing each other and the expectations of beneficiaries; human needs and their relevance in the refugee context; traumatic events and reactions to stress; the impact of forced displacement on mental health.

GIZ Project Manager Mircea Ursu underlined the importance of improving social cohesion during the

workshop and reconfirmed the readiness of the German Agency for International Cooperation to support host communities in the Republic of Moldova in response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis.

As **trainer was Stefanie Gaumert**, international expert/advisor for psychosocial support in peacebuilding and forced displacement. The trainer carried out needs assessment visits to local authorities in Ungheni, Căușeni and Ștefan Vodă districts to learn about the needs and resources



available for the refugee crisis, the social relations of refugees with locals, and the support and protection services in place.

The international expert appreciated the open communication of the workshop participants and noted that the event is part of the process of psychosocial support for social assistance and education specialists and other relevant professionals and expressed willingness to provide further support in capacity building of public service providers.

The capacity building workshop for public service providers, namely those in the field of social assistance and education, was organised by the Women's Law Centre in the framework of the project 'Supporting Moldovan communities in hosting Ukrainian refugees', implemented by the German Agency for International Cooperation, with the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



Approximately 2,000 persons from Ukraine have been integrated into host communities in Moldova

The war initiated by Russia against Ukraine has led to an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. In order to help, in addition to their daily work, non-governmental organisations, including women's organisations, have directed their resources to support refugee women and children coming to our country.

In this regard, in the period May-December 2022, WLC, in partnership with the National Coalition 'Life without Violence', implemented the project 'Building peace through resilience of women, organizations and communities', which aimed to integrate people from Ukraine into host communities. The project had the support of UN Women and was financed by Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

12 organisations from several regions of Moldova, which implemented their own activities, were the beneficiaries of the grants offered as part of the project. The project was completed at

the end of last year with good results, as the grantees managed to involve a total of 1,927 people, mostly refugees from Ukraine. **Of whom: 1,392 women, 420 children, 247 girls and 173 boys, 115 men.**

Each organization did more than was expected from them within the project. Dozens of activities were organized, among which: meditation sessions, pottery sessions for children and women, trips to beautiful places, gastronomic activities, festivals, women's gatherings, psychological counseling, knitting classes, mothers' academies, book clubs, tailoring



classes, grants were offered to several women to keep their businesses running and much more. Through this project, women from Ukraine and their children were supported to detach themselves from the tragedy going on back home, they were given a safe space, moral support and human warmth, as mentioned by several beneficiaries of the project.



Economic empowerment of women – the path to a life of dignity

290 women survivors from 5 pilot districts benefited from economic empowerment services, 204 survivors participated in vocational guidance workshops, including business guidance sessions, 86 women survivors benefited from employment counselling and peer-to-peer learning using the PLATO method, 50 women benefited from mentoring, and 15 of them developed their own business plans, central and local authorities have become part of a dialogue platform for advancing economic empowerment processes and are actively involved in creating empowerment tools.

These are just some of the economic empowerment project achievements, which was launched a year and a half ago and has now reached its final stage.



Dominika Stojanoska, UN Women Moldova Country Representative: 'We have to admit that one of the reasons why domestic violence is perpetuated is the economic dependency of women experiencing abuse. Often-times, they have no way out because they lack financial independence. It is

extremely important that, when designing economic empowerment programmes, we are coherent and inter-connect state institutions responsible for providing appropriate support and services. I am glad that we are at the stage where the piloting of this programme is completed and that we can take into account, for the next stage, the needs of both the beneficiaries and the system, so that what we can come up with a comprehensive response.'



Mariana Buruiană, Executive Director, WLC: 'Designing these economic empowerment programmes required expertise and was a participatory, strategic, long-term process. For us, as a day centre providing direct support to women beneficiaries, it is important to take into account their needs, so that the services offered correspond to the peculiarities of this group of women.'

Both beneficiaries of the project and representatives of regional communities of women entrepreneurs, who shared their experiences regarding the difficulties encountered in the process of economic empowerment, were present at the event.

'I went through all circles of hell - that's how I felt at that time. I understood that I didn't have enough financial re-

sources to move forward on my own. When I applied for divorce, I didn't have money to pay for a lawyer. This is what drove me to start a business. I benefited from the services of a business incubator and launched an educational centre where I offer English classes. This has allowed me to bring more stability to my life, but also to help other girls and women who come to me for advice.'



Economic empowerment of women – the path to a life of dignity

AREAS COVERED BY THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

■ Harmonisation of cooperation between competent institutions

For survivors of domestic violence, an important step in the process of economic empowerment is getting a job and becoming financially independent. In this regard, a consultation meeting was held on the draft mechanism for referring victims of domestic violence to the regional offices of the employment agency. Experts from the specialised units of the MLSP discussed potential ways to improve their activity and what algorithm will be used in offering assistance. The suggestions received during the consultation meeting will contribute to enhancing the 5 economic empowerment programmes developed in partnership with public authorities, service providers and other stakeholders in Soroca, Bălţi, Hînceşti, Teleneşti and Ştefan-Vodă districts.



■ Fact-finding visits to business incubators

The visit to the Soroca business incubator and the discussions with the entrepreneurs from this region inspire young people to stay in the country and believe in their business ideas.

A group of young people who are beneficiaries of the economic empowerment project had the opportunity to interact with representatives of the Regional Employment Agency and find out about the job offers available. At the same time, they could see and understand how a business works. At the Soroca incubator, one entrepreneur opened a gym, another provides photo and 3D printing services, a third has a business in light industry, and a fourth woman entrepreneur turned a childhood dream into reality and opened a bakery.



Economic empowerment of women – the path to a life of dignity



■ Exchange of experience with professionals from Romania

A delegation of 30 people who are actively involved in the implementation of the project took part in a 3-day study visit to Iași. The team from the Republic of Moldova, made up of representatives of the Government, local public authorities, regional social assistance and employment offices, municipalities, civil society, and donors visited the Alături de Voi (ADV) România Foundation, where the activity of three social enterprises was presented. They also made a visit to two centres for victims of domestic violence, followed by a discussion in

Iasi County Council, during which the local view and the social and employment services that can be accessed by victims of violence were presented.

The emphasis is on providing a full support cycle through employment and business development assistance, entrepreneurial capacity building, and psychological counselling. An extremely important aspect is the co-operation between NSAA, NEA, and other relevant institutions for labour market integration of women survivors.



The activities were organized in the context of the implementation of the 'Support for the co-creation of economic empowerment programmes for women survivors of gender-based violence' Programme, carried out by Women's Law Centre, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Moldova, with the support of UN Women Moldova and the financial support of Sweden.



Second edition of the International Conference on Preventing and Combating Violence against Girls and Women and Domestic Violence

At the end of 2022, central public authorities, international experts and representatives of civil society attended the second edition of the International Conference on Preventing and Combating Violence against Girls and Women and Domestic Violence, where specific challenges and progress in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, the need to create economic empowerment programmes for women and the promotion of gender equality were discussed.

Doina Gherman, Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Policy: 'Given the fact that the Republic of Moldova was granted EU candidate status, the implementation of the Istanbul Convention is a top priority. By November we need to vote on a number of draft laws that have reached Parliament, but have not been passed yet. Just yesterday we held public consultations on the draft law prepared by the Ministry of Justice, meant to

guarantee the rights and dignity of women in case of sexual and domestic violence offences.'

Marcel Spătari, former Minister of Labour and Social Protection: 'Domestic abuse is something many people, especially women, are faced with daily. Our society is still a patriarchal one, and gender equality is still a matriarchal issue. We must also make efforts to involve men in these discussions, as men are still a minority in discussions on gender equality, the role of women in society, women's economic empowerment, especially in socially vulnerable groups, combating gender-based violence and harassment.'

The conference also included discussions on women's vulnerabilities and power, how different crises and poverty affect women, and economic em-



powerment as one of the key elements in becoming independent.

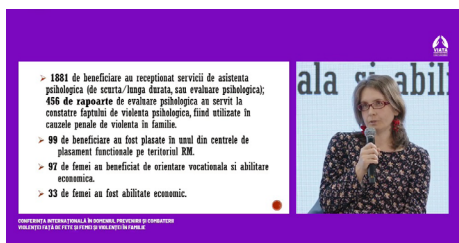
During the conference, our colleague Tatiana Timotin, a vocational counselor, shared her experience in empowering women who have experienced domestic violence.

'The holistic approach to the case is particularly important. In addition to legal counselling, women need psychological support and personal develop-



ment sessions, during which they discover their values, abilities, set goals and make plans to put their business ideas in practice.'

At the same time, a panel was dedicated to practical issues and trends in the criminal justice system's response to cases of violence. The speakers were professionals from the system, including a woman Secretary of State, a lawyer, a prosecutor, a police officer and a judge.



Good practice workshop to ensure a coordinated response to prevent femicide



Approximately 40 women die annually in the Republic of Moldova as a result of domestic violence. In order to prevent such cases, a Committee for monitoring and analysis of domestic violence cases resulting in death or severe harm to the bodily integrity of the victims was established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The members of the Committee, together with the persons responsible for data collection and management, participated in a good practice workshop where they discussed how the system can ensure a coordinated response to prevent femicide cases, but also to promote a case analysis model within the Committee. Guided by trainers with decades of experience in the field, the participants analysed:

- challenges and obstacles to effective data collection
- peculiarities of femicide offences
- recurrence of violence risk assessment
- lethality risk assessment
- the role of the criminal prosecution body in investigating cases of femicide.

Femicide is a serious, extreme form of violence against women and girls that results in the death of the victim. Most often, the perpetrators are intimate partners, family members or people who know the victim.

This event was organized by Women's Law Center in partnership with Ministry of Internal Affairs and the General Police Inspectorate, as part of the sub-component aimed at supporting the activity of the Committee for monitoring and analysis of domestic violence cases resulting in death or severe harm to the bodily integrity of the victims. The activity was organized as part of the 'Establishing a Family Justice Center in Moldova' Project, funded by Office of Criminal Justice and Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the United States Department of State.





‘The response of law enforcement to cases of violence against women and girls: challenges and opportunities’ was the topic of the international conference organised in 2022 by the OSCE Mission to Warsaw.

Mariana Buruiană, Executive Director of the Women's Law Centre, attended this meeting to exchange good practices and identify innovative approaches in the region. She was one of the speakers in the panel discussion. The panel brought together law enforcement representatives, experts in the prevention and fight against GBV, and civil society representatives.

Employees of Penitentiary No. 7 - Rusca have strengthened their knowledge about the rights of women in detention and their special needs. They attended the training workshop organised by WLC, in partnership with NAP.

Together with trainers Sergiu Tona and Arina Turcan, the employees discussed the factors that determines the increased vulnerability of women, the specific behaviours in detention, cooperation and conflict relationships with the staff and family, the relationship between the victim and the offender.

It also included discussions on guaranteeing the observance of the rights of women and girls in detention, as well as an analysis of the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners (Bangkok Rules).

The training workshop is part of the ‘Enhancing access to justice, legal aid and psychological support to women in detention’ project. The main goal of the project is to contribute to empowering women in detention by helping them know and claim their legal rights.

The project is implemented by WLC, in partnership with NAP, and with the financial support of Sweden.



The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova has approved in final reading the draft law that will increase the safety, protection and assistance to victims of domestic violence and will toughen punishments for perpetrators.

The draft law aligns the national legal framework on preventing and combating domestic violence with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. The new provisions will oblige perpetrators to attend programs aimed at enhancing the accountability and changing the violent behaviour; the defendant will undergo forced medical treatment in case of alcohol/drug addiction, confirmed by medical notice; acts of domestic violence committed several times over a certain period of time will be punished from 4 to 6 years.

The 24th WAVE Network Conference took place in Prague. Our colleague Eleonora Grosu, program coordinator at the Center, participated in a series of workshops focusing on the importance of specialized services for women, strengthening women's resilience in times of crisis, and recovery and rehabilitation plans in situations of war, conflict and gender-based violence.



24th WAVE CONFERENCE

October 10 – 11, 2022
Prague, Czech Republic



'At the conference we had the opportunity to exchange experiences with WAVE organisations from other countries and to support each other, increase our resilience and strengthen our efforts to further provide victim/survivor-centered services, which are absolutely necessary in order to support the rights, safety and well-being of women and girls affected by violence.'

The conference brought together organisations from over 150 countries that advocate for the promotion and protection of women's rights.

SPolice officer from the Ministry of Internal Affairs participated in the training course on best practices of police response to domestic violence.

For five days, the participants engaged in interactive activities, discussions and debates on cases from their daily practice, in order to improve their understanding of the phenomenon, dynamics and forms of domestic violence.

Trainers advised representatives the law enforcement authorities:

- how to ensure a pro-active response in preventing, identify-

ing and combating domestic violence

- on the types of services needed for a victim of violence and the referral procedure
- how to issue an emergency restraining order
- on tactics of crime investigation and stakeholders responsible for providing a coordinated response to victims of domestic violence.

The training is organised by WLC in partnership with ILETG and the financial support of Sweden.





Handmade activities are both a process of creation and a process of reflection, conscious living and analysis of emotions and thoughts. It is the space where you discover unknown abilities and the creative power of the hands.

WLC beneficiaries and their children have the opportunity to connect with this world and bring to life truly unique works.

‘The beginning always seems complicated, then gradually, thread by thread, flower by flower, we see how our work takes shape. In addition to learning to do something useful, these are two hours of relaxation, disconnection from everyday problems and worries’ said a participant in the master-class.

The handmade sessions are guided by our colleagues Evelina Pîrau and Olga Matasari, passionate about the art of handmade.

The activity was carried out by the Women’s Law Centre with the support of Sweden..

At the initiative of the Hîncești Police Inspectorate, the Women’s Law Center signed a collaboration agreement. As part of this partnership we commit to carry out information and training activities, to provide primary and qualified legal support to women victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

Once the agreement was signed, we held a first training session on best practices for responding to domestic violence and ensuring effective cross-sectoral cooperation for better case resolution. Participants reviewed case studies of domestic violence and presented their response strategies, followed by discussions in the large group. They discussed the myths, forms and specific elements of domestic violence. Based on the reviewed cases, a coordinated response



model was developed, taking into account the safety of the victim and her children.

The training was carried out with the financial support of Sweden.





On the International Human Rights Day, the day when the Women's Law Centre celebrates 13 years since its establishment, we launched a new digital service together with the General Police Inspectorate and the Single National Emergency Service 112: **MOBILE APPLICATION** for girls and women. The application can be downloaded in phones and consulted whenever needed. It contains all the necessary information for a person going through domestic violence or who wants to understand whether what is happening to her are forms of violence.

The application has been designed so that all information is within the reach of the user and allows the beneficiary to call directly to 112.

For obvious reasons, we will not share more details on how to access it. To get this information one can contact us at our phone number or it can be shared by professionals in charge of providing support in cases of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

We express our gratitude to Sweden for their trust and support. We are one step closer to the girls and women of Moldova.

Certainly, many of us are curious and wonder what is happening in a courtroom. How is a court session held? What does a lawyer, a prosecutor or a judge do?

15 NIJ trainees, candidates for the position of prosecutor and judge and 15 students from the Law Department (SUM) and 'Stefan cel Mare' Police Academy, together with two talented young women from the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts have created the context of a civil case that reviews the request of protection measures for victims of domestic violence.

The young people researched and studied the case materials and the existing evidence, and designed a defence strategy. Then they were divided into two groups to simulate a court trial.



It was an extremely interesting and useful exercise that perfectly combined theory with practice and engaged young people from different universities and academies, showing an example of harmonious cooperation between art and the justice system.

The exercise was possible due to the openness and pro-active attitude of the NIJ and the Law Department at SUM, under the guidance of WLC lawyer Turcan Arina.



The Women's Law Center and the Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Moldova signed a collaboration agreement to implement joint activities for preventing and responding to gender-based violence and economic empowerment of women.

The cooperation will focus on:

- exchange of experience and transfer of knowledge
- organisation of meetings and working sessions
- public advocacy and lobby campaigns
- development and dissemination of information materials.

The initiative took place as part of „Reducing barriers to women's



economic empowerment' Project of Women and Girls Empowered - WAGE Consortium, implemented by ABA ROLI Moldova and the Center for International Private Enterprise and local implementing partners Women's Law Center and Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Policy.



A Business Women Forum was organised in Tiraspol. The event took place on the eve of the International Women's Entrepreneurship Day and was the final event of the Women Economic Empowerment Project implemented by

The Association of Creative Industries in cooperation with the Women's Law Center, as part of Advanced Cross-River Capacities for Trade Project (AdTrade), funded by Sweden and the United Kingdom and implemented by UNDP Moldova.

The Forum brought together over 100 women who develop their businesses on both banks of the Nistru river.

'Women's business is one of the most effective ways to overcome poverty and promote sustainable socio-economic

development of both small communities and the country as a whole. Entrepreneurship is a guarantee of increasing the quality of family life, health indicators and children's education. That is why we support entrepreneurs in all respects' – Olesya Lungu, director of the Association of Creative Industries.

8 speakers - successful women in their fields of activity shared best practices in building a successful business.



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.

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