



The way from impasse to success



Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project
Activity Report

2006-2007

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Chisinau 2008

The report was developed with the contribution of all staff members from the Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the U.S. Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under President's Bush Anti-Trafficking Initiative.

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The Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project in Moldova is part of President Bush's world-wide \$50 million Anti-Trafficking Initiative.



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Introduction

The attempts to decentralise the residential system for child protection, as well as for other categories of population are still rather modest; the process is undergoing some serious debate which is supported more by the nongovernmental organisations than by the state bodies that are meant to do it. The main reason for the current situation is well-known and actually became an old topic a long time ago, namely the lack of financial means.

The educational deficiencies of the residential system and the subsequent consequences emerging from them (the specific behavior of the youth coming from the residential environment), the issue of youth unemployment, the problem of human trafficking, poverty in general and the domestic violence particularly have generated the idea to establish some services of

social, economic and professional integration for disadvantaged persons, especially for orphans or young people without family care – children who lived in boarding schools or professional schools.

Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project seeks to facilitate the social, economic and professional integration of these vulnerable categories through setting up some social Centres to provide specialised services for the development of some abilities and skills necessary for an independent life. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the U.S. Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under President's Bush Anti-Trafficking Initiative.



Better Opportunities for Youth and Women

Project

Description:

Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project promotes reduced vulnerability of socially disadvantaged categories of people facing negative social phenomena such as domestic violence and physical abuse, abandonment, unemployment, criminality and drug abuse.

The overall objective of the project is to develop specific services to support the social, economic and professional reintegration of disadvantaged persons, especially those who lived in boarding schools – orphans or children without family care, mothers with children at risk, pregnant women at risk or in crisis situation, through providing shelter services (up to 12 months), with conditions similar to family ones, psychological and social care, providing independent life skills, activities aimed at facilitating or mediating beneficiaries' access to the labor market, financial and material support. The project creates jobs for target-beneficiaries, identifies the available job vacancies and provides professional training courses.

Implementation Dates:

October 2004 – March 2009

What is waiting this children in future? A lot is within their own control. A lot depends on their parents.



Objectives:

- Establish and develop a network of nine independent centres for social reintegration located in areas outside the capital-city, operated by local non-governmental organisations.
- Develop within these centres support services and programmes to facilitate social and professional reintegration of project beneficiaries.
- Improve social assistance services in these communities both from a qualitative and quantitative aspect.
- Increase the capacity of "marketability" of the labour force through professional training.
- Create long-term and temporary employment through the launch of social enterprises.

Results:

- Nine (9) Social Reintegration Centres were established and became fully operational.
- 1720 beneficiaries, among which: graduates from boarding and professional schools, socially vulnerable women and their children will benefit from a wide variety of services for a period of two years and will get professional trainings with real employment opportunities.
- At least 300 of such graduates will be employed within the social enterprises newly established.
- Ten (10) social enterprises newly created.
- Thirty (30) partnerships with the private sector.
- 65 specialists from the social and child protection field are trained to further assist beneficiaries.

Budget:

The total project budget is USD 3.5 million. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the U.S. Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under President's Bush Anti-Trafficking Initiative.

Partners:

Ministry of Local Public Administration, Ministry of Education and Youth, Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child, Ministry of Health, local public authorities, UNICEF, IOM Moldova, ILO/IPEC, OSCE, Winrock International, La Strada-Moldova, Centre for Non-Commercial Law, Every Child, Global Compact, local non-governmental organisations.

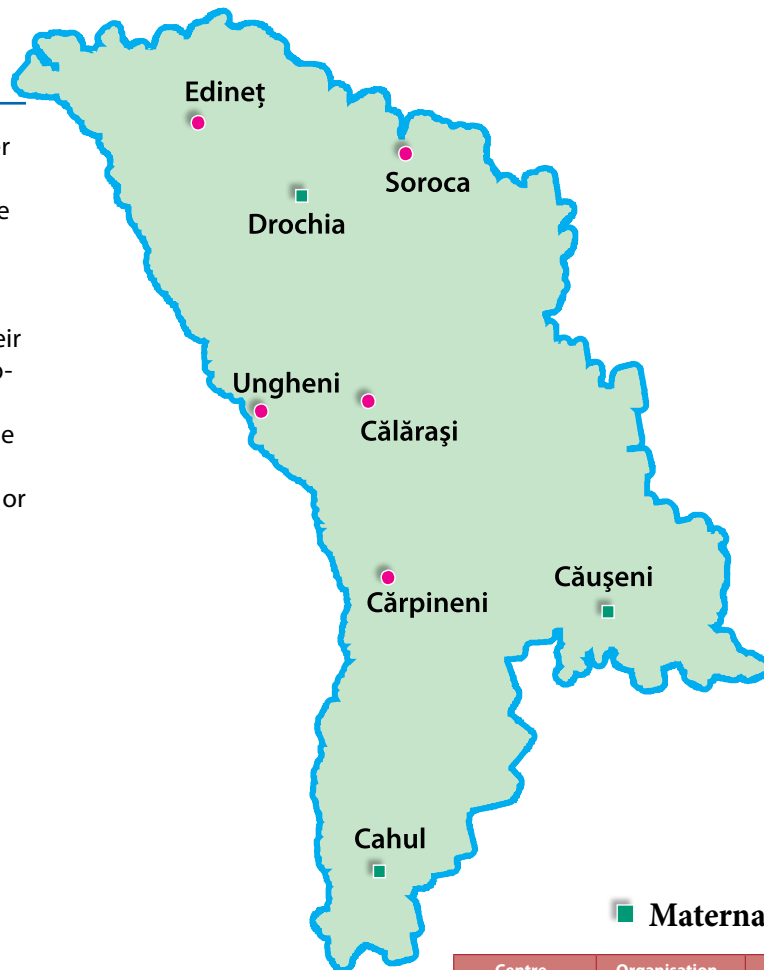
Noteworthy:

The Social Reintegration Centres cover the deficit of specialized social services provided to both: young people who have been brought up and educated within residential system, as well as women and children at risk or in crisis situation, or pregnant women inclined to abandon their children. Via these nine centres, Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project aims at reducing the number of vulnerable persons subject to risk of social marginalization, physical and psychological abuse or exploitation.

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■ **Maternal Centres**

● **Social Reintegration Centres for Youth (SRCY)**

Centre	Organisation operating Centre's services	Contacts
SRCY CREDO from Ungheni town	"Viitorul incepe azi" Association of Civil Education	Constantin Stratulat, tel.: 0 236 23115, 36a, Decebal street, Ungheni
SRCY AMIGO from Carpineni village	SPERANTA Public Organisation	Tel.: 0 269 27 584 Carpineni village, Hincesti rayon
SRCY DACIA from Soroca town	DACIA NGO	Ion Babici, tel.: 0 230 236 19, 21, Mihai Sadoveanu street, Soroca
SRCY from Calarasi town	EPITROP NGO	Vasile Gilca, tel. 0 244 23120, 11 Makarenko street, Calarasi
SRCY ALTERNATIVA from Edinet town	DEMOS Public Organisation	Liliana Samcov, tel.: 0246 29 400, 18A, Alexandru cel Bun street, Edinet

Centre	Organisation operating Centre's services	Contacts
Maternal Centre ARIADNA from Drochia town	ARTEMIDA Public Association	Simion Sirbu, Tel.: 0 252 220 75, 9, Alexandru cel Bun street, Drochia
Maternal Centre INCREDERE from Cahul town	INCREDERE Public Association	Elena Bacalu, Tel.: 0 692 43 704, 133, Caragiale street, Cahul
Maternal Centre PRO-FAMILIA from Causeni town	TIGHINA Association of Psychologists	Ludmila Afteni, Tel.: 0 794 36 300, 18A, Ana si Alexandru street, Causeni



**Social Reintegration Centres for Youth
and Maternal**

Centres

The Social Reintegration Centres for Youth seek to cover the deficit of specialized social services meant for young people who have been brought up and educated in the social institutions' system, which through their very nature create a number of problems for subsequent social and professional integration of their beneficiaries. Whenever reaching a specific



Before becoming ARIADNA Maternal Centre, this place was an abandoned wing of a kindergarten from Drochia.



age level, young persons leave the social institutions or graduate from professional schools; being not involved in any social and professional environment, these young people are exposed to the risk of resorting to anti-social actions and behaviour or that of being trafficked. This youth lacks basic independent life skills; they do not know how to orient themselves on the labour force market due to a lack of basic skills or because of not knowing how to harness their abilities, they have no possibility of ensuring themselves with a place to live due to a lack of subsistence means; they have no one to ask help from; they have no families or they do not wish to return to their own families or communities.

Currently, the social protection system does not meet the needs of this group. The existing services simply treat separately certain groups that eventually could cover the youth, for instance, the orphans. This context does not provide for a variety of social services that might allow the subsequent integration of youth in the society.

Maternal Centres provide services for mothers with children at risk or in crisis situation, for women – victims of domestic violence or victims of human beings trafficking after initial rehabilitation period. The crisis situation can be qualified under a large range of events: starting with the assistance granted at home in case when temporary support is needed for overcoming the situation (lack of subsistence means, conflict in the family, problems with children care) up to situations when the woman is left in the street as a result of conflicts in the family or no home.

Maternal Centres provide rehabilitation services also to victims of human trafficking, offering them the possibility of gradually reintegrating into the community, support for a longer period of time and assistance for establishing relations with social and professional environment. The centres shall also provide assistance for beneficiaries' employment on labor market, a fact that will serve as basis for their subsequent autonomy.

The Social Reintegration Centres for Youth

What is a Social Reintegration Centre for Youth?

The Social Reintegration Centre for Youth provides social services for youth – graduates of professional schools, former residents of boarding schools, orphans or young people from vulnerable families who have no or little possibility of integrating themselves into their own family, who have no skills and resources for an independent life or encounter difficulties when networking with social environment.

The services are provided with the aim of facilitating social and professional integration of youth. In the centre young people have their basic needs met (housing, medical assistance, hygiene, food), training depending on the situation and access to information. The centre's beneficiaries are involved in activities for independent life skills and development of social abilities; they benefit from psychological and pedagogical assistance, as well as from legal assistance.

Beneficiaries

- residents of boarding schools
- residents of professional schools
- orphans or young people from vulnerable families

Services provided by a Social Reintegration Centre for Youth

Social assistance – social assistant's intervention, case evaluation, establishing the social diagnosis and drafting the individual intervention plan.

Psychological and psycho-pedagogical assistance – initial and periodical psychological assessment, development of an individual plan of services based on identified psychological problems, teach-



ing some strategies for problems' settlement.

Pedagogical assistance – especially for beneficiaries who did not finish 9 grades, as well as for children who temporarily are not enrolled in the educational process.

Support for obtaining legal assistance – with the aim to clarify the beneficiary's identity, to settle the litigations related to private property or child's custody.

Activities for developing individual life skills - activities that promote and plan beneficiaries' preparedness for an independent life.

Functions carried out by a Social Reintegration Centre for Youth

Protection and care – security and care, accommodation and meals are assured.

Education-counseling-orientation – the young person learns about inde-

The Social Reintegration Centre for Youth offers services to young persons – graduates of professional schools, former beneficiaries of boarding schools, orphans and young people from vulnerable families.

pendent life skills; for the purpose of the Individual Plan of services' application, the Centre practices activities that aim to improve or to settle the difficult situation.

Monitoring-evaluation – the primary evaluation of the case, which serves as basis for drafting the Individual Plan of services; every case is assessed on regular basis.

Support for social and professional reintegration – educational activities, counseling and orientation activities that facilitate young person's autonomy development and prepare him/her for community integration.



With the help of the psychologist working within the Centre, young people overcome the difficult situation they had to cope with for a while.

Centre structure

Administrative component – centre manager office equipped with work-station furniture, files, telephone and computer.

Social services component

- 2-3 offices for psychological and legal counselling. The offices are fitted out with work-station furniture offering work premises for the social assistant and psychologist/psycho-pedagogue and are fully equipped with everything that is necessary to carry out individual activities with beneficiaries;

- free time hall/recreation hall equipped with TV set, computer, work-spaces for

didactical activities carrying out, sofa, 2-3 armchairs, radio and tape recorder, video, and a library. This hall is also like a resource centre for the youth from the centre and community as a whole.

Residential component

The residential component ensures secure shelter for young persons under such conditions as: hygienic principles, respect for every person, care, partial or total coverage of costs for every young person. The space of the residential component includes dormitories (2 persons per dormitory), sanitary units, kitchen and living hall.

The kitchen is equipped with everything that is necessary for cooking. Young persons learn how to cook so as to be able subsequently to cook without any assistance.

Centre staff

Centre chart

A multi-disciplinary team activates within the centre, including:

Centre Manager (a professional with higher education degree in social-human field)

Social assistant (2 units)

Psychologist/psycho-pedagogue (1 unit)

Centres' localisation

The centre's localisation allows beneficiaries' access to community services: school, cultural, medical. Besides, the following points were also taken into account: the locality's infrastructure,, economic units' presence, LPA availability to collaborate with the centres, presence of service provision organisations - as the centre has to perform the mediation function between beneficiaries and these services.

Maternal Centres

What is a Maternal Centre?

The Maternal Centre provides a complex of social services to women with children at risk and women – victims of human trafficking for their subsequent integration into their own families (in case families do not present a danger) or into community.

Women with children shall benefit from assistance and shelter within the centre (or at home, in case it is possible and the woman or the child is not in danger), psycho-social assistance, counseling, mediation of processes dealing with employment and establishing relations with the community. The specific services provided to trafficked persons cover psycho-social assistance, training and professional re-profiling.

Beneficiaries

- Young mothers at risk (crises related to lack of subsistence means, problems or conflicts in the family, etc.)
- Mothers with children – victims of domestic violence
- Pregnant women in their last quarter of pregnancy inclined to abandon their child
- Teenager mothers who would like to continue their education
- Victims of human trafficking

Services provided by a Maternal Centre

Social assistance – social assistant's intervention, case evaluation, establishing the social diagnosis and drafting the individual intervention plan.

Psychological and psycho-pedagogical assistance – initial and periodical psychological assessment, development of an individual plan of services based on identified psychological problems.



The Maternal Centres become like second homes for mothers and children.

Pedagogical assistance – especially for beneficiaries who did not finish general education cycle.

Professional assistance – both: for professional training and for professional re-profiling upon need.

Support for obtaining legal assistance – clarifying beneficiary's identity, settling the litigations related to private property or child's custody, etc.

Functions carried out by a Maternal Centre

Protection and care - security and care, accommodation are assured.

Education-counselling-orientation – the mother is taught/counselled to give the child adequate care. The individual intervention plan applies the activities dealing with the improvement or settlement of mother's difficult situation (visits at father's home, or enlarged family's home, meetings within the centre, etc.); there are organized psychotherapy sessions; assistance might be offered by a legal advisor for the mother to know her rights/duties or to get special guidance in the

field; there are organized collective activities on different educational subjects.

Monitoring-evaluation - the primary evaluation of the case, which serves as basis for drafting the Individual Intervention Plan; every case is assessed on regular basis.



In the living room there are toys for everyone: young and old.

Support for social and professional reintegration – educational activities, counselling and orientation activities that facilitate the mother's autonomous development and prepare her for family or community integration. Necessary steps are taken so as to find a job; the centre undertakes social inquiries and visits mother's family or relatives if any exist. Field activities are carried out so as to prepare for a change in mentality of those in the community with regards to these categories of persons.

Centre structure

Administrative component – centre manager office equipped with work-station furniture, telephone and computer.

Social services component

- 2-3 offices for psychological and legal counselling, The offices are fitted out with work-station furniture offering work

premises for the social assistant and psychologist/psycho-pedagogue and are fully equipped with everything that is necessary to carry out individual activities with beneficiaries;

- common hall that can serve also as a hall for training, different professional training activities (courses, seminars, round tables).

Residential component

The residential component ensures a secure shelter with conditions such as: hygienic principles, respect for every person, care for mother and children (food, some clothing for the child, toys, personal hygiene products, etc.), partial or total coverage of costs. The space of the residential component includes dormitories (every mother has a separate space), sanitary units, kitchen, laundry and ironing room as well as a living hall.

Centre staff

Centre chart

A multi-disciplinary team activates within the centre, including:

Centre Manager (a professional with higher education degree in social-human field)

Social assistant (2 units)

Psychologist/psycho-pedagogue (1 unit)

Medical nurse – infant care (1 unit)

Night supervisor (2 units)

Centres' localisation

The centre's localisation allows beneficiaries' access to community services: school, cultural, medical. Besides, the following points were also taken into account: locality's infrastructure, economic units' presence, LPA availability to collaborate with the centres, the presence of service provision organisations - as the centre has to perform the mediation function between beneficiaries and these services.



Social Reintegration Centres Activity

Results

Whenever we talk about social reintegration centres' activity results, we refer first of all to the youth and the mothers with children who receive services from these centres' specialists. We call them *beneficiaries*, although this term is rather dry and asks to be presented with figures. Figures will be offered below. From the analytical point of view, these figures set up the picture of our project activity in general and of every centre separately.

Beyond these figures we deal with people's destinies – persons who had to face in their lives injustice, tragedies and dramas. The statistical data offered under *Placed in Centre* chapter does not reveal a project success: to place the beneficiary in the Centre is not our aim; the period when the beneficiary is in the centre is not a success yet – his/her integration in the society can last for a longer period of time. But for sure this is a start – from impasse to success. Below we present some success stories – something the multi-disci-

plinary teams of the centres and our entire project are really proud of.

The statistical data presented further on cover the period of one year: January 2006 – October 2007. 613 – this is the figure representing the number of young people and women with children who have benefited from social reintegration Centres' services. Out of a total of 613: 263 persons were placed in centres and 350 got assistance on day care regime; 214 persons obtained a profession and got a job with help from the centres; 36 victims of human trafficking benefited from services provided by centre specialists. We also show some statistical data that are rather sad: some 8 social reintegration centres have registered 27 cases of failure. These failures are due to different causes: from the categorical unwillingness of young persons to get integrated in the society up to the deep conflicts in the family. Nevertheless the cases remain open – centre specialists try and try to get back on them.

Social Reintegration Centre for Youth CREDO from Ungheni town

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

General data:

Totally assisted – 166

Prevention – 162

Victims of human trafficking – 4

Provided services:

Training on independent life skills, counselling, professional orientation, professionalization, procurement of textbooks, employment on the labour market, childrens' clothing, finding shelter reintegration in the family.

Prevention:

Placed in Centre – 65

Assisted on day care regime – 101

Family status:

Orphans – 42

Mono-parental – 72

Deprived – 52

Professional integration:

Professionalised/supported to continue education – 85

Employees – 70

Compulsory military service – 3

With no place of work – 8

Stories from CREDO Centre activity

At the beginning of October 2006, the SRCY CREDO received an interpellation from the Social Assistance and Family Protection Department from Ungheni about G., a young unskilled orphan who needed assistance.

Born in Ribnita, he had no parents (his father died in 1994 and his mother in 1997). He has two younger sisters: one is 16 years old and the other one is 11 years old. After his parents died, the Guardianship Body provided the custody for the young orphans left without parental care to a relatives' family located in Ungheni.

G. was totally discouraged and disappointed. The only way out in his perception

Within CREDO Centre young people are helping each other with whatever they can.



was to go and work in Moscow. He had difficulties at establishing relations with strangers, preferring not to communicate with anyone and after a time his relations with the tutor became tense.

The first step undertaken by the specialists from CREDO Centre was to get the tutor more sensitive towards this situation and afterwards the Centre helped the young boy through the LFEO to attend some courses for becoming an auto locksmith.

During the current year summer, G. expressed his wish to study at the Military Institute "Alexandru cel Bun" in Chisinau. With the help of the Zone Military Centre from Ungheni and the Family Doctors Centre, G. passed a medical examination, being afterwards referred to the Consultative-Diagnostic Centre under the Ministry of Defence. After passing the medical examination and taking the necessary exams, the young man was enrolled in the Military Institute where he started classes at the beginning of September 2007.

* * *

A. comes from a family that consumes large quantities of alcohol. The beneficiary is a child whose accidental birth stemmed from a fleeting relationship her mother had – her biological father found out about her existence when she was 14. The girl's mother set up a new family and the stepfather did not want to offer parental care to the child. After graduating from the boarding gymnasium, she has submitted her documents to enter the Agro-Industrial College from Ungheni and was offered shelter in the college hostel. Very soon, her material situation forced her to abandon school so as to get enrolled into some training courses that she has given up after 2 months period as she had no money to pay for them. At this date the young girl was kindly requested to leave the room from the hostel.

A. came to CREDO. The intervention plan was applied immediately. The needs and medical status of the girl were identified. A. went back to the training courses being supported by the Centre (including even meals and accommodation). When she finished the training course, the young girl was employed in a hairdresser's shop as a manicurist. The tools for the training course were procured with the financial assistance of the regional project FACT.

After discussions, A. decided to attend some recycling courses in Chisinau. The



courses were financed due to the assistance got from another project. After she finished these courses, she was employed in a manicure-pedicure salon where she has since worked.

At the moment the young girl has her own group of clients who trust her. She really hopes to launch her own business in the near future.

Within CREDO Centre the young people are beneficiaries and specialists at the same time.

Social Reintegration Centre for Youth AMIGO from Carpineni village, Hincesti rayon



The official launch of the AMIGO Centre took place just before the New Year Holiday – on December 28, 2005.

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

Totally assisted – 117

Prevention – 114

Victims of human trafficking – 3

Provided services:

Training on independent life skills, counselling, professional orientation, professionalization, procurement of textbooks, employment on the labour market, childrens' clothing, finding shelter reintegration in the family.

Prevention:

Placed in Centre – 55

Assisted on day care regime – 62

Family status:

Orphans – 31

Mono-parental – 27

Deprived – 59

Professionalised/supported to continue education - 49

Stories from AMIGO Centre activity

R. came from Dancu. His parents were heavy drinkers who completely forgot about their three children. Being unable to bear his parents' attitude any more and due to the impossibility of providing any means of subsistence, R's two sisters went abroad to work. Thus, the young boy was left with no support at all – he had to endure hunger and cold weather. He was lucky to have some neighbours who pitied him and offered him some food. One day someone from the neighbourhood advised him to go to AMIGO Centre from Carpineni. At the centre R. was offered shelter, psycho-social assistance and practical advice. The social assistants treated him as if they were his parents – an attitude that he never got from his own parents.

R. benefited from driving courses. He is going to stay in the centre until he is 18 so as to have the possibility to get employed. Until then he helps here and there in the centre.

Sisters A. and I. graduated from the professional school in Carpineni – the first one got a tailor's diploma and the other one a chef's diploma. The girls' father went to Russia for work, but for six months he has not written a letter to his girls and he hasn't sent any money. The mother cannot provide for all her five children – the only income the family has comes from the land they have, but unfortunately it does not ensure even the minimum means of subsistence.. The Social Reintegration Centre for Youth AMIGO has offered the girls an entire set of services, including shelter services. Starting with the last summer A. was helped to get employed at a clothes-making plant in Ialoveni and I. became the cook's help in a kindergarten from Chişinau.

Social Reintegration Centre for Youth DACIA from Soroca town

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

142 persons benefited from social reintegration for youth services.

Placed in Centre – 42

Assisted on day care regime – 100

Family status:

Orphans – 48

Mono-parental – 35

Deprived – 59

Professional training – 23

Employed on labour market – 54

Integrated in society – 20 young people: 7 integrated in the enlarged family and 13 live independently

Victims of human trafficking – 2

Human trafficking victims benefited from the following services: social counselling, psychological counselling, allowances for food, hygiene and clothing, medical check-up, computer courses.

Stories from DACIA Centre activity

O. comes from a socially-vulnerable family with 4 children. The parents are unemployed and heavy drinkers. They live in an old, damaged house, and 5 persons (parents and 3 children) live in one room. When they are drunk, the parents are aggressive and abuse their children. O. is the most abused in the family. Her father threatens her, maltreats her, sends her away from home and the young girl has to go to the neighbours or the vineyard. Several times the girl went to the police office and mayor's office. Her elder sister left abroad for work some years ago and since then there is no news from her.

The mayor's office addressed the DACIA Centre with the request to help the girl out. Thus O. attended a social reintegration programme at the centre. She was provided different services: a medical check-up, development of independent life skills,



money management, house management, personal hygiene, employment on labour market. During the period she was in the centre, O. participated in a number of seminars: about the danger of smoking, about the consequence of pregnancy and abortion, about sexually transmissible diseases, about employment on the labour market.

At present she is employed at an enterprise as a seamstress – a profession she likes and which corresponds to her needs.

The young boy D. comes from a family of 6 children. His parents were deprived of their parental rights because of alcohol problems, anti-social behavior and anti-sanitary living conditions. The children were sent to different social institutions for children.

D. ended up in the orphanage from Balti where he stayed for 2 years. Afterwards he was transferred to a boarding school from Falesti where he met one of his sisters and one of his brothers. After that he was transferred to the boarding school of sanatorium type from Drochia where he finished 9 grades cycle. He continued his education

"Snails" Band performance during the launch event for DACIA Centre has brought a holiday spirit for the inauguration. July 2006.

at one of the professional schools from the same locality. Afterwards he decided to go to a professional school from Zgurita, Drochia where he specialized in becoming a tailor and a tractor driver.

When finishing the professional qualification courses in Zgurita, he was placed in DACIA Centre where he attended a social reintegration programme. He has benefited from the whole set of services provided by the Centre.

D. was employed at the Hidroinplex

plant. Initially he was employed as an electro-seamstress, but afterwards he was advanced and got the job of a rectifier. He likes this profession.

The young girl V. was offered assistance for escaping from a gypsy family who has taken away her documents and isolated her from society. V. benefited from psychological and social assistance, shelter services for a period of 10 days and afterwards she was referred to CREDO Centre at Ungheni.

Social Reintegration Centre for Youth ALTERNATIVA from Edinet town



In Edinet the roof of the future Centre was rebuilt anew.

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

Number of beneficiaries assisted – 57
Placed in Centre – 29
Assisted on day care regime – 28
Young persons professionally trained (including during the training process) – 9
Young persons employed on labor market – 18

Family status:

Orphans – 39
Mono-parental – 8
Deprived – 10

Victims of human beings trafficking

Total number of assisted persons - 4 adults and 3 children

Number of integrated persons – 3

Provided services: psycho-social counselling, social services as provision of food, clothing, personal hygiene products, money

allocations, information on community resources, training and developing independent life skills, health education, and mediation when getting employed on labor market.

Stories from ALTERNATIVA Centre activity

M. is 21 years old and comes from a dysfunctional family – his father died when he was young. His family (his mother and his two other brothers) moved very frequently from one place to another and when M. was 8 years old, his mother went abroad leaving her children with some relatives.

Because of a lack of parental care, M. became rather unsociable and had relations with persons from delinquent environment. When he was 16, M. got a 10-year conviction for committing an offence and served the sentence at the penitentiary from Lipcani. At the beginning of 2007, he was freed before his sentence ended.

In March 2007 M. approached the ALTERNATIVA Centre. Here he was offered psychological counselling and professional orientation. The young man got involved very actively in the centre's life. He participated in different projects run by the centre, and actually became one of the most active volunteers. M. got a lot of new friends. He passed successfully the exams for graduating from secondary school. With the centre's help he took the exams and was admitted to "Alecu Russo" University from Balti, Pedagogy, Psychology and Social Assistance Faculty. At present he is a student in his first year of university. "ALTERNATIVA Centre – says the boy – has offered me a chance to restart my life and I am deeply grateful to the centre's staff for this opportunity".

Social Reintegration Centre for Youth from Calarasi town

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

Assisted beneficiaries – 43
 Placed in Centre – 16
 Assisted in day care regime – 27
Family status:
 Orphans – 13
 Mono-parental – 14
 Deprived – 16
 Professionally oriented – 23
 Employed on labour market – 10
 Victims of human trafficking – 2

Stories from Social Reintegration Centre in Calarasi activity

At the very beginning V. was living in an ordinary family just like many others with a mother, father and two children. But for some time the mother had started to drink. Because of this, the father left the wife and the family and went to another locality where he set up a new family. After a while, the mother died. The father took the children into the new family, but in the new home they were abused and maltreated by their father's new wife.

The children ran away back to their native village. As a result V. was placed in the boarding school in Carpineni and her brother was left with some relatives. Having some health problems, V. was transferred to the boarding school from Drochia. When graduating from school, the girl's aunt (her tutor) has submitted the girl's documents to a professional school for learning the specialty of house painter – all this without girl's will. The young girl has accepted this only because the professional school was offering scholarship and hostel. After graduation, her brother tried to convince her to go abroad for work.

The multi-disciplinary team from the



Centre for Youth has taken over V.'s case from the Guardianship Authority. There was drafted an individual intervention plan. The young girl has benefited from psychological counselling, courses for independent life skill as: skills to eat healthily, to manage money, to take care of herself and the place she lives. Being shy, she was taught how to establish interpersonal relations, how to behave during an employment interview.

As a result of the services given to her, the beneficiary can already all by herself set her strong points and personal needs, changing thus even her attitude towards future. Now she is placed as an apprentice at a confections plant for obtaining a new qualification – the one she really likes.

L. was abandoned when he was 4 months old at the Pediatric Section from the Hospital in Calarasi. His mother left to an unknown location. Subsequently L. found out from a relative that his mother passed away. He knows nothing of his father.

The Pediatric Section became his home

Within Social Reintegration Centres, youth gets the chance to find out what "healthy food" actually means.

and the doctors and medical nurses – his family. L. studied at the Auxiliary School from Calarasi, but he was not capable to adapt himself to the regulation of school hostel, so he continued to live in the hospital. After graduation, he had an unsuccessful attempt to continue his studies at the Professional Polyvalent School from Calarasi.

The young man began a disorganized way of living; he began to hang out in the streets and has actually joint a deviant non-formal group. He had no elementary independent life skills. The single occasional income source was coming from washing cars.

In March L. was placed in the Centre, manifesting from the very beginning a very rebellious, conflict and sometimes even aggressive behaviour. The young man adjusted himself to new conditions with great diffi-

culty as he permanently wanted to go back to the hospital implying different excuses.

As a result of a lot of counselling activities and meetings within the centre, the young man began to adjust himself to the internal order regulation and became more responsible and respectful. If at the very start L. could cook only one single meal (noodles) and did not accept any other type of food, today he is able to cook several simple recipes by himself, which are both diverse and healthy. He is able now to observe rules for personal hygiene and he has even learned how to take care of his clothes and how to keep clean his living place.

At present, L. is employed as a worker at a car repairers. His ambition is to attend some courses to become an auto locksmith.

Maternal Centre ARIADNA from Drochia

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

Assisted couples mother-child – 38
Placed in Centre – 26
Assisted on day care regime – 12
Professional orientation – 9
Concluding the legal documents of beneficiaries – 13

12 women – victims of human trafficking benefited from the following services: individual counselling, concluding of identity documents, obtaining independent life skills, reintegrating in the family (8 cases). With the help of the mayoralty a beneficiary has been offered a place to live.

A story from ARIADNA Centre activity

M. lived together with her mother up till she turned 7 years old. She studied at the boarding school from Cupcini for 10 years. When she was 15 years old her mother died. After having studied for 2 years at the boarding school in Drochia, she entered



the Professional School from Zgurita for getting the skills of a tailor.

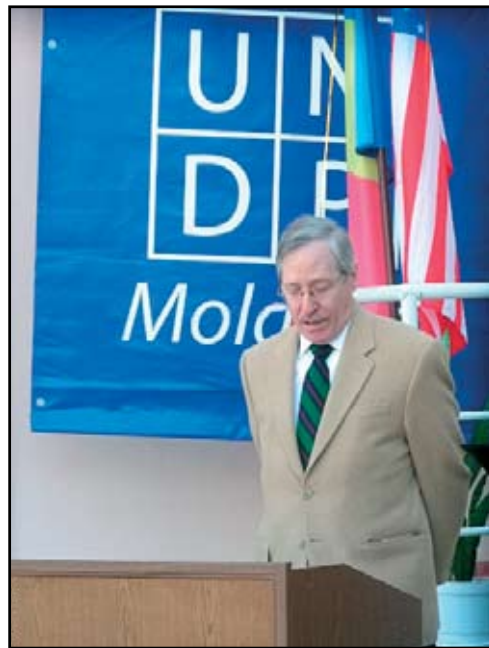
At 18 years old M. left for Moscow together with a friend from Zgurita. In Moscow she met a young man and she got pregnant. M. came back to Moldova where the family doctor advised her to go to "Ariadna" Maternal Centre. In the centre she was offered shelter. M. was in despair and she was intending to leave her child, basing her decision on the fact that she had no one to help and support her and she was really afraid that she would not be able to meet her child's needs. The Centre offered her practical advice and counselling, psychological assistance in the field of child abandon prevention. After giving birth to the child and still staying in the centre, M. got really attached to her baby. At the beginning she learned how to live independently, to manage the money she was receiving for food and to take care of the child.

After 6 months of placement in the centre, M. rented a room – the Maternal Centre paid the rent for the first three months. The woman renting out the room for M. is an old lady who does not work so she agreed to stay with the young child. Thus M. was able to obtain a job staying away from home just for several hours. After her living, the "Ariadna" Centre addressed the mayor and obtained a financial assistance.

Beneficiaries of the ARIADNA Centre and their children live as a close-knit family.

Maternal Centre INCREDERE in Cahul town

His Excellency, Michael D. Kirby, USA Ambassador in Moldova has honored us with His presence at the launch of "Incredere" Centre.



Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

Assisted couples mother-child and pregnant women – 36, inclusively:
 Mothers – 25
 Children – 35
 Pregnant women – 9
 Assisted victims of human trafficking – 9
 Benefited from professional training – 2
 Employed on labour market – 2
 Provided services: shelter, counselling, material and financial assistance.

Stories from INCREDERE Centre activity

N. was brought up in a one parent family with 3 children. The family was living in a single room. The roof of the house was leaking, the walls were mouldy, and the room was poorly furnished, just two beds and one wardrobe. The living conditions caused the mother to send the youngest boy to the boarding gymnasium at Cahul.

Being the oldest child in the family, N. always felt that she was more mature and

more independent. She started her sexual life without knowing too much about contraception as her mother did not even try to discuss this with the daughter, considering that it was too early. Being a student at the technological school from Cahul, she had sexual relations with a boy older than her and as a result she got pregnant. The boy insisted that she had an abortion, but the girl did not want one.

After the child was born, N. began to argue with her mother so she moved away to a rented room. The local social assistant worked with N. and her mother to try and settle the conflict. The mother and the daughter made it up, but the financial crisis and poor living conditions made it impossible for the young mother and her child to get reintegrated into the biological family. The Maternal Centre "Incredere" was a real help out for N. and her child, whom she loved a lot.

With IOM assistance, the roof and the room where N.'s family lived were renovated so the young mother was able to come back to the family. N. was also helped to conclude all necessary identity documents and through LFEA, she was helped in finding a job. At present, the young mother works and is bringing up her child. She has a boyfriend whom she intends to marry. Now she remembers with regrets her initial decision to abandon the child and she is really thankful to her mother and the social assistants who have helped her to recover her self-confidence.

S. lives in a flat with two rooms in a hostel with her mother and elder sister. Because of her mother's immoral way of life and indifference, her sister was raped by one of mother's friends and today she is in a boarding school. Due to the bad and tense mother-daughter relations, S. lived for almost two years in a village in the Cahul rayon, at one of her relatives who helped the girl to graduate from the local gymnasium.

As a result of having a relationship with a boy of the same age, S. got pregnant.

The girl hid the pregnancy and was afraid that her mother would not accept her in the house. She went to "Incredere" Centre where the doctor detected that she was pregnant. During the first days after the child was born, the young girl wanted to abandon the child saying that she did not have the right conditions to bring up a child. The social assistant's work was directed towards child abandon preven-

tion. After a short period of staying with the child, the young mother got very attached to the new-born.

At the same time, activities were carried out with the girl's family so as to settle the conflict between the mother and the daughter. As a result of this mediation S. together with the child were reintegrated into the family. At present S. has some relations with a man who accepted the child.

Maternal Centre PRO-FAMILIA in Causeni town

Statistical data for the period in between January 2006 – October 2007

Assistance on day care basis and residential care regime for:

- 18 mothers
- 22 children
- 4 pregnant women

Out of which:

Professionally trained – 2;

Reintegrated socially and in families – 6

From the category of human trafficking victims, 1 person was assisted in a day care regime. She was offered psychological, social, legal, medical assistance, financial support and also during the reintegration process she was supported to obtain a working place with professional training and to identify a living place in the community.

Stories from PRO-FAMILIA Centre activity

A., a young girl of 24 years old, is the fifth child in the family and at present she is a single mother. Looking for ways to survive and a happy future, she leaves to Ukraine to her elder sister. Over there she enjoyed some happy moment with a young man who left her after several months without even having the chance to find out that he would be a father. A. came back to Moldova, and tries to oppose herself to parents' insistence to abandon the child – "one more mouth to feed". She gets a day jobs so

as to provide for her son, her brother and the 2 alcoholic parents who every evening are asking for the money she earns.

The social assistants from the Centre have identified her and suggested her to come to the Centre together with her son Pavel. At the centre she benefits from the whole range of services: acquires some



skills how to take care and communicate with the child, undertakes a surgery intervention for her son, attends professionalization courses organized by the NALFE to become a plasterer. The child started to go to the kindergarten located in one of the wings of the PRO-FAMILIA Centre.

"I became more self-confident, more

Within Maternal Centres there are beds for mummies and little beds for kids.

courageous. I know and I can open the doors that I need. I am aware that all these successes were obtained thanks to my being in the Maternal Centre and thanks to the kind attitude of the staff from the centre towards us" – A told us when the residential period came to an end.

* * *

A., 24 years old, single mother, gymnasium education. When she was 4 years old, a hereditary disease marked her for the rest of her life. The father leaves the family because of her disability.



She meets Anatolie in the spring of 2006. When he finds out that she is pregnant (he did not want the child), he just could not even imagine his future next to a disabled mother. The young girl's mother disowned her, leaving with her younger brother. Pregnant, with no place to live and with no means of survival, A. decided to go to her sister.

The little girl turned one month when she was identified by the staff from "Pro Familia" Centre. Initially, she was placed for one month in "Casa Marioarei" and when the PRO-FAMILIA Centre was opened, she was the first beneficiary of the shelter services provided by the institution and also one of the most caring mothers placed over there. She loves her little daughter very much and she considers herself happy – this being described in "The Life Story" book and one of the poems she has written while in the centre. Of her own initiative she has re-established her relationship with her mother and sister. At the Centre she has baptized her young child, she is visited by her friends, she is sociable and helpful and also she has organized the baptism of two other children from the Centre. Soon she will leave the centre together with a friend. They will live in hostel room that was offered by the Education Department from Causeni and the Theoretical Lyceum "Alexei Mateevici".

Assistance Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking (ACVT)

The Assistance Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking represents an area meant for persons – victims of human trafficking offenses coming from the Eastern rayons of the Republic of Moldova aiming to offer physical protection and psycho-social assistance so as to reintegrate them into the community.

The Centre provides assistance and protection to human trafficking victims for a period of 3 – 6 months with the possibility of extending this period up to 12 months depending on the physical, psychical and social shape of victims.

Services provided within the Centre

- **Social assistance** – drafting social inquiries, carrying out activities included in the victim's social reintegration plan developed together with the social assistant: mediation of relations with the family and local authorities, re-enrollment in the school, vocational counselling and support for attending a qualification course, mediation for finding a job.
- **Psychological assistance** – individual and group counselling for over-coming and accepting the traffic experience, counselling for family reintegration, counselling focused on problems and emotions so as to adjust oneself to the situation, counselling for collaboration with the investigation bodies, upon need.
- **Legal assistance** – legal counselling and mediation during the relations with the investigation bodies, court and representation in the court during the trial.
- **Medical assistance** – granting first help in case of emergency; referring the cases to specialist doctors.



- **Educational and recreation activities** – aiming to improve the socialization level of the assisted party: group activities led by specialists from the Centre on different subjects regarding life skills.
- **Administrative activities** refer to the living space of the assisted person (the order and cleanliness in the room) and participation in joint activities.

Stages undertaken by a person assisted in the ACVT

The victim of human trafficking comes to the centre based on a written referral note that might be drafted by IOM, La Strada, CPWT, the Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons and other governmental and non-governmental structures that are involved in assistance granting for human trafficking victims.

Victims of human trafficking may be sheltered and can benefit from services offered in the centre only based on a request for a limited period of time.

The initial assessment of the assisted persons is carried out by the psychologist / social assistant from the Centre and should seek, first of all, to assure the basic needs of the persons: food, personal hygiene, rest, security and health. During the following days the person will have meetings with the psychologist, doctor, legal advisor and each of them will assess the situation of the assisted person so as to be able by the end of the first week of stay in the Centre to draft the individual plan for social and professional reintegration of the person.

Assistance will be offered only with person's will and acceptance and it is not going to be conditioned on his/her involvement on criminal proceedings.

The main goal of the ACVT launch is to prepare beneficiaries anew for the autonomous life so as to facilitate their social inclusion under all aspects thus leading to the social and professional integration of persons who had to face human trafficking.

Centre's structure

Administrative component – centre manager office equipped with work-station furniture, telephone and computer.

Social services component

- 2 offices for psychological and legal counselling. The offices are fitted out with work-station furniture offering work premises for the social assistant and psychologist/psycho-pedagogue and are fully equipped with everything that is necessary to carry out individual activities with beneficiaries;
- recreation hall with TV set, computer, tables for didactical activities, chairs, sofa, 2-3 armchairs, radio and tape recorder, video, library.

Residential component

The residential component ensures secure shelter with conditions such as: hygienic principles and respect. The area of the residential component covers 5 dormitories (2 persons per dormitory, ensuring a living area of at least 6 square meters per person), sanitary units, kitchen, and a living hall.

The kitchen is equipped with everything that is necessary for cooking. Young people learn how to cook so as they can subsequently cook without any assistance.

The launch of the Assistance Centre for victims of human trafficking is planned for the spring of 2008.

Sustainability of Maternal Centres and Social Reintegration Centres for Youth

The centre's sustainability and continuity when Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project ends shall be ensured through the following:

- a strong partnership with the local public administration that has offered free of charge premises and can take over some other current expenditures (water, energy, sewerage) or the salary payment for some of the employed staff;
- setting up social enterprises meant to generate own incomes to be used for covering the needs of the centre;
- developing other projects, attracting finance from outside and within the community;
- skills and knowledge of the organisations managing the Centres in such fields as management, psychology, psycho-pedagogy, social, legal and medical assistance, training organisation, fulfillment of activities dealing with professional training, public relations;
- stable partnership with the Department for Social Assistance and Family Protection based on experience and collaboration for developing and implementing projects, as well as the database with socially deprived persons.



The centre's functioning after the project comes to an end will be ensured also through some activities that are going to involve different segments of the population from the communities in some protection actions of deprived persons, charity and fund raising. Fund raising shall cover such actions as campaigns for volunteer worker' recruitment, hot-lines and seed grant campaigns.

Example

Fund raising undertaken by the Maternal Centre "Alternativa" from Drochia

1. Electricity is paid by the Mayor Office.
2. In collaboration with LPA and Public Utility Enterprise "Apa Canal" exemptions have been made for water invoices payment.
3. Material assistance was obtained for beneficiaries from the "Counterpart" NGO (hygiene sets, diapers, bed-sheets).
4. On the occasion of New Year, The Peace Corps volunteer, Ben Resers, together with the students

5. A newsix-month project was implemented in the organisation for the amount of 2,200 euros "Prevention of Human Trafficking" supported by the Embassy of Norway. The project employed a legal advisor who offered legal consultations to beneficiaries from the centre and communities. The telephone and Internet services are being paid for and

the territory from the centre courtyard was fitted out and well equipped.

6. The community also comes with help for beneficiaries (donations of clothing for mothers and children, toys, food products).
7. A social enterprise was launched, a laboratory for ultrasound tests. The lab will generate 2 jobs places and the annual profit is estimated to count for about MDL 150,000 lei. For project's beneficiaries the services of ultrasound tests will be free of charge.



Composition

of the Vocational Formation and Integration Service (VFIS)
for women and youth at social risk

What does VFIS mean?

The idea of a network of services for vocational formation and integration is not really new – until now it was successfully carried out by other projects with foreign funding. The opportunity of the Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project to set up its own network emerged as a need after consulting the findings and activity outcomes obtained during one year by Social Reintegration Centres for Youth as well as based on the analyses of the reports delivered by other stakeholders active on the Moldovan social scene (relevant international organisations, National Agency for Labour Force Employment – NALFE) regarding the employment of vulnerable groups, especially youth employment. These analyses and observations denote a rather high unemployment rate among young people in between 15 and 29 years old.

A job means hope and confidence for tomorrow...



Defining some problems from labour market

A number of key-problems that need some settlement were identified within the permanent analyses carried out by the specialists from NALFE in regards to the phenomena from labor force market. These would be the following:

- high number of working places with low level of productivity and salary payment;

- high rate of unemployment among youth;
- very low rate of participation and employment;
- non-involvement of economic units in the process of labor force professional training and cadres training without taking into account labor market demands;
- insufficient capacities of NALFE structures to grant qualitative services, especially information provision regarding available vacancies and professional orientation;
- economic units' passive participation in presenting the information to NALFE about free vacancies;
- lack of labour force market monitoring and forecasting system.

In these conditions, it is clear that there is a need to have a professional training service that would support the social-economic development process and integration of socially marginalized categories through professional orientation, training and integration services.

For the given purpose, the project decided to set up a network of 10 vocational formation and integration services administered by the NGOs-partners. For a period of two years, these services shall provide several specific services (information provision, professional counselling and mediation on labour market) to a total of 2,000 young persons.

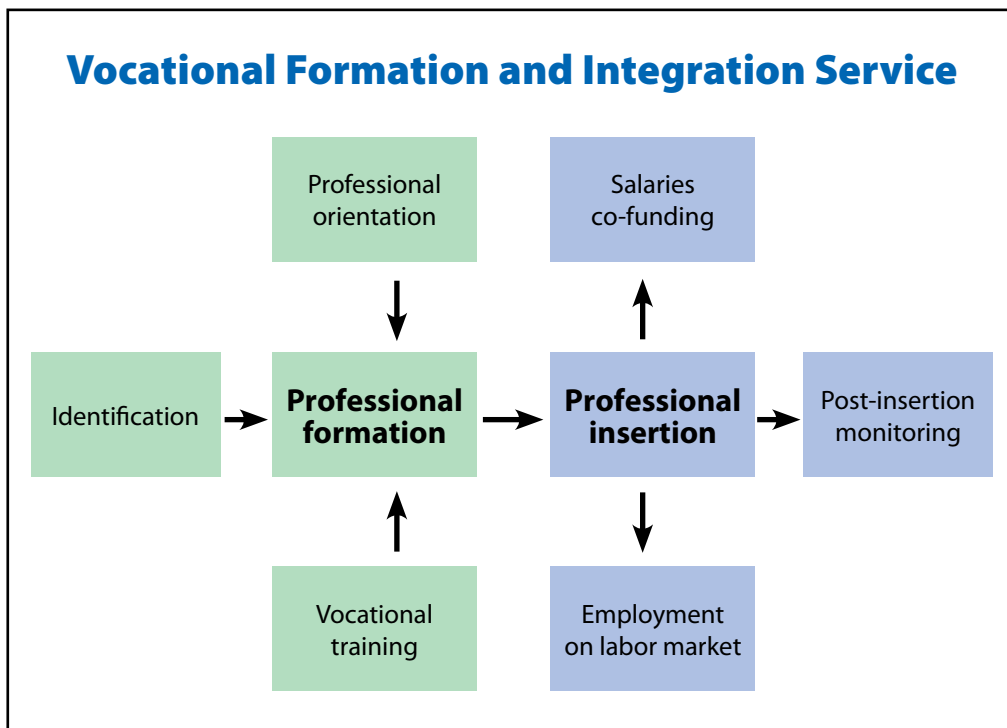
The following categories of young people shall benefit from these services:

- post-institutionalized (orphans or with no parental care);
- without shelter;
- with interrupted educational cycle;
- from deprived families;
- young couples from deprived social-economical environments;
- young single mothers or fathers who are unemployed.

What services will be provided within VFIS?

Services for youth

Information provision about the job market, vacant jobs, possibilities for professional re-qualification, employees' classifi-



cation, legislation from the field, etc.

Professional counselling and orientation, which will assess the potential and the possibilities for professional re/integration.

Financial support for qualification courses depending on the young person’s school option and level but also in line with labour market demands.

Mediation on labour market through relations’ establishment between the young persons and potential employers.

Salaries co-funding: For the purpose of efficiency increase in case of youth re-insertion on labour market and job maintenance for a period of at least 3 months, VFIS shall contribute to the co-funding of salaries for those young persons who meet the following conditions:

1. The employer commits himself/herself to employ with a working contract VFIS beneficiary for a minimum period of one year.
2. The allocated salary shall not be lower than the minimum salary in economy.

In case these conditions are met, VFIS will co/fund the beneficiary’s salary for a period of 3 months since the day the contract was signed.

Services for employers

VFIS proposes the following services to

commercial companies:

- selection, professional training and proposal of young people for employment;
- assistance to employers during the initial period of young persons’ involvement;
- consultancy regarding the legal facilities offered to employers who provide work involvement for marginalized persons.

Service structure and how are beneficiaries approached

VFIS is composed of two major components:

- a) Resource Centre Component, which manages the counseling and information provision services for youth, analyzes labor market, maintains relations with partners, employers and other public stakeholders;

Salaries co-funding in tariff sector (examples)

Basic salary	Project contribution month 1	Project contribution month 2	Project contribution month 3	Monthly average salary	Total project contribution
940 lei	500 lei	500 lei	500 lei	1440 lei	1500 lei
1120 lei	320 lei	320 lei	320 lei	1440 lei	960 lei
1260 lei	180 lei	180 lei	180 lei	1440 lei	540 lei

- b) Mobile Team Component, which identifies beneficiaries, undertakes interventions and mediates on labor market.

On one hand, the vocational formation and integration service adds up to the services provided by the NALFE, which being a static structure has no possibility to search in active way; on the other hand the vocational formation and integration services develop other services, such as analysis and forecast of labour market. In this sense, the major role is played by the Mobile Team, which travels in rural and urban localities so as to find and select young people from the target-group, to inform them about the services they can benefit from and to make

interventions in the favor of the respective young persons; after counseling stage the Mobile Team might offer such services as qualification or re-qualification, mediation on labor market.

Multi-disciplinary team of specialists

The team of a VFIS covers 5 specialists who have been trained in the following fields: psychology, sociology, labour market, social assistance, pedagogy, public administration, legal sciences, political sciences, marketing.

Staff chart

The Resource Centre is led by a multi-disciplinary team composed of:

- Service coordinator
- Psychologist
- Labor market analyst

Mobile Team covering the following specialists:

- Adviser for professional information and orientation (2 units);

The team is led by and subordinates to the Service Coordinator.

NGOs-partners

Vocational formation and integration services are open in ten localities: Ungheni, Hincesti, Soroca, Balti, Causeni, Comrat, Calarasi, and Chisinau. In 2008 the vocational formation and integration services will be launched in two more localities.



Locality	Organisation
Balti	"Modern Woman Honour and Rights" NGO
Calarasi	"Epitrop" NGO
Causeni	Association of Psychologists "Tighina"
Chisinau	"Business Consultancy Centre" PA
Comrat	Gagauzia Women Association
Hincesti	"Association for Human Resources Development" PO
Soroca	"Dacia" NGO
Ungheni	Civic Education Association "Future starts today"



Job
creation

One of the priority directions of Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project activity deals with creation of jobs for project beneficiaries. When talking about creation of jobs, we do not mean the process for employment facilitation on labour market, but the direct generation of some new jobs as a result of project's financial and material investments.

Within Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project we distinguish two main modalities for jobs' generation:

- through social entrepreneurship;
- self employment

With Project's support, the Social Rehabilitation Centre from Calarasi has launched a farm for rabbits' breeding.



Social entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship phenomenon is a relatively new idea for the Republic of Moldova, although it is largely spread out and fully harnessed in Western Europe countries. The notion of "social entrepreneurship" has many different definitions, but the simplest formulation would be the following: **a business that uses the products of its own activity exclusively for social purposes.**

The main ways for social entrepreneurship carrying out are the following:

- through public organisations;
- through business sector;
- through state institutions.

In the specific case of Better Opportu-

nities for Youth and Women Project, the majority of social entrepreneurship activities are undertaken through the public organisations that are project partners. Thus, entrepreneurship activities are carried out both: directly by the NGOs-partners and indirectly, by setting up some separate social enterprises or joint ventures in collaboration with business sector.

The benefits of social entrepreneurship activity are rather different and can refer to the following:

- creation of jobs for project beneficiaries;
- generation of financial means for covering the costs for social reintegration centres' maintenance;
- setting up a base for project beneficiaries' professionalization.

Until now, 5 social enterprises were registered with the help of the our project; three of them – in Soroca, Drochia and Calarasi – already carry out some economic activities and the ones from Carpineni and Causeni are to be launched.

The social enterprises launched by Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project activate in a rather large field. In **Soroca**, there was built a workshop for making items from wood and metal, which was offering 14 new working places for the beneficiaries from the Social Reintegration Centre "Dacia". According to preliminary estimations, the profit generated by this enterprise will reach a yearly total of 120,000 lei and thus will be able to cover almost 40% of centre's maintenance costs. Besides, in the "Dacia" Centre itself a photo-copying service was started with the project's help.

In **Calarasi**, social entrepreneurship activities are more varied. With the project's support a farm for breeding rabbits, a green house and 2 centres for photo-copying services were set up. There are a total of 10 beneficiaries employed in these activities and the annual cumulative profit could reach about 88,000 lei.

The project has granted assistance for setting up a laboratory for ultrasound tests in **Drochia**. The generated social benefits refer to three working places and the annual profit is estimated to be of 180,000 lei. The project beneficiaries will be allowed to use the services of the ultrasound test lab for free.

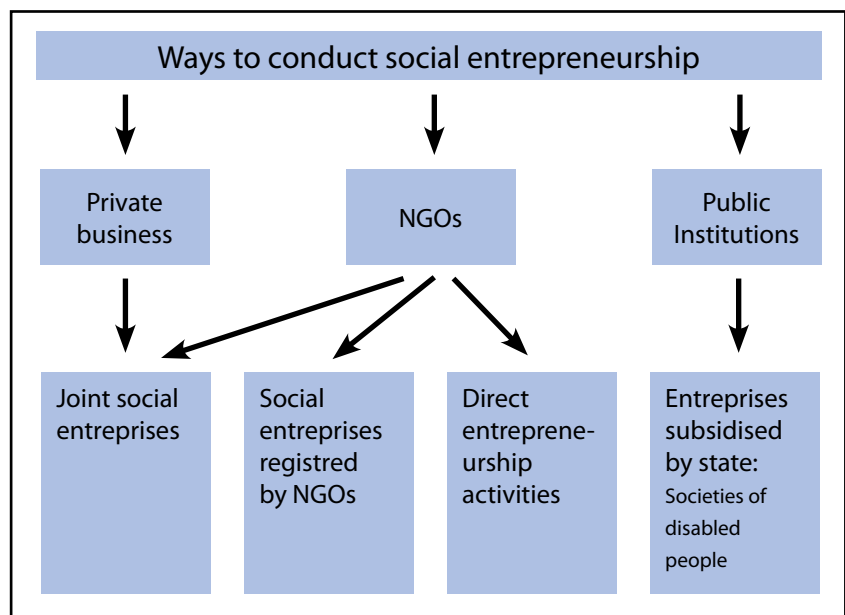
Presently, the social enterprise in **Carpineni** village, Hincesti rayon is getting close to the day when it is going to be launched. The specific characteristic of this enterprise is the fact that it is going to be established in collaboration with a private economic unit in the village. The joint venture will produce hygiene items. Estimated social benefits will be: 5 working places for project beneficiaries and an annual income of about 240,000 lei.

Self employment

Another way of generating jobs that is foreseen by the Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project deals with the support of entrepreneurship activities launched directly by project beneficiaries. The support offered by the project includes specific training on how to launch a business, support for drafting a business plan, equipment, as well technical support already after entrepreneurship activity launch. A successful example is the hairdressers opened in Soroca by one of the beneficiaries of "Dacia" Social Rehabilitation Centre for Youth. This launch offered employment opportunities to other 3 beneficiaries.

With the aim of creating 300 new jobs, the project will offer support for the creation of at least 5 new social enterprises in 2008, will support possibilities for beneficiaries to be self-employed and will continue to collaborate with the private sector so as to increase the number of working places for project beneficiaries.

Social entrepreneurship





Mass-media

helping out SRC

For the purpose of presenting and promoting a positive and accurate image of Better Opportunities for Youth and Women Project and Social Reintegration Centres launched within the project, as well as for ensuring stronger visibility for the activities undertaken by the United Nations Development Programme and the US Agency for International Development, a Communication Strategy for the project was developed.

Besides the multiple activities undertaken in line with the given strategy, which shall not be subject of the given report analysis, further on we will offer just some

articles published in mass-media during the "reporting period", January 2006 – October 2007. These articles shall make complete this report coming up with new details (sometimes rather emotional ones) from the life of Maternal and Youth Centres, from the life of those who have to ask for help and use the services of the respective Centres – not because they are so happy with the life they have, but because they want to find themselves again in this life, to relaunch themselves and to become personalities in this complicated society we are living in.

"Dreptul meu",
February 23, 2007

Centrele maternale, o șansă de consolidare a familiei

Viața plină de lipsuri l-a în-crâncenat pe soțul Svetlanei și el a început să bea. Nu avea un loc de lucru stabil și lucra cu ziua ba la unul, ba la altul. Relațiile între soți s-au deteriorat. Svetlana nu lucra nici ea, pentru că nu avea cu cine-i lăsa pe cei doi copii, de patru ani și de 10 luni. Soțul a devenit violent, a început să o bată. Într-o zi, a bătut-o de a ajuns în spital. Svetlana nu mai dorea să revină acasă, se temea. La spital i s-a recomandat să se adreseze la Centrul maternal „Ariadna” de la Drochia.

La Centru, Svetlanei i s-au acordat servicii de găzduire și îngrijire – ei și copiilor – până avea să ia o decizie pentru viitorul său. A beneficiat de ajutor material lunar pentru procurarea produselor alimentare și igienice. Tot la Centru, asistenții sociali i-au acordat consiliere psihosocială, care să o ajute să facă față problemelor. Cu suportul asistenților sociali s-a încercat restabilirea relațiilor cu familia Svetlanei. În cele din urmă, după trei luni de ședere la Centru, Svetlana a revenit în familie. După care, cu ajutorul părinților soțului și cu ajutorul Centrului „Ariadna”, au cumpărat o casuță, în care s-au mutat și în care locuiesc până în prezent.

Centrul maternal „Ariadna” activează în cadrul proiectului „Oportunități mai bune pentru tineri și femei”, implementat de PNUD Moldova și finanțat de Agenția SUA pentru Dezvoltare Internațională (USAID) la Inițiativa președintelui Bush pentru Programul Antitrafic. Centrul acordă ajutor mamei cu copii și femeilor însărcinate în situații de risc. Femeile care doresc mai pot beneficia de cursuri de calificare profesională și programe de instruire ce le vor ajuta ulterior să-și găsească mai lesne un loc de muncă. Instituția are 10 locuri și activează la capacitate maximă – în momentul vizitării Centrului, acolo se aflau 8 mame și 10 copii.

„Unul dintre cele mai importante



obiective ale Centrului este prevenirea abandonului copilului de către mamă și, ca urmare, prevenirea instituționalizării lui”, spune Simion Sârbu, directorul Centrului „Ariadna”. „Ea poate sta aici o perioadă de până la jumătate de an – timp suficient pentru a se atașa față de propriul copil și, dacă e la primul, a învăța cum să-l îngrijească”.

Viorica locuia la gazdă cu prietenul său și lucra într-o unitate comercială. Când a aflat că e însărcinată, prietenul a dispărut. După ce a născut o fetiță, Viorica a decis să o abandoneze – starea materială grea și lipsa ajutorului din partea părinților au determinat-o să decidă astfel. La maternitate a fost sfătuită să se adreseze la Centrul maternal de la Drochia. Acolo, a beneficiat de întregul set de servicii. Ca urmare a consilierii psihosociale, Viorica și-a schimbat decizia de a abandona copilul. Între timp, o familie din localitate, aflând de existența Centrului

și în particular de situația Vioricăi, și-a exprimat dorința de a-i deveni fetiței nași de botez. Deseori o vizitează la Centru, îi aduc cadouri, merinde. Până va găsi o soluție pentru

viitorul său și al copilului,

Viorica va sta la Centru. Dar deja acum

lucrătorii de

la „Ariadna”

negociază cu

autoritățile

publice locale să i se

găsească un

loc de trai

permanent.

„Pe durata

șederii la Centru, tinerele mame

au posibilitatea să

învețe să ducă un

mod de viață

independent”,

zice Ina Câșlari, coordonator

de servicii

la această instituție. „Ele se ajută una pe alta, învață una de la alta. Iar noi, asistenții sociali, ne străduim să le insuflăm sentimente materne față de copil, iar în cazuri specifice – să-și restabilească legăturile cu familia”.

Un alt caz este cel al Lidiei, care, ca urmare a conflictelor repetate în familie, s-a separat de soțul său. Doi copii au rămas la tata, iar două fetițe, cele mai mici – de 2 ani și de 9 luni – i-a luat ea. A vrut să vină la părinți, însă tatăl i-a zis că locul ei e lângă soț și nu a primit-o. În toiu iernii, ajunsă într-o situație de impas, femeia cu doi copii a plecat la Centrul „Ariadna”. Acolo i s-a dat o cameră, pentru ea și copii. Timp de o săptămână, Lidia a beneficiat de serviciile Centrului. Asistentele sociale au discutat atât cu Lidia, cât și cu soțul ei. În cele din urmă, ambii soți și-au dat seama că familia este cel mai important lucru pe care îl au și au reîntregit familia.

În afară de centre maternale, proiectul „Oportunități mai bune pentru tineri și femei” a mai lansat și centre de reintegrare socială pentru tineri. Acestea au fost create pentru ajutorarea tinerilor lipsiți de grija părintească și a absolvenților internatelor. Serviciile pe care le acordă centrele pentru tineri variază în funcție de nevoile copiilor. Unii vor să învețe o meserie, alții vor să facă niște cursuri, iar alții, pur și simplu, nu au unde locui. Cu fiecare dintre ei, lucrătorii sociali poartă discuții ca să stabilească care ar fi ajutorul de care au nevoie.

În Moldova, au fost deja create 4 centre de reintegrare socială pentru tineri și un centru maternal cu suportul financiar al USAID. Pentru a asigura continuitatea și durabilitatea proiectului, centrele sunt administrate de ONG-uri locale. În total, în cadrul proiectului vor fi create 10 centre de reintegrare socială; aproximativ 600 de tineri și mame cu copii vor beneficia anual de serviciile acestor centre. Nu este mult dacă raportăm la numărul total de circa 12 000 de copii din cadrul internatelor sau la numărul copiilor din familiile vulnerabile, care este mult mai mare. Dar, cel puțin, 600 de oameni nu au ajuns în stradă și au în prezent un sprijin.

Mai nou pentru Moldova, centrele de reintegrare socială



La Centrul maternal de la Drochia se simt confortabil și mamele, și copiii

În Moldova există o statistică foarte tristă: 95 la sută din copiii plasați în internate au un părinte sau chiar pe ambii (datele Ministerului Educației). Din anumite motive, acești copii își duc traiul departe de părinți – fie că e vorba de sărăcia extremă a familiilor lor, fie că e vorba de părinți alcoolici, fie că aceștia renunță la copii încă din pruncie. Dar cert este că, după absolvirea internatului, anual, mii de băieți și fete se pomenesesc într-o situație foarte gravă – fără casă, fără o profesie, fără un loc de lucru. Dacă am spune că absolvenții școlilor internat fac parte din cea mai vulnerabilă categorie a populației, am spune un adevăr greu de contestat.

Centrul de la Ungheni, primul în țară

Cînd tatăl Vioricăi a fost judecat și închis în penitenciar, mama șomeră a hotărît s-o dea pe fiică la Gimnaziul internat din Ungheni. Viorica (numele este schimbat) se vedea cu mama o dată în citeva săptămîni, uneori nu se întâlneau cu lunile. După absolvire, a revenit acasă, într-o cameră de cămin de 9 m.p., neîncălzită în timpul iernii, cu mobilier sărăcăcios. Între timp, tatăl reveni din închisoare și o îndesi cu alcoolul. Mama, la fel. Părinții o observau pe fiică doar cînd trebuia de porăit prin casă. Uneori, nu mîncă cu zilele. Tatăl era brutal cu ea, mama era pur și simplu indiferentă. Desele certuri o afectau pe tînără.

Dorea să fugă de acasă, oriunde, deja se gîndea să plece la lucru în străinătate, deși auzise de riscurile traficului de ființe umane. Dar în decembrie anul trecut, la recomandarea directorului internatului în care a învățat, Viorica s-a adresat la proaspăt deschisul Centrul de reintegrare socială pentru tineri «Credo» din Ungheni și a fost primită. La Centru a găsit o atitudine grijulie din partea asistenților sociali – a beneficiat de cazare, asistență psihosocială, instruire de deprinderi de viață. «Am făcut și cursuri de cusătorie, zice Viorica. Cu ajutorul asistenților sociali de la Centru, m-am angajat la un atelier de confecții din Ungheni. Am salariu, adun bani pentru o cameră în cămin. Pînă atunci, voi sta la Centru».

Centrul de reintegrare socială pentru tineri «Credo» este o realizare a proiectului «Oportunități mai bune

pentru tineri și femei», implementat de PNUD Moldova cu finanțarea Agenției SUA pentru Dezvoltare Internațională (USAID) la Inițiativa Președintelui Bush pentru Programul Antitrafic. A fost creat pentru ajutorarea tinerilor lipsiți de grija părintească și a absolvenților internatelor. Capacitatea de cazare a centrului este de 12 locuri, dar de multe alte servicii oferite aici pot beneficia și tineri din regiune care nu se confruntă cu problema spațiului locativ, dar au o stare socială grea. Optzeci de tineri au beneficiat de serviciile instituției în primele 9 luni de activitate a acesteia.

«Pe durata șederii la Centru, beneficiarii au posibilitatea să învețe să ducă un mod de viață independent, spune Tatiana Țicu, coordonator de servicii la această instituție. Ei învață să gestioneze banii, pe care îi primesc pentru procurarea produselor alimentare și igienice, a îmbrăcămîntei. Acest lucru, dar și altele, pe care le învață la Centru, îi vor ajuta să capete deprinderi de viață».

La Cărpineni vin și tineri din alte sate

Surorile Aurica și Irina au absolvit școala profesională din Cărpineni, Hîncești, – una a obținut diploma de croitoreasă, alta de brutăreasă. Tatăl fetelor a plecat la muncă în Rusia, dar de jumătate de an nu mai scrie nici un rînd, nu trimite nici un ban. Mama nu este în stare să întrețină cei cinci copii. Centrul de reintegrare socială pentru tineri «Amigo» din satul Cărpineni le-a oferit fetelor un set întreg de servicii, inclusiv de găzduire. În această vară Aurica a fost ajutată să se angajeze la o fabrică de confecții din Ialoveni, iar Irina a devenit ajutor de bucătar la o grădiniță din Chișinău.

Liuba Balan, directorul Centrului «Amigo», susține că majoritatea copiilor provin din familii sărace, în care pîinea cu unt este un produs foarte rar consumat. «Serviciile pe care le acordăm – spune dînsa – variază în funcție de nevoile copiilor. Unii vor să învețe o meserie, alții vor să facă niște cursuri, iar alții pur și simplu nu au unde locui. Cu fiecare dintre ei discutăm ca să vedem cum am putea să-i ajutăm».

La Centrul de la Cărpineni vin și tineri din alte sate din raion. Ruslan e originar din Dancu. Pînă va împlini 18 ani și va putea să se angajeze în cîmpul muncii, el va sta la Centru. Pînă atunci,

mai dă o mînă de ajutor «prin gospodăria» Centrului, iar de curînd a făcut cursuri de șoferie. Permisul de conducere îl va primi doar odată cu împlinirea majoratului.

Centrele maternale

În afară de centre de reintegrare socială pentru tineri, proiectul PNUD Moldova a deschis și un Centru maternal la Drochia. Această instituție acordă ajutor mamei cu copii și femeilor însărcinate în situații de criză. Obiectivul centrului maternal este prevenirea separării copilului de mamă și, ca urmare, prevenirea instituționalizării lui. Prin admiterea la centru, mamei în dificultate i se acordă o șansă de consolidare a atașamentului față de copil. Aici ele se bucură de servicii de cazare și îngrijiri medicale, de asistență psihosocială. Mamele și gravidele sînt ajutate să-și continue școala, să restabilească legăturile cu familia, iar ulterior – să beneficieze de cursuri de calificare profesională și de programe de instruire ce le vor ajuta să-și găsească un loc de muncă.

Olga a venit la Centrul maternal din Drochia pentru că soțul, un bețivan fără pereche, o bătea și o pune la munci grele chiar și cînd era însărcinată. «Aici, la Centru, zice ea mă simt mai bine decît acasă – lucrătorii sociali au grijă de mine și de copilul meu». Nina, o altă beneficiară, se destăinuie: «S-a întîmplat că am revenit din Italia însărcinată și tata m-a alungat de la casă. La Centru am găsit a doua casă – îngrijesc de copil și învîț de croitoreasă».

Centrele lansate de PNUD sînt amplasate în localuri aflate la balanța primăriei, majoritatea grădinite părăsite. «În acest sens, zice Viorel Albu, directorul proiectului «Oportunități mai bune pentru tineri și femei», am conlucrat cu autoritățile publice locale, obținînd localurile în folosință gratuită pe un termen de 15-30 de ani. Mijloace considerabile au fost investite în renovarea spațiilor, care însă ar rămîne simple cheltuieli de bani, dacă nu ar fi abnegația asistenților sociali, psihologilor, lucrătorilor medicali. Ei devin și mama, și tata tinerilor care vin la Centre».

Pentru a asigura continuitatea proiectului, Centrele sînt administrate de ONG-uri locale. Pînă la această oră, au fost lansate trei Centre de reabilitare pentru tineri – la Ungheni, Cărpineni și Soroca – și un Centru maternal la Drochia. Încă patru instituții de acest fel vor fi deschise, pînă la sfîrșitul acestui an, la Edineț, Cahul, Căușeni și Călărași. Cu suportul financiar al USAID, în Moldova vor fi create 10 centre de reintegrare socială; aproximativ 600 de tineri și mame cu copii vor beneficia anual de serviciile acestora. Nu este mult raportat la numărul total de circa 12 000 de copii din cadrul internatelor; este și mai puțin raportat la numărul copiilor din familii vulnerabile. Dar cel puțin 600 de persoane vor simți alături un umăr de care se pot sprijini la nevoie, vor ști că soarta lor poate fi modelată de ei înșiși și vor învăța cum să facă acest lucru.

Pasul de la disperare la reușită

Centrele de reabilitare socială readuc tinerilor zâmbetul pe buze

Centrele lansate de PNUD în cadrul proiectului "Oportunități mai bune pentru tineri și femei" sunt amplasate în localuri aflate în gestiunea primăriei. Proiectul a conlucrat fructuos cu autoritățile publice locale, obținând sediile în folosință gratuită pe un termen ce variază între 15 și 30 de ani.

Cu suportul financiar al USAID în Moldova, au fost create deja opt centre de reintegrare socială, cel de al nouălea este pe cale de constituire. Un număr total de aproximativ 600 de tineri și mame cu copii beneficiază anual de serviciile centrelor.



Andrei și Petru, aflați la Centrul de reabilitare de la Călărași, așteptau să vină mai repede toamna, ca să înceapă să învețe la școala de meserii din localitate.

Ambii vor să devină lăcătuși auto. „E o meserie practică, zic ei, aproape într-un glas. Ne plac mașinile, pricepem câte ceva în motor, dar numai așa, pe deasupra. La școală vom învăța toate cele necesare pentru a repara o mașină”. Înainte de a veni la Centrul de la Călărași, ambii prieteni au stat la o altă instituție de acest fel, aflată la Cărpineni. Cum însă la Cărpineni nu este o școală de lăcătuși auto, ei au fost referiți la Călărași.

Nadia a crescut numai cu mama, iar pe tata nu l-a văzut niciodată, deși știe că este în viață. Mama a decedat în urma unei hemoragii când Nadia avea doar opt ani. Tutela i-a fost oferită bunicii, însă vârsta înaintată a determinat-o pe bunica să o dea pe Nadia la Casa de copii orfani „Preafericitul Iosif” din Chișinău.

Nadia a simțit totdeauna lipsa căldurii materne, deși condițiile de trai în orfelinat erau foarte bune.

După absolvirea gimnaziului, Nadia s-a înscris la Școala profesională de la Călărași, urmând specialitatea de bucătar. Totuși, fără o sursă sigură de existență, fără o susținere din partea familiei, Nadiei îi venea greu să se descurce. „Elevii din școală, chiar dacă stăteau în cămin, aveau o familie, plecau la sfârșitul săptămânii acasă, zice cu amărăciune Nadia. Eu nu aveam unde pleca”. În cele din urmă, la recomandarea directorului școlii, Nadia s-a adresat la Centrul de reintegrare socială pentru tineri din Călărași.

Centrul i-a oferit cazare, asistență psiho-socială, sfaturi practice și, în general, aici a avut parte de o atitudine părintească din partea asistenților sociali.

„Copiii care vin la noi fac parte dintr-un grup vulnerabil, destul de complicat, afirmă Aliona Grulea, coordonatorul de servicii de la această instituție. Lipsiți de grija părintească, mulți dintre ei se închid în sine, devin apatici, uneori chiar agresivi. Noi ne străduim să le compensăm, pe cât e posibil, lipsurile de care au avut parte. Întâlnind aici o atitudine grijulie, ei se schimbă, devin mai sociabili, treptat își găsesc un rost în viață”.

Centrul de reintegrare socială pentru tineri de la Călărași este unul din rezultatele activității proiectului „Oportunități mai bune pentru tineri și femei”, implementat de Programul Națiunilor Unite pentru Dezvoltare (PNUD) și finanțat de Agenția SUA pentru Dezvoltare Internațională (USAID) la Inițiativa Președintelui Bush pentru Programul Antitrafic. Centrul a fost creat pentru ajutorarea tinerilor lipsiți de grija părintească și a absolvenților internatelor. Capacitatea de cazare a centrului este de 13 locuri. Dar de serviciile „de zi” ale centrului pot beneficia și alți tineri din comunitate. Centrul și-a deschis ușile în martie 2007 și de atunci 33 de tineri au beneficiat de serviciile acestuia.

Pe durata aflării la Centru tinerii sunt învățați să ducă un mod de viață independent – să gestioneze banii, pe care îi primesc pentru procurarea produselor alimentare, să aibă grijă de igiena personală, de îmbrăcăminte. Într-un cuvânt, tinerii capătă deprinderi de viață.

Cu ajutorul asistenților sociali de la Centru, pe timpul

verii Nadia a fost angajată în calitate de ajutor de bucătar la tabăra pentru copii de la Sadova; tot acolo a făcut și practica de producere. „Acum, spune Marcela Stoian, asistentă socială la Centrul de la Călărași, Nadia este cu totul alt om. L-a apărut zâmbetul pe buze, și-a făcut prieteni”.

La tabăra de la Sadova am găsit o față veselă și plină de viață. „Aici e bine, zice Nadia, – lucrez, mă odihnesc. Îmi place profesia de bucătar – cel mai mult îmi place să gătesc copturi și chifle. Avem în tabără peste 300 de copii, păi lor le trebuie mâncare, nu glumă! Iar azi am o bucurie – e ziua salariului!” La despărțire, Nadia ne-a rugat: „Dacă vă duceți la Centru, să-i transmiteți salutări Mariei, prietena mea cea mai bună. Spuneți-i că mi-i dor de ea, poate vine vreodată în vizită?”

Maria s-a împrietenit cu Nadia chiar din prima zi de aflare la Centru. Din anul 2000, de când a murit mama ei, Maria a tot umblat din internat în internat – Cărpineni, Drochia, câțiva ani a stat la o mătușă, dar și mătușa o ducea foarte greu, îngrijind de patru copii. Maria își dădea seama prin câte lipsuri trecea familia mătușei sale și o ajuta cât putea la gospodărie. Într-o zi, vestea despre Centrul de reabilitare socială de la Călărași a sosit ca o salvare. Maria a fost primită la Centru. Aici a beneficiat de consiliere psihologică, a căpătat deprinderi de viață independentă: să se alimenteze sănătos, să gestioneze corect banii, să-și îngrijească locuința, să stabilească relații cu semenii de-ai săi.

Îndrumată de lucrătorii Centrului, recent a început să urmeze un curs de cusătorie la fabrica textilă din localitate. „Abia aștept să încep să lucrez, zice Maria. Îmi place să cos, dar vreau să devin profesionistă – poate chiar modelieră vestită”.

Proiectul „Oportunități mai bune pentru tineri și femei” a deschis în Moldova cinci Centre de reabilitare socială pentru tineri: Călărași, Soroca, Ungheni, Edineț și Cărpineni, Hâncești. Împreună cu Centrele pentru tineri, în cadrul aceluiași proiect au fost lansate și trei Centre maternale. Aceste instituții acordă ajutor mamelor cu copii și femeilor însărcinate din familii social vulnerabile. Unul din obiectivele centrelor maternale este prevenirea abandonării copilului de către mamă. La centru, tinerele mame obțin îngrijiri medicale, asistență psiho-socială și, bineînțeles, cazare și hrană. Beneficiarele sunt ajutate să-și restabilească legăturile cu familia, iar ulterior ele pot urma programe de instruire ce le vor ajuta să-și găsească un loc de muncă.



A Step from Despair to Success

Social Reintegration Centres Bring Smiles Back to Young People's Faces

For a few years, Nadia grew up only with her mother. She never met her father, though she knows he's alive. Then, Nadia's mother passed away as a result of a hemorrhage when Nadia was only eight years old. The girl's grandmother took custody briefly, but because of her age, wasn't able to handle raising a child. Nadia was forced, then, to be placed in the Blessed Joseph orphanage in Chisinau.



Nadia always felt the lack of maternal warmth, even though the living conditions at the orphanage were very good.

Upon graduation from gymnasium, Nadia was enrolled in a professional cooking school in Calarasi. But without a stable income and family care, Nadia had ongoing problems. "The students, even if they stayed in the dormitories, had families, and went home for the weekends," Nadia said bitterly. "I did not have a place to go."

Finally, at the recommendation of school principal, Nadia came to the Social Reintegration Centre for Youth in Calarasi. The Centre offered her housing, psychological counseling, and practical advice. At the Centre, she experienced a real parental attitude, thanks to the Centre's social assistants.

"The children who get here are part of vulnerable group, a very difficult one," said Aliona Grulea, a services coordinator from the Centre. "Lacking parental care, many of them isolate themselves, and experience apathy and aggression. We try to do our best to compensate for the losses they have had in the past. As the students experience a warm and caring attitude, they start to change, becoming more sociable and finding more sense in their lives."

The Social Reintegration Centre for Youth in Calarasi is one of the activities of the Better Opportunities for Women and Youth Project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under President's Bush Anti-Human Trafficking Initiative. The Centre was created to assist young people who lack parental care as well as boarding schools graduates. The Centre can house 13 young people. Youth from the community can also benefit from the Centre's 'day' services. The Centre opened in March,

2007, and 33 young people have benefited from its services to date.

During their stay in the Centre, young people have an opportunity to learn to live independently. They learn how to manage the money they receive to buy food, to take care of their hygiene, and to buy clothes. In short, they acquire basic life skills.

With the help of social assistants from the Centre, during the summer Nadia was employed as a cook's assistant at the children's summer camp in Sadova, where she also had her professional practice. Marcela Stoian, social assistant from the Calarasi Centre, said, "Today, Nadia is a totally different person. She always has a smile on her face and she has made friends."

At the summer camp in Sadova, we found a happy girl, full of life. "It is very nice here," said Nadia. "I work and have time to rest. I like the cooking specialty – most of all I like making pies and cookies. We have over 300 children at the camp and they need food, no joke! And today I had a happy moment – it's pay day!" Nadia continued, "If you go to the Centre, give my best regards to Maria, my best friend. Tell her that I miss her and maybe she can pay me a visit some time?"

Maria made friends with Nadia from the very first day of Nadia's stay at the Centre. Beginning in 2000, when her mother passed away, Maria was shuttled from one boarding school to another – Carpineni, Drochia, and several years spent at her aunt's house, but the aunt lived in poverty herself, raising four children. Maria was aware of the fact that her aunt's family lives in poverty and was helping with housework. When Maria found out about the Social Rehabilitation Centre in Calarasi, it was a blessing. Maria was accepted by the Centre. There, she benefited from psychological counseling, acquired independent life skills, including eating right, managing money, keeping a clean house, and establishing healthy relationships with peers.

Being guided by the Centre's employees, she recently started a tailoring course at a textile factory in the neighbourhood. "I can't wait to start working," said Maria. "I like sewing, but I want to become a real professional – maybe even a famous fashion designer."

Better Opportunities for Women and Youth Project established five Social Reintegration Centres for Youth: Calarasi, Soroca, Ungheni, Edinet and Carpineni, Hincesti. Along with the Youth Centres, three Maternal Centres were opened as part of the same project. These institutions provide assistance to mothers with children and pregnant women from socially vulnerable families. One of the Maternal Centres' objectives is prevention of child abandonment by the mothers. At the Centre, young mothers receive medical care, psychological assistance, as well as accommodation and meals. The beneficiaries are assisted to reestablish connections with the family. After that, they can be enrolled into various training Programmes that would help them find jobs.

The Centres, launched by UNDP Moldova, are located on properties managed by local municipalities. The Project efficiently cooperated with the local public authorities, obtaining the Centre sites for free for 15-30 years. With financial support from USAID, eight Social Reintegration Centres have been created, and a ninth will open soon. A total of almost 600 young people and young mothers with children benefit from the Centres' services each year.

