

# **Partnerships for Every Child Annual Report**

April 2011 – March 2012



# FOREWORD

The last year has been special for the team of Partnerships for Every Child. After 10 years working under EveryChild UK umbrella, we become independent. I should say, they were years of challenges, but also of beautiful achievements. Gradually, we contributed to changing the lives of many children in the country, but also to the creation of a child protection system based on the child's raising and care in the family and in the community.

I am sure that the name of EveryChild will still be uttered for a long time in Moldova, as this name is associated with the family, with child-friendly services, and, why not, with the reform of the child protection system.

I must say, all we achieved during these years is, first of all, due to our partners from the local public authorities, who worked with self-denial and responsibility to reorganize and develop better services for children and families, especially for the children left without parental care. We are convinced that the achievements made by EveryChild will be amplified and further developed through the new organization – Partnerships for Every Child. Partnerships for Every Child totally took over and re-launched the programme of EveryChild Moldova.

Partnerships for Every Child will insistently advocate for a CHANGE TILL THE END, continuing the residential system reform, the de-

velopment of alternative child care services and of early intervention programs that help children to grow up in healthy and caring families. We want to create a protection system that limits the use of residential care through the development of services preventing the child's separation from family and makes sure that the residential services are of due quality, child friendly, and are used as a last resort for children. We want happy people to live in this country. For the sake of this goal, we will act with all our forces, with hope for and expectation of a better life.

**Stela GRIGORAS**  
**P4EC Country Director**

# ABOUT US

**The** Non-Profit Organization Partnership for Every Child (P4EC) is the legal successor of EveryChild Moldova, which was established as a result of the merger between these two organisations. It was created in order to consolidate, build upon and secure the sustainability of EveryChild's work in the Republic of Moldova. P4EC/EveryChild worked in Moldova since 1995 and has focused on preventing loss of parental care for children and ensuring that where children do have to leave the care of their family, they are protected in a safe, secure family environment in keeping with the provisions of the UNCRC and other international instruments. At the moment P4EC is one of the few organisations working with LAs to implement programmes for reorganization of childcare, including large-scale institutions, as well with national authorities influencing social policy in this area. 10 residential institutions out of 15 covered within the reform were reorganised or closed by P4EC.

## Vision

A world where every child enjoys the right to a childhood in a safe and caring family, free from poverty, violence and exploitation.

## Mission

We work to give vulnerable children who are, or risk being, separated from their family or community a safe and secure future. We empower children, their families, communities and authorities to create opportunities for a better life:

- We give children the chance to grow up in loving families and communities - we help to strengthen families to prevent children from being separated.
- We help children getting back into families - wherever we can, we re-unite children on their own with their families; when that is not possible, or not in a child's best interest, we help them get into alternative family-based care.

- We protect children from abuse, discrimination and exploitation - when children are living without the care and safety of a family, most at risk of violence, abuse or exploitation, we protect them with crisis care and support.
- We make sure children are heard - we help children, their families and communities speak for themselves, take part in decisions which affect their lives, and find lasting solutions to their problems.
- We learn to do better - we innovate to bring about lasting, positive change and then share what works with communities and governments to bring about lasting, positive change.

## Main strategic directions

**Keeping families together.** We give children the chance to grow up in loving families and communities. We help strengthening families' abilities to keep their children at home and offer them love, warmth and the best possible care and protection. We also support children and parents to reunite after a long period of separation.

**Helping babies stay with their parents and making baby homes history.** We help babies who are abandoned or at risk to be abandoned by their parents to continue to live in safe and secure own or alternative families. We support and encourage communities, authorities and civil society organisations to strengthen the capacities of young parents, build up their parental skills and put in place effective early intervention services to support babies' healthy development in a family environment.

**Getting children into safe alternative families.** We support central and local authorities to help children who lost the care of their parents to find new caring and safe families.

**Ensuring institutional care is used as a last resort.** We support local and central authorities to assess a number of large-scale institutions to establish and implement transformation or closure plans. In the recent years we have supported the closure of 6 institutions and transformation of one institution into a community-based social services centre.

**Ensuring social inclusion of children.** We support central and local government, civil society and other stakeholders' efforts to bring about greater social inclusion of marginalized children and their families, ensuring those who are excluded due to different reasons are able to exercise their rights.

**Building child participation.** Children are the experts of their lives. They now best what support should be developed and delivered

to them and their families. Till now many professionals in Moldova are reluctant to listen to young people in care and don't see the need for it. The more we start to build a movement for the children in care, the better in terms of reaching policy makers and pushing on for innovative policy and practice.

**Commitment to protect children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.** We encourage the authorities to bear primary responsibility for preventing and responding to violence against children, to implement actions in all sectors. Establish and maintain a child safe environment is the main consideration in all of our activities, including in all the services that are developed at local level for children and families. We help central and local authorities and civil society to improve the understanding of the problem, to build the evidence base on this phenomenon, and devise multi-disciplinary and inter-sectorial strategies, services and policies to confront family violence, child abuse, neglect and exploitation.

## Our people

Human resources are the most valuable resource of the organization. Total number of staff is 22 persons. P4EC has a consolidated team with vast experience, known to local and international stakeholders. The team has strong image created on the market of the Republic of Moldova, as an organisation that implemented important reform projects, provides consultancy, as well as deliver services to children and families. The team has solid relationships of collaboration with local and central government authorities and has a positive reputation among international agencies. The team is one of the main players in the civil society, being the founders/active members of different Alliances.



## Partnerships

- P4EC's partners includes: the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance.
- Local authority partners: Chisinau Municipal Department of Child's Rights Protection, raion Councils of Cahul, Calarasi, Falesti, Orhei, Ungheni and Telenesti.
- Local and International organisations and NGOs: UNICEF, Terre des Homes, Lumos, CCF Moldova, Keystone Human Services International, CNPAC, CDIDC, Alliance for the Protection of Children and Families.

## Donors

Apart from permanent UK donors, such as EveryChild UK, the programs, promoted by the organization, were financially supported by USAID, European Commission, Norwegian Embassy, World Childhood Foundation, Oak Foundation, East-Europe Foundation, Medicor Foundation, Vitol, and other donors.

Among local donors and supporters are a number of private companies, such as Union Fenosa, Metro Cash&Carry, Fourchette and others.

Important assistance comes from private donors, private persons who permanently support EveryChild through their donations into boxes, placed in shopping networks.

It is very important to mention the partnership between Partnerships for Every Child and Moldovan mass-media, who has supported P4EC activity as devoted media partners (for example, Teleradio Moldova public company, Pro TV, TV 7, EURO TV, MIR company, Saptamina newspaper, and INFO Prim news agency).



# OUR HISTORY

## 1990s

- 1995** The year when EveryChild started to work in the Republic of Moldova, namely in the Municipality of Chisinau, implementing an EU-funded project (Overture).
- 1997** The Directorate for Protection of Children's Rights was set up as a first structure of this type in Moldova as a result of the EU project, implemented in collaboration with Chisinau City Hall.
- 1998** The first team 15 social workers were recruited and trained to pilot Family Support and Reintegration Services in Chisinau Municipality.
- 1999** The first Small Group Home for children with disabilities without parental care in Chisinau. EveryChild extended its activity to Cahul and Tiraspol to replicate family support and reintegration services.



## 2000s

**2000** The first Foster Care Service pilot was launched in Chisinau, in collaboration with the Directorate for Protection of Children’s Rights;

**2002** The first Day Care Center for children with disabilities was opened in Cahul, in collaboration with UNICEF and Cahul local authorities.

EveryChild programme extended to the 4<sup>th</sup> region - Ungheni raion, implementing, in collaboration with UNICEF and Ungheni Council, a programme for the development of integrated social services for children and families.

**2003** The Republican Centre for street children was reorganized into a child-friendly service. EveryChild started to implement a large EU –funded Tacis Project “Capacity building in social policy reform”.

**2004** EveryChild programme extended to the 5<sup>th</sup> region - Orhei raion. Gate-keeping legislation and methodology was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and tested in 3 regions – Cahul, Orhei and Ungheni.

**2005** A successful awareness raising and advocacy campaign on the need to reform the child care system was implemented, with the motto “Call Your Future Back Home”.

First 3 institutions were assessed and strategies were developed at local level to reform child care system.

Analysis on expenditures on the Residential Care of Children in the Republic of Moldova and Cost Comparison of Residential Care and Community Services were carried out; the findings presented to the national government to influence changes in the system.

**2006** The national reform on reorganisation of the residential child care was launched by the President of the country at a national conference organised by EveryChild, in collaboration with UNICEF and President’s office.

A comprehensive package of gate keeping and family-based alternative services were developed in 3 regions and lessons learned disseminated to 50% of regions from Moldova, 2432 children from 3 raions were pre-

vented from institutionalization, 245 children were reintegrated with their parents and 55 children were placed in foster care.

EveryChild programme extended to the 6<sup>th</sup> region – Soroca, supporting the local authorities to develop an integrated system of social services for children and families.

**2007** The first residential institution was closed in Cahul, as a result of EveryChild’s advocacy campaign. The Gate-keeping and Foster Care regulations were approved by the government. This legislation facilitated the reduction of the number of children in residential care.

A National Strategy on reorganisation of the residential child care system and Plan of action were developed and approved by the Government.

The implementation in Chisinau and Ungheni of a programme to prevent infant abandonment was launched. The second residential institution in Cahul started the transformation process.

EveryChild in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management GB started a project funded by DFID and SIDA “Support to the development of effective and efficient social assistance services” to support the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child to implement social assistance reform.

**2008** The National Programme for the Development of the Integrated System of Social Services and Foster Care Quality Standards were approved by the Moldovan Government.

The Law and Regulations on Social Aid (means-tested benefit) was approved

by the Parliament. Other 9 regions established gate-keeping as a result of the approval of the national legislation.

**2009** The Law on Social Services was approved by the Parliament. Social Aid is implemented nationally; monthly around 16,000 households (majority of them being families with children) received financial support under the new legislation.

Parent-and-Baby Units established in Ungheni and Chisinau become fully operational providing specialized support to young babies and their parents to prevent abandonment.

In Cahul the first phase of the reorganization of the institution finalized: all children (together with teachers) were integrated into mainstream schools; 47 children out of 131 were reintegrated with biological and extended families a small scale family-type placement centre was established and fully operational.

New 9 regions were covered by EveryChild by providing technical assistance to local authorities in developing Foster care service and gate keeping system.



## 2010s

**2010** With UNICEF support, we piloted a model of inclusive education for children with special needs who were placed in residential care in Falesti and Ungheni; 144 children from 3 special schools were assessed; 91 children were integrated with families or placed in alternative family care; 148 headmasters and deputy-headmasters of 74 community schools were trained in inclusive education; one institutions was closed and other two were prepared for closure in 2011.

80 hours-training to 800 community social workers and 220 employees of the Community Social Assistance Service and Domiciliary Care Service nationwide were provided with DFID support in collaboration with OPM and Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family

Other new 8 regions were covered by providing technical assistance to local authorities in developing foster care and gate-keeping system.

EveryChild started to implement, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and local authorities in Calarasi, Falesti and Ungheni a USAID-funded Project “Protecting children of Moldova from family separation, violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation”, working in 7 residential institutions for children and developing gate-keeping and family based alternatives.





# AREAS OF ACTIVITY AND THE MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2011 – 2012

P4EC 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 and consolidating the capacity and confidence of children and the community in their own forces to control their own future.

In the past year, as a direct effort of the organization:

- An Action Plan on implementation of UN Guidelines on alternative child care was developed on the basis of the analysis of national legislation. A Child Friendly version of the UN Guidelines on alternative child care was developed by children, and published.
- 4 residential institutions with 372 children were assessed in 4 regions; 322 children were reintegrated with their families or placed in alternative family care.

In addition, 112 children in the institution for children with hearing impairments and 126 children from the health facility for children infected or affected by tuberculosis have been assessed and care plans have been established.

- 2 out of 3 residential schools in Falesti Region closed – 90% of the children were reintegrated into their families (birth or extended). The remaining residential school is targeted for closure in the next six months and has already reduced to less than 50 students in care.
- Ungeni Region no longer has any children in residential care. P4EC helped to close two residential schools – an auxiliary school and a general boarding school. The region is home to one special healthcare institution for children with tuberculosis (Tb) or who have been in contact with the disease. The assessment of the institution was presented to the national Ministry of Health (MoH) and P4EC stands ready to help develop a plan for transformation of this institu-

tion. Transformation is complicated by the fact that the institution is national, not regional, meaning that it houses children from all over the country, and comes under the direction of the national MoH.

- 1 residential school (auxiliary school) in Calarasi was closed in the last year. Calarasi Region is also home to a special needs institution for children with hearing impairments. Assessment of the school is completed and a plan is being developed for transformation of this institution. Closure is complicated by the fact that the institution is national, not regional, meaning that it houses children from all over the country. It comes under the direction of the national Ministry of Education (MoE).
- Another residential boarding school was closed in Telenesti region in the last year. Telenesti Region is also home to a republican auxiliary school for children. The Assessment of this school will start in the next year.

- 77 schools from the three target sites are piloting the inclusive education model for children with special education needs.
- In Cahul a Community Centre for Children and Young People established which includes Social Apartments for care leavers and Vocational workshops: sewing, cooking/confectionery, carpentry and computer literacy. A “Life Skills Educational Programme” and a Vocational Programme were developed. The

capacities of the centre’s staff were built in provision a permanent support to children and youth in the re/integration process in the family, school and community.

- 26 regions in the country were supported to develop and deliver foster care and gate-keeping system.
- A model of short-break foster care for children with disabilities was developed and is being tested in two project sites – Orhei and Chisinau.



# IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS IN THE PERIOD 2011 – 2012

## 1. Supporting local authorities of Moldova to provide alternative family based-care to children without parental care (year 2), funded by Childhood Foundation.



**This project is an extension of the project implemented in 2010-2011 and was working to achieve the following objectives:**

1. By March 2012 local authorities in 8 new regions of Moldova have the capacities to develop and provide high quality foster care services to children without parental care.
2. By March 2012, local and national authorities, civil society organisations have capitalized on the experience in developing and foster care services, have adjusted the national policy accordingly and have established a sustainable professional foster care body.

### **Overall achievements registered as a result of the project:**

As a whole the objectives set out in the project were accomplished and this contributed to the achievement of the goal that consisted in ensuring the right of vulnerable children to be protected and cared for in their own family or in a family type environment which secure

the right to education, health care and minimum standard of living is ensured in 100% of the regions of the Republic of Moldova.

A viable strategy was developed for working with the local authorities' representatives, which includes strategies of provision of the sustainability of developed services, through its institutionalization, elaborating the necessary legislative, normative and methodological bases. The project contributed to the institutional establishment of the functional model of the foster service within the local authorities by developing professional capacity within the Social Assistance and Family Protection Department & Gatekeeping Commission members.

The project contributed significantly to strengthening of foster care as an alternative family based service for children by demonstrating how foster care can meet the needs of various children and young people through the development of specialized foster care services, which have been already in place in the neighbouring countries with Moldova

and also some pilot project being implemented in our republic. The project contributed to a qualitative, uniform, following a unique philosophy of implementation of alternative family-based child care service in the Republic of Moldova.

An International conference “Modern practices in alternative care for children” was organised on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2012 in Chisinau with the participation of over 100 policy-makers, decision-makers, professionals all over the country. The participants were exposed to innovative models of foster care in CIS countries and Western Europe, such as short-break foster care, foster care for children with disabilities, emergency foster care, foster care for juvenile delinquents, child participation in foster care, early interventions in the context of foster care and global overview of foster care.

The event was funded by another P4EC’s project that was also in line with objectives of this project. At the event the survey on short-break foster care internationally and the assessment of children with disabilities and their parents developed by the project were presented and distributed to the participants. 5 interviews in written media, TV and radio about the short-break foster care were given by project staff and partners. We are very grateful that the head of operations from the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova gave a welcoming speech at this event. The event was highly appreciated by the participants.



## 2. Empowering care leavers of the Cahul residential institution to successfully integrate into mainstream education, the labour market and the community, funded by Medicor Foundation and East Europe Foundation.

*“When it was just a boarding school we stayed here and We didn’t use to go out. Now we go out in the town, we see other people, we fell part of the community”.*

**Child**



**The project goal** was to ensure that, by March 2012, young people – graduates of the long-term institutional care in Cahul are provided with increased chances for their effective integration into further education, labour market and community.

### **Project objectives:**

1. By March 2012, orphan young people leaving long-term institutional care in Cahul have acquired skills to live independently.
2. By March 2012, orphan young people leaving long-term institutional care have been provided with further vocational education opportunities within the centre and in the community.
3. By March 2012, newly recruited staff has acquired skills and knowledge to support the integration of young people into further education, labour market and community.
4. By March 2012, to have capitalized on the best practice achieved in developing leaving care programme for orphan young people and young people without parental care and to have ensured that the lessons learned are promoted for incorporation into the national policy.

The reorganisation of the boarding school from Cahul was initiated in 2007 by Every-Child Moldova, being a complex process with a few stages related to the reintegration of the children living in residential care into their families, setting up of a small group home for

children without parental care who could not be reintegrated home or placed in alternative family-based care, integration of the young people and children residents of the small group home left in the care of the community schools, creating a social apartment for orphan young care leavers of the boarding school with an aim to prepare them for independent life. The last stage of the boarding school reorganisation process was setting up vocational workshops and developing life skills and professional orientation programmes, and also reflects the objectives of the project implemented together with the Medicor and East Europe Foundations support.

**Key conclusions from the final project evaluation:**

**The good practice model has produced an intended change of the initial situation of beneficiaries and the community.** The reorganisation of the residential institution can be qualified as a radical one which reorganised the property into family-like facility, changed the status of the institution (from education to social assistance facility), the range of provided services, the level of professional competences of the staff working in the reorganised institution, and as a result level of readiness of children and young people for independent adult live.

**The developed services generated the improvement of beneficiaries' living standards.**

This huge change is very much appreciated by the final beneficiaries – children, young people and their families. They appreciate especially the change in the quality of their lives, as significantly improved living conditions, their involvement in the running of the service, the workshops that changed their life style and the opportunities to use their free from education time according to their wishes and interests. The opportunity to attend mainstream community school was appreciated as the main change in their lives. This offers them possibility to integrate into community life, into mainstream schooling and get prepared for responsible independent adulthood. The satisfaction of beneficiaries demonstrates the observance of quality standards, flexibility and adaptation to beneficiaries' needs, modelling the intervention by involving beneficiaries. At the same time, some details have been mentioned that need improvement in the nearest future, mainly related to a bigger number of children and young people in the care of this service, more than the capacity of the service permits. This relates to difficulties of children to reintegrate with their families and slow development of foster care that can provide an alternative family-based service.



The life skills training programme and vocational training programme produced a positive impact on the abilities of young people to continue education, integrate into labour market and society. The life skills training programme and vocational training programme for young people have extended the area of the professional competence of the specialists and facilitate the preparation of the young people leaving care for independent adult life and social inclusion after care. These programmes have increased the opportunities provided to young people leaving care, so that the leaving care support becomes applicative, useful and practical. The life skills training programme and vocational training programme for young people were highly regarded by the young people, who acknowledged the importance of planned preparation for independent life and early professional orientation and determination. At the same time, these programmes have been also highly appreciated by the specialists as they increased their professional competence, extended the area of activities for children and young people, developed new areas of commutation with young people and facilitate the integration of the service into community and mainstream service provision.

*I attend a cooking course and I like it very much. I hope I have chosen an important course that will help me in life. I will be able to cook healthy and tasty food. I have the opportunity to learn things that I cannot learn somewhere else.*

*Victoria*

*I like working with the wood, using the lathe, file and borer. I love this activity.*

*Dan*

*I chose the carpentry to learn things that will help me in the future become a good master.*

*Ion*

*I decided to attend 3 workshops in parallel: the cooking workshop – because I want to learn cooking, computer science – to learn the computer, for instance, if I become a psychologist I will need the ability to use the computer, find information and the last one – dressmaking – because I like it and I will have an occupation when I am old..*

*Cristina*

*I want to thank everyone who contributed and helped me find my way in life, have the necessary skills for better living*

*Petru*

**The new services are provided by a team of trained professionals** who deliver services and intervene to improve the beneficiaries' living standards. Professional competences of the staff have been considerably improved with the support of the project. The training programme was developed on the basis of regular and coordinated with responsibilities stipulated in each staff job description. The conducted training achieved changes at the level of knowledge, practical skills to work with children and young people, as well as at the level of attitudes towards children and young people, their families, colleagues, community partners, that have been strengthened also by means of regular professional supervision. The capacity building programme contributed to a qualitative change in specialists' attitudes towards children and young people, understanding of their problems, needs and points of view, according to their age and maturity, as well as to assess their readiness for independent life after care. These have been mentioned by both children and young people, and specialists themselves.

*“I learned a lot at these seminars; I learned how to be more open and self-confident”*

*“I learned to be a good mediator, to be honest, brave and professional; I developed my capacity to establish a positive relationship”*

*“Closer to children... More engaged.... More open.... More careful... I see the issue from the child's perspective... I see and hear the child's needs... I get involved here and now... I can form relations with the child and regain the child's trust...”*

*“I learned to see the child as a personality”*

*“The knowledge I acquired helps me see and highlight the child's problems and help the child solve them”*

*“To know the child's needs and protect the child's interests”*

*“After the training I noticed that my relations with children improved a lot. I can speak to children very intimately”*

*“After the trainings, I noticed that children understand better what I want from them and I became closer to them”*

*“I became a reference person for children, I try to help them in issues they face”*

*“I am kind and open to them, we communicate efficiently; I appreciate the child's potential and help children find answers”.*

*Personnel of the Center*

**The services developed in Cahul raion meet the local needs, are cost-efficient and produce long-lasting changes** in the life and welfare of children, young people and their parents. The project demonstrated a better use of public funding to meet the needs of children, young people and their families. Services have produced optimal results for the beneficiaries with minimum efforts and resources, a cost-benefit correlation that ensures their efficiency and economic and social feasibility.

**The services developed in Cahul raion are accessible, flexible and acceptable for the beneficiaries; the services** considerably increased the level of coverage of the target group's needs, are in great demand and produce a high level of beneficiary satisfaction.

**The Project demonstrated a good partnership model** between EveryChild and local authorities, service providers and other local agencies, a high level of maturity of these relations, which resulted in the creation of cost-efficient and sustainable services in Cahul raion. Partnership is an essential condition to generate a good practice model. The service provider within the Project managed to develop partnership relations with other public and private institutions.

**The Project ensured a level of autonomy of the social services.** Joining resources at community level with a view to reach Project's objectives is an essential condition for functional partnership and ensuring sustainability and autonomy of services developed within this model of good practice.

**Ensuring the sustainability of services and effects on direct and indirect beneficiaries** is one of the strongest challenges in supporting a model of good practice. In addition to increasing the level of autonomy of the services, it is necessary to ensure the long-term influence of interventions on beneficiaries and the community. The project had a clear sustainability plan which was thoroughly designed, planned and completely achieved. This plan included institutional, methodological and financial sustainability of services to ensure that the developed services will continue to function and bring about long-lasting positive changes for both the children and young people that are the current beneficiaries of these services and for future generations of children and young people that will need some support and care.

The Project has shown **participation and involvement in providing social services.** This model of good practice aimed at empowering children, young people, parents, authorities and communities in developing their prob-

lem solving skills by stimulating participation at all stages of interventions, from designing services to final evaluation of results.

The Project has shown **creativity and social innovation.** The model has proposed creative interventions being an innovative form of proposing expected and intended changes by the implementing agency, having a practical character of interventions. The developed model of good practice is based on applicability, the practical character of the proposed interventions, suggesting concrete solutions for the identified needs. More than that, the developed model is a success story, being a source of motivation, inspiration and stimulation of new initiatives.

**The developed services represent models of good practices which are being replicated** – the representatives of other local authorities started to implement similar process to reorganise child care being inspired and motivated by the local practice developed in Cahul.

**The Project produced changes of attitude at community and national level** by means of effective communication and advocacy activities. Dissemination of the project results and participation of community members in the process of reorganisation produced a change of attitude at the community level and a shift in policy debate at the national level.

### 3. Developing short-break foster care for children with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova, funded by EU Delegation, EIDHR Programme.

#### Project Purpose

Short Break Foster Care model for children with disabilities is developed and tested in 2 regions of Moldova and integrated into local level service provisions and national level policy debate by the end of the project.

#### Project results and activities

1. Local authorities and NGO service providers in Chisinau and Orhei, have an increased capacity to ensure the rights of children with disabilities to quality family-based care by the end of the project.
2. By the end of the project professional and public attitudes have shifted towards supporting children with disabilities and their families to prevent family separation and use of short-term substitute family based care as opposed to residential care for children with disabilities.

3. By the end of the project, national authorities (Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family) support the implementation of models of short break care for children with disabilities and promote this practice for nationwide replication.

During the first year of implementation the ground was prepared for the new models of short-break foster care to become part of the local service provision in the project sites. The project has managed to develop a concept for the new models grounded in real life experiences of over 308 children and their families in Chisinau and Orhei. The assessment of the needs of children and families that the project undertook, although unplanned in the original plan and provoked some delays in the project timeframe, is the reassurance that the models correspond to the needs and wishes of the final beneficiaries and will produce expected results in their lives.

*„Age doesn't matter, she only should be good, have children of my age, have younger children, so that I will be the big brother”.*

*„The foster carer should be elder, to have experience, because young people should self-realize. Foster carers should have their own children, but they should be prepared to accept a child with special needs into their family, so that the child is not ignored in placement”.*

*„I would like the person to come to my place, not me to go there, because I do what I like at home, and in someone else's home, I don't think they would allow me”.*

*„Foster carers should have experience with such children. They don't necessarily have their own children, but they should work or have worked with children with special needs. Or they should be well-informed about this category of children”.*

*„She should be patient. And not give orders, but communicate nicely with the child in placement, so that he doesn't grow up aggressive”.*

*From the children's opinions about how a foster carer should be*

Moreover, the local authorities had the unique possibility to assess in depth the real needs and expectations of people that they should work for, become motivated and committed to change the situation of these children and families to better.

The capacity building programme that was thoroughly planned and implemented considerably built the capacities of the local authorities to devise, plan and implement a new service in their regions. They have a full set of methodology to run the service which is completely owned by them due to the participatory process that they have been through. They become the resource that other local authorities can use in the future should they decide to implement a service like this.

We can assess that the professional attitude in the project sites are in favour to develop new services that would support families

to care for their children with special needs at home and to prevent unnecessary family separation and institutionalisation of these children. More and more in national and local mass media positively reflect the issues related to children with special needs. It is also encouraging that in such a short time the project managed to have approved short-break foster carers that will start soon taking children with disabilities in short care.

The National government has shown full support to the new services, agreed to amend the national foster care regulations and standards of care to incorporate this new type of placement.



#### 4. Establishing child protection systems at local level to ensure the protection of children from abuse, neglect and exploitation in the Republic of Moldova, funded by Oak Foundation and implemented by P4EC and Tdh.

##### **Project purpose**

By December 2013, 2000 vulnerable children and their families in Falesti and Ungheni have improved access to family support and child protection services, including systems to prevent and protect them from family separation, violence, abuse, and neglect.

##### **Project objectives:**

By December 2013, models of child protection mechanisms have been designed, tested and capacities built to integrate these models into the child protection system in Ungheni and Falesti regions.

By December 2013, professional and public attitudes are shifted towards supporting vulnerable families and children to prevent child neglect, abuse and exploitation.

**An assessment of current service provision** in the raions was conducted aiming at defining the situation of child abuse and neglect in two regions and to inform the design of models of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**An analysis of child protection legislation on abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation** was done to identify gaps in the legislation and suggest amendments to better respond to child abuse, neglect and exploitation issues. The findings of the legislation analyses were presented to local and national project partners and have been used to inform the process of drafting the mechanisms for inter-agency collaboration on child abuse and neglect cases and the new child protection law (which is under development at the moment).

**Child protection policies and procedures have been designed in collaboration with local partners and approved by raion councils;** local authorities were trained to implement them. Existing social services were reviewed to incorporate child protection mechanisms and new models of prevention and protection.

**The child help line** was launched within the regional conferences held in the two project sites. The model of the help line was designed in collaboration with local authorities and children. Local providers to run the services were identified and regulations of function-

ing were amended to include the new service. The training curricula for the child help line teams were developed and training provided to 2 teams of operators. A study tour to Romania, Bacau of the representatives of the both teams to learn about the management of the child help line service was organised. Promotional materials for the help line (poster), the video and audio clips were developed and are broadcasted on local and national TV and radio channels. The ideas for the printed, video and audio materials were developed in collaboration with the Advisory Boards of Children (ABCs) in both regions. In both raions local partners have committed to maintain the child help line from the institutional and financial point of view.

**An assessment of existing inter-agency collaboration** was carried out based on findings from interviews and focus groups held with reps of education, health, social assistance and police, as well as with service providers and decision-makers. Thus, a common vision on further improvement of interagency collaboration was drafted called "Instructions

on inter-agency cooperation mechanism and monitoring assistance to child victims and potential victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, trafficking". The Mechanism was developed in strong collaboration with CNPAC and CRIC and submitted to MLSPF, and were approved by representatives of 4 Ministries. The Mechanism will be piloted in 2 raions during 2012.

**Training needs assessment was carried out and training programs for different target groups, were designed** by P4EC and Tdh in collaboration with the local authorities and delivered to local stakeholders, supporting the implementation of the prevention models and mechanisms. All trainings and workshop were coordinated

and agreed with both Social Assistance Departments (SAFPD) and Education Departments (GDEYS) from the two project sites.

**A survey on child abuse and neglect perceptions of the professionals and general public** was carried out to identify the attitude of different groups of population towards the concepts of abuse, neglect and exploitation, to establish the incidence of child abuse in different social environments, to identify the views of children and professionals regarding the concept of child friendly organisations, and the child abuse issues in different social assistance, health care, educational, media institutions. The survey has also included an

in-depth analysis of child protection services from the point of view of insuring a safe and secure environment for children and their protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation, as well as identification of image indicators to help in modeling the messages for future communication campaign. The survey results were made public during a 3-day workshop carried out for both local authorities.

**The communication strategy and action plan** for the project has been produced and its implementation started by launching the Child helpline campaign. The members of the media support group were identified and trained to participate in communication campaigns.



## 5. Protecting children in Moldova from family separation, violence, abuse, neglect & exploitation funded by USAID.

The overall **goal** is that 100,000 vulnerable children in Moldova will have improved access to quality social protection services, including systems to prevent and protect them from family separation, violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The project **purpose** is to enable the social protection system to comprehensively address the needs of vulnerable children and their families in Moldova for quality social services, including systems to prevent family separation and protect children without parental care by the end of July 2013.

The **intended outcomes** are that, by the end of July 2013:

1. National authorities are committed and actively support the implementation of the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children in Moldova;
2. 5,000 vulnerable children and their families in Calarasi, Falesti and Ungheni have improved access to high quality family support and family substitute services integrated in the wider social protection context;

3. 1,100 specialists in Calarasi, Falesti and Ungheni have an increased capacity to prevent family separation and provide effective protection to children without parental care;
4. Local authorities in Calarasi, Falesti and Ungheni prioritize meaningful child participation as a means to consult, monitor and evaluate their local child welfare policies and
5. Professional and public attitudes have shifted towards supporting vulnerable families and children to prevent separation and use of family based care as opposed to residential care for children without parental care.

### **Key Conclusions from the project mid-term review:**

The project has caused beneficial and sustainable changes in the lives of children supported to leave institutional care. Through the focus groups with children and life mapping exercise it became clear that children have hope and dreams for their future lives. Many envision future professions and families

with children of their own. They expressed positive feelings around their deinstitutionalization and return to family care. Families overwhelmingly expressed joy at having their children home and generally seemed to feel supported in caring for their families. Many described not having a choice when their children were placed in residential care. This description ranged from “no one asked me” or “they told me it was the best option for my child” to “the community school forced me to place my child” and “I knew it was not best for my child but I did not have any say in the matter”.

The situation has improved for families and children. Family members realize the benefits of the reintegration and are happy to have their children home despite communicating clearly ongoing challenges for their families, particularly economic. No parent expressed regret or concern in regard to having their child at home. Children understand the role of family (described through words and pictures) and they do not want to relive the experience of being separated. Children are attending community schools. School results are positive. Children are less isolated

according to both family members and teachers. In spite of initial fears around both school and community social inclusion expressed in earlier focus groups, children reported feeling supported by classmates, and having made friends both in school and within their communities.

To April 2012:

- 3 out of 5 institutions have been closed
- 508 vulnerable children (308 deinstitutionalized and 200 prevention) and their families have improved access to high quality family support and family substitute services integrated in the wider social protection context



## *CHILDREN SERVED*

*84 children have graduated from residential care with life skills support*

*136 children have been reintegrated into their birth families*

*31 children have entered guardianship (custodial care) with extended family*

*19 children were deinstitutionalized into professional foster care families*

*5 children went into small family-type group homes within their communities*

*33 children into community-based family-type placement centers*

Data collected supports the attribution of positive outcomes and impact directly to the project interventions. Of particular note is the comprehensive approach to capacity building, which has in turn empowered and equipped community social workers in their professional practices. All in all 1,103 people have been trained to date:

### *Training and Capacity Outcomes*

*112 community social assistants & social assistants from community centers – 17 days of training*

*24 decision makers and child protection specialists – 20 days of training*

*12 attended a study tour in Great Britain*

*300 school directors and deputy directors – 1 day of training*

*302 support teachers and inclusion managers – 13 days of training*

*146 residential institution personnel from 5 institutions – 5 days of training*

*120 health specialists and police – 2 days of training*

*99 mayors – 2 days of training*

Social workers, teachers, administrators, officials and other professionals describe their changing attitudes, behaviors and improving abilities and skills directly attributed to their involvement in project implementation and training. Furthermore, they have a clear sense of what is needed in their communities and in spite of resource challenges they show commitment to quality services for families and children. Stakeholders have a clear sense of involvement and participation at a level that has empowered them, increased their creativity and innovation, shifted mentalities and carries forward the momentum for reform. All of these factors are the project's sustainable impact. They cannot be taken away. In the words of one of the regional officials, "there's no going back now".



*We started to see that the children (in institutions) did not even know the basic things like how to light the cook stove, how to wash clothes, or even how often to change their clothes. I asked myself, what will happen when they leave the institution for home after years of living away? We send them to their families at that point totally unprepared to live. Only in family do they really learn how to live*

*Deputy Regional President  
for Social Issues, Falesti*

*Before (referring to the old system) children with special educational needs were sent to the special schools. They recuperated but then they got stuck in the system. We thought we can't send them back into their family situations (referring to poor living conditions) where they might lose what they recuperated. And so they stayed, for years some of them. The project helped to make the conditions at home possible for them to move back to their families. This was huge.*

*Deputy Director  
for Education, Calarasi*

*I remember distinctly when I finally changed my thinking. I was very resistant. I attended a national conference about one year ago and there a young girl spoke about leaving residential care and returning to her family. She said to us that even though the soup at the school was full of meat – rich nutritionally – good for her – it would never have the smell of home – it would never smell as rich as her mother’s simple meatless broth. I cried. I realized that no matter the conditions we provide a residential school is never a family. Never home*

*Deputy Director for Education,  
Calarasi*

*They (community social workers) are no longer just putting out fires based on what they think the possibilities for putting out fires might be - They are knowing what the fires are, where they are, and what they need to put them out.*

*Deputy Regional President for Social  
Issues, Falesti*

*It has felt very important in the first place to prevent the institutionalization of additional children. In our view any institution, however small even for just a few children, is still an institution. In a family a child has the opportunity to develop his individual personality. This is never possible in residential care. Children need the connection with parents, with family*

*Director of Social Assistance  
and Family Protection / Head of Regional  
Council, Ungeni*



*The reason for the level of support for these ideas (referring to deinstitutionalization and family reintegration) at our regional level is due considerably to the training that has been provided to all levels of people who work with and for children and families.*

*Director of “Speranta” Community  
Center, Falesti*

*The training for inclusive education has been very important. The best part about teacher training and the biggest impact is that they each came back and were excited to pass on the information to the other teachers. This is the way they are learning to do things differently.*

*Deputy Director for Education,  
Calarasi*

One of the most empowering activities for children as well for adults carried out in the project is the establishment of the Advisory Boards for Children (ABC) in three regions. In all three regions children and young people from ABC were trained in child rights, social services for children and families, to prepare them to be involved in monitoring and evaluations of social services. Children and young people of the ABCs have monthly plans of activities to be conducted in their schools and communities. They share their learning with peers, as well as with adults. Moreover, some

ABC children work as volunteers in a number of community centers supporting other children, including children with disabilities and are involved in the organization of charitable activities connected to different community events.

With a direct children and young people of the ABCs involvement the Guidelines on Alternative care for children were adapted to a child-friendly language.

These are some views of the ABC members expressed on the published Guidelines:



*“It is an awareness raising guide for all ages: children, teenagers, adults, grandparents, etc. on how to act when a child is in difficulty.”*

*(Chitoroagă Vasile, Sipoteni village, Călărași district).*

*“The information in these Guidelines is very useful. It is good that it is known by all children, community decision makers, so that they are able to intervene and help children who suffer or are in difficult situations.”*

*(Maimescu Dorina, Sipoteni village, Călărași district).*

*“I think that children who will read the Guidelines will be able to understand all messages and the language is easy to read and remember. The drawings are distributed by subjects. The Guidelines will be very useful for children for finding answers to their questions.”*

*(Nanii Marius, Fălești town)*

*“The Guidelines looks very nice. The selected colors are soft and calm. The terms used in the text are explained. The use of children’s drawings highlights their importance. It would be great to translate the Guidelines into Russian. Thanks.”*

*(Panicov Ivan, Făleşti town)*

*“In my opinion, the Guidelines are very good. The content is accessible to anyone. The drawings are nice and their content interesting. I think children will be able to use a different approach to a problem by using the Guidelines.”*

*(Paiul Rodica, Făleştii Noi village).*

*“The Guidelines on the Alternative Care of Children are very useful for children with problems. The idea with the glossary is very good, because not everybody understands all the notions. The drawings are interesting and represent something. The examples of children who were or are in difficult situations are real and, unfortunately, very spread in Moldova. The content can easily be understood and used at various stages of life. I hope the Guidelines will be distributed to all children who have questions and are afraid or don’t have someone to address these questions to.”*

*(Ciupercă Cristina, Făleşti town)*

As it is underlined in the mid-term evaluation the *Project* has been an ambitious undertaking in a limited timeframe and challenging environment. Partnerships for Every Child and partners have stepped up to the challenge, serving Moldova’s children and families with strength and will. The project has met challenges such as political uncertainty, counter-productive mentalities and attitudes, less than optimal economic circumstances, and at times overwhelming circumstances facing families and communities with a professional team, sense of innovation, flexibility and commitment to learning.



*“This book is very interesting and presents many new things. It is accessible to children and to everybody. I think child and teenagers need this brochure to learn, discover information and know where to go for help in case of neglect and abuse. The book raises interest since the lively colored pages invite you to read it. The meaning of words guides the children to understand the message. The real cases that are presented help the readers understand the meaning. The goal of the book is to help adults implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as correctly as possible. I believe that this brochure will be successful and will be requested and understood by children, because it contains information that has to be learned.”*

*(Popovici Mădălina, Ungheni town)*

*“My impression about the brochure is that all topics covered in it are interesting. All cases are painful and it is good to know that the social assistant helped these children.”*

*(Vozniuc Svetlana, Ungheni, Petreşti village).*

## 6. Prevention of child abandonment at birth; the social apartment for parent and baby couples, funded by Norwegian Embassy in Bucharest.

The Project was implemented by P4EC in collaboration with the Republican Maternity Hospital, Municipal Hospital, Chisinau Municipal Directorate for the Protection of Children's Rights and Raion Social Assistance and Family Protection Departments.

### The project goal:

Contributing to the reduction of the number of infants abandoned at birth in Chisinau by the end of 2011.

### The Project Objectives:

1. By the end of 2011, 12 parents placed in social apartment have acquired good parenting skills and are able to form secure attachments with their children thus ensuring their healthy development.
2. Objective 2: By the end of 2011, at least 12 parent-and-baby couples placed in parent-baby unit are supported to reintegrate in their families and communities of origin thus ensuring the children's right to live and grow up in safe and secure families.

The project directly targeted 18 babies and young children preventing their abandon-

ment and ensuring their right to grow up in safe and secure family.

Thirteen mothers were supported to improve their abilities in addressing the needs of their children and developing positive life perspective. The parents gained confidence in their own forces and acquiring good parenting skills by means of professional coaching and support. The service contributed to forming secure attachments of the new parents with their babies.

Nine parent-and-baby couples were successfully reintegrated with their families and communities as a result of Social Apartment activity in the settlement of relationships

with the biological/extended family from origin community of the beneficiary. One parent-and-baby couple needing long-term care and support, was transferred to a maternal Centre. Three couples continue to benefit from the Social Apartment services; the work is being carried out for their future family and social reintegration.

Social apartment staff increased their professional capacity in communication and conflict resolution in the work with the beneficiaries as well as social work interventions in the cases where there is a risk of child abandonment thus contributing to the reduction of the child at birth abandonment cases.





# MOLDOVA IN NEXT 10 YEARS

**P**artnerships for Every Child will insistent-ly advocate for a **CHANGE TILL THE END, continuing the residential system reform, the development of alternative child care services and of early intervention programs that help children to grow up in healthy and caring families.**

- **A protection system that limits the use of residential care** – through the development of child separation prevention services and ensuring that residential services are of high quality, child friendly and are used as a last resort for children.
- **More united and stronger families** – by promoting services and programmes

to strengthen parenting skills to support and encourage parents to provide adequate care and protection to their children.

- **Children separated from their families – cared for in the alternative families** – through supporting the authorities to diversify placement types in foster care service – an optimal and cost-efficient alternative to residential institutions.
- **Child friendly schools** – provide training, education and support regardless of their disability, race, and religion – through supporting the authorities in the implementation of the National Programme for inclusive education.

- **Children protected against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation** – through the creation, at local level, of the mechanisms, child prevention and support services as well as building capacities among professionals, encouraging efficient inter-disciplinary cooperation.
- **Decisions that concern children's rights and their life to be consulted with children** – through the development of practices and policies that would facilitate child and youth participation on elaboration, provision, monitoring and evaluation of services; through supporting the creation of children's, who are in alternative care, movement.





# FINANCIAL SUMMARY (EURO)



<b>Income</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>General funds</b>	<b>251,851</b>
<b>Institutional Grants</b>	<b>888,814</b>
<i>USAID</i>	<i>722,084</i>
<i>UNICEF</i>	<i>36,627</i>
<i>European Commission</i>	<i>101,001</i>
<i>East Europe Foundation</i>	<i>29,102</i>
<b>Charitable Funds</b>	<b>229,505</b>
<i>Medicor Foundation</i>	<i>88,385</i>
<i>World Childhood Foundation</i>	<i>43,788</i>
<i>OAK Foundation</i>	<i>79,745</i>
<i>Private Foundations</i>	<i>17,587</i>
<b>Embassies</b>	<b>7,200</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,377,370</b>



<b>Expenditurs</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Core Budget</b>	
<i>Deinstitutionalisation of children from Telenesti, Cazanesti</i>	79,866
<i>Localization</i>	3,885
<b>Subtotal Core Budget</b>	<b>83,751</b>
<b>Institutional Grants</b>	
<i>Protecting children in Moldova from family separation, violence, abuse, neglect &amp; exploitation</i>	703,505
<i>Developing Short Break Foster Care Service for Children with Disabilities in the Republic of Moldova</i>	67,632
<i>Empowering carelevers of the residential educational institution to integrated into further education and labour market</i>	29,101
<i>Support to the development of philanthropy culture and private giving in the Republic of Moldova</i>	28,020
<i>Children in Moldova are protected from family separation, violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation</i>	22,339
<b>Subtotal Institutional Grants</b>	<b>850,597</b>

<b>Charitable Funds</b>	
<i>Supporting Care Leavers, Cahul</i>	88,960
<i>Empowering careleavers of the residential educational institution to integrated into further education and labour market</i>	73,712
<i>Supporting local authorities of Moldova to provide alternative family based-care to children without parental care</i>	55,953
<i>Establishing child protection systems at local level to ensure the protection of children of Moldova from abuse, neglect and exploitation</i>	44,309
<b>Subtotal Charitable Funds</b>	<b>262,934</b>
<b>Embassies Grants</b>	
<i>Prevention of child abandonment at birth</i>	20,351
<b>Subtotal Embassies Grants</b>	<b>20,351</b>
<b>Administrative costs</b>	<b>85,418</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,303,051</b>

