

# THE COURIER OF CHANGE

10 YEARS OF QUEST,  
ACHIEVEMENTS AND  
HOPES

*Special edition edited with the support of the SOROS Foundation Moldova*



## REASONS TO ADVANCE

Looking back, the fact that most delights us is that, in Criuleni, children have access to community services and we succeeded to avoid institutionalization of children with special educational needs. Even if this is not only the result of our efforts, we consider the fact that no child in the Criuleni region in the last 3 years was abandoned by family in residential institutions, part of our merit. Children need us, adults, for protecting and helping them develop in accordance with their own potential.

Also, the partnership with the local public authority obtained makes us happy. We did not take our stand on different barricades, we have chosen to collaborate from equal to equal. Solving problems is the fact that unites us. The discussions held with the public authority, the fact that they take into consideration our opinions, is very important to us. It is also a

pleasure to ascertain the fact that, if at the beginning we were only two collaborators, today we are an entire regiment working in the service of the community. We are as well pleased by the fact that we succeeded to create new working places – only in Criuleni, in the centers created by us are over 65 people employed. Is it much? Is it few? It is as much as our efforts and our resources have allowed us to.

The way of our Association is, though, continuing. The hope is the power that gives anybody the trust of making a step forward and try.



## ACTION AREAS

## PARTNERSHIP FOR THE REALIZATION OF AN IDEA

**It is said that from a good idea and towards its realization there is a long way. It may be a verity in many cases, but it certainly does not concern the Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support” from Criuleni.**

Ten years ago, the idea of those several members from the newly registered Association – of creating a centre for disabled children – began its fulfillment starting with the first project presented to the donor, the SOROS Foundation from Moldova. How many NGOs can be proud of obtaining the support starting with their first project? How many projects start having a clear outline shortly after being written? This project, very presuming for an NGO from a regional centre has become a part of Associations’ archive as a relic. „I believed it has been the perfect project”, laughs Alexandra Grajdian, the President of the Association, when recalling as the courage of the team when presenting it in the framework of a grants contest launched by the Programme „Public Health”, as well as a funny conversation held with an employee of the Foundation when submitting the project. „Is this your first project?”. „Yes”. „In this case, you will win the eleventh one definitely!”

It was a good omen. Today, even if the Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support” activates in the town of Criuleni, its action area has overpassed the limits of the region, being known on a national level due to the achievements obtained in several fields, especially in the field of social protection of disabled children.

After 10 years of „quest, achievements and hopes”, if we would draw a portrait of the Association, from the view of achievements, this would look as follows:

- Broad experience in creating and supervising community centres that offer social services to the vulnerable layers of the society, especially to disabled children;
- The promotion and realization of including disabled children in the community and pre-school and school education institutions.
- The creation of innovative services for the rural community as, for example, the mobile specialists’ team;
- The promotion of an early intervention in the rehabilitation of disabled children;
- Preventing the institutionalization of disabled children;
- Attracting social investments at a local level, addressed towards the creation of a social assistance infrastructure for vulnerable layers of the society in the region;
- Carrying out parental counselling on a broad scale;
- Deploying activities of specialists training in the field of inclusion and recovery of children with special educational needs, parental counselling;
- Offering vocational assistance by creating ergo-therapy workshops in some regions;
- Activates as a resources centre for the Alliance of NGOs active in the field of child and family social protection;

### The activity of the Association is structured on four programmes:

- The programme „Deploying community services”
- The programme „Social and school inclusion”
- The programme „Family assistance and support”
- The programme „Advocacy”

## CREATING COMMUNITY CENTRES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS



**The town of Criuleni has 4 community centres that offer social services to the vulnerable layers of the society, out of which 3 were created by the Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support (FCPS)”.**

In 2000, the Association opens the day Centre for children with special educational needs „Speranta” and, even if it works especially for the protection and support of families who’s children have special educational needs, it did not limit its field of activity strictly on this socio-vulnerable category. In time, since its establishing, it has addressed the needs of several socio-vulnerable groups in the region.

Thus, in 2006, by the vote of the regional Council, FCPS obtains

the premises for opening the Youth Centre „UNIT” and, in the same year, a seat for opening the Day Centre for the Elderly: „SOS – Support, Orientation and Change”. Realisations in the social field, capacity of attracting investments and using them efficiently towards solving community issues, has placed the Association between the reliable partners of the regional Criuleni Council. Both initiatives have received also the necessary assistance of donors, and namely of the Social Investment Fund

from Moldova.

In 2009, the Association also sets the basis for other two community Centres from Dubăsarii Vechi (region of Criuleni) and from the village of Oxentea (Dubăsari region), about to be opened.

The proximity of services to the domicile of the beneficiaries is the main reason for which both centres were opened in rural areas. Thus, FCPS has created an entire network of community centres in the region. A main principle that has been at the basis of creating services for the socially vulnerable layers was the durability of the services. Today, all centres created by FCPS are subordinated either to the local authorities, either to the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child. All created services meet minimal quality standards.

## USING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPPING LOCAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

# DAY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS „SPERANȚA”

By the vote of the Criuleni Mayorality local Council, in 200, the Association obtains a space for the Community Centre „Speranța” in the premises of the former kindergarten – an ample, bright space, but also a space that had, at those times, several disadvantages – the absence of reparations, mould on walls, a damaged heating system. For a period, the children coming to the centre were warming themselves up from the fireplace painted on the wall by volunteer pupils. There was the need of serious investments in order for it to become a hospitable community center for the children with special educational needs. In this sense, the Association has functioned as a „magnet” for the community, and has attracted investments for the development of

In the period of 10 years of activity, a number of 268 children have benefited from the services of the Centre, out of which 227 children (85 %) have been integrated in the general school.

the local social infrastructure. „I have read in internet about the Social Investments Fund from Moldova and we decided to apply. Why shall we not create good conditions in the centre, when such a possibility exists?”. Today, the centre „Speranța” has a good material basis, rehabilitation equipment proper to the needs of disabled children, halls arranged for activities with the children, transport. Children are offered two meals a day, fact that allows them to stay at „Speranța” for a longer period of time.

Today, the centre has a capacity

of 44 children but this number is, in the end, a conventional one, because when a child with special educational needs requires the services of the centre, even if this is the 45th or the 46th, the doors are open. The centre is intended for children with special educational needs that have reached the age of 6, as well as for youth up to 25 years in the case when they suffer of severe disability. In the framework of the centre there is a team of multidisciplinary specialists employed.

**THIS CENTRE EXISTS THANKS TO:** The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, the Mayorality from Criuleni town, Social Investment Fund from Moldova, SOROS Foundation Moldova. The minibus of the centre was purchased with the support of the JANIVO organization, Netherlands, with the help of the Charity and Social Assistance Association ACASĂ.

### ENSURING DURABILITY:

In 2006, the Centre „Speranța” from Criuleni started to be administered by the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child (on the basis of the Government decision nr. 181 from 17.02.2006).

# THE CENTRE OF RESOURCES FOR YOUTH „UNIT”

Ensuring the continuity of services for the children with special educational needs became a necessity in 2006, once the increase of number of the children attending the day centre „Speranța”. Still, the Association has avoided the idea of segregating the children and has thought of creating a centre for all youth from Criuleni, especially because, in 2006, the only fun that the youth could benefit of in the town was attending bars. The youth, a vulnerable social group in the Republic of Moldova have obtained, once the opening of the „UNIT” Centre, the possibility of benefiting of a series of services that were not

existing before in the region. The Centre for Youth „UNIT” is today a busy centre, as it offers a variety of occupations for the youth. The ones interested in computers, have at their disposal a computer hall, the ones interested in sports are attending the gym hall, the youth interested in the small business can register for the School of Small Business and the ones striving to become leaders follow the Leadership School. Also there, they can address themselves for the psychologists’ or for social assistance, and the disabled youth can also benefit of physiotherapy procedures.



## ENSURING DURABILITY:

The Centre for the Youth „UNIT” is totally financed from the local budget and is subordinated to the General Direction for Education Criuleni.

## THIS CENTRE EXISTS THANKS TO:

The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, the Mayoralty of Criuleni town, Social Investment Fund from Moldova.

## Dumitru Simon, President of the Criuleni region:

*The upper-named NGO benefits of a substantial support from the local Council. During the years, the NGO, together with the Council, have jointly made beautiful things, useful for the entire region. For example, the Centre for the children with special educational needs „Speranța” was created, where 44 children benefit of assistance on a daily basis. The elderly were also not forgotten, a centre for their needs being also created. Now, the local public authorities, together with this NGO, have elaborated a project that aims to increase the field of activity of the centre for the elderly. It has also been paid attention to the youth, for the needs of whom the Centre „UNIT” was opened. It is very important to mention the fact that the named NGO does not limit its services only to the area of Criuleni, but has also opened similar centres in specific areas of the Dubăsari region. We offer them all of our support, because they make extraordinary things.*

# THE DAY CENTRE FOR ELDERLY „SOS – SUPPORT, ORIENTATION AND CHANGE”

„Casa Bucuriei” (The „House of Joy”) is the unofficial name of the Centre for the Elderly „SOS – Support, Orientation and Change”. This is how the beneficiaries are calling, between themselves, the centre. Opened in the former hostel of the Driving School from the town of Criuleni, the centre offers a large range of services and a medium for communication for one of the most vulnerable categories of the population – the elder people. Yearly, there are assisted in the centre up to 36 beneficiaries. In other words, 36 aged people from the region of Criuleni who are in situations at risk, become yearly assistance when they most need it, 36 aged people understood they are not alone and that their life matter to someone.

The duration of placement is of 4 months but, in exceptional cases, the period is raised up until the case is solved. The social assistant of the centre deals with solving urgent problems that the beneficiary has to face, involving the local authorities nad, in some of the cases, also the law bodies when a reclaim of a house problem arises. The service is very much in demand, fact for which it has been created a long waiting list.

Ensuring a temporary hosting is

only one of the services offered by the centre. You will find these also a social canteen, where the most vulnerable persons can find a warm meal (daily capacity: 20 people, annual number of beneficiaries – 158 persons). The Centre offers also services of maintaining personal hygiene: yearly, up to 120 persons are washing clothes at the laundry of the Centre, and the bathroom is attended by a number of 116 persons. A therapist and an assistant are monitoring the health condition of the beneficiaries and mediate the liaison between them and the curative institutions. Services of physiotherapy are also present, service that improves the health condition of the beneficiaries, especially as, between them, there are also disabled people. The individualised social assistance service is elaborating for each beneficiary an individual plan of intervention, on the basis of which the process of recovery of the person is developed. For the ones who only need communication, during the day, he/she can be involved as in various social activities – tailoring, knitting, weaving; as well as in cultural ones by attending the Ensemble of Elderly Ladies “Corul Senioritelor”. In the framework of the Centre there is also a library functioning, where beneficiaries have the possibility

to read the last news and artistic literature. The Centre is opened for all elderly people from the region of Criuleni.

## DEVELOPMENT:

The Association makes efforts for creating a new service in the framework of the Centre and, namely, the one of offering home services by the volunteers of the Centre for the bed-ridden persons chosen between the beneficiaries. It is prepared the widening of the Centre with 8 more places and the creation of a protected atelier for the elderly people.

## ENSURING DURABILITY:

The Centre is subordinated to the Criuleni regional Council and is totally financed by the above-named institution, from the local budget.

## THIS CENTRE EXISTS THANKS TO:

The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support” and the Criuleni Regional Council (founders), as well as the Social Investment Fund from Moldova.

ACCESS TO SERVICES  
FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

# A BOARDER, BUT NOT A BARRIER

In 2009, the mobilization activities of two rural communities deployed by the Association, have ended up with two important realizations: the creation of the Day centre for the Children with Special Educational Needs „Empatie” from Dubăsarii Vechi (Criuleni region), having a capacity of 30 beneficiaries and a similar centre in the village of Oxentea (Dubăsari region), being about to be opened. In these regions, the Association has identified an increased need of services for the

disabled children and their families. Thus, in Oxentea village there are 35 children with special educational needs, and in Dubăsarii Vechi – 52. The Association continues to supervise the activities of these centres. It is important to mention the fact that the Association maintained its basic principle – ensuring the durability. Thus, both centres are funded by local NGOs created, as well, thanks to the support of the Association and the local Mayoralities to whom respectively centres are now subordinated.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

A similar centre will be created in Hârtopul Mare.

**ENSURING DURABILITY:**

Local Mayoralities ensure the financing of the centres.

**THIS CENTRES EXIST  
THANKS TO:**

The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, “The Swedish Organization for Individual Relief”, SOIR Representation for Moldova, Oxentea Mayorality and the Mayorality of Dubăsarii-Vechi village.

EARLY INTERVENTION

# CREATING THE FIRST MOBILE TEAM

The mobile team of the Association is an unprecedented service in the Republic of Moldova, created in 2009. This reflects an innovative vision on the social services in the rural area. „In the rural areas, it is more convenient to develop services than creating institutions. Services are less expensive, can be brought very close to the homes of the beneficiaries, can be addressed to the entire family and – a very important advantage – can change the destination if the problem addressed to has disappeared”, Alexandra Grajdean, the President of the Association, explains the brave decision of creating a mobile team. The aim of the mobile team is to visit families with disabled children that have not yet addressed themselves to a specialist, for the evaluation and early intervention in the recovery of children with development issues.

*„It is known – early intervention is very important for the rehabilitation of disabled children. The lost time means lost chances for the child. The mobile team goes directly to families in order to prevent the loss of this precious time, in the moment when the family does not realize the importance of addressing itself to specialists in time. At home, we evaluate the child, inform and consult the members of the family on how to take care of the child, how to educate it, how to solve appeared problems, etc”.*

(Victoria Secu, Coordinator of the Programme “Developing community services“)

During the period 2008-2010, 80 families who have children with special educational needs have benefited of the mobile team assistance (children of small age: 0-6 years and children with severe impairment). It is the only service created by the Association that exists, for now, due to the financial assistance of foreign partners.

**THIS SERVICE EXISTS  
THANKS TO:**

The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, “The Swedish Organization for Individual Relief”, SOIR Representation for Moldova.

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

# KINDERGARTEN WITH INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

In order to ensure all components in the inclusive education, the Association, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and UNICEF Moldova has created the first inclusive kindergarten from the town of Criuleni. The institution holds a specialised service for the children with special needs integrated in this pre-school educational institution. As part of the service there is a psychologist working, a speech therapist and a special educator. Local authorities have been open minded to message of the Association

concerning the need of an early intervention at the children facing problems in development in the framework of a pre-school institution: these supplementary units at the personnel are paid by the Mayorality of the town of Criuleni. Thus, the kindergarten with inclusive practices from the town of Criuleni has solved not only the issues of including disabled children in the community, but deals as well with the early intervention in the case of these children so that they can enjoy, as a result, the communication with other people.

**DURABILITY:**

Remuneration of specialists in the framework of the specialised service for the children with special needs – by the Criuleni Mayorality.

**THIS INCLUSIVE KINDERGARTEN EXISTS THANKS TO:**

The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, Criuleni Mayorality, UNICEF, Ministry of Education.

Inclusion is one of the major objectives in ensuring the rights of disabled children. Thanks to the intervention of the Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, the schools from the Mășcăuți (Criuleni region) and Doroțcaia (Dubăsari region) villages have become school institutions with inclusive practices. Thus, school from these areas have become institutions for all children, including ones with special educational needs.

Presently, the theoretical Lyceum from Doroțcaia is attended by 45 children with special educational needs, and the Mășcăuți Gymnasium – by 28 children. Children with special needs are assisted in the school by a specialised service (ergo-therapist, psychologist, special teacher, support teaching

staff). Both institutions function on the basis of the Regulation for the school with inclusive practices, adopted by the Regional Criuleni Council and approved by the Ministry of Education. The specialists of the Association continue to offer assistance to the teaching staff in evaluation, planning and curricular adjustment. Also, the Association sustains these pilot-schools by promoting them as models, at the level of the two regions – Criuleni and Dubăsari. Using the experience gathered in both schools with inclusive practices. The Association extends this activity for other 8 regions ( Dubăsarii Vechi, Cimișeni, Coșnița, Cocieri, Oxentea, Hrușevo, Hirtopul Mare and Hirtopul Mic). In these regions, the schools with inclusive practices are in development.

## SCHOOL INCLUSION

## SCHOOL WITH INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

**THESE INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS EXIST THANKS TO:**

The Public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support”, “The Swedish Organization for Individual Relief”, SOIR Representation for Moldova, SOROS Foundation Moldova and Mășcăuți Mayorality. Primăriei Mășcăuți.

# THE PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL SERVICE – an innovative one

**One of the ambitions of the Association is the creation of a new service that would substitute, gradually, the medico-psiholopedagogical consultation.**

One of the ambitions of the Association is the creation of a new service that would substitute, gradually, the medico-psiholopedagogical consultation. The psychopedagogical service and educational support is a service under construction, that will have in sight the psycho-physical health of children and will defend the rights of the disabled children, will offer all the support to prevent, as early as possible, the deviations in the development of the children and will ameliorate already existing problems.

The psycho-pedagogical service will offer assistance for all disabled children from the region of Criuleni and Dubăsari, for the teaching staff in the schools of Criuleni and Dubăsari, for the parents in the families of whom children with special educational needs are grown.

In the same time, the service will have the role of child's attorney,

monitoring how the rights of the children with special educational needs are respected.

Activity of the service will be based on following programmes:

- **The evaluation/ diagnose and monitoring programme**, in the framework of which the medical evaluation of child will be realised (the evaluation of mental health of the child and medication prescription, in the case of need) and the psycho-pedagogical evaluation, where children with special education needs will be evaluated, re-evaluated and diagnosed by means of adequate and valid instruments, there will be elaborated an individual plan of intervention for each child.

- **The programme of specialised assistance** will include following services for the children with special educational needs:

- Speech development services offered by a speech-therapist;

- Individual psychological care (improvement of the self-perception, inter-personal relations, ways

of solving conflictual life situations) realised by a psychologist;

- Prevention and therapy of deviations (formation and development of intellectual-cognitive abilities, motric, affective, motivational abilities, needed for learning to read, write and calculate), realised by the teacher;

- Educational counselling (ways of learning), realised by the teacher;

- A third programme – **of continuous formation and methodological support** – will have in view the teaching staff in schools, intra-school evaluation boards, parents, and will offer methodological assistance in adapting the curricula to the needs of the child. The main groups of beneficiaries of this service will be constitute the children with special educational needs from the regions of Criuleni and Dubăsari, intra-school evaluation boards, teaching staff of the educational institutions from the mentioned above regions and parents of children with special educational needs.

## CONSULTANCY / EXPERTISE

The experience gathered during those 10 years of activity has propelled the Association between the organisations – resources in the field of protection of disabled children. Thus, specialists in the framework of the Association have actively taken part at the elaboration of quality standards for the day centres, have been included in the Group of assessors for the de-institutionalization of children in

Orhei, have realised trainings in the framework of the Alliance active in the field of Social Protection of the Family and Child for the NGOs that offer services for the disabled children, have offered trainings in the framework of the „TACIS” Programme also for the mobile teams that will activate in the Project: „Moldova – an inclusive community”.

## MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The public Association „The Woman and the Child – Protection and Support” counts over 40 members (parents and specialists):

### Founders of the Association

ALEXANDRA GRAJDIAN, founder,  
President of the Association  
OLGA LIENCO, founder of the Association  
ARIADNA SINCHETRU, founder of the Association  
NATALIA ROTARI, founder of the Association  
GALINA ȘEVCIUC, founder of the Association

### Administration Board of the Association

ALEXANDRA GRAJDIAN, President of the Administration Board  
VICTORIA SECU, Secretary of the Administration Board  
OLGA LIENCO, Member of the Administration Board  
ELENA RAICU, Member of the Administration Board  
TATIANA NECULAI, Member of the Administration Board

### Employees of the Association

VICTORIA SECU, Coordinator of the Programme „Developing community services”  
INA CAZACU, Coordinator of the Programme „Social and school inclusion”  
VERA STAHI, Coordinator of the Programme „Family assistance and support”  
NATALIA ROTARU, accountant  
RADU MUNTEANU, technical assistant  
ELVIRA BULGAC, speech-therapist, mobile team  
STELA SITNICOV, special teacher, mobile team  
INA ILIESCU, social assistant, mobile team

INA MARCO, melo-therapist, mobile team  
CAROLINA BĂDĂNĂU, physical therapist, mobile team  
NATALIA CAUIA, ergo-therapist, mobile team  
ANGELA CEBAN, psychologist, mobile team  
VALENTINA OGOR, special teacher, mobile team  
VALERIU GRAJDIAN, driver, mobile team  
BORIS TODERAȘCO, driver in the Programme “Social and School inclusion”



***Domnica Gânu, Manager, The Secretariate of the National Council for the Protection of Children's Rights, Secretary of the High-Level Group for the Children of Moldova:***

*„It is a team that has addressed, between the first, the problems of the children with special educational needs. The preoccupations of the Association have not been reduced only to children; A special attention is payed to the family as a whole. In solving the problems, it did not rely only on support from abroad, but it convinced the community of the fact that only together the best solutions for children can be found. The Association has succeeded to convince also the local public authorities to realise, jointly, many beautiful things. Moreover, it has changed the attitude of local authorities in relation to children's problems. The team deserves all our appreciation!”*



## **WITH GRATITUDE FOR DONORS:**

SOROS Foundation Moldova

The „Open Society” from Budapest

Social Investment Fund from Moldova

The Swedish Organization for Individual Relief

SOIR Representation Moldova

JANIVO Foundation, Netherlands,  
by the Charity Association ACASA

UNICEF Moldova

Psychiatry Initiative from Geneva, with the regional office based in Bulgaria, Sofia

LAIGUE Solidarity and Ministry of External Affairs, France

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