

Partnerships for the future

...The most important and efficient tool in achieving our short-term and long-term objectives is partnership, where the general rule is communication, understanding and mutual complementing. It is in close cooperation with our partners that we managed to address the expectations of many children deprived of parental care, families that received moral and financial support, young people who still find it difficult to cope independently and be successful.

I am convinced that the expertise and resources provided by our team to the state authorities of the Republic of Moldova in the reform of the child social protection and care system, through commitment and mutual accountability, will transform the issues that seem to be impossible in obvious achievements. The safety of our fellow citizens and, especially, of our children depends on us. Together, we will build a future full of dignity and well-being that we deserve, as a country and as present and future citizens of our country – the Republic of Moldova.

*Director of EveryChild Moldova,
Stela GRIGORAS*



AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2008-2009

EveryChild Moldova continued promoting the right of the child to grow up in a loving family or in a family-like environment. Our priorities continue to be the reduction of the use of residential institutions for children in difficulty by implementing alternative social services and demonstrating the efficiency of family support in the community, targeting social assistance to the poorest and consolidating the capacity and confidence of children and the community in their own forces to control their own future.

Reform of the social assistance system

Targeting social assistance to the poorest population, including children, by providing them with the opportunity to stay in the family, has been one of the areas that EveryChild Moldova set as a priority in the last three years. In 2007, 28% of children in Moldova lived below the poverty level, while 3% lived in extreme poverty. To stop these indicators and improve the situation, the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child, with support of EveryChild Moldova and Oxford Policy Management, launched the reform of the social assistance system, the key elements being the review, development and implementation of governmental policies that would increase the efficiency of social assistance, including the quality of social service delivery. The most important documents developed in the *“Support in the Delivery of Efficient and Sustainable Social*

Assistance Services” Project, involving the civil society and beneficiaries in addition to the state authorities were the National Strategy for the Development of the Integrated Social Service System, the Law on Social Support, the Law on Social Services, the Referral Mechanism, the Supervision Mechanism, the Regulations of the Social Assistance Service, the Training Strategy for staff employed in social assistance, the Minimum Quality Standards for the Foster Care Service, etc. Most of these documents were approved by the Parliament, Government or Ministry, became operational and implemented. At the same time, the MSPFC was supported in developing and implementing a Communication Strategy, which increased the profile and visibility of the institution, giving it more authority and efficiency in promoting social assistance policies.

I am 15 and I study in the 9th form. I have been in the Cahul boarding-school for 9 years and I can say that this is now my home. I will graduate this year and I would like to go to the Medical College, but I envisage great material difficulties. Due to the fact that the Project on reorganisation of the residential-school builds social apartments for children like me, I can be sure that I will have a place to live and will not be permanently concerned about what I am going to eat today or tomorrow. I will have the possibility to learn the desired profession and build a happy future, which I could not do without the support of this project. ”

Irina

Reform of the residential childcare system

Since institutional care continues to be the predominant form of care provided by the state despite the carried out reform actions, EveryChild engaged to develop and provide for dissemination a model of reorganisation of a residential institution that would address the child as a personality and respect his/her right to grow in a family environment. Thus, the reorganization of Cahul residential-school in a complex of social services has continued. It will consist of a temporary placement centre for 25 places, for children in difficulty, 8 social apartments for graduates of the residential-school, who are orphans or have lost any connection with their biological family, and a daycare centre for children who are in the services and for children from the community.

In the last year, the efforts of the two projects implemented by EvC - *Reorganisation of Cahul residential-school and Support to graduates of the residential-school in the social integration* process focused mainly on the reintegration of children in to their biological families; integration of all children in to mainstream schools and constant support provided to them in this process; preparation, empowerment and support of young graduates in their integration in to the society; prevention of institutionalisation and development of services planned to be created in the complex. An essential part of the activity has focused on preparing the staff, retraining them in the delivery of new services and holding an active and efficient campaign of promotion, advocacy and fundraising to support the reorganisation process. Cahul institution is the first reorganised residential institution of the 68 that were registered in 2007.



“ We miss our parents, we cannot see them very often, because they live too far from the residential-school. When they are with us, we can help them, talk to them. We miss our home. ”
lonel and Alina

Prevention of infant abandonment

Young children at risk of abandonment or who have been abandoned are the group of children “forgotten” by the existing state policies. The lack of co-operation between health and social assistance, the treatment of abandonment at birth as a medical problem leads to the fact that at least 300 young children are deprived of the right to a family, not to mention the serious consequences of institutionalisation, which, according to the studies, affect, first of all, the brain of these babies. In an attempt to identify the causes for child abandonment at birth, to establish the measures that need to be taken at local and national level, EveryChild launched in 2007 the implementation of two projects in Chisinau and Ungheni „Prevention of abandonment at birth” aiming at reducing the number of abandoned children between 0 and 3 years old these localities and at developing patterns of support services for mothers and children at risk.

In Ungheni, EveryChild concentrated its efforts during the last year on building the skills of local authorities at community and raion level, of the staff of maternity hospital and of the Parent-and-Baby Placement Centre, opened in Cornesti, in the prevention of child abandonment at birth, the protection and reintegration of mother-and-baby couples identified at risk of abandonment. The project team also supported public authorities in the development of financial mechanisms for the integration of services in the structure of local administration. Thus, starting with January 2009, the

funding of the placement centre for parent-and-baby couples was taken over at the 100% level.

In Chisinau, the Psycho-Social Assistance Service was established in the republican maternity hospital, on the basis of the multidisciplinary team created to prevent cases of abandonment at birth. The level of medical staff’s awareness on psycho-social aspects of abandonment and the capacity to intervene in supporting mothers at risk of abandonment was raised through continuous trainings and technical assistance provided by the project. The republican maternity hospital was supported in the consolidation of tools and methods developed for the prevention of abandonment in the institution and in the development of partnerships with various stakeholders at national level. The skills of the staff of the Parent-and-Baby Social Apartment from Chisinau were also built and a supervision mechanism for improvement of case management was created.

The implementation of the referral mechanism of cases of abandonment at raion and national level was finalised in both projects, and the positive practice was taken over and integrated in to the policies developed by the line Ministry, such as the National Strategy for the development of the integrated social services system. Due to donors’ support, it was possible to build playgrounds for children and their mothers placed in the two centres in Ungheni and Chisinau.



“ When I came here, I was astonished and I thought: “Oh, my God does something like this exist? I wouldn’t believe if somebody told me about this centre. . . . When I feel bad or I don’t know something, I go to the social worker. Once a week we have sessions with the psychologist and discuss a lot of interesting things with her. She wants us to feel well here and to respect each other. She also teaches us how to communicate with children. **”**

Beneficiary of the Parent and Baby Social Accomodation

“ The boys who are placed in to our family found out that their father was somewhere in Floresti. They took the bicycles and went to search him without telling me anything. When they came back in the evening, they told me that they had found their father drunk; he took their money and sent them to buy vodka. They said that they had stopped at a Crucifix and prayed to God that I received them back. They did a lot of pranks, but recently, the eldest boy Gheorghe washed the dishes without me telling him to do so. I had come from work tired and left the dishes unwashed. I went to bed and in the morning I found everything washed and arranged. I praised them both. I was very proud for them, maybe even prouder than I was for my own children. They were so glad that we all started crying. This is how people change if they receive love and are caressed and encouraged. ”

Foster carer, Soroca raion

Development of integrated social services for the child and family

The need to integrate social services in a unique system that will ensure the prevention, limitation and elimination of temporary or permanent effects of situations generated by poverty and increased vulnerability, which lead to child separation from the family, has been promoted by EveryChild since 2006 when the “*Development of integrated social services for the child and family*” Project was launched in Soroca raion. Today, this is realised by central authorities and is to become of paramount priority of local authorities in the following years. The integration of social services for children and families in Soroca involved the integration both at inter-sector policy and programme level, and at the level of intervention mechanisms/structures, social services, unification of methodologies. Besides, the project team has also developed a package of new services focused mainly on prevention of abandonment and institutionalisation and ensuring of the child’s right to a family.

The directions of activity in 2008 – 2009 continued to be focused on improving the child protection system at raion level. The skills of local authorities, especially, of the SAFPD, have been built in the delivery of Family Support and Reintegration Services, foster care. The Gate - Keeping Commission and the Network of community social assistants have also received technical assistance. Starting with January 2009, the Gate-keeping System and the developed services have been integrated methodologically and financially in to the package of services provided by the local public authority and are part of the child protection system.

Tiraspol Family Counseling Centre

The high level of poverty, the economic collapse, the underdeveloped social protection system, the limited access to education, healthcare services and the psychological shock caused by these combined factors generate crisis of family values affecting its integrity and cohesion. This creates a feeling of despair and feebleness that makes parents divorce, leave abroad, etc. Under such circumstances, children are the most affected, because they often lack elementary life conditions and are subject to risks that alter and mutilate their personality. While the category of children at risk used to cover children placed in residential institutions, today new vulnerable groups are identified: children who are exploited physically and sexually, trafficked and exploited through labour, deprived of parental care of parents who are abroad, etc. *The Family Counseling Centre* opened in Tiraspol in 2005 focuses, first of all, on the work with

families with children at risk facing psycho-social problems as a result of poverty, abuse, etc. and requiring support to prevent child separation from the family. Another important direction is the work with institutionalised children and their families to ensure reintegration.

The specialists of the centre were working on the creation of a family support network at local level, supporting and stimulating governmental structures and civil society of Tiraspol to take over and integrate viable procedures focused on an individual approach in the settlement of cases with the risk of abandonment or reintegration with the biological family. At the same time, psycho-social assistance services provided in the centre for children at risk of abandonment and their families were consolidated and efficient work methodologies and procedures established.

Advocacy and communication to support the implementation of the reform

In the financial year 2008 - 2009, communication and advocacy activities were aimed at maintaining the commitment of decision-makers to continue the reforms launched both in the social assistance system and in the residential childcare system. The awareness raising of society of the need to raise children in the family and of the negative effects of institutionalisation has continued. The media partners, especially

Radio Moldova, have played an important role in the promotion and implementation of social assistance policies for children and families, by broadcasting the „Together for the Future” programme. The advocacy and fundraising campaign for the reorganisation of Cahul residential-school called “You Build the Future” was carried out in cooperation with our partners at local and central level in this period.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2008-2009

■ One of the most important achievements in 2008 within the “Support in the Delivery of Efficient and Sustainable Social Assistance Services” Project was the approval by the Moldovan Parliament of the Law on Social Support. Monthly around 16,000 households receive financial support under the new legislation implemented by MSPFC in cooperation with EveryChild. Other achievements of the project are the approval of policies and by-laws, such as the National Programme for the development of the integrated social service system, the Referral Mechanism, Regulations of the Community Social Service.

■ For the first time in the country, the educational process was separated from social protection in Cahul residential childcare system. All children from Cahul residential-school go to community schools, and a Placement Centre for children without parental care was built in place of the old school. The Placement Centre consists of 6 family modules for 25 children. 47 children have been reintegrated with their biological or extended families. 8 social apartments are being built for graduates of the institution who do not have parents or have lost any connection with their biological or extended families. Social apartments will start operation in 2010.

■ The positive practices developed in Ungheni and Chisinau on prevention of infant abandonment, including the creation of the Placement Centre in Ungheni and Social Apartment in Chisinau for mothers at risk of abandoning their infants contributed to the improvement of the situation in these two regions, as well as at national level by integrating the obtained experience into the national policies. This is the mechanism of referral of cases with the risk of infant abandonment developed and established within lo-

cal authorities with the involvement of the healthcare institution, social assistance department, community social assistant, non-governmental sector and other agencies. Currently, the infant abandonment in the hospital is no longer the problem of only the healthcare institution, all cases at risk of abandonment identified at community, raion or municipal level are referred to social assistance and child protection services. As a result, the separation of 29 newborns was prevented in Ungheni within April 2008 – March 2009. 28 children with 19 parents were placed in to the Placement Centre in Cornesti. 15 children with 13 parents were reintegrated into their family and community. 8 children with 8 parents received the services of the social apartment in Chisinau. The abandonment of 62 newborns was prevented in the republican maternity hospital as a result of the intervention of the multidisciplinary group.

■ The institutionalisation of 315 children was prevented through the family support service and the Gate-keeping Commission and 6 children were reintegrated; 6 children were placed into Foster Care in Soroca raion.

■ The institutionalisation of 25 children was prevented, 3 children were reintegrated in Tiraspol through psycho-social support provided by the staff of the Family Counseling Centre. 26 families with various psycho-social problems with their children received trainings in good parenting, 63 psycho-therapeutic sessions were held for 8 families with 11 children at risk of separation.

■ As a result of communication and advocacy actions in the reported period, the Moldovan Parliament approved the Law on Social Support; the Government approved the National Programme for the

development of the integrated social service system and the minimum quality standards for the Foster Care Service.

With approval of the Ministry's Collegium the Referral Mechanism, the National Strategy for training of staff employed in social assistance, the Framework Regulations on the community social assistance, the Supervision Mechanism were adopted.

The radio programme "Together for the Future" produced by Radio Moldova in cooperation with EveryChild was recognised as the most successful programme at the end of 2008.

In addition to advocacy activities, EveryChild organised for the first time a promotion and fundraising campaign at local level called "You Make the Future". Thus, as a result of the communication campaign three children from Sarata Galbena, Hincesti raion who became orphans and homeless after a fire accident, received a house where they live with their grandmother.

Within the same campaign the children who are placed in the Foster Care Service with foster carers, and their biological children and the specialists in charge for implementation of this service in the 5 regions of the country attended a two-weeks summer school, where the rehabilitation programme was combined with trainings both for adults and children.

The last action launched in the "You Make the Future" campaign is focused on supporting the reorganisation of Cahul residential-school into a complex of services. 18,000 Euro was collected and used to purchase furniture and equipment for the new Temporary Placement Centre.



“ It is the interest of the State to solve the issues of the family and child using the scheme proposed by EveryChild, since it is much more efficient than other methods proposed by other organisations or using the old method of settlement by placing children in boarding-schools. We lose children as population of the raion, but we also lose people from the qualitative point of view. The way gone through with EvC is the only way to solving the issue of abandonment, at least it is a way that corresponds to the reality and produces quick and encouraging results. ”

President of Soroca raion

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

April 2008 - March 2009

Income	EURO
	2008
General Funds	
EveryChild Head Office	312338,52
Subtotal General Funds	312338,52
Institutional Grants	
DFID/SIDA	339323,13
Council of Europe	3426,93
Subtotal Institutional Grants	342750,06
Charitable Funds	
World Childhood Foundation	12529,00
Andreas A David Foundation	180684,32
Medicor Foundation	19714,97
Subtotal Charitable Funds	212928,29
Corporate Grants	
Vitol	216969,65
Subtotal Corporate Grants	216969,65
TOTAL	1084986,52

Expenditures	EURO
	2008
General Funds	
Tiraspol Counseling Centre	31149,78
Development of Integrated social services for children and families in Soroca	29887,63
Prevention of Early Child Abandonment in Chisinau Republican Maternity Hospital	20979,61
Lobby and Advocacy	51555,83
Chisinau Counseling Centre	19353,74
Subtotal General Funds	152926,59
Institutional Grants	
Support in the delivery of efficient and sustainable social assistance services	310185,41
Subtotal Institutional Grants	310185,41
Charitable Funds	
Prevention of Early Child Abandonment in Ungheni raion	29021,88
Reorganisation of Cahul boarding school	218376,74
Prevention of Early Child Abandonment in Chisinau Republican maternity and Ungheni Children's Hospital	41921,64
Subtotal Charitable Funds	289370,26
Corporate Grants	
Cahul Care Leavers	148402,24
Subtotal Corporate Grants	148402,24
Administrative / Core Budget	
Subtotal Administrative / Core Budget	169086,56
TOTAL	1069921,06

OUR PARTNERS

The implementation of EveryChild Moldova Programme would not have been possible without the support of national and international partners who believed in our expertise, in our capacity of implementation and accepted to take over development projects or support us financially.

The promotion of a coherent social policy in child and family social protection is only possible if there is an efficient partnership between competent governmental and non-governmental structures. In this period, EveryChild's partners were the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Scientific Institute for research in mother and child healthcare, Chisinau Municipal Directorate for Child Rights Protection, raion Councils of Cahul, Ungheni and Soroca. UNICEF office in Moldova, the European Commission, the High Level Group for Children were the basic partners of EveryChild in promoting and maintaining the political commitment of the authorities to reform the residential system for children. The partnership of

EveryChild with Oxford Policy Management played a special role in developing social policies in social assistance.

In addition to our permanent donors in the United Kingdom, the programmes fostered by us were supported financially by the UK Department for International Development, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UNICEF office in Moldova, World Childhood Foundation, Andreas A David Foundation, Medicor Foundation, Vitol and others.

A series of private companies such as UNION Fenosa, Metro Cash and Carry, Fourshette, Green Hills, Confort are our local donors and supporters.

It is very important to mention the partnership that EveryChild has with Moldovan media, which consists in the activities they carried out as permanent information partners. These are the Public Company Teleradio Moldova, Pro TV, TV 7, EU TV, „Rezonans” Programme, „Saptamina” magazine, VIP, Tribuna Copiilor, Info-prim news agency, etc.