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**FUTURE OF ROMANIA (FOR) CHILDREN
PROJECT {PRIVATE}
EUR-0032-A-00-2059-00**

MID-TERM EVALUATION

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Bucharest and Constanta*

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ACRONYMS

AID	Agency for International Development
COR	Children of Romania
DIP	Detailed Implementation Plan
EC	European Commission
EOP	End of Project
FOR Children	Future of Rumanian (FOR) Children Project
GOR	Government of Romania
Holt	Holt International Children's Services
IRSOP	The Rumanian Institute For Public Opinion
Leagana	Orphanage
LOP	Life of Project
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
MSW	Master of Social Work
NASW	National Association of Social Workers
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PACT	Private Agencies Collaborating Together
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RAC	Rumanian Adoption Committee
TOT	Traning of Trainers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	US Agency for International Development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The FOR Children project, initiated in 1992, has completed its initial implementation phase. The primary purpose of this mid-term evaluation is program improvement. This evaluation assesses a) progress made towards the achievement of project goals and objectives, b) effectiveness of project management practices, and c) community viability. Major project accomplishments are highlighted and program activities not meeting project objectives are identified, with suggestions for possible modification, re-evaluation or elimination. It is expected that this evaluation will be utilized by Holt International Headquarters staff, in-country field staff, and appropriate USAID officers, as a tool to identify shortcomings and implement changes to improve effectiveness.

The objective of the FOR Children project is to develop and strengthen the capacity of the people and government of Romania to reduce child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization. This is to be accomplished by providing, and thereby demonstrating, the effectiveness of social services to improve the quality of life for children and families and by developing a network of trained Rumanian social workers.

The strategy selected to implement the objective is to demonstrate or "model" the direct delivery of services to children and families, combined with a capacity building or "development" approach, to effect change by intervening with agencies that represent "entry points" into the child welfare system.

The Logical Framework of the Approved Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) dated 01 September 1992 identifies three overall purposes for the FOR Children project. These include development of a "network" of trained Rumanian social workers and a corresponding "network of agencies" collaborating to reduce child abandonment, provision, and thereby demonstration, of the effectiveness of critically needed services, and development and strengthening the capacity of individuals and GOR to reduce child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization.

The ambitious and complex project design was based on Holt's experience in Romania as a sub-grantee of the Children of Romania (COR) project from January 1991 to December 1992. It reflected the findings of an extensive study of Institutionalized children, undertaken with COR funding in collaboration with Ocrotiti Copiii, a national NGO, and Holt's previous experience in permanency planning in other regions of the world. The proposal was written at Holt International Headquarters.

The strategy recognizes that certain government agencies function as "entry points" into the Rumanian system of children's services. Holt believed that early intervention, by

trained workers, at these "entry points" would reduce the likelihood of abandonment of children. Holt identified and entered into conventions with these institutions to provide trained personnel and coordination through the various agencies. It was anticipated that this approach would promote the development of "networks" which would insure a reduction in the number of abandoned children.

The project design called for the establishment of three Centers for the Provision and Development of Services for Children and Families in Bucharest, Constanta and Timisoara. A decision was made, in collaboration with the Project Officer of USAID/Romania, to close the center in Timisoara on 30 December, 1993 to avoid duplication of similar services being provided by other NGOs. These remaining Centers were intended to serve as the HUB or focal point of the program.

The "modeling" component has been the most effective component of the project. It demonstrates, through the delivery of services, the importance of early and direct intervention at the "entry points" as an effective approach for identifying and supporting children who are at risk of institutionalization.

The "developmental" or capacity building component is based on the assumption that by training and placing social assistants within the "entry points" the numbers of children entering institutions will be reduced. While this approach is demonstrating the importance of early intervention, it is insufficient to bring about the required systems change necessary to achieve the objective of building institutional capacity. Impediments include a lack of clarity and understanding of project goals and purposes, a sense of isolation between Holt's social assistants and their more experienced colleagues, a need to renegotiate some of the conventions which no longer accurately reflect project objectives, and a lack of training opportunities for other individuals presently involved in the project or critical to its development and sustainability.

The evaluation team finds that this basic strategy of incorporating both a "development" (capacity building) strategy and a "modeling" approach of developing and delivering direct services remains viable, and with some modifications, should be continued throughout the life of the project.

Previous studies by the World Bank and UNICEF, among others, have addressed the need for and obstacles to the organization and delivery of assistance and services to Rumanian children and families. While there appears to be a consensus among policy makers that problems exist, the need remains to "forge a common understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the current system as part of developing a feasible agenda for change" according to a 1993 study undertaken at the request of UNICEF. It is anticipated that UNICEF will provide assistance to identify options for reform. "Social Support for Children," a recent initiative supported by the European Community (EC), may provide a more receptive environment for institutional change. Holt is encouraged to present the

FOR Children model to the concerned ministries, European NGOs and the National Committee for the Protection of Children in the immediate future as a contribution to the redesign of the GOR program

Without continued external assistance or additional GOR support for this project's objectives -- and given that social problems such as high inflation and unemployment are likely to persist -- it is unlikely that FOR Children's contributions will be sustained beyond LOP. Social assistants will not be incorporated into GOR agencies, inter-agency networks will not yet be sufficiently strong enough to function independently, the GOR will not have gained an adequate understanding of the FOR Children model or the financial means to continue support for innovative approaches to permanency planning (such as short-term foster care)

The Project has been successful, through direct intervention, in drastically reducing the number of undocumented children born in maternity hospitals. However, the problem of abandoned children is far from resolved. A backlog of cases in the courts and the sluggish pace of institutional reform impede the development of the legal and institutional environment needed to move abandoned children presently in institutions into appropriate foster or adoptive homes.

Members of the Commission for the Protection of Minors at the Judet level are responsible for making all decisions concerning the movement of institutionalized children. Involvement of these key persons, from the courts and in the Judets, through dialogue and training, is essential and recommended to assure their involvement in considering alternative models.

While some involved in FOR Children clearly understand its goals and objectives, many others, including Ministry and local government officials, heads of institutions, etc., have little or no understanding. Some individuals who exhibit a clear understanding of the theoretical concept are apparently less committed to its implementation, practice or continuity. Increased effort must be made to involve all concerned individuals and institutions in the decision making process. Expanded training and networking efforts are required to reach individuals whose cooperation is essential to facilitate the successful de-institutionalization of children.

There is a reasonable expectation based on current success or recommended changes that most of the FOR Children objectives can be achieved by EOP. Current financial allocations for FOR Children are adequate to allow Holt a number of alternatives for accomplishing project objectives. With monies which were not spent in the first half of the project, due to posts which remained unfilled for varying lengths of time or project components which were not implemented as planned, Holt may elect to increase spending by hiring more social assistants or requesting a no-cost extension. Some money might be spent on undertaking additional studies or alternative demonstration projects. All

decisions should aim toward increasing the probability that the components will continue after the project ends

While the number of children placed outside of institutions is impressive, it is not possible to state with certainty that there is a direct relationship between this activity and FOR Children. There has been an estimated eight percent increase in children placed in institutional care during the last year. This is explained by those interviewed to be the result of a combination of social and economic problems presently besetting the country. Further study and better information is required to establish a clear link between FOR Children activities and the realization of project objectives.

Project implementers cannot realistically hope for profound impact without concomitant change throughout the larger system. Holt's staff have gained a better understanding of the role NGOs can play in the project context and the importance of both needs and resource assessments to better situate the project in the local context.

The principal recommendations are based on the expectation that project objectives will have a greater possibility of being achieved if financial and human resources remain focused on the present project sites and renewed emphasis is placed on "modeling" and "development". These recommendations cover three broad areas:

1) permanency planning development

- Holt International may choose among a range of options to expand program staff and activities until July 1995 or request a no-cost extension for the project.
- The critical factor in all decisions related to expansion of programs is to insure that they enhance the probability of being sustained in Romania.
- In collaboration with a local institution, a follow-up study should be undertaken to evaluate the current status of a random sample of children placed by FOR Children in the first half of the project.
- Where possible, these decisions should complement current efforts of other NGOs, such as World Vision/ARAS, Youth for Youth, etc.
- Holt should take a more aggressive, pro-active, and inclusive approach to presenting the program and its achievements to the Rumanian people. Specifically, FOR Children should be publicized as one alternative model to institutional care to other organizations concerned with designing and implementing changes in support to children.

- Additional technical assistance from FOR Children, or in collaboration with other USAID-funded projects, is required to assist local governments and institutions to learn how to manage information, to re-allocate existing resources, and to identify needs for new programs
- Further consideration should be given to future use of Project Centers as community based family oriented social service centers
- Resources allocated for the shelter care component should not be used as planned. There is no possibility that present objectives can be achieved. The problem is complex, the complimentary resources are not presently available and the model requires further study (which Holt should support). As it is presently conceived, shelter care has no possibility of being sustainable in Romania.
- The "Pregnancy Counseling" component of shelter care should be implemented in collaboration with existing institutions and organizations, and other USAID supported projects, and counselor training should be planned and undertaken soon.

2) training and networking

- Increased emphasis on training and additional effort in "networking" are key to assuring that the demonstration elements of FOR Children are better integrated during the life of the project. Where possible, training programs should be undertaken in collaboration with Rumanian institutions (to increase their institutional capacities and credibility), in cooperation with appropriate ministries, local Judet or tutelary authorities, NGOs, etc.
- Existing networks among institutions and among local authorities, police, hospitals, etc. should be strengthened and used as demonstration models either through study-tours or video tape.
- Efforts must be maintained and every possible avenue pursued to assure accreditation of Holt's training program for social assistants.
- Ensure long-term resources for Romania by, when possible, providing Training of Trainers (TOT) opportunities.

3) project management

- All existing Conventions, job descriptions and institutional relationships, should be reviewed and modified where necessary with the appropriate authorities.

- More emphasis is needed in supervision and staff development which will require reorganization of field staff responsibilities, regular staff meetings and retreats and increased contact and dialogue between the Constanta and Bucharest center teams
- Holt management must undertake the necessary supervision and training to assure Rumanian staff are given every opportunity to develop the necessary skills and competency required to continue to have impact after the project
- Field staff must be involved in setting program priorities to assure their input into project modifications following the mid-term evaluation

- Holt headquarters staff, in collaboration with the field-offices, need to revise the policy concerning what spending is done at the Project Director's discretion. This will improve response to financial matters with program implications such as inflation, rising costs of consumer goods, etc.

The evaluation team has noted the commitment of Holt staff and others interviewed to improving conditions and providing alternatives for children at risk of abandonment. FOR Children is contributing significantly to the future of Rumanian children. These recommendations, coupled with reports and constant vigilance over the ever changing Rumanian context, will have substantial impact during the remainder of and after the life of FOR Children.

I. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a) *Conclusions*

The mission of the Holt FOR Children project is to develop and strengthen the capacity of the people and government of Romania to reduce child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization, by providing and thereby demonstrating the effectiveness of social services to improve the quality of life for children and families and to develop a network of trained Rumanian social workers and a corresponding network of agencies collaborating in innovative ways to reduce child abandonment. This will be achieved through training and promoting communication among agencies serving children.

- The Holt FOR Children project is successfully providing and demonstrating the effectiveness of social services. It is developing a network of trained social assistants thereby developing the capacity of those individuals involved with the project to reduce the numbers of children being abandoned or unnecessarily institutionalized.
- It is not possible to evaluate the impact of the project on the overall reduction of child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization due to a lack of sufficient data concerning the movement of children into and out of institutions in Romania.
- There are no indications that the project is achieving its objective of strengthening the capacity of the government of Romania to deinstitutionalize children. This requires not only program change, but also a systems change over which NGOs do not have control. While NGOs have an important role to play in a civil society, this role remains to be defined in Romania. As one component of a civil society, NGOs may be able to influence change, but it is unlikely that they may single-handedly

implement change at a national level, especially when the issue involves policy modification and, especially when the NGO comes from outside the country

- The hypothesis that the provision and demonstration of social services would be sufficient to decrease the number of children in institutions does not take into account the essential changes required in the Rumanian perception of institutionalized children nor the complex system responsible for overseeing such practices. Neither does it allow for social and economic unpredictabilities over which the project has no control. Such variables may be the sole reason for the estimated eight percent increase in the number of children placed in institutions within the past year. Hardships can certainly prevent families, who might otherwise keep, adopt or foster a child, from doing so. Other multi- and bi-lateral institutions such as the World Bank, UNICEF, EC, and other NGOs, are having an impact on some of these same institutions and systems, thus affecting, directly or indirectly, the potential impact of FOR Children.
- The proposal for FOR Children was written at Holt headquarters and the design is based on their experience with similar issues in other regions of the world. While Holt staff in Romania were consulted, local data was used to identify key problems of institutionalized children, and the proposed model was innovative, the project design lacks sufficient assessment of needs and existing resources within the host country.
- One strategy of FOR Children is to demonstrate or "model" the direct delivery of services, with emphasis on a capacity building or "development" approach by working in collaboration with and through "entry points" where children are introduced into the system.
- The concept of "modeling" and working through "entry points" remains valid although to date, it has not had the desired effect of capacity building or "development". This is due to a combination of factors including the paucity of available services at these "entry points," resistance to change by individuals and institutions, the present improbability of these services being maintained without outside support and additional human resources.
- A decision was made in December 1993 to close the Timisoara project site due to the presence of a number of NGOs offering projects with components similar to FOR Children.
- As designed and conceived it is unlikely, given the current social and economic conditions in Romania and in the absence of additional support, that the project will be sustainable after July 1995.

Recommendations

- Holt should continue to work in Bucharest and Constanta and not expand programs into other geographical regions. Training and networking are the keys to success and should be reinforced where possible. Any expansion in the second half of the project should share the objectives and priorities of services to current target populations and institutions. This would increase the impact of the "modeling and development" strategies of the FOR Children.
- Holt must take a more proactive role and approach with government, other concerned institutions and NGOs to keep them up-to-date on project objectives and developments by demonstrating, through all possible means, the methodology and achievements of the approach of FOR Children. For example Holt should present FOR Children to both the National Committee for the Protection of Children and relevant ministries as one alternative model soon as shape is given to the policies for the new Social Support for Children program. These presentations should be made in Rumanian to enhance their impact. When appropriate, meetings with GOR should involve representatives from all relevant Ministries to enhance communication and collective decision making.
- Holt must develop and expand technical assistance and current training programs to include supervisor and colleague training, other individuals, institutions and constituents involved in or affected by FOR Children. Such training will strengthen the professional environment, thereby increasing overall effectiveness. This includes colleagues of Holt social assistants, the institutions in which they are working, local authorities and ministries where appropriate. This should include training in training of trainers (TOT), the techniques of supervision, and information management.
- Holt should clarify program objectives and activities in the light of changes, following the mid-term evaluation, to assure that all concerned individuals and institutions are informed and updated on progress and proposed changes. All conventions should be reviewed and revised as required with the appropriate institutions. There should be more regular supervision and team meetings with institution directors and/or staff.
- Holt should renew and strengthen their relationship with other NGOs such as World Vision, Rumanian Orphanage Trust, Youth for Youth, ARAS, etc., by updating them on current activities and progress, to assure, as much as possible, that FOR compliments and avoids duplicating existing or planned initiatives by these organizations. Due to the modeling nature of FOR Children, Holt is encouraged to be pro-active in working with NGOs and to take initiative when required, to demonstrate the importance of collaboration and cooperation.

- Holt must renew its commitment to "networking" by assuring that the two current regional centers in Bucharest and Constanta serve as "nerve centers and coordinating entities" as stated in the DIP. Holt's role is critical to initiate and ensure that networking occurs and that networking skills are demonstrated. Networking can be reinforced by renewed efforts to create Child Welfare Councils which include government and agency representatives. Holt should investigate how it can best support the recently created Professional Association of Social Workers as a possible alternative to creating a National Welfare Council.
- Holt must renew efforts and use every option available to assure accreditation for social work training being provided to social assistants.
- Holt must continue to provide and thereby demonstrate the effectiveness of certain services that are not well known in Romania to improve the quality of life for children and families. This goal will be met by establishing and managing services including a) crisis counseling and intervention, b) pre- and post institutional placement evaluations, c) short-term foster home care, d) domestic adoption, and e) temporary shelter.
- Holt should continue to offer a limited number of social work students from the University of Bucharest the intensive internship program even though it will not achieve the EOP objective of working with 45 students.

b) Conclusions

The goal of FOR Children is to provide and thereby demonstrate the effectiveness of certain services that are not well known in Romania to improve the quality of life for children and families. This goal will be met by establishing and managing services including a) crisis counseling, b) pre- and post institutional placement evaluations, c) short-term foster care, d) domestic adoption, and e) temporary shelter.

- In three areas (crisis counseling and intervention, pre- and post institutional placement evaluations, and domestic adoption), FOR Children has already met or will likely exceed its EOP objectives. This is illustrated in the statistical analysis and graphs to be found in the appendices.
- Through direct intervention or collaboration with participating local institutions such as maternity hospitals, police, dispensaries, etc. FOR Children social assistants have all but eliminated the possibility that abandoned children with whom they are working will be without birth certificates or identity papers and thus legally nonpersons for

life FOR Children intervention in this area is clearly one impressive success of the first half of the project

- However, Holt has not been as successful in obtaining formal declaration of abandonment for the children with whom they have worked. Due to a backlog of cases, very few of the applications from Holt have yet passed through the legal system. The "modeling" impact of FOR Children is thus diminished by this failure to change the legal system.
- The number of FOR Children interventions, although impressive at first glance, do not indicate that the project is having any direct impact on the destitutionalization of children. There has been an estimated eight percent increase in the abandonment of children during the last year. There is insufficient information to judge whether or not Holt's cases would have been resolved differently in the absence of the FOR Children interventions.
- The number of domestic adoptions, and the quality of placements observed by the evaluation team, is impressive and reinforces the potential for future success. The "modeling" aspect of this component can serve both the GOR and other agencies with a prototype for establishing a domestic adoption process.
- The low number of families recruited for short-term foster care and the children actually placed suggest that Holt may not achieve the targeted EOP objective. However, the temporary placement of children outside of the immediate family is new to Romania. It is commonly believed that institutional care is preferable for the child's emotional development, in the long-term, to multiple placements. It should be noted that multiple placements is also a current issue of debate with regards to permanency planning in the United States. The evaluation team has been impressed by the quality and diversity of the homes and families recruited by the Holt social assistants.
- The proposed model for shelter care as presently conceived is not viable in the current Rumanian context. The problem is multi-faceted and complex and requires additional study and consideration. While there appears to be a need for such a resource, the concomitant services such as child care and job training are not available in the existing network. The financial expenditures required to establish and implement this model are unlikely to be cost-effective or to adequately address the scope of the problem as a demonstration project, and is totally unsustainable in the present context. A preliminary paper prepared by Holt and the Peace Corps provides a basis on which to build further study.

- The pregnancy counseling component of the proposed shelter care module is viable in terms of "modeling" and possible "sustainability" The need is also great
- The IRSOP study, concerning Rumanian attitudes towards short-term foster care, will provide data and alternative models for consideration by appropriate institutions as they continue to address permanency planning needs and options

Recommendations

- Holt should expand its training program to work more collaboratively with GOR, other agencies and local institutions at the Judet and Tutelary level Training, combined with increased staff and peer supervision, regular team meetings and retreats, will help to assure the impact and sustainability of FOR Children To build capacity of Rumanian institutions, possible areas for support include information management which emphasizes the importance and uses of information, training for local Commissions for the Protection of Minors to address the backlog of pending cases and secure future cooperation based on the relationship between permanency planning and documentation
- Holt should maintain the two regional service centers, review all job descriptions to assure their appropriateness, consider the hiring of Rumanian nationals to fill supervisory positions to reinforce its practice of "modeling" and "development" and base all decisions for increased staffing for the duration of FOR Children to reflect revised program objectives Additional staff needs include more social assistants to work in AIDS and/or pregnancy counseling, to represent at risk populations (such as migrant workers or gypsies), etc
- Holt should not pursue implementation of the shelter care component but should support further study of alternative models for providing emergency services to Rumanian women in need of short-term shelter The study should be national in scope and perspective, and identify existing resources related to shelter care
- Holt must review all conventions signed with Rumanian institutions to assure their appropriateness and make necessary amendments in the current context Continuing dialogue and meetings between Holt and institutional staff should be the natural follow-up to these negotiations
- Holt should pursue the pregnancy counseling component of the proposed shelter care program While the design will require further study, it will provide a critically needed service, and does address the project objective of serving at risk families and children

- Holt should pursue and develop the short-term foster care component. Although the current statistics would not seem to indicate that EOP objectives will be met in terms of numbers, the success to date should be exploited and built upon. It would provide a solid grounding for rapid development and expansion of this innovative component in the Rumanian context. Current participants should be encouraged to act as resource persons to further develop awareness among the Rumanian population and serve as models for recruiting additional families.
- Holt should re-open discussion and carefully consider development of long-term foster care as an activity integral to permanency planning. There is a history of long-term foster care in Romania, so it is a viable option, and addresses concerns which many express concerning the undesirable likelihood of multiple placements arising from short-term foster care.
- Holt should continue to develop and expand the domestic adoption program and to support the Rumanian Adoption Committee through collaboration, training and technical assistance. Holt must be very careful to maintain its policy of total separation between its international and domestic adoption activities and take all necessary measures to ensure that the two programs are kept distinct in institutions where there is overlap and potential for confusion.

- Holt should undertake a vigorous education and public relations campaign based on its current successes to present FOR Children objectives and progress to the people of Romania in order to demonstrate these new ideas and their viability as models for the demstitutionalization of children
- Holt is encouraged to conduct a follow-up study of cases closed in the first half of FOR Children (to identify successes and examine the current status of each) and to support other additional studies

c) Conclusions

Project Management

- FOR Children has experienced a number of personnel changes in the management team since the inception of the project and two key positions (AT&R and Bucharest Site Supervisor) remain vacant. An Assistant Director for Training and Research has been selected, and the person is expected to arrive in Bucharest in late May
- The Site Supervisor for Constanta arrived in country some five weeks ago and appears to be well integrated into the environment and the project and has already gained the respect of staff and FOR partners. The roles and responsibilities of Site Supervisor and Site Coordinator in Constanta appear to be effectively defined, more because of communication between the two individuals filling the positions than because of formal job description
- Financial and narrative reports are thorough and well prepared. They provide A I D , USAID/Bucharest, Holt headquarters, and Holt staff with sufficient information from which to make program plans and decisions
- The economic situation has changed markedly in Romania since the design of the project. Prices, wages, etc are constantly adjusted or reindexed. At present, changes to FOR Children budget or spending require approval from headquarters. The costs of public transportation, day-care, and consumer goods change regularly. The necessary approval to change the amount of money paid to these families comes from headquarters. This is an obstacle to the efficient and timely operation of the project
- It is not possible to compare caseload/staffing ratios against any norms to evaluate the appropriateness of time spent on functions such as home studies, files, counseling, etc , nor is it possible to do a cost/benefit analysis of institutionalization vs prevention and community based services

- Holt is in the process of completing an extensive data-base of its case-load. The status of each child or family with whom FOR Children social assistants work is recorded. Even though there are no regulations regarding confidentiality of children's files Holt has coded the identity of the child or family and access is limited by a "pass-word", thus modeling the importance of confidentiality.
- Present management team staffing, when the unfilled positions are staffed, is adequate to accomplish the project objectives. Present job descriptions require review and may require modification to better meet program goals and to better use the experience of current staff. Regular staff meetings, supervision, and staff retreats, as originally conceived, will reinforce staff and program development, assure better transfer of skills from the expatriate to the national team, and reinforce the importance and roles of Rumanian staff.

Recommendations

- Holt needs to review, redefine and establish new guidelines for FOR Children discretionary spending to enable the Project Manager to make decisions based on program needs.
- Holt should consider filling the Bucharest site supervisor position with a Rumanian national and not recruit an expatriate at this late date.
- Job descriptions and responsibilities should be reviewed following the mid-term review to assure that they reflect program needs.
- Communications among Constanta and Bucharest project staff need to be strengthened by involving both teams in regular staff meetings and retreats so that managers and social assistants may exchange information about solving similar problems.
- Holt social assistants need to collect additional data and include information in current reporting to better evaluate the cost effectiveness of various interventions.
- Holt should give GOR and local authorities opportunities to learn and understand new concepts such as need identification and assist institutions and communities to evaluate existing resources and use them differently and more creatively.

II PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

A mid-term evaluation of Future of Romania (FOR) Children Project, being carried out by Holt International Children's Services under USAID Cooperative Agreement No Eur-0032-A-00-2059-00, took place from 02-16 April 1992. The three member evaluation team consisted of one independent evaluator, Holt International's Director for International Programs, and former Holt Representative to Romania from 1991-93, and a former Ministry of Health official who had been the GOR liaison for the FOR Children Project. This multi-disciplinary team provided expertise in the field of child welfare, management of international development projects and social science.

The FOR Children project, initiated in July 1992, has completed its initial implementation phase. This phase required extensive staff training, and orientation, negotiation with the Government of Romania and logistical management. With the opening of the Bucharest project site in January 1993, and the Constanta project site in July 1993, project staff have begun delivering services to children and families as outlined and approved by USAID in the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) of 01 September 1992.

As stated in the "Scope of Work" the primary purpose of the mid-term evaluation is **program improvement**. The evaluation assesses the progress made toward achieving project goals and objectives, evaluates effectiveness of project management practices, and assesses assumptions made regarding strategy and sustainability. This report highlights the major project accomplishments as well as those program activities which do not meet project objectives or which need to be re-adjusted, reevaluated or eliminated. The approved Detailed Implementation Plan provide the project objectives to be measured.

This report addresses three key management issues: 1) the probability of accomplishing projected objectives (outputs), 2) changes needed to increase the probability of meeting objectives, and 3) effectiveness of inputs to date including staffing, training, expenditures and supervision. It is anticipated that the results of this mid-term evaluation will be utilized by Holt International Headquarters staff, in country field staff, and appropriate USAID officers, to identify and suggest changes to the project's implementation. Such changes will be incorporated into a revised DIP, if necessary, and submitted to USAID for approval.

III METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Team members were provided with a briefing document which contained all relevant background documents including, the original proposal dated 13 February 1992, the formal signed Cooperative Agreement, the approved Detailed Implementation Plan dated 01 September 1992 including timeline, logical framework, corresponding budget, and all quarterly reports. The Scope of Work had been translated into Rumanian prior to the evaluation.

Before visiting the program sites, the team leader and Holt International Director for International Programs spent two days at Holt International headquarters, during which time they met with all relevant Holt staff, planned the strategy and identified institutions and individuals with whom they would meet in Romania. This information was sent to Bucharest to give field staff the time required to set up appointments. They were also briefed by an A I D program staff officer in Washington DC.

Upon arrival in Bucharest, the team members reviewed the Scope of Work, the planned site visits, devised a strategy for gathering and recording data, defined roles and responsibilities, and agreed upon a strategy for data analysis. Two full-time interpreter/translators accompanied them on site visits as required. They attended a briefing with USAID/Bucharest.

To supplement empirical data derived from project documents and project reports, the evaluation team set out to meet individuals representing Rumanian institutions, appropriate Holt International and Rumanian staff, USAID/Bucharest, other PVO/NGOs and participating GOR Officials.

Following site visits in Bucharest and Constanta, the evaluation team met to analyze data, reach conclusions and frame recommendations. They then led a series of debriefing sessions with USAID/Bucharest, Holt field staff, A I D Washington, and the Holt International headquarters management team. The Holt debriefings focused on strategies for planning and implementing changes in the second half of the project.

The team had the full cooperation of Holt International and field staff and enthusiastic support from USAID/Bucharest. Project staff from Bucharest and Constanta provided logistical aid and participated in both briefing and debriefing sessions.

IV. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND STRATEGY

Holt International Children's Services is a private, nonprofit social service agency which has served children around the world for over 37 years.

Prior to FOR Children, Holt had already successfully conducted a program of family reunification and permanency planning in Romania, from January 1991 through December 1992 as a sub-grantee of Private Agencies Cooperating Together's (PACT) "Children of Romania" (COR) project.

In July of 1992 Holt was awarded this USAID grant. The Cooperative Agreement "Future of Romania (FOR) Children" project is a three-year pilot program with the goal of reducing the instance of child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization in Romania.

The logical framework for FOR Children (Detailed Implementation Plan, 9-1-1992) identifies three goals

- 1) To develop a network of Rumanian social workers trained in child/family issues and a corresponding network of agencies cooperating in innovative ways to reduce child abandonment
- 2) To provide and thereby demonstrate the effectiveness of critically needed services to improve life for children and families
- 3) To develop and strengthen the capacity of the people and government of Romania to reduce child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization

a) A Network of Social Workers

The strategy to reduce abandonment recognizes that certain agencies of government function as "entry points" into the Rumanian system of children's services. The assumption was that early intervention by trained social workers at these "entry point" agencies reduces the likelihood of child abandonment. Holt identified three types of agencies: 1) maternity and children's wards of hospitals, 2) tutelary authorities, and 3) leagana, or orphanages.

A problem common to these agencies is that they often do not have enough trained personnel to successfully intervene in the children's cases. Holt entered into conventions with these agencies where Holt would place Rumanian nationals whom they provide with intensive pre-service and ongoing training to equip them to function as Child Welfare Specialists (social workers). These conventions spell out the responsibilities of each party and stress the importance of the agencies working cooperatively with Holt and each other, and provide that Child Welfare Specialists operate under the day-to-day supervision of the agency in which they are placed. Administrative Conventions have been signed with appropriate GOR governing bodies at each site.

Outplacing staff into a variety of GOR agency settings is expected to promote networking, leading to better utilization of existing services by providing a continuum of services to families and children in crisis. Promotion and acceptance of this network strategy will be reinforced through the establishment of local and national child welfare councils, and through periodic meetings involving supervisory personnel of the agencies involved with the FOR Children project.

b) Service Provision Centers

Holt has established "Centers for the Provision and Development of Services for Children and Families" in the cities of Bucharest and Constanta. The original project proposal

called for a third site in Timisoara, but this was closed in December 1993 to avoid duplication of services being provided by other NGOs

Each center is directed by a Site Coordinator who has a staff of Child Welfare Specialists. The Site Coordinator is responsible for developing a Site Plan to effectively provide a range of services geared to reduce child abandonment. The plan specifies which services will be offered directly through the Center and which services will be provided through outplacement of staff for work in the maternity and children's wards of hospitals, tutelary authorities and leagana. More recently the position of site supervisor has been created.

Service objectives are: 1) crisis counseling and intervention for families when the crisis may result in the abandonment of a child, 2) social evaluations of families and children to establish plans for eventual reunification when a child is about to enter an institution, 3) evaluation and follow-up services to children leaving institutions to insure their successful re-integration into the family, 4) temporary family care, 5) promotion and facilitation of adoptions by Rumanian families, 6) emergency shelter for families to prevent its children from being abandoned, 7) training of child welfare specialists to insure their ability to provide the above services in an effective and professional manner.

V. PRESENT RUMANIAN CONTEXT

It is generally agreed that there has been an estimated increase of 8% in institutionalized children in 1993. While the reasons for abandonment of children in Romania are the result of many factors, the economic situation in the country is consistently given as a major contributing factor for increased risk of an abandonment. The Holt caseload shows economic reasons cited in 78% of the cases of abandonment.

a) Economic Life in Romania

Wages are not keeping up with inflation. The inflation rate in Romania in 1993 was nearly 300% while wages increased by only 266%. According to the Monthly Statistics Bulletin published by the Rumanian National Commission for Statistics in the first two months of 1994 the inflation rate has averaged 5.5%, which translates into a 90% annualized rate. The Government has agreed to a target of 75% by year end in order to meet IMF requirements.

The average net salary in January 1994 was 101,000 lei or slightly less than US \$60. The net average wage for agricultural workers was 79,500 lei. This is particularly relevant to Constanta judet where agriculture is a significant part of the economy. It is estimated that 35% of abandoned children are from migrant families who lack a stable source of income.

The Rumanian Statistical Yearbook for 1993 states that in 1992 over 55% of total household consumption for employees was spent on food, 13.7% on clothing and

footwear, and 12% on housing and durable goods Peasants spent 75 1% on food, and 7 3% on clothing and footwear, and 12 7% on housing

Examples of current prices (in lei) for groceries are bread 200/loaf, powdered milk 1,600 - 2,500 for 400 grams, cheese 3,000-8,000/kg, meat and salami 4,000-12,000/kg, lettuce 400/head, oranges 2,500/kg Disposable diapers are selling for 23,900 lei (more than US \$14) for a package of 28

Involuntary unemployment is a new concept in Romania The national unemployment rate in 1993 was 11 1% In the municipality of Bucharest the rate was 5 7% and in Constanta judet the rate was 10 3% As more State enterprises close, unemployment is expected to increase The highest rate of unemployment in 1993 was 28 1% in Vaslui Judet Because of the high cost of living during the transition to a market economy, it is essential for a family to have two wage earners It is estimated that of current unemployed high school graduates, 70% are female

b) Social Policy Changes

Legislation has been passed that is intended to decrease the number of institutionalized children State child allowance legislation was implemented in the fall of 1993 to provide 5,300 lei per child per month regardless of family income, twice the amount will be given to children who are handicapped Over 2 4 million children are expected to be reached, two million children have received the benefit to date

While the concept of child support is not new, there were several new aspects to the program A new method of disbursement through the schools for school-aged children was implemented in an attempt to keep children in school If a child is not with the family for a minimum of fifteen days per month, the allowance will not be provided for that month Children who are between 14 and 18 years have legal authority to receive the benefit directly Many interviewed during the evaluation believe that the amount of the allowance relative to the rate of inflation and cost of living will not be a significant factor in reducing economic reasons for abandonment

Child abandonment legislation passed in mid-1993 provides standards and procedures by which a child in the care of state medical or social institutions could be declared abandoned and, therefore, be entrusted to individual care The impact of the legislation was seen by many of those working in Tutelaries as not being effective due to lack of training and resources for effective implementation, especially for preparing paperwork and representing the interests of the children in the legal and judicial arenas

More handicapped children can now be taken care of at home due to legislation implemented starting September 1992 that provides for income allowances for families

taking care of their child full time The rate of pay is equivalent to that of a beginning social worker (estimated at 50-60,000 lei)

Legalized abortion has had a significant impact on family planning It is currently being used as a primary method of birth control However, a drastic rise in cost is a major factor in whether or not women have access or not to abortions

c) Multilateral activities

Because the economic and social problems encountered in the transition are so extensive, there are many multilateral efforts underway in Romania attempting to impact these systems

UNICEF, with the assistance of USAID funding, has been working with the government officials to study, analyze, and report on the social and economic status of Rumanian children and families. In addition to evaluating the general status, they have also focused on the Romany population, pre-natal care, maternal mortality, and the social welfare system

UNICEF is also providing training to local members of Commissions for the Protection of Children and representatives of different government agencies responsible for finding solutions for institutionalized children and children at risk. Focus of the training has included values and philosophies related to child protection, alternative systems for child protection, child development concepts, and cultural diversity, resources for child protection and family preservation. These training sessions provide a forum to discuss and reinforce the concepts presented through Holt programs

UNICEF is also working on projects related to the development of young children and has collaborated with Holt in attempting to implement a credentialed short-course training for social assistants

d) Project on the Support Given to the Development and Implementation of a Child Social Protection Policy in Romania

This summer, Holt will have an opportunity to cooperate with a new initiative by the European Community which has granted the Government of Romania financial support and technical assistance for the development and implementation of a Child Social Protection Policy. This program, to operate over a period of 2 years starting July 1994, has 5 components

Component 0 - coordination and management of components 1-5,

Component 1 - preparation of legislation oriented towards child protection, in line with international standards,

Component 2 - professional training enhancing the educational, social, legal, etc profile of the nursing staff, establishing curriculum and the staffing procedures, primary and continuing education

Components 3 - 4- prevention of child institutionalization and facilitation of demstitutionalization

Component 5 - "physical rehabilitation" of dilapidated children's institutions

Through pilot projects already developed in Romania, Holt can add value to the efforts, mainly to components 3-4 (prevention of institutionalization), but also to components 1 and 2 (legislation and professional training)

VI CAPACITY BUILDING

1. Training

From its inception, training was a basic and important component of the FOR Children Program, as outlined in both the Project Proposal and the Detailed Implementation Plan. Key to every objective is the placement and training of personnel at "entry points" in the Rumanian child welfare system with knowledge of social work techniques and available resources

a) Pre-service and in-service training of social assistants

Holt's EOP goal is to provide training to 30 full-time social assistants. To date, the project has trained 22 who have each received 60 hours (10 days) of pre-service training. The Bucharest social assistants have received 66 additional hours and those in Constanta have received 42 hours of in-service training. Selected assistants and site coordinators have undergone 80 hours of specialized training in foster care, the remaining ones have each had six hours in foster care training.

The training design is experiential and stresses participatory training, review of case studies and self learning, all oriented to developing useful, practical skills, quickly and efficiently, while conveying theories and concepts of social work and child welfare.

Each social assistant has a notebook in which to enter training notes and other training material. All Holt training materials have been translated into Rumanian. In addition, a 60 page training manual written for the project by a Rumanian physician covers child development, childhood diseases and first aid.

Social assistants and agency supervisors interviewed for this evaluation spoke very positively about their training experiences. Several assistants expressed a wish for more hours of training, but most felt that the training was adequate to prepare them for their jobs. Most indicated that, prior to receiving training from Holt, they had very little understanding of the social work profession.

Social work principles are being successfully conveyed to the social assistants. One assistant working on a maternity ward shared how she had learned of the concept of empathy or "walking in another person's shoes" through a group training activity. She also spoke of learning to look for positive strengths in each person regardless of their situation. Another spoke of learning about nonverbal communication and interviewing skills through role playing.

The Detailed Implementation Plan states that Holt will work with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, UNICEF and the University to coordinate the development of the social work curriculum. In reality, it is Holt staff who have been responsible for curriculum design and provision of training.

b) Internship training for social work students

The EOP goal is for the Project to provide an internship experience for 45 University level social work students. Each student selected by the faculty of the University of Bucharest School of Social Work receives 360 hours of supervised practicum placement and training from the project. Five third year students have so far received supervised internship training through the project.

The students work in the FOR Children project 40 hours per week for 3 months. The students receive 3 days of orientation and at least one hour per week of individual supervision. This training is provided by the project's Director of Training and Research, who has a MSW. The aim of internship training is to help students apply to case practice the theoretical concepts and theories which they learn at the University.

The project is providing an excellent practicum program which will hopefully serve as a model for future Rumanian university social work programs. Unfortunately the University of Bucharest currently places little emphasis on internships in its overall course for training of social workers. It only requires a 2-3 week practicum in its four-year training program for social workers.

The two American Peace Corps volunteers who are assigned to work at the School of Social Work said that the current 2-3 week practicum in which students participate consists primarily of visits to various social service agencies and institutions with little or no "hands on" case experience. The Peace Corps volunteers judged Holt's internship program to be both qualitatively and quantitatively "far superior" to the practicum experience provided by other agencies. They also commented that the five students who had participated in the FOR Children's internship program "stood out" in the classroom for their understanding of social work principles and practices as a result of the training and supervision received at Holt.

It was initially assumed that the supervision and training for the social work students could be provided in groups and that therefore a larger number of students could be accommodated in the internship program. However, it was the assessment of Holt's Training Director that, considering the students' low level of understanding of social work concepts and their total lack of previous experience in working with children and families, an individual approach would be better suited to meet the students' needs.

The goal of providing internship training to 45 students is probably not achievable. The value of these internships lies not so much in the number of the students receiving this training, but rather in the modeling which this program provides to the University's School of Social Work. Hopefully in the future the University will place a greater emphasis on practicum training and on directly involving students in providing social work services to children and families.

c) Supervisor and colleague training

The DIP states that the FOR Children project will stress "capacity building in the present existing system" for "if the professional environment (of the host agency) is not strengthened too, (the project's social assistants') effectiveness is limited in spite of the social assistant's increased skills." The project goal was to train approximately 180 non-project host agency staff.

To the evaluators this component appears weak and needs strengthening in the second half of the project. There has been some training of tutelary authority and maternity hospital colleagues in Bucharest, however there has been none in the Constanta area. A group of six nonproject workers said they appreciated the written training materials, ideas and information shared by their project colleague, but none of them had attended a Holt sponsored training program themselves.

d) Management training

An intensive week-long training retreat was held in December, 1993 to orient the management staff to project goals, purposes and strategies and to work on team building. This retreat was facilitated by Holt's Director for Training and Helen Vojna, a trainer from the University of Maryland who was referred to Holt by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) office in Washington DC. In addition, the administrative staff has had 46 hours of training in development of policies and procedures, decision making, action planning and role clarification.

Four Rumanian management staff have attended a series of four seminars (each lasting 2-3 days) in management training sponsored by International Support Centers. The training focuses on program planning and development, fund raising, financial management and evaluation.

e) Training of child welfare councils

The project has not yet established organized regional child welfare councils. However, it has sponsored two informal meetings in Bucharest and one in Constanta to discuss the problems of abandoned children, the large backlog of children in institutions without legal identities and possible strategies to improve the network of services to these children. In attendance were orphanage directors, tutelary authority supervisors, representatives from the police department and Civil Affairs offices. From among these interested parties, FOR Children plans to build regional child welfare councils in the second half of the project.

f) Certification of social assistants' training program

An extremely important goal for the FOR Children Project is that the social assistants training program be accredited by the government of Romania. It is important to the social assistants since it would enhance their opportunity for advancement and long-term employment upon termination of the project. The issue is also extremely important for the longer term sustainability of the project. Continued employment of the social assistants in the host agencies would be much more likely if the training which they receive through the FOR Children Project can be certified.

Social assistants trained through the project deserve some recognition or certification. Certification problems have also been an issue for other NGOs developing short-term training programs for the interim period until the new professional schools can produce more graduates. Holt has been actively pursuing getting certification for its training program, but it has gotten unclear and sometimes conflicting directives from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, both about the application process and the possibility of getting certification.

Dr. Emil Paun of the Ministry of Education said that he thought "it is possible to find a way to get certification for the training program." He appeared supportive and gave detailed instructions on how to apply to get the Holt training program certified. If certification through the Ministry of Education is not accomplished, the project could explore the possibility of getting the training certified as a secondary competency for those social assistants who are university graduates.

The project has contracted with the Colorado State University School of Social Work to have one of their faculty members, Mona Schatz, come to Romania as a technical advisor to work with the project staff on a social assistant training curriculum. FOR Children will submit this curriculum with its application to the Ministry of Education. Ms. Schatz will be in Romania for 12 days in June.

g) Training of foster parents

Each of the six foster parents in Bucharest and Constanta programs received six hours of training in preparation for becoming foster parents. The foster family visited by the evaluation team spoke positively of the training they had received. The plan is that the foster parents will receive training on a quarterly basis for the remainder of the project. The FOR children contracted with a Romania physician to develop a 40 page manual for foster parents.

2 Networking

a) Among the project social assistants in the host agencies

The evaluation team saw evidence of good networking among the project social assistants working in hospitals, dystrophic wards, tutelary authorities and orphanages. This was especially true in the Constanta area, although there was also positive indication of networking among the Bucharest social assistants. It was reported by several different sources that, because of this network of project social assistants and because of their good communication, childrens' cases were passing through the system at a faster rate, legal documents were obtained for abandoned children in a much shorter period of time and therefore these children remained in hospitals for a shorter period of time.

b) Between project social assistants and (non-project) host agency social assistants and staff

The evaluation team got indications of both strong and weak networking in this area. In several of the maternity hospitals, doctors and nurses consult with the project social assistants and refer cases to them. A doctor from a Bucharest maternity hospital is preparing a paper to present at a Rumanian medical convention on the value of having social assistants working with maternity patients. On the other hand, a social assistant in another maternity hospital spoke of the difficulty she had in being accepted by the hospital staff, especially during the early months of her placement. She reported being seen as an "intruder and outsider."

The evaluation team visited two tutelary authorities in Bucharest. In one there appeared to be good acceptance and networking among project and non-project social assistants. But in the other, the non-project social assistants are suspicious and resentful of the project social assistant who they see as getting "all the benefits" such as training, higher salary, access to a vehicle, etc.

c) Among the host agencies themselves

In some cases, it appears that networking is stronger among the individual project social assistants than between agencies. Though the project social assistants are modeling good networking and communication for the other staff at the agencies, it has not yet had a significant impact in the way these agencies network together. However, there are examples of how the project is having real impact on agency networking. In Mangalia (Constanta Judet) the police department and the tutelary authority are referring cases and getting information about community services and procedures in handling child welfare cases from the social assistant working in the local hospital. In the small city of Cernavoda there is evidence of an excellent networking relationship between the police department, city hall, the tutelary authority and the hospital. The mayor of the city

credits the project with having had a major impact on the development of their network system. The mayor said, "we can never practice business as usual here in Cernavoda again."

The evaluation team feels that if the local child welfare councils in Bucharest and Constanta could become more active, they could become excellent venues for initiating, developing and sustaining contact among agencies.

d) Between the project and government Ministries

The project's main difficulty in working with the Ministries has been the high rate of turnover among key staff within the Ministries. The persons in the Ministries with whom the evaluators spoke were often not familiar with the project and its aims. However, they were very interested in learning more about the project and its achievements. The representative from the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection was interested in learning more about Holt's foster care program and how Holt's program could be applied to the Ministry's long term foster care project. Likewise, the Commission for the Protection of Children, an inter-ministerial agency, is also very interested in talking about how it can cooperate with the project in the future. The European Community is funding a project to develop new policies for the protection of children. The Commission for the Protection of Children hopes that the EC project can benefit from and build on the experience of the Holt project.

Because of the turnover of staff in the ministries and the lack of clear understanding of the project and its purposes, the evaluation team encourages the project to be more aggressive and more proactive in sharing the aims and results of the project with the various Ministries.

e) Between the project and the professional social work community

The project has been instrumental in establishing the Rumanian Association for the Promotion of Social Work, whose first priority is to develop a short course curriculum which would lead to the certification of social assistants.

The project's Director of Training teaches a seminar on child welfare policy and practice each semester at the University of Bucharest School of Social Work. In addition, Holt has provided practicum placements for social work students from the University.

In collaboration with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in Washington, D C, FOR Children developed a special training for trainers workshop. NASW also referred faculty members from the University of Maryland and Colorado State University to the project as technical advisors.

f) Between projects and NGOs

In speaking with the social assistants it was clear that they were aware of the value of networking with NGOs in order to meet the needs - especially material needs - of families and children. Counseling and mental health resources are still extremely limited. However, the evaluation team did learn of new counseling services which are just beginning to emerge. A listing of the agencies with which the project has networked is included in the appendix.

3 Counseling Activities

The aim of counseling activities is to prevent child abandonment and institutionalization. Maternity hospitals are the main target of counseling intervention since most newborn children are abandoned there. The need for social work is crucial in institutions where most births are to families with special problems and zero access to special services.

FOR Children's original intention was to provide counseling for 2800 families and to date some 1132 have been serviced. However, the evaluation team notices that the activities of Holt social assistants working in maternity hospitals reached many families not at risk of abandonment, but needing assistance in solving certain problems, such as declaring a newborn or obtaining legal rights.

The activities performed by social assistants in the main maternity hospitals visited by the evaluation team - Polizu Municipal Hospital, Constanta and Medgidia (where there is a pediatric ward) - are now well integrated into general health care services. After their placement, it took some time before social assistants were completely accepted.

In Medgidia maternity hospital, Holt social workers first identified mothers at risk, then began to counsel them on problems related to motherhood. They have introduced new clinical options to keep the child within the family, using short-term foster care where required.

In successful cases, children identified in maternity hospitals are reintegrated into their families and receive follow-up by the social assistants who originally identified them. There remains a great deal to be done by social workers on maternity wards, and there is a need for additional trained staff.

Working with authorities, positive results have been achieved in helping families to obtain "civil status" papers for their children, and identity cards for newborns. This is of major importance since the lack of "civil status" documents impedes domestic or international adoption. It is especially difficult to get identity papers for children over one year of age because of the intricate legal procedures.

Cooperation with other governmental authorities such as police, DA's office, and tutelary authority has also improved. Relationships in host agencies between Holt social workers and other staff have improved as well. Holt's trained staff are able to approach the authorities with ease and in more professional manners. Inter-sectoral collaboration in Constanta appears to be more efficient than in Bucharest.

The Holt social assistant from the leagana in Navodari has already prepared files for twenty children eligible for domestic adoption. Formerly compiling a complete adoption file was difficult due to the absence of trained skilled social workers. It would be useful to contact the Justice Department to discuss undertaking a study on similar procedures used at the international level.

4 Domestic adoption

Romania has a tradition of domestic adoption. The 246 children already adopted by families exceeds the original LOP objective of 135. Project social workers from maternity hospitals, children's hospitals, leagana, and tutelary authorities promote and facilitate domestic adoption through the skills they have acquired during training.

When Holt social workers ascertain that a child cannot be kept within its family before the process of adoption is facilitated by the timely documentation of the child's civil status, support to the tutelary authority to carry out home studies and the emotional preparation of the family.

Holt social assistants' dedication in identifying and selecting families and following up on placement is crucial. One adoptive mother in Bucharest stated "the role of the social worker is not only useful but essential for the well being of the child."

The work of FOR Children social assistants in identifying parents at risk of abandoning their children and in preparing children for adoption is an important contribution to the demstitutionalization of children in Romania.

5 Short-term foster care

The aim of this component is to promote temporary foster care as an alternative to institutionalization. Romania has a tradition of long term foster care. Prior to World War II, children of incapacitated parents were placed on a temporary basis outside the birth family. These traditions have eroded over time. There are provisions in Rumanian Law concerning placement of children mainly within the extended family for reasons of adoption. These laws are vague and are not applied uniformly. During the Communist era, due to economic hardships and the role of the State as a substitute for the family, the system of institutions developed.

FOR Children's original objective of placing 200 children in 105 foster homes is not realistic. Short-term foster care is virtually unknown in Romania, and Rumanians believe that in terms of a child's emotional development institutional care is preferable to multiple short-term placements.

The evaluation team visited foster homes to assess the children selected for placement and evidence of their physical, intellectual and emotional development. The team concluded that short-term foster care is a viable alternative in Romania to institutionalization.

Based on discussions with several foster families, it is evident that financial considerations, although important, are not necessarily paramount. A young foster mother in Bucharest from a working class family with a modest income stated "money is not everything. I really wish to take care of this child."

This foster mother intends to look after other children when the current foster child returns to his family upon the mother's release from a sanatorium. "I wish to go on taking care of other children in the future since I believe I was able to do something good for this one."

Despite these comments, there is some difficulty in recruiting foster families. Holt should undertake a more extensive public information program to inform and educate the Rumanian people about foster care as one way to keep children in the community.

Using current foster parents in the public education program would demonstrate the diversity of people who can become involved. Another potential resource might be the nursing staff currently working in children's institutions as they have the advantage of already having been trained in the field.

While the process of recruiting foster families is slower than originally foreseen, it is essential to maintain high qualities and standards for the project to succeed. The evaluation team emphasizes the demonstration aspect of the project. The quality of the families is more important than the number of children served.

6 Emergency shelter care

The program objective is to provide housing, feeding and the delivery of medical and psychological care of young pregnant women that lack the means to support themselves. Holt in collaboration with the Peace Corps has undertaken an initial needs analysis and how such services might best be delivered.

The problem which shelter care is intended to address is complex and requires further study which Holt should provide. The concomitant services required to provide support

to young women in shelter care do not presently exist. The rate of unemployment is higher for this category of young women than for any other sector, their job skills are minimal and job training programs are uncommon.

The proposed shelter care program cannot begin to meet the enormous need for such a service and it is unlikely in the current economic context that such a program could be maintained by the GOR.

The evaluation team feels that the value for such a demonstration project at this time is limited and that the allocated resources could be better used in other areas of the program.

7 Pregnancy counseling

The emergency shelter care component includes the training of social assistants to provide counseling to pregnant women especially those at risks of abandoning their child.

The evaluation team considers this proposed training as essential and required in the current Rumanian context. Even in the absence of emergency shelter care, trained pregnancy counselors placed in the key entry points of the Rumanian system such as dispensaries have the potential to provide long-term impact on the abandonment of children.

FOR Children is encouraged to provide the necessary training in collaboration with NGOs such as Youth for Youth to the nursing staff and mid-wives who provide prenatal consultations work in dispensaries and polyclinics. These latter have both the skills and the knowledge to provide medical services and through this training they will be able to expand their field of activities.

VII PROJECT MANAGEMENT

1 Staffing

FOR Children has undergone a number of staff changes since 1992 resulting in delays in program development and service delivery. There are positions which remain unfilled, such as the Bucharest Site Supervisor and the Assistant Director of Training, for which recruitment has been completed but the person selected has yet to arrive in country.

While these changes in personnel have impacted the development and flow of the project it is not possible to state that the effect has been adverse nor that it has hampered FOR Children from achieving its EOP objectives.

These vacant positions provide an opportunity for Holt to use the unspent monies in innovative ways during the second half of the project. As Holt defines the second half, the project must look at staff allocation in ways which ensure maximum impact of activities and long-term sustainability. For example, the employment of a Rumanian to fill the Bucharest Site Supervisor position appears more viable at this stage than recruiting and orienting someone from the outside.

The hiring of social assistants must reflect current project priorities and address problems in the evolving Rumanian context. For example, FOR Children social assistants have been successful in keeping HIV positive children in their families but will require additional resources to continue this in the future.

2 Reporting

Holt International's internal accounting and financial reporting systems are more detailed than those required by A I D. Holt's regular financial reports from Constanta and Bucharest are summarized in monthly reports for A I D Washington which reflect expenditures for the month, current spending to date and remaining balance.

The quarterly reports prepared in Bucharest follow the format of the Logical Framework as outlined in the Detailed Implementation Plan. These provide details on the cumulative status of EOP objectives, accomplishments to date and activities targeted for the upcoming quarter. These reports are useful not only as evaluation tools but also as planning instruments. A.I.D. Washington and USAID/Bucharest express satisfaction with them.

3 Home office back-up

Holt International has provided constant support and backup from its headquarters in Eugene Oregon. The Administration/Finance department has sent a staff member to provide technical assistance to the field staff on three occasions. The program officer is in constant contact with the field office and provides regular input to program and administrative decisions.

At present, budget reallocations for the FOR Children project must be made at Holt headquarters. Because the economic situation changes almost daily in Romania, it is necessary that headquarters redefine, as soon as possible, a new policy regarding financial decisions which can be taken in country and take into account differences in program needs in the two sites.

4 Program management tools

FOR Children has a full range of management tools meant to maximize project impact including a detailed organization plan for administrative and project sites, conventions of cooperation, job descriptions, and site plans.

It is important that all such documents be reviewed following the mid-term evaluation to assure that they reflect the program objectives for the second half of the project. Particularly, conventions of cooperation need to be renegotiated with all ministries and with some local authorities and institutions. Job descriptions may need to be revised in order to better use each position. Site plans need to be reviewed to see how project sites can more effectively demonstrate the concept of integrated family counseling centers.

FOR Children was completing an extensive data base during the evaluation. There is a record for each child or family with whom FOR Children social assistants work, with status and disposition noted. Even though Romania has no regulations regarding confidentiality of children's files, Holt codes the identity of the child or family and limits access to data by a "pass-word," thus modeling the importance of confidentiality.

Formerly there were structured and regular staff supervision and staff meetings. These need to be reactivated to assure that staff development is taking place and that staff concerns are being addressed in terms of program development. Communication between

the Constanta and Bucharest project sites needs to be structured and increased. Meetings provide an opportunity to discuss the different needs and approaches required in the two project sites. Meetings should alternate between the two sites so that Constanta is seen as integral to, and not isolated from, the entire project.

At present it is not possible to evaluate against any norm, the time required to do home studies, counsel a family, or keep a child from being placed in an institution, as such data has not been gathered. Nor is it possible to determine the cost/benefit of institutionalization versus prevention or community based services. Minor modifications to the data collection process would be desirable in order to include such information in the data bank for future reference, to reinforce the demonstration aspect of FOR Children, and to enhance the project's presentations to Rumanian authorities.

5 Financial inputs

The project underspent during its first 18 months. The Timisoara center was closed in December of 1992, the shelter care program has not been implemented, some staff positions are unfilled, and Holt International staff chose not to order vehicles from the USA but rather to purchase local-made automobiles at their own expense (not FOR Children). This leaves Holt International with a range of options, from increased staffing to a request for a no-cost extension. At present there are no further A I D funds allocated for children of Romania but this does not preclude Holt from seeking alternative source of funding.

6. Capital inputs

It is unlikely that additional capital expenditures will be required during the remaining life of the project, especially if Holt follows the evaluation recommendation not to open the shelter care component.

However, there is a need for increased transportation to enable social assistants to do more effective follow-up with families once children have been placed. It is too late to order additional vehicles from the USA, an allowable project expense, and USAID regulations do not allow for the purchase of foreign vehicles.

APPENDICES

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 - Hundreds of Millions of dollars for social Reform from the World Bank*
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 - American lessons for Rumanian Bankers*
 - Inflation monster got wounded but not killed*
 - Coopers and Lybrand is "Number One" among the Foreign Consultancy*
 - Companies in Romania*

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- 2 UNICEF Regional Monitoring Report No 1, *Public Policy and Social Conditions - Central and Eastern Europe in Transition*, 1993
- 3 Datculescu, Petre Dr , *IRSOP Foster Care Focus Group Research Review*, 1993
- 4 Tobis, David, Ph D et al, *Description and Assessment of the Administration of Romania's Social Welfare System for Children and Families*, 1993
- 5 M King, Joyce, team leader in collaboration with Family Planning Logistics and Training Team, Centers for Disease Control/Atlanta, *A framework in Support of a Draft Strategy for Health, Population, and Humanitarian Assistance in Romania*, 1993



HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES • PO BOX 2880 • EUGENE OR 97402 • (503) 687 2202 • FAX (503) 683 675

MID-TERM EVALUATION

“SCOPE OF WORK”

“FUTURE OF ROMANIA (FOR) CHILDREN” PROJECT
HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES

USAID COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NO
EUR-0032-A-00-2059-00

February 2, 1994

I ACTIVITY TO BE EVALUATED

A	Title of Activity	"Future of Romania (FOR) Children" Project
B	Authorization No	EUR-0032-A-00-2059-00
C	Cost	\$1,652,570
D	Most Recent Project Assistance Completion Date	July 15, 1995

II PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The FOR Children project, initiated July 1992, has completed its initial implementation phase that has required extensive staff training, orientation, negotiation with the Government of Romania (GOR) and logistical management. With the opening of the Bucharest project site in January of 1993, and the Constanta project site in July of 1993, all project staff are in place and have begun delivering services to children and families as outlined and approved by USAID in the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) of September 1, 1992.

The primary purpose of the Mid-Term evaluation is program improvement. The evaluation will assess the impact and the progress made toward achieving project goals and objectives, evaluate effectiveness of project management practices, and assess assumptions made regarding strategy and sustainability. Major project accomplishments will be highlighted, as well as program activities not meeting project objectives needing to be adjusted, re-evaluated or eliminated. Project objectives to be measured are those outlined in the approved Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) of September 1, 1992 (Attachment 1).

Key management issues to be addressed will be

- the probability of accomplishing projected objectives (outputs)
- changes needed to increase the probability of meeting objectives
- effectiveness of inputs to date including, staffing, staff training, expenditure levels, and supervision

Results from this Mid-Term evaluation will be utilized by Holt International Headquarters staff, in-country field staff, and appropriate USAID officers, to identify and implement changes in the project's implementation to improve effectiveness. All such changes will be incorporated into a revised DIP, if necessary, and submitted to USAID for approval.

III BACKGROUND

Holt International Children's Services is a private, non-profit American social service agency which has served children around the world for over 37 years

In Romania, Holt has successfully conducted a program of family reunification and permanency planning since January 1991. From January 1991 to December 1992, Holt was a subgrantee of Private Agencies Cooperating Together (PACT) which was in turn funded by the United States Agency for International Development. USAID identification number ANE-0001-0055-00

In July of 1992 Holt was awarded additional funding by the United States Agency for International Development. The Cooperative Agreement "Future of Romania (FOR) Children" project is a three-year pilot program with the goal to reduce instances of child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization in Romania.

Holt's "Future of Romania (FOR) Children" project has 3 overall purposes identified in the Logical Framework of the approved Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) dated September 1, 1992.

- 1) To develop a "network" of trained Romanian social workers focused on child and family issues and a corresponding "network" of agencies collaborating in innovative ways to reduce child abandonment.
- 2) To provide and thereby demonstrate the effectiveness of critically needed services which are not well known in Romania in improving quality of life for children and families.
- 3) To develop and strengthen the capacity of the people and government of Romania to reduce child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization.

The strategy to reduce abandonment recognizes that certain agencies of government function as "entry points" into the Romanian system of children's services. Early intervention by trained social workers at these "entry point" agencies reduces the likelihood of abandonment. Holt has identified these agencies as 1) maternity and children's wards of hospitals, 2) tutelary authorities, and 3) leagana, or orphanages. It is apparent that these agencies often do not have enough trained personnel to successfully intervene in child cases.

To help develop the capacity of Romanians to reduce child abandonment and to provide needed personnel, Holt has entered into conventions with these agencies to provide them with

trained manpower to initiate these early interventions. Holt has recruited 24 Romanian nationals and provided them with intensive pre-service training and on-going training to equip them to function as Child Welfare Specialists (social workers) in the collaborating agencies.

Child Welfare Specialists placed through these conventions work under the day-to-day supervision of the agency to meet the objectives agreed upon. These conventions spell out the responsibilities of each party and stress the importance of the agencies working cooperatively with Holt and each other. Conventions covering all Child Welfare Specialists are complete, as well as administrative conventions with appropriate GOR governing bodies in each site.

It is expected that the above strategy of outplacing staff into a variety of GOR agency settings, yet maintaining those placements within the same legal jurisdiction, will promote the concept of "networking", leading to better utilization of existing services, providing a continuum of services to families and children throughout their crisis period, leading to a reduction of child abandonment or institutionalization. Promotion and acceptance of this "network" strategy is being reinforced through the development of local and national child welfare councils, as well as, periodic meetings involving supervisory personnel of the agencies we are involved with.

Holt has established "Centers for the Provision and Development of Services for Children and Families" in the cities of Bucharest and Constanta*. These Centers serve as the focal point of the programs. *The original project proposal called for a third site in Timisoara which was subsequently eliminated in November 1993.

Each Center is directed by a Site Coordinator who has a staff of Child Welfare Specialists. The Site Coordinator is responsible for developing a Site Plan to effectively provide a range of services geared to reduce child abandonment. The plan will identify which services will be offered directly through the Center and which services will be provided through outplacement of staff for work in the maternity and children's wards of hospitals, tutelary authorities and leagana. Objectives for services to be delivered in the FOR Children project, either through the Center or through outplacement are:

- 1) Crisis counseling and intervention for families when the crisis may result in the abandonment of a child (2800 crisis counseling contacts projected by EOP),

- 2) Social evaluations of families and children for the purpose of establishing a long range plan when a child is about to enter an institution (700 evaluations completed by EOP),

3) Evaluation and follow-up services to children leaving institutions to insure their successful reintegration into the family (500 evaluations and follow-up services completed by EOP),

4) Temporary family care developed (temporary family care provided to 200 children by EOP),

5) Promotion and facilitation of adoptions by Romanian families in which focused and innovative steps will be taken to increase the number of permanent homes in Romania for Romanian children (135 domestic adoption placements facilitated by EOP),

6) Provision of emergency shelter for families where the provision of appropriate shelter may prevent a child from being abandoned and, (318 family months of shelter care provided by EOP) and,

7) Provision and promotion of training in social work and child welfare to insure the ability of the Child Welfare Specialists to provide the above services in an effective and professional manner

IV STATEMENT OF WORK

The evaluation team will address the following project components and issues, stated here as questions, with the overall goal of project improvement. The final evaluation report will include an **executive summary**, followed by the **findings** of the evaluation team, **conclusions** based on those findings and **recommendations**. In addition, the evaluation report will specifically highlight **“lessons learned”** that emerge from the analysis.

GOALS, PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES (OUTPUTS)

1 Are the project goals and purposes clearly and consistently stated and understood by all significant parties involved both in written communications and personal understanding? The team will assess the understanding of the project goal by management staff, local staff, and GOR counterparts. Assessment will be based on written project documentation and interviews with the above-mentioned groups.

2 Is the cause and effect link between project objectives (outputs) and the goal reasonably sound following 18 months of implementation? Reasonably sound, for purposes of this evaluation will be “a measurable reduction in abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization” within the population served. The evaluation team will use case studies and interviews of project staff and GOR counterparts to document cause and effect.

3 Are the project objectives (outputs) measurable as currently documented? The evaluation team will review projected objectives and systems for documenting progress towards the objective and make recommendations needed for improvement if necessary.

4 Is there a reasonable expectation that project objectives (outputs) will be accomplished by EOP? “Reasonable” here is being defined as within 10% of overall total projected. Case files and statistical reports will be utilized by evaluation team to measure projected outcomes.

5 If there are outputs that will not be accomplished, are there any identifiable solutions (inputs) that would ensure their completion? The evaluation team will outline their observations as to the validity of the unachieved objectives as currently implemented, in relationship to the project goal, and offer recommendations as to adjustments needed and/or additional inputs required to stimulate successful completion of objective.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

6 Are the following inputs sufficient to accomplish project objectives (outputs)?

Staffing The evaluation team will assess effectiveness of staffing levels of project management, local social assistant and support staff through review of time distribution and output to each project objective.

Training The evaluation team will review effectiveness of training through review of accomplishments to date, case review and interviews with training staff, local staff and GOR supervisors.

Financial Inputs The evaluation team will review financial inputs to date, in comparison to expected inputs and current realities, to identify areas of possible over or under spending and/or areas of additional spending needed.

Capital Inputs Capital inputs will be reviewed for effectiveness, utility and additional critical capital inputs needed, if any, will be identified “Critical” here is being defined as necessary for completion of project objectives

7 Are fiscal management and financial reporting systems adequate to ensure Holt’s control of Cooperative Agreement funds and report expenditures accurately? Evaluation team will review Holt fiscal management policies and assess actual practice for compliance Financial reporting systems will be reviewed with USAID for adequacy and compliance

STRATEGY/SUSTAINABILITY

8 Is the basic strategy of incorporating both a “developmental” (capacity building) strategy of training and outplacing social assistants into the existing GOR system and a “modeling” approach of developing and delivering direct services still viable? The evaluation team will assess the effectiveness of combining these two approaches by using interviews and a review of project outputs

9 Are the assumptions made about sustainability, including the incorporation of social assistants into GOR agencies, continuation of the interagency network, and transfer of direct services from Holt to the GOR, going to be viable (an expressed desire and reasonable expectation for funding) at the end of project? The evaluation team will document the perception of GOR officials as to the likelihood of sustaining current activities through personal and/or group interviews, review of GOR child welfare plans (if available) and review of the issue with project staff

V METHODS AND PROCEDURES

EVALUATION METHODS

Empirical data derived from project documentation, along with group and individual interviews with appropriate international and Romanian staff, participating GOR officials and colleagues will be used to obtain evaluation findings

The following materials will be reviewed prior to and used as reference during the evaluation process the original Holt proposal dated February 13, 1992, the formal signed Cooperative Agreement No EUR-0032-A-00-2059-00 document, the approved Detailed

Implementation Plan dated September 1, 1992 including the detailed timeline, logical framework, corresponding budget, and all quarterly reports

The evaluation team will have full access to all Project documents, data and other project-related material throughout the evaluation process, as well as access to all international and local staff as needed

EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will consist of three members, William Booth, independent evaluator will be the team leader and have overall responsibility for the evaluation process and reporting on the findings, Glen Noteboom, Holt International's Director for International Programs and former Holt Representative to Romania from 1991-1993, and Dr Alin Stanescu, Romania Ministry of Health Official and GOR liaison for the FOR Children Project

The role of the team leader is critical and it is important that this individual have adequate experience in program evaluation and preferably USAID program evaluation if possible

A multidisciplinary approach will be used with experts in the field of child welfare, management of international development projects and social science. Therefore, beside the team leader's evaluation experience, he or she will have expertise in one of these other fields

It is important that the two team members from the United States have experience living and working overseas and have the ability to examine programs in their cross-cultural context

Independent translators will be provided as needed for the Romania segment of the evaluation in recognition of the low probability of identifying appropriate evaluation team members from the United States that also possesses Romanian language skills

RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The evaluation team leader (independent evaluator) and GOR official will be recruited by Holt headquarters Program Manager for Special Projects. The Holt management team member will be assigned full time to this evaluation as needed and outlined here and will work with the team leader as reasonably directed. The Romanian GOR official will participate in the in-country evaluation work on a pro-bono basis, receiving a per diem rate per day to cover expenses

While in Romania, the team will receive guidance and assistance from the Holt Project Director and assigned staff. The team will interview and communicate with USAID/Romania field staff and the GOR as needed with the assistance and guidance of the Holt Project Director

The evaluation team will maintain communication as needed with the USAID/Romania field staff Holt Eugene, and USAID Project Director throughout the evaluation process

PERIOD OF SERVICE AND SCHEDULING

The Mid-Term evaluation field work will be scheduled for the April 4 - 16 with corresponding preparation time prior to and following these dates

The independent evaluator will be contracted for 30 working days as scheduled below

Two days for preparation and independent review of project documentation to be completed prior to field work

Two days will be spent in Holt headquarters in Eugene, Oregon with Holt management team member for orientation, review of project documentation and strategic planning plus two days for travel

The two US team members will meet with the AID project officer in Washington D C for one day prior to traveling to Romania to review the evaluation scope of work and clarify any outstanding issues

Twelve working days will be spent in Romania (two six day weeks) The first two to three days will be spent team building, receiving orientation to the project by international and local management staff that will include the Holt Project Director, Associate Directors for Training, Implementation, and Finance plus the Bucharest and Constanta Site Coordinators In addition, the evaluation team will meet with USAID/Romania field staff and appropriate GOR officials

The remaining time will be spent visiting project sites, with sufficient time to review on-site documentation, visit social assistant work sites, and interview appropriate staff and GOR counterparts Time will also be allowed for review, compilation of findings, and analysis in Holt's National Headquarters in Bucharest

A field draft of the Mid-Term evaluation report will be prepared by the evaluation team and provided to the Holt Country Director and USAID field staff for review This document will provide the basis for debriefing meeting with Holt management staff and USAID/Romania field staff to be scheduled two days prior to departure and debriefing with the USAID Project Director and Holt Management upon return to the US The Holt Project Director will arrange for adequate secretarial services necessary for the Evaluation Team's preparation of this field draft

A debriefing meeting will be scheduled with USAID in Washington to include the two US team members and the USAID/DC Project Director en route back to the US and with Holt

management staff in Eugene, Oregon, prior to the drafting of the final report by the evaluation team leader

The final Mid-Term Evaluation Report will be completed by the evaluation team leader by **May 16, 1994**, and will include consideration of written responses to the field draft provided by Holt and USAID/Romania field staff, Holt International management staff and the USAID Project Director in Washington D C , following the post-evaluation debriefings

VII REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The final evaluation report will include

- I Executive Summary
- II Project Identification Data Sheet
- III Table of Contents
- IV Body of the Report
- V Lessons Learned
- VI Appendices

VIII FUNDING

Mid-Term Evaluation Budget

SALARIES

Team Leader	30 days	\$318 per day	\$9,540
Holt Official	9% salary/benefits		\$5,500
GOR Official	14 days	pro bono	\$0
Translator	14 days	\$50 per day	\$700
			<hr/>
			\$15,740

TRAVEL

Local U S

Interview of Team Leader			
Airfare (round-trip)			\$775
Per Diem (3 days) \$100 per day			\$300

International

Team Leader

Airfare - New York to Eugene to Wash D C to Romania to Wash D C to Eugene to New York			\$4,500
Per Diem - US, 4 days, \$175 per day			\$700
Per Diem - Romania, 14 days, \$100 per day			\$1,400

Glen Noteboom - Holt Team Member

Airfare - Eugene to Wash D C to Romania to Wash D C to Eugene			\$2,500
Per Diem - US 2 days, \$175 00 per day			\$350
Per Diem - Romania, 14 days, \$100 per day			\$1,400

Local Romania Travel

GOR Official - Per Diem, 14 days, \$100 per day			\$1,400
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\$13,325

Clerical Support/Supplies			\$3,000
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TOTAL FOR MID-TERM EVALUATION			<hr/> \$32,065
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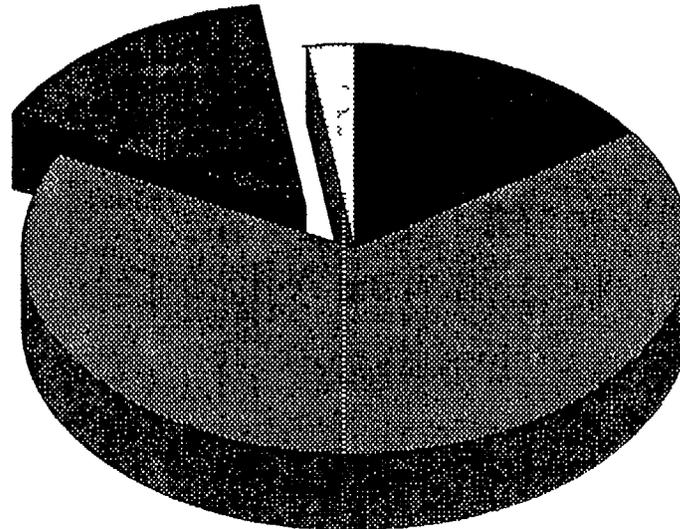
HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES
"FUTURE OF ROMANIA CHILDREN"
MID-TERM EVALUATION

LIST OF CONTACTS

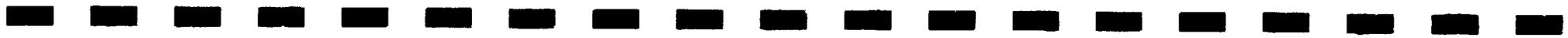
John L. Williams, Executive Director, Holt International Children's Services
Dan Lauer, Special Project Manager, Holt International Children's Services
Bob Gibbs, Accountant, Holt International Children's Services
Mary Lee Mc Intyre, US AID, Washington, DC
Dr. Mary Ann Micka, Project Officer, US AID, Romania
Richard Hough, Executive Director, US AID, Romania
Rodica Furnica, Program Assistant, US AID, Romania
Sandra J. McLaughlin, Project Director, Holt - Romania
Beth Durbin, Assistant Director for Finance and Administration, Holt - Romania
Rodica Mitulescu, Bucharest Site Coordinator, Holt - Romania
Kelley McCreery, Constanta Site Supervisor, Holt - Romania
Fetin Osman, Constanta Site Coordinator, Holt- Romania
Dr. Viorel Dan, Deputy Director of Mother, Child and Teenage Direction, Ministry of Health
Dr. Maria Costea, Psychologist, Ministry of Health
Dr. Lavina Bulogan, Direction of Mother, Child and Teenage, Ministry of Health
Dr. Buloga, Direction of Mother, Child and Teenage, Ministry of Health
Dr. Petru Damir, Direction of Mother, Child and Teenage, Ministry of Health
Dr. Bianca Mihai, Director of Romanian Adoption Committee
Felicia King, MSW, Peace Corp
Ambrose Baltas, MSW, Peace Corp
Mircea and Elena Grosu, Bucharest foster parents
Mariana Popescu, HOLT foster care specialist, Bucharest
Emil and Rodica Mardare, Bucharest adoptive parents
Mrs. Adina Dragatou, Director of Social Assistants, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
Dr. Emil Paun, Ph.D., Ministry of Education
Mrs. Maria Filip, Office of Local Public Administration
Mrs. Hergelegiu, Office of Local Public Administration
Mrs. Eugenia Avrigeanu, Chief, Tutelary Authority, Sector 1, Bucharest
Cristina Nedelcu, HOLT domestic adoption specialist, Tutelary Authority, Sector 1
Mihaela Stoica, HOLT social assistant, Tutelary Authority, Sector 1
Genoveva Tunsoiu, HOLT social assistant, Leagan nr 1, Bucharest
Rodica Grigore, social assistant, Leagan nr 1, Bucharest
Emilia Dobrin, foster mother, Constanta
Mariana Tanase, foster mother, Constanta
Matei Ilie, Secretary of Judet Council, Constanta
Camelia Ciungu, referent, Tutelary Authority, Constanta county
Doina Belciug, Director of Tutelary Authority City level, Constanta
Mrs. Doina Vasile, Director of Tutelary Authority County level, Constanta

Livia Vasile, HOLT social assistant, Tutelary Authority City level, Constanta
Mrs Victoria Bagai, foster mother, Constanta
Dr Jircia, co-director, Leagan Navodari, Constanta judet
Daniela Isac, HOLT social assistant, Leagan Navodari, Constanta judet
Dr Raul Danut Stanescu, director, Leagan Cernavoda, Constanta judet
Laura Zamfirescu, psychologist, Leagan Cernavoda, Constanta judet
Mirela Stan, Leagan Cernavoda, Constanta judet
Denis Pana, HOLT social assistant, Cernavoda, Constanta judet
Mr Mircea Pintilie, Mayor of Medgidia, Constanta judet
Mrs Mircescu, chief, Tutelary Authority, Medgidia, Constanta judet
Doinita Ciuculin, HOLT social assistant, Tutelary Authority, Medgidia
Mr Tiberiu Birda, Mayor of Cernavoda, Constanta judet
Mrs Elena Garaba, supervisor, Tutelary Authority, Cernavoda, Constanta judet
Margareta Marin, HOLT social assistant, Medgidia Hospital, Constanta judet
Marilyn Mullinox, Director, Casa Speranza, Constanta
Adriana Necula, HOLT social assistant, Mangalia Hospital, Constanta judet
Dr Mircea Elena Popescu, Inspector of the Health Direction, Constanta judet
Argentina Hohan, HOLT social assistant, Judet Hospital maternity, Constanta judet
Coca Lapadatu, HOLT social assistant, Judet Hospital premature, Constanta judet
Nina Negutu, HOLT social assistant, Judet Hospital dystrophic, Constanta judet
Rachel Cook, World Vision, Constanta & other staff
Julide Petrescu, HOLT social assistant - HIV/AIDS, Constanta judet
Dr Silvia Stoicescu, Chief of Pediatrics, Polizu Maternity, Bucharest
Smaranda Poenareanu, HOLT social assistant, Polizu Maternity, Bucharest
Carmen Gheorghiu, HOLT social assistant, Polizu Maternity, Bucharest
Mrs Elena Baciu, chief of Tutelary Authority, Sector 5, Bucharest
Ruxandra Polysu, HOLT social assistant, Tutelary Authority, Sector 5, Bucharest
Mioara Marcu, program assistant, HOLT Administrative Office
Constantin and Maria Filotti, Romanian adoptive parent, Bucharest
Gary Westwater, director, Romanian Orphanage Trust
Rodica Stanulescu, Romanian program director, Romanian Orphanage Trust
Rodica Manulu, Administrator, Romanian Orphanage Trust
Mr Gheorghe Floricica, chief, Tutelary Authority, Sector 6, Bucharest
Mariana Albu, HOLT social assistant, Tutelary Authority, Sector 6, Bucharest
Mirela Solomon, social work student, University of Bucharest
Nicoleta Rosu, social work student, University of Bucharest
Liliana Miron, social work student, University of Bucharest
Marcela Radu, social work student, University of Bucharest
Marcela Turcanu, social assistant, Leagan 3, Bucharest
Gina Schiteanu, HOLT social assistant, University Hospital, Bucharest
Silvia Pasti, Program Director, UNICEF
Bob Vitillo, Technical Assistant Consultant, UNICEF -USAID project
Paul Prosser, Director, World Vision
Obie Moore, training consultant
Monida Parascanu, ARAS

HOLT International Children's Services FOR Children Project



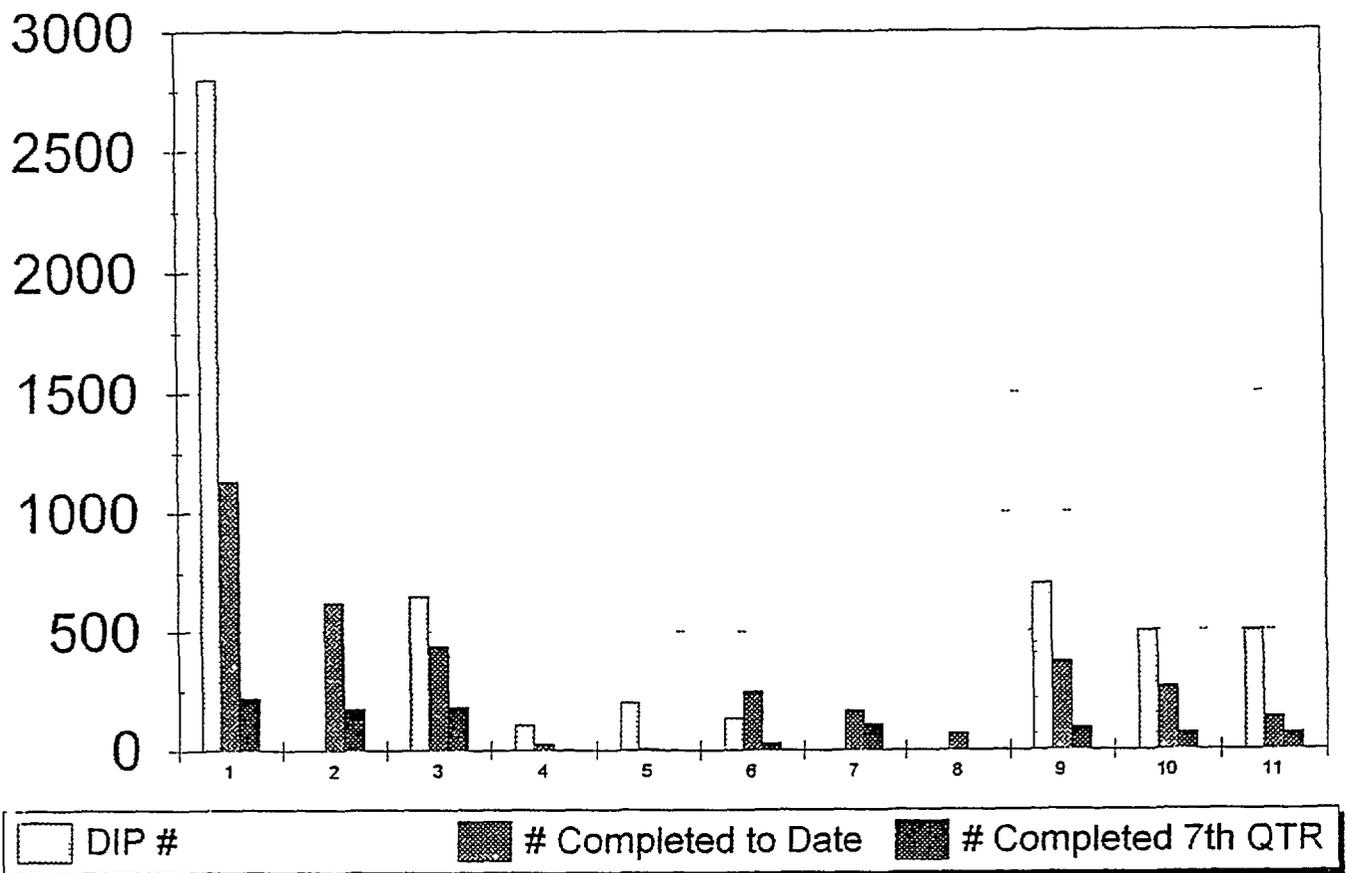
Statistics - A Piece of the Picture



Data Sources for Graphs (in order of presentation)

Graph Title	Data Source
Companson of DIP to Actual #'s	Holt Data
Children - Abandoned & At Risk	Holt Data
Reasons for Abandonment (both graphs)	Holt Data
Birth Certificate P.oduction	Constanta Holt Data
Child Placement Results	Holt Data
Training as outlined in DIP	Holt Data
Specialized Staff Development Training	Holt Data
Abandoned Children in Institutions	Ministry of Health Dept for Mother Child & Adolescent Assistance
Children Entering Institutions	Ministry of Labor & Social Protection The Central Commission for the Protection of Minors
Children in Institutions	Ministry of Labor & Social Protection The Central Commission for the Protection of Minors
Institutionalized Children	Constanta Holt Data
Social Assistant Work Location	Holt Data
Growth in Exchange Rate	Economic Observer (3/30-4/5/94)
Unemployment in Romania	Economic Observer (3/30-4/5/94)
Inflation Rate of Yealy and Monthly Average	Economic Observer (3/30-4/5/94)
Growth of Inflation in Romania	Economic Observer (3/30-4/5/94)
Romanian Industrial Performance	Economic Observer (3/30-4/5/94)

Comparison of DIP to Actual #'s FOR Children Project

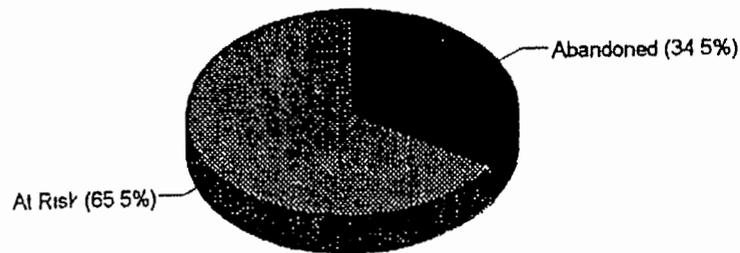


DIP Requirments by Graph Reference Number

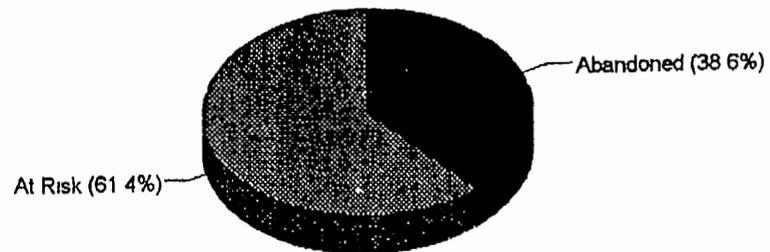
DIP Requirments by Graph Reference Number	DIP #	# Completed to Date	# Completed 7th QTR
1 - Families/Children receiving social service interventions	2800	1132	218
2 - Families receiving crisis counseling	0	622	172
3 - 25% of families remaining intact	650	440	181
4 - Foster Care - families recruited & approved	105	28	5
5 - Foster Care services provided to children	200	6	3
6 - Domestic Adoptions	135	246	30
7 - Children referred to Romanian Adoption Committee	0	168	108
8 - Children referred to R A C legally free for adoption	0	69	0
9 - Evaluations of Children referred to Institutions	700	370	93
10 - Evaluations of Children leaving Institutions	500	262	70
11 - Follow-up Services of Children Leaving Institutions	500	135	70

Children - Abandoned & At Risk

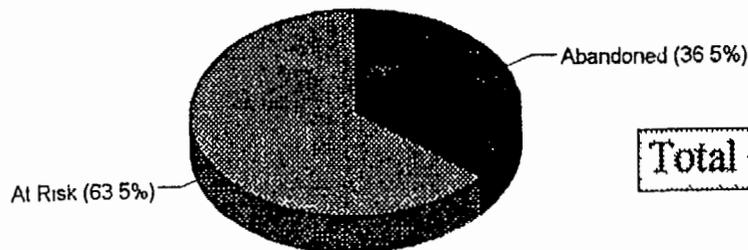
Served by Social Service Center



Bucuresti



Constanta



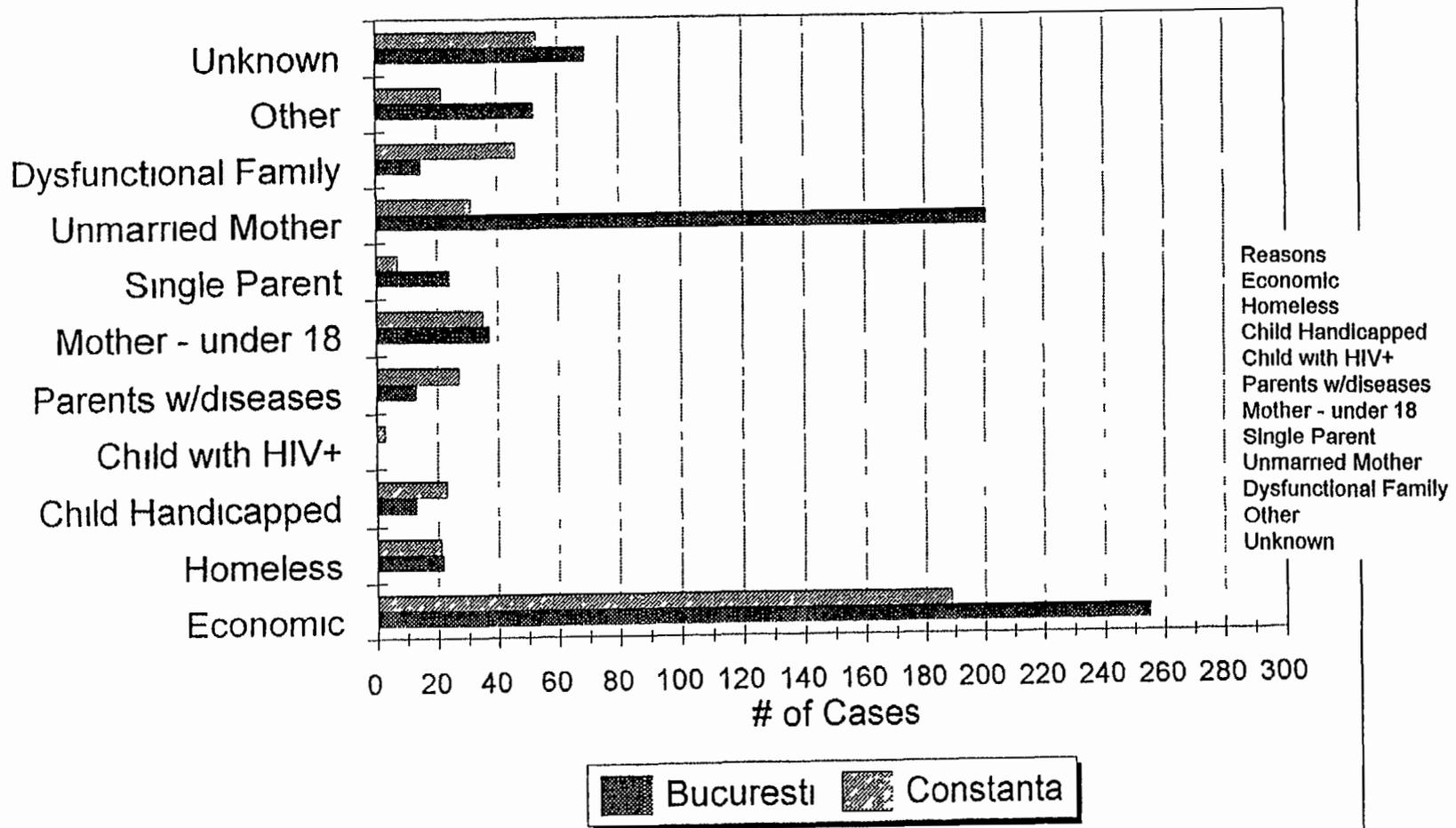
Total Caseload

Children - Abandoned & At Risk

	Abandoned	At Risk
Bucuresti	153	291
Constanta	160	254
Total Caseload	313	545

Reasons for Abandonment

Comparison by Social Service Center

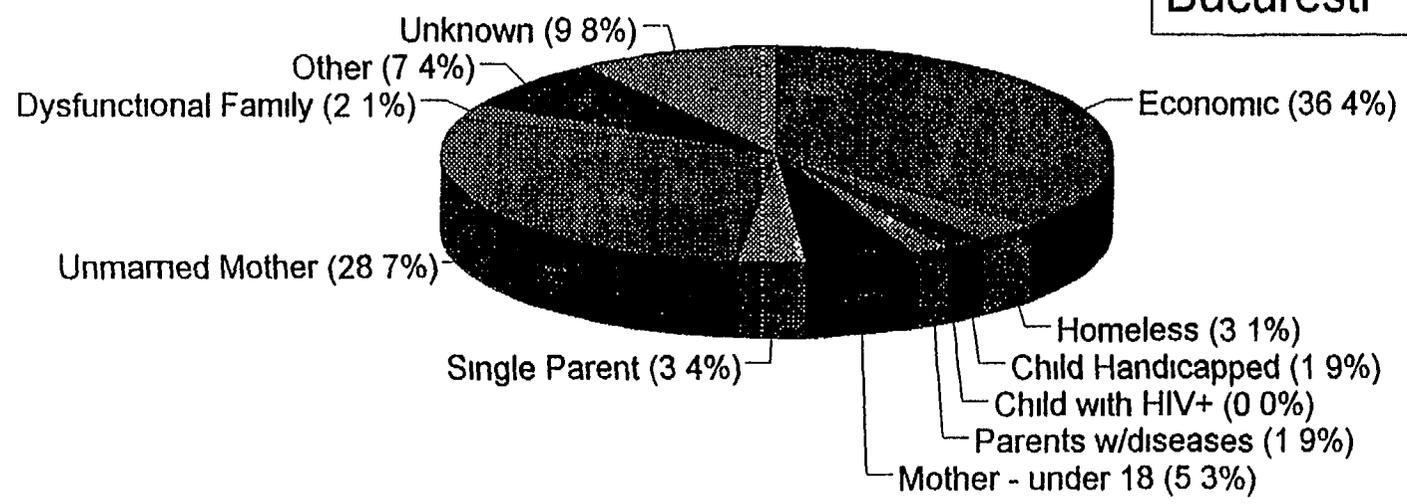


Reasons	Bucuresti	Constanta
Economic	255	189
Homeless	22	21
Child Handicapped	13	23
Child with HIV+	0	3
Parents w/diseases	13	27
Mother - under 18	37	35
Single Parent	24	7
Unmarried Mother	201	31
Dysfunctional Family	15	46
Other	52	22
Unknown	69	53

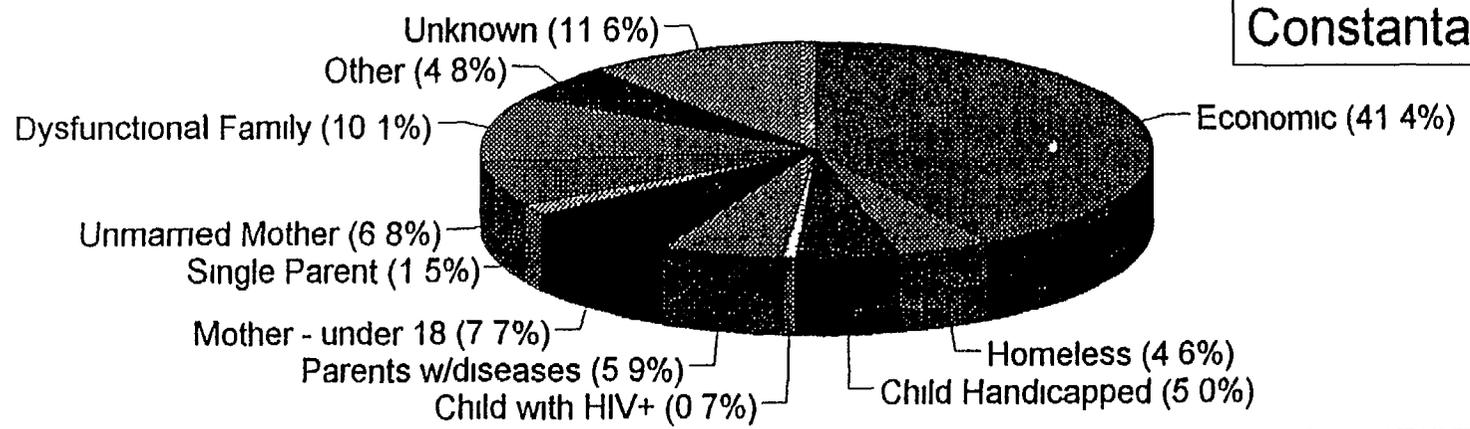
Reasons for Abandonment

Caseload by Social Service Center

Bucuresti

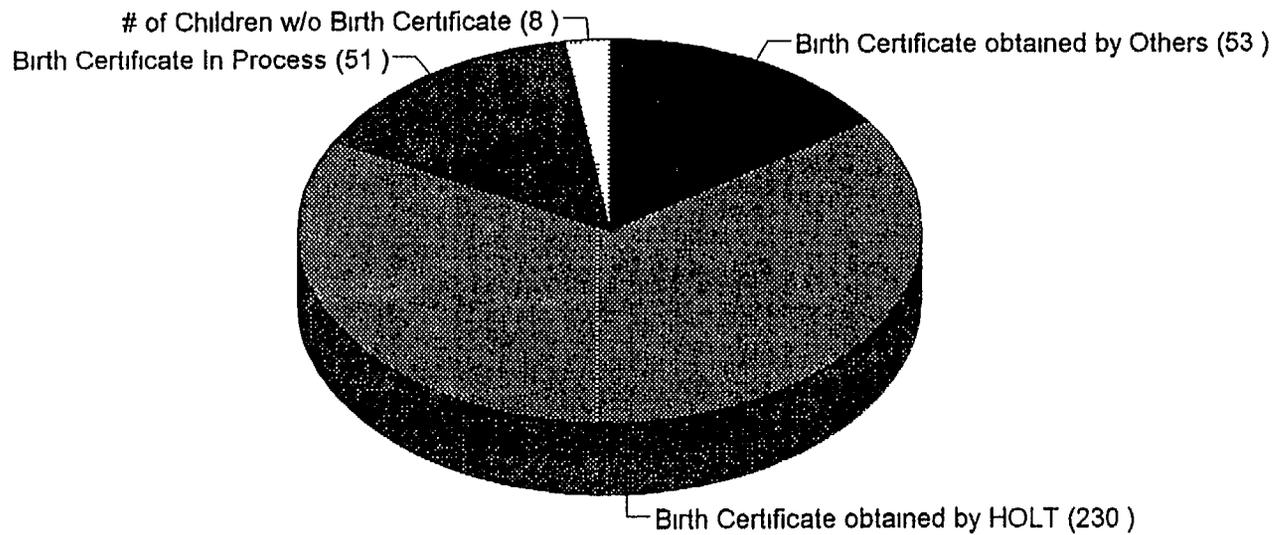


Constanta



Birth Certificate Production

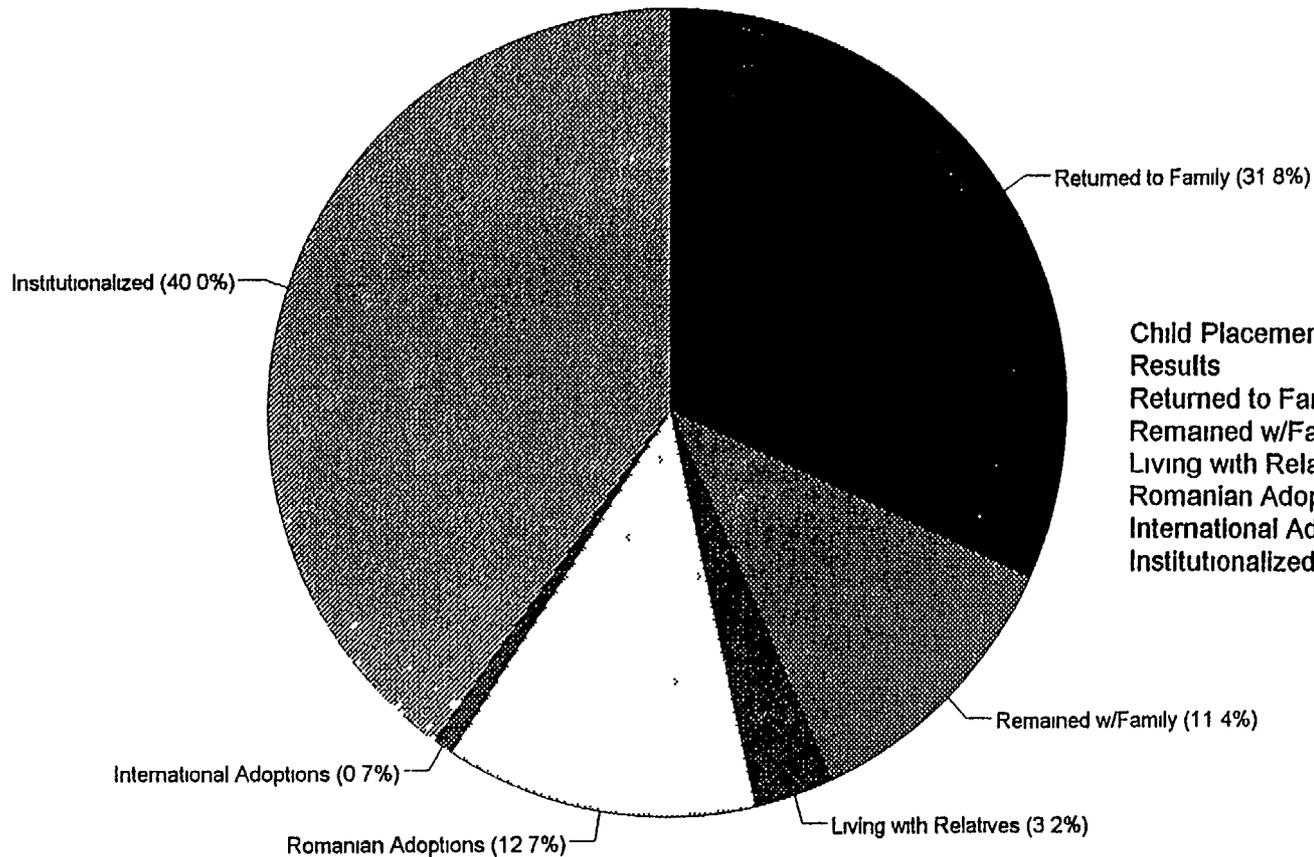
Constanta Caseload (342)



# of Children with Birth Certificate	283
Birth Certificate obtained by Others	53
Birth Certificate obtained by HOLT	230
Birth Certificate In Process	51
# of Children w/o Birth Certificate	8
Total Caseload	342

Child Placement Results

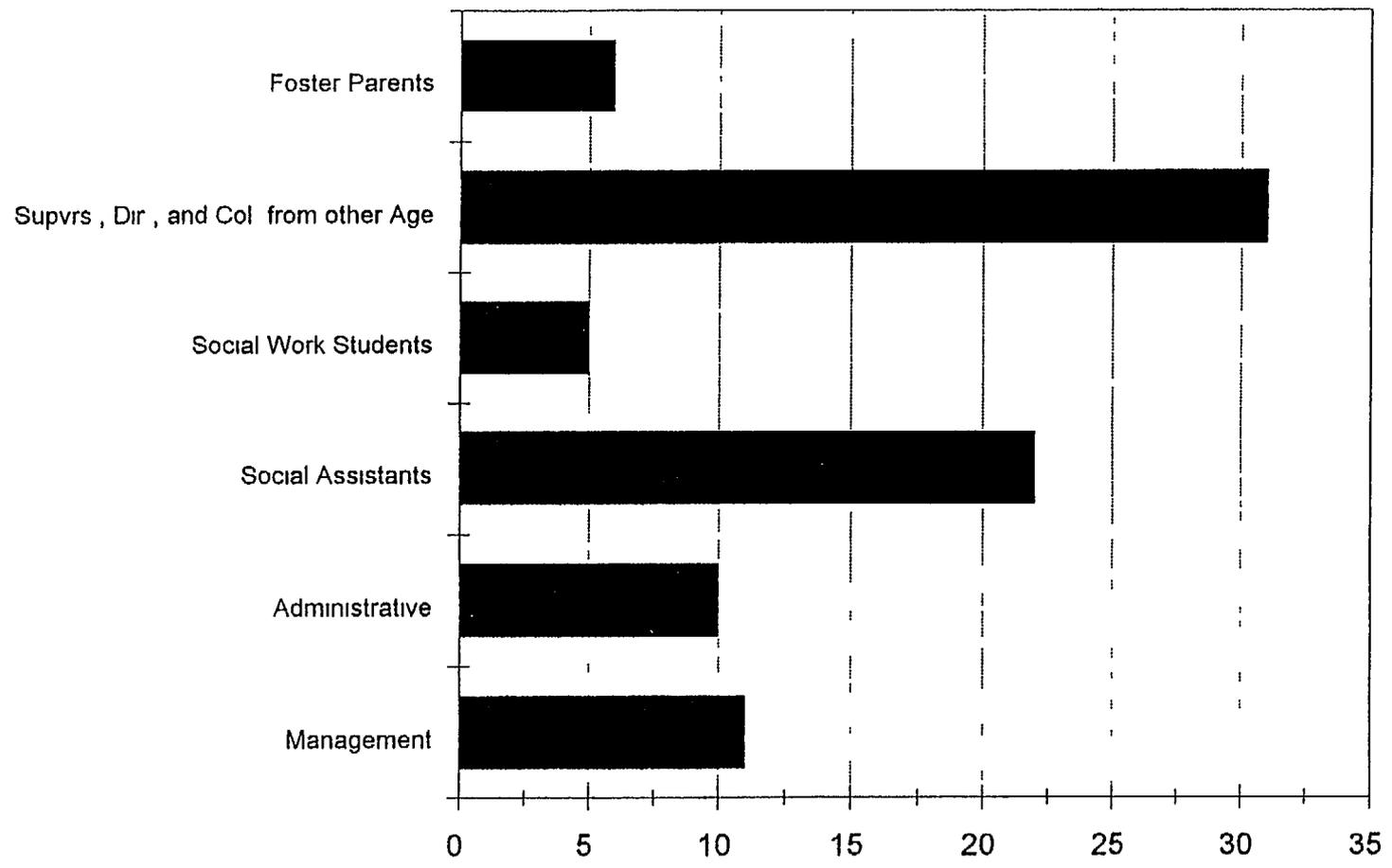
(417 Closed Cases - 3/93 through 3/94)



Child Placement Results

Results	# of Children
Returned to Family	128
Remained w/Family	46
Living with Relatives	13
Romanian Adoptions	51
International Adoptions	3
Institutionalized	161

Training as outlined in DIP

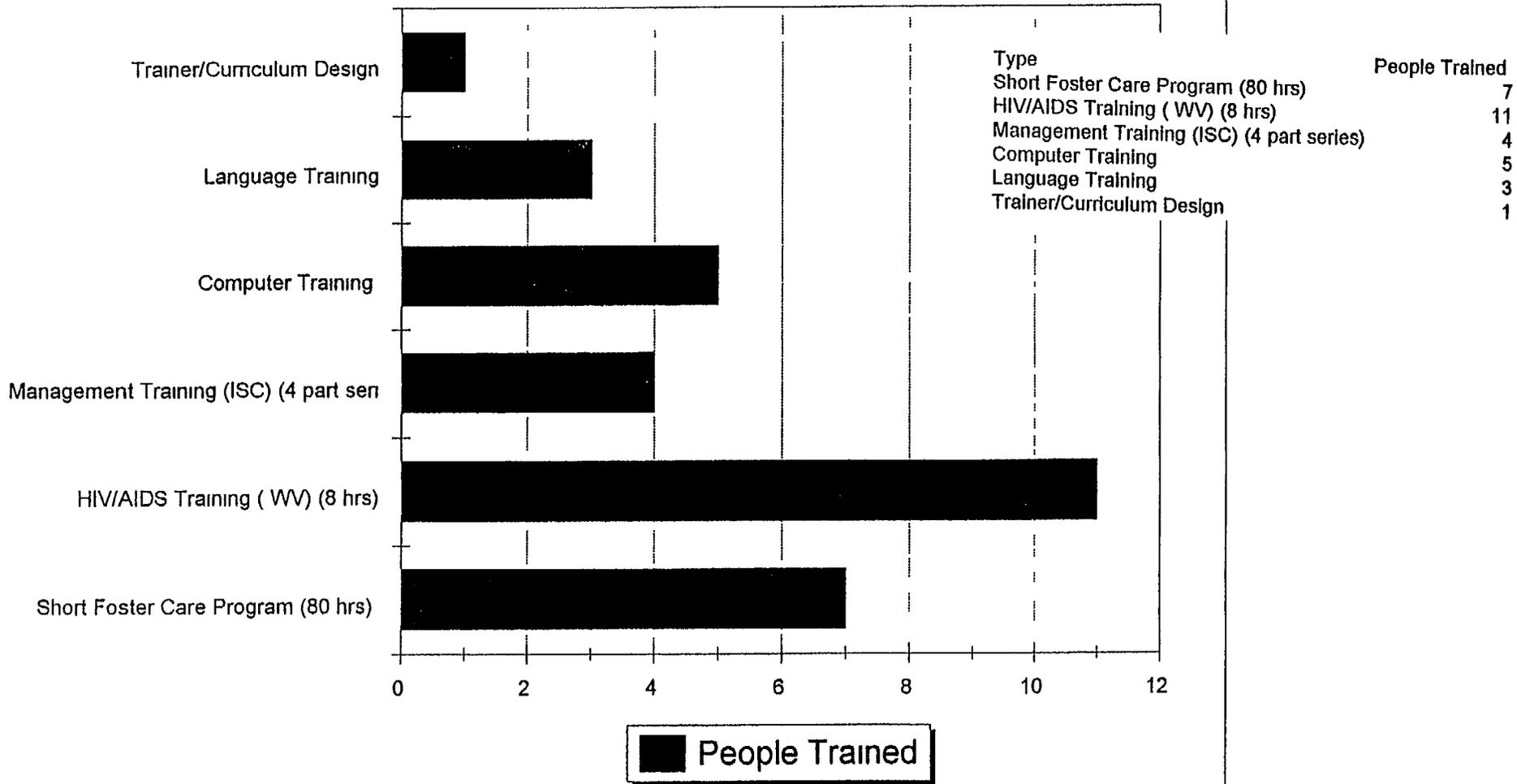


■ People Trained

Management	11
Administrative	10
Social Assistants	22
Social Work Students	5
Supvrs, Dir, and Col from other Agencie	31
Foster Parents	6

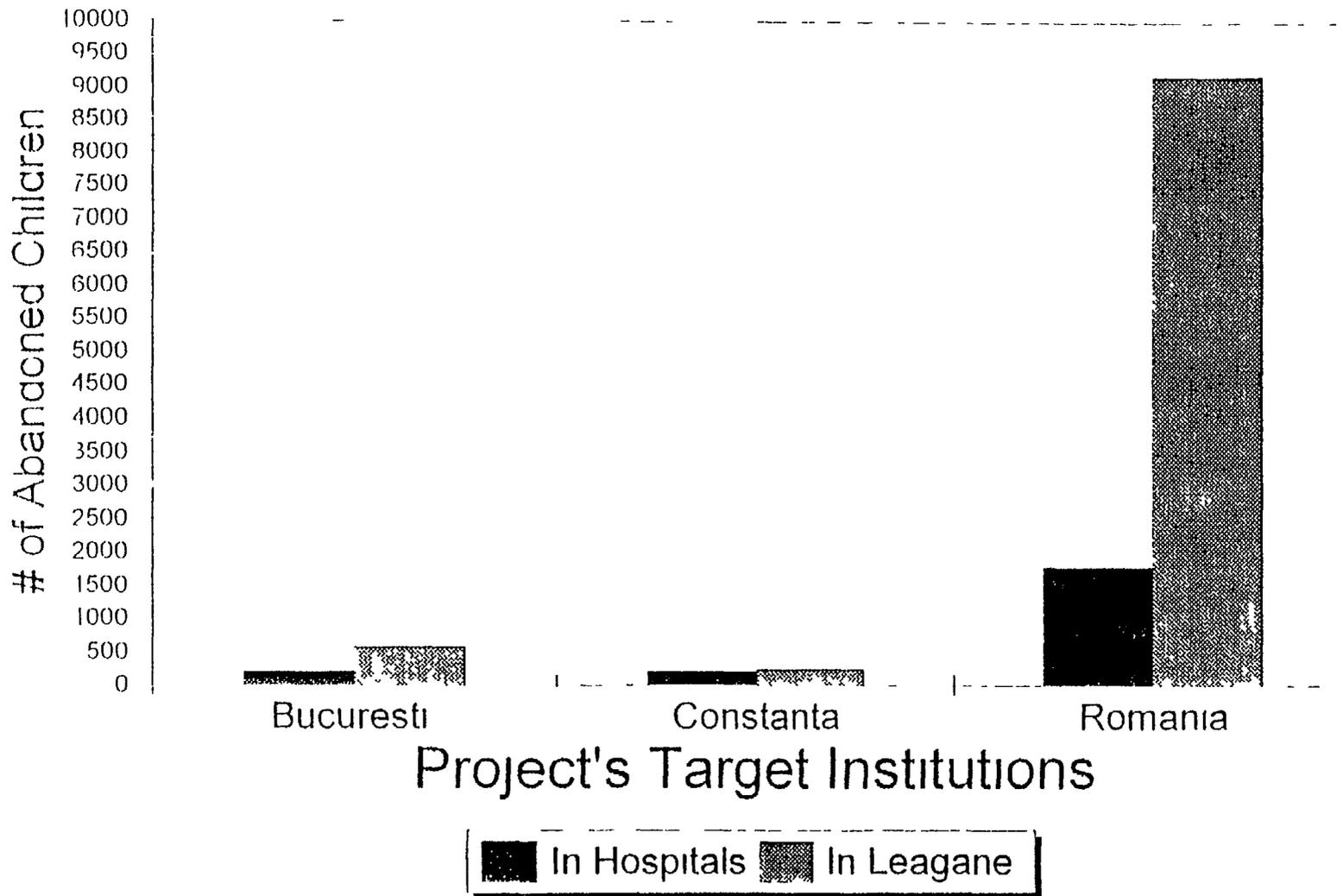


Specialized Staff Development Training



Abandoned Children in Institutions

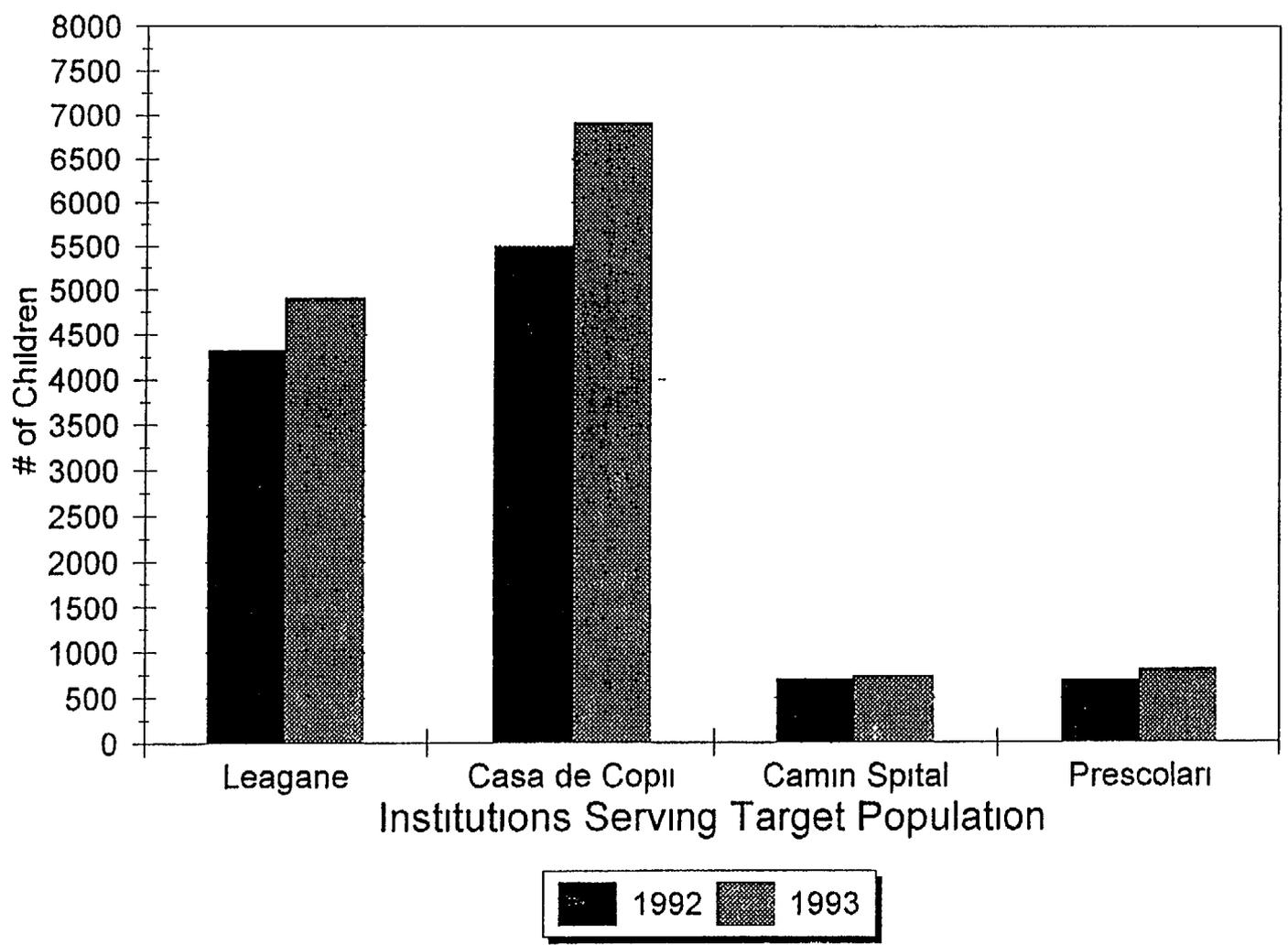
As of February 1, 1994



Abandoned Children	Bucuresti	Constanta	Romania
In Hospitals	206	207	1788
In Leagane	575	336	9181

Children entering Institutions

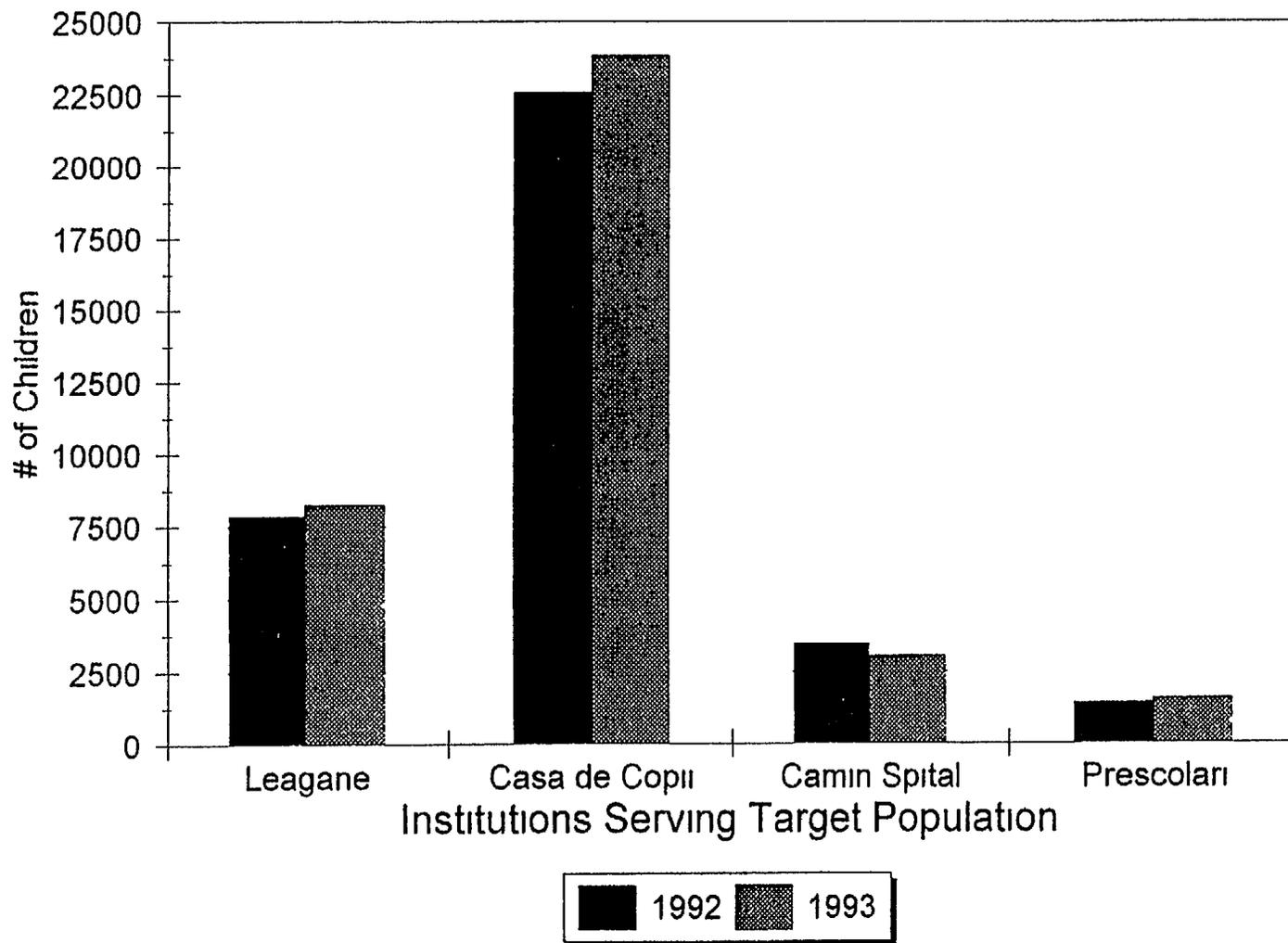
for Project's Target Age Group



	Leagane	Casa de Copli	Camin Spital	Prescolari
1992	4325	5491	707	689
1993	4906	6910	739	811

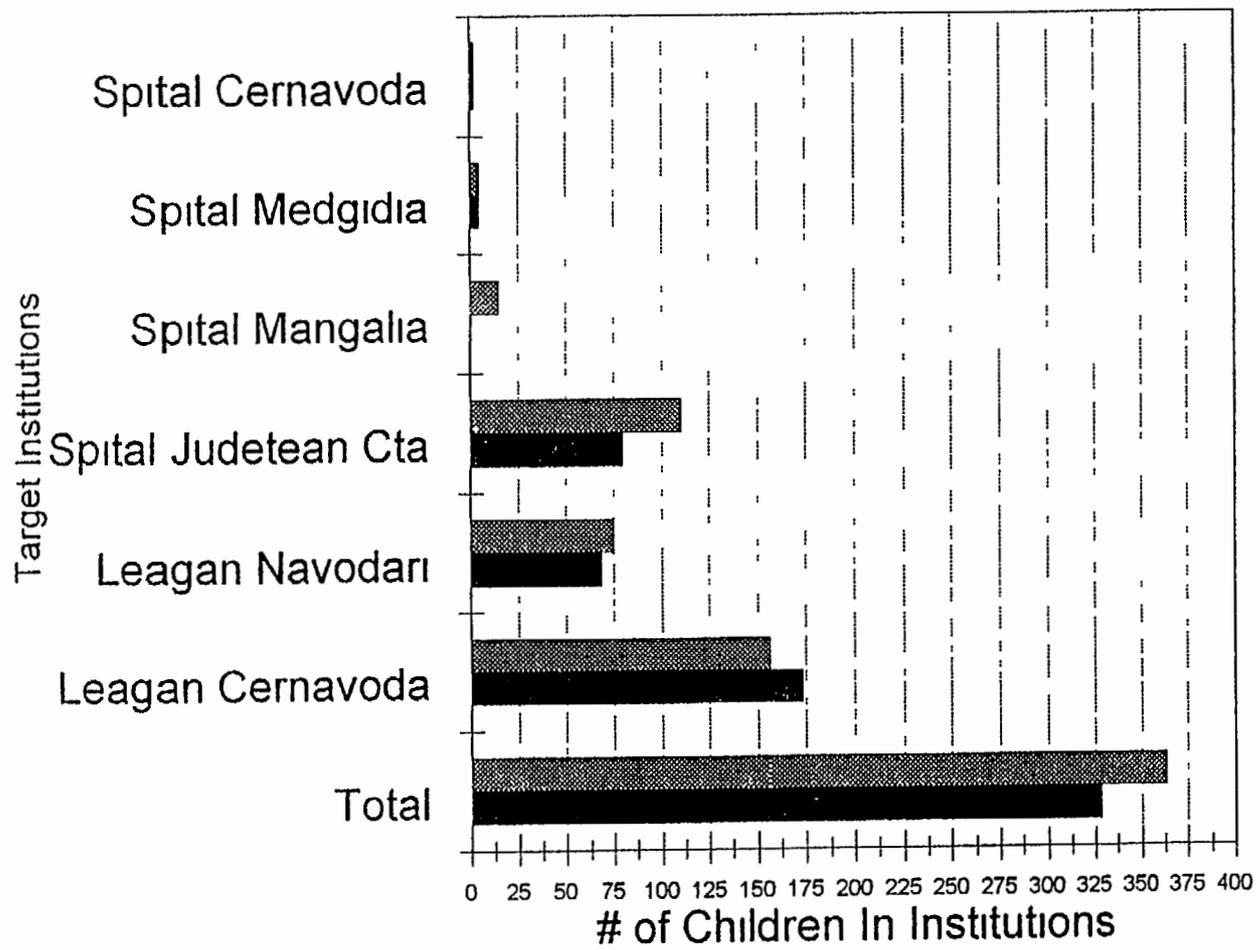
Children in Institutions

for Project's Target Age Group



	Leagane	Casa de Copii	Camin Spital	Prescolari
1992	7878	22582	3444	1408
1993	8245	23859	3021	1565

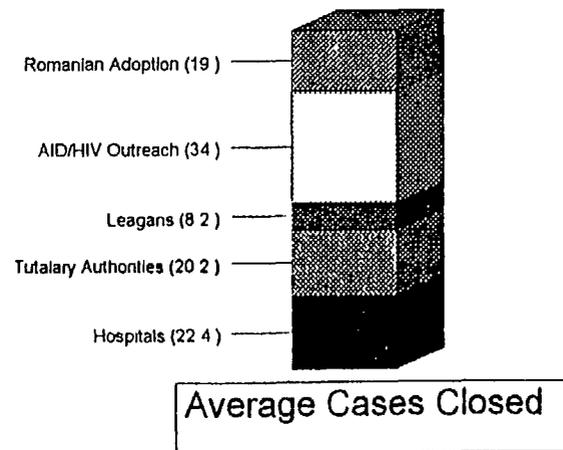
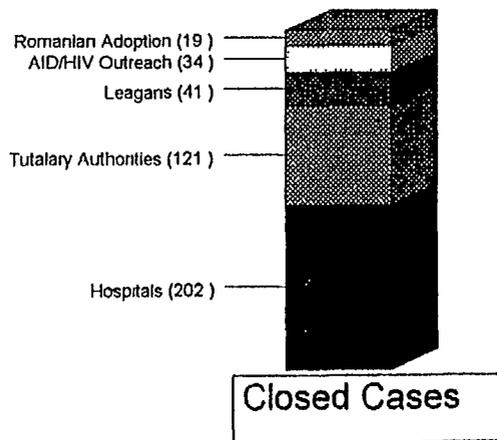
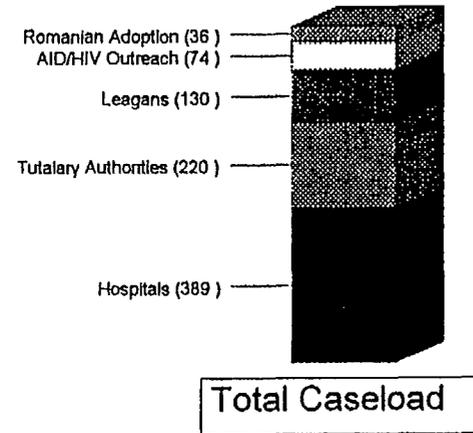
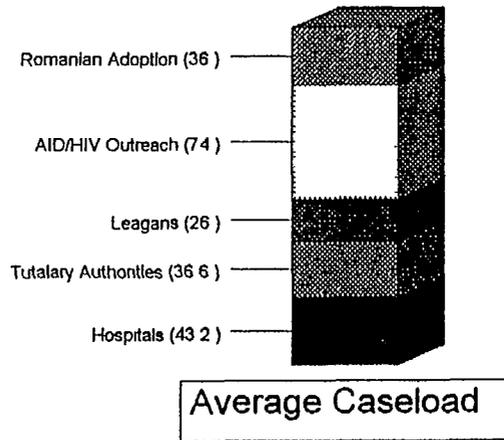
Institutionalized Children in Target Institutions in Constanta



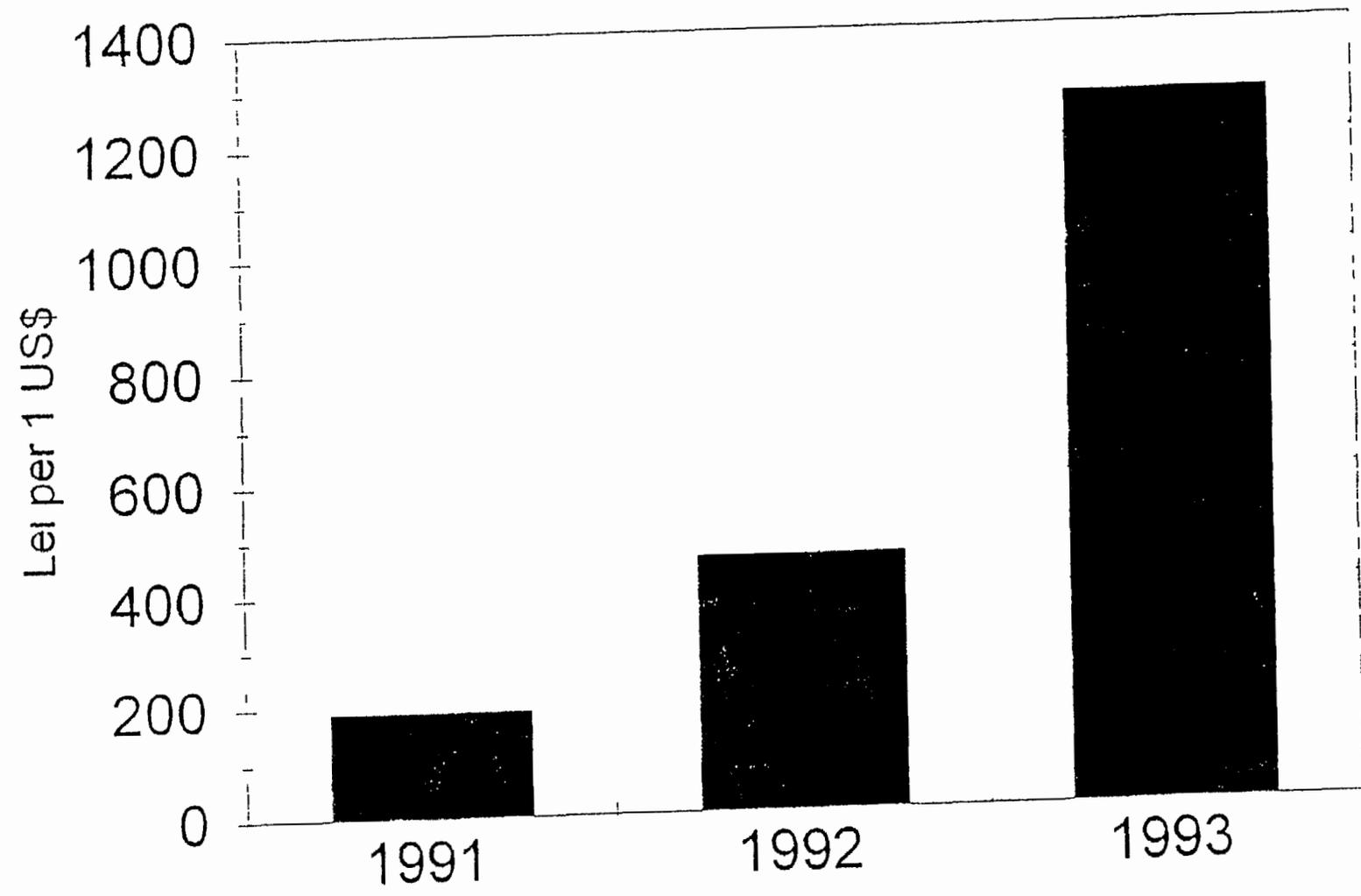
■ After 7 Qtrs
▨ Beginning

	Beginning	After 7 Qtrs
Total	363	328
Leagan Cernavoda	156	173
Leagan Navodari	75	68
Spital Judetean Cta	110	80
Spital Mangalia	15	0
Spital Medgidia	5	5
Spital Cernavoda	2	2

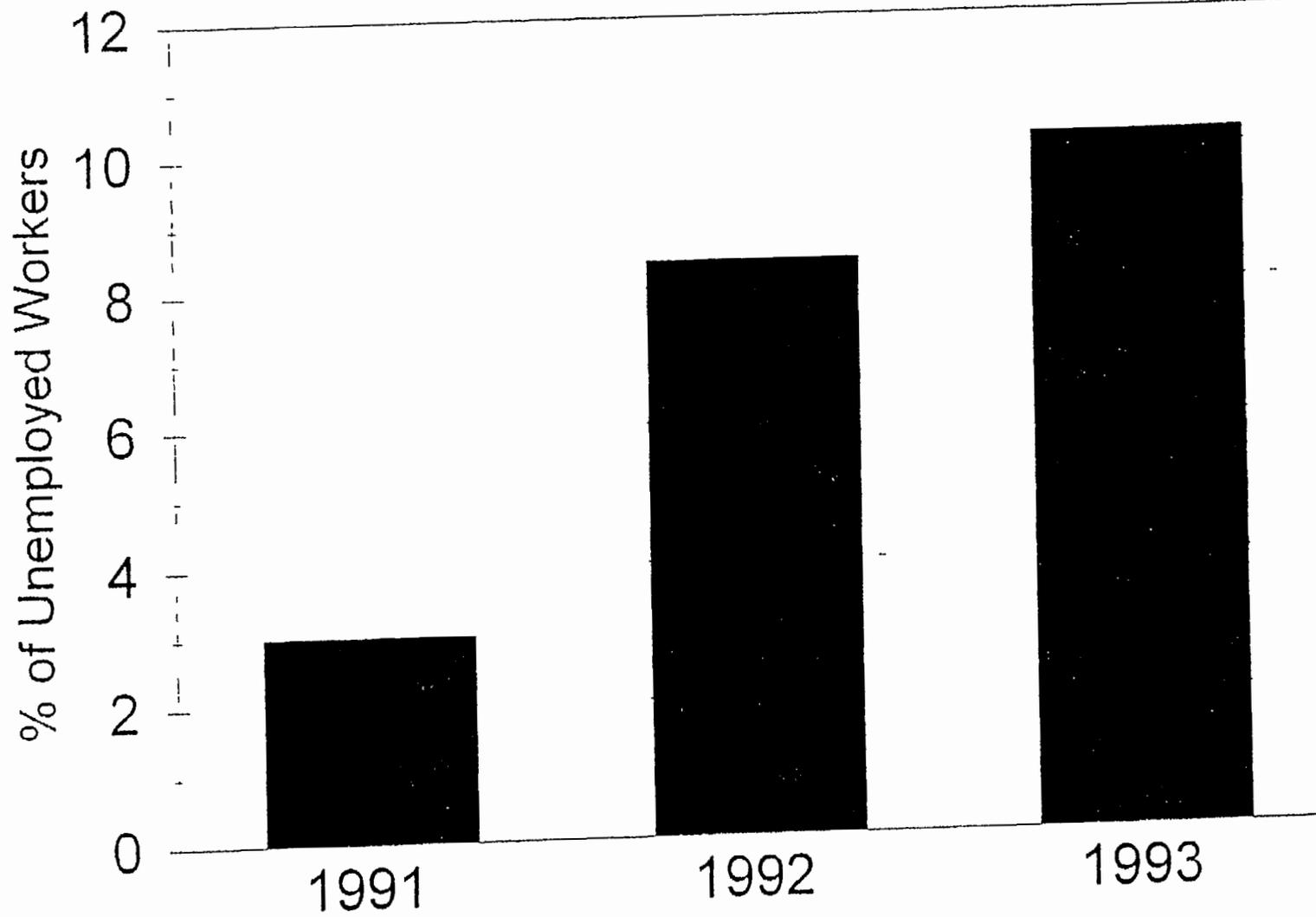
Social Assistant Work Location Caseload & Average/Social Assistant



Growth in Exchange Rate

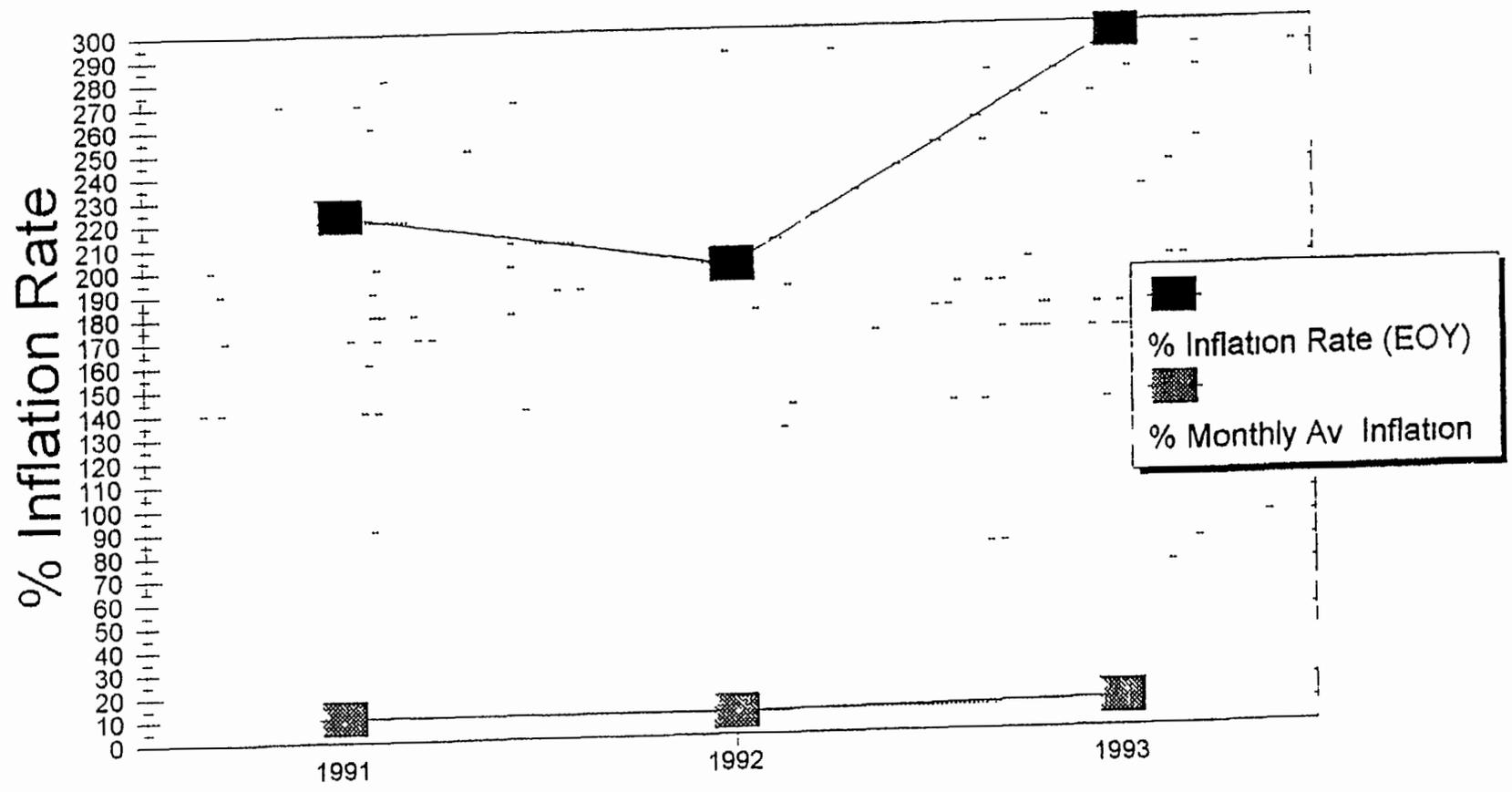


Unemployment in Romania



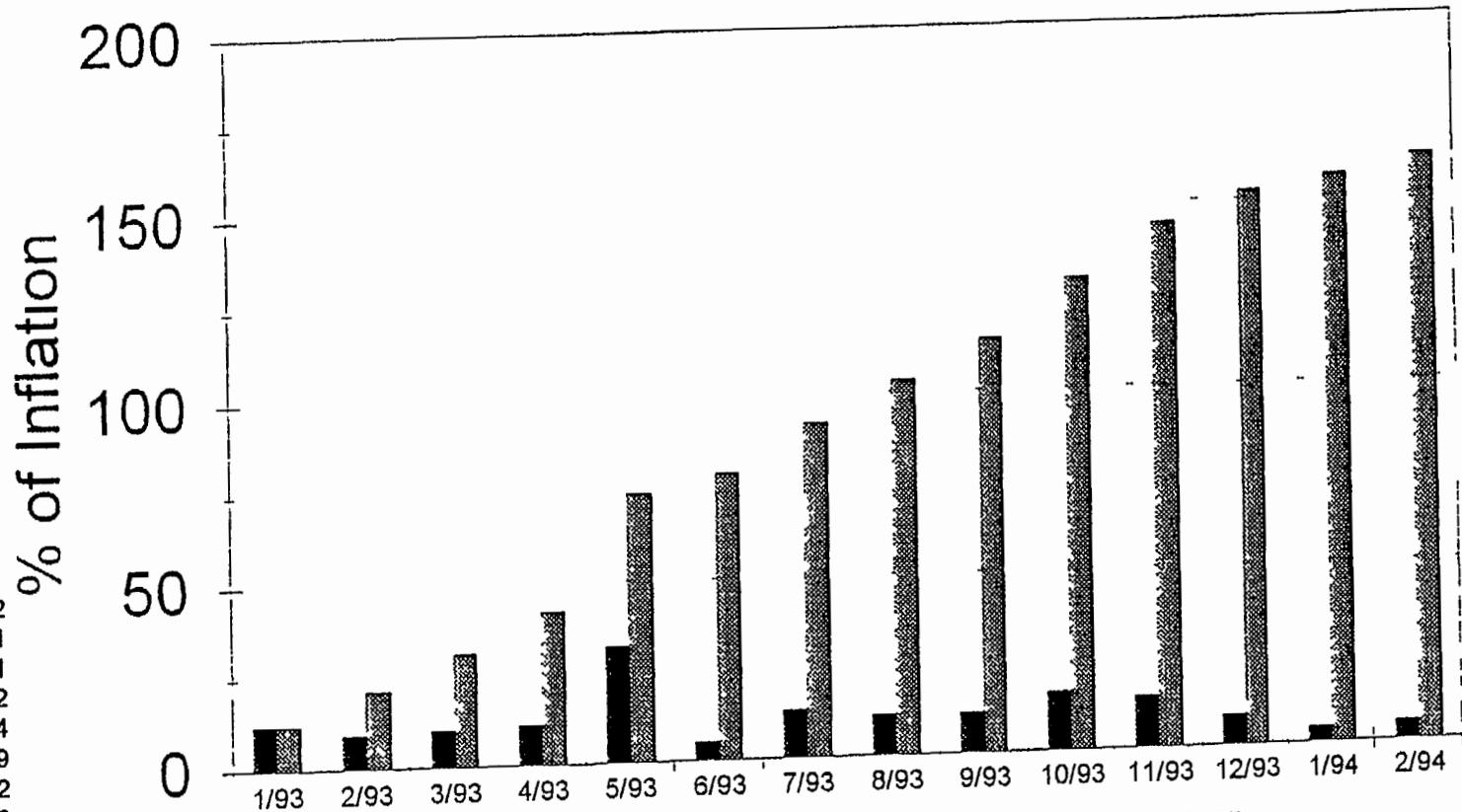
Inflation Rate of Yearly & Av. Monthly

1991 through 1993



Growth of Inflation in Romania

(All of 1993 and 2 mos. of 1994)



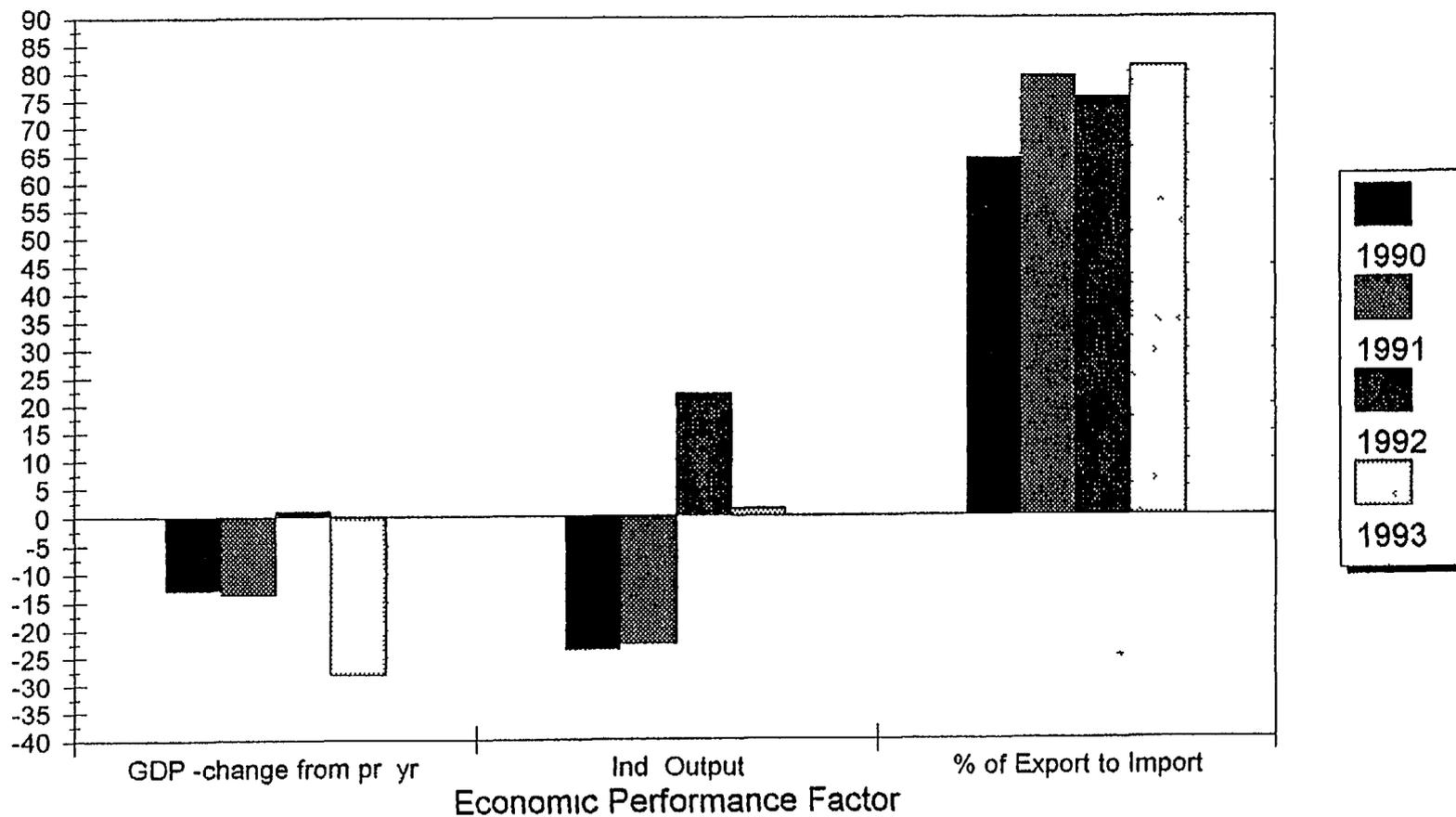
Growth of Inflation

Month	Mo Rate	Cum Rate
1/93	12	12
2/93	9	21
3/93	10	31
4/93	11	42
5/93	32	74
6/93	5	79
7/93	13	92
8/93	11	103
9/93	11	114
10/93	16	130
11/93	14	144
12/93	8	152
1/94	4	156
2/94	5	161

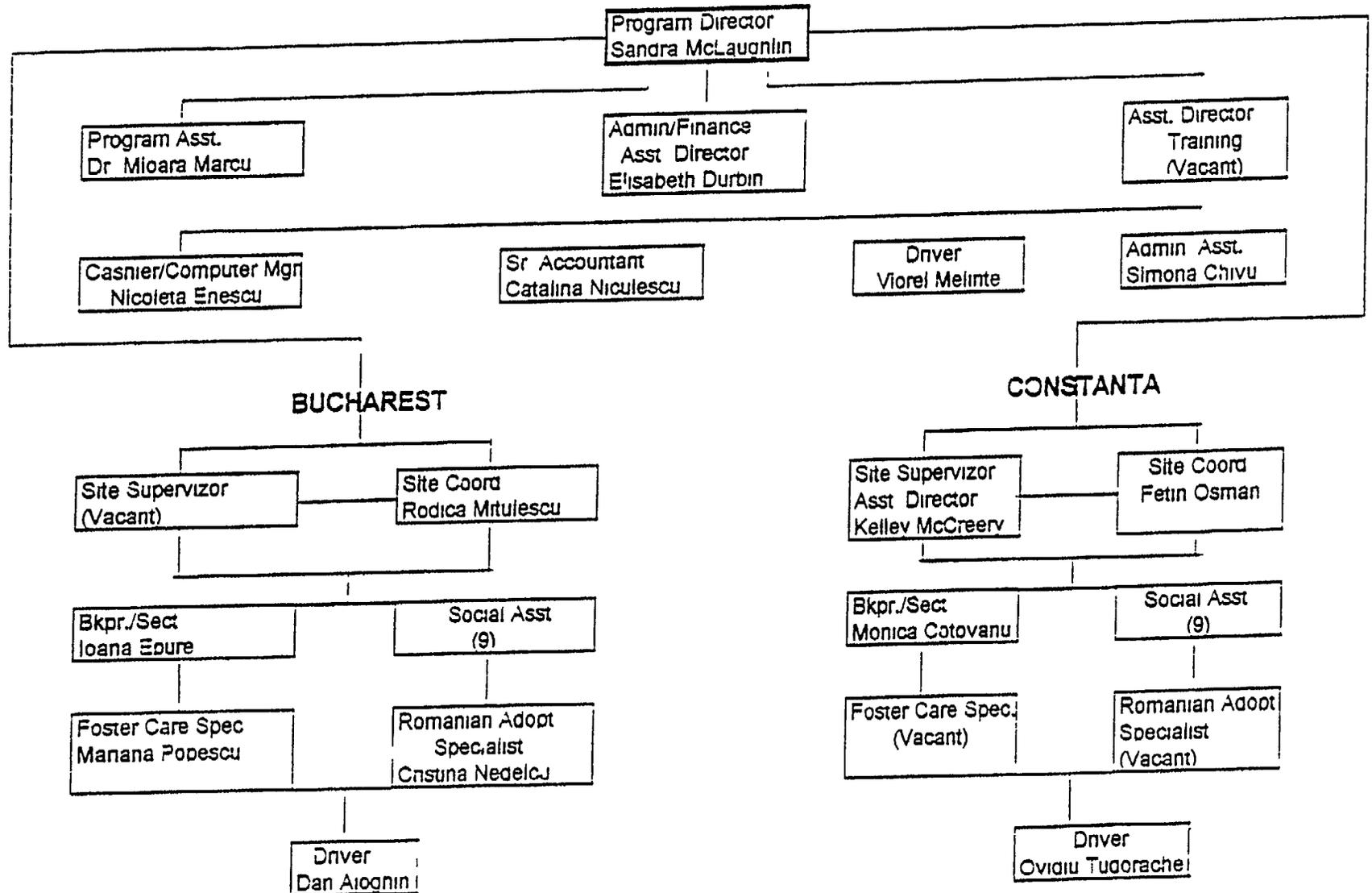
Mo. Rate Cum Rate

Romanian Industrial Performance

1991 through 1993



HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES
 Future of Romania (FOR) Children Project



**HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES
"FUTURE OF ROMANIAN CHILDREN PROJECT"**

CONVENTION / PROTOCOL LIST

Ministerial Level

- Ministry of Health

Local Level:

- Bucharest Town Hall 2 16 93
- Local Council of Constanta 7 20 93
- Local Council of Medgidia 7 21 93
- Mayor of Cernavoda Town 8 17 93
- Constanta Judet Council 7 20 93
- Sanitary Direction 7 22 93

Institutional Level

- Polizu Maternity/ Institute for the Protection of Mother/ Children, Bucharest 3 8 93
- University Hospital, Bucharest 1 20 92
- Leagan nr 1, Bucharest 3 8 93
- Leagan nr 3 Bucharest 12 22 92
- Leagan Navodari, Bucharest 7 29 93
- Medgidia Hospital, Constanta 7 21 93
- Cernavoda Hospital, Constanta 8 16 93
- Mangalia Hospital, Constanta 7 23 93
- Judet Hospital, Constanta 7 22 93

Non-governmental Organizations

- World Vision 7 8 93
- Handicap International

CHILD WELFARE NETWORK
(demonstration design by HOLT)

BUCHAREST:

Bucharest Center

Vacant position - Site Supervisor
Rodica Mitulescu, Site Coordinator
Mariana Popescu, Foster Care Specialist
Vacant position - Emergency Shelter Care/ Pregnancy Counselor

Polizu Maternity

Dr Silvia Stoicescu, chief of Pediatrics
Smaranda Poenareanu, HOLT social asst
Carmen Gheorghiu, HOLT social asst

Tutelary Authority, Sector 1

Mrs Eugenia Avrigeanu, director
Mihaela Stoica, HOLT social asst
Cristina Nedelcu, HOLT adoption spec

infant

Leagan nr. 1

Dr Sanda Gancevici, supervisor
Genoveva Tunsoiu, HOLT social asst

Tutelary Authority, Sector 5

Mrs Elena Baciu, director
Ruxandra Polysu, HOLT social asst

infant

children over 1yr

University/Municipal Hospital

Dr Ana Culcer, chief of pediatrics
Gina Schiteanu, HOLT social asst

Tutelary Authority, Sector 6

Mr George Floricica, director
Mariana Albu, HOLT social asst

children over 1yr

Leagan nr 3

Dr Elena Tarta, director
Marcela Turcanu, HOLT social asst



CONSTANTA COUNTY

Constanta Social Service Center

Kelley McCreery, Site Supervisor
Fetin Osman, Site Coordinator
Vacant position, Foster Care Specialist
Vacant position, Emergency Shelter Care/Pregnancy Counselor
Julide Petrescu, HOLT social asst /HIV-AIDS specialists
(participates in HIV MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM OF
WOLRD VISION/ARAS in Constanta)

(CONSTANTA CITY)

JUDET HOSPITAL

Dr Mircea Elena Popescu, Inspector of Health

Maternity Section

Argentina Hohan, HOLT social asst

Premature Section

Coca Lapadatu, HOLT social asst

Leagan Navodari

Iordache, Sanda, supervisor
Daniela Isac, HOLT social asst

Tutelary Authority

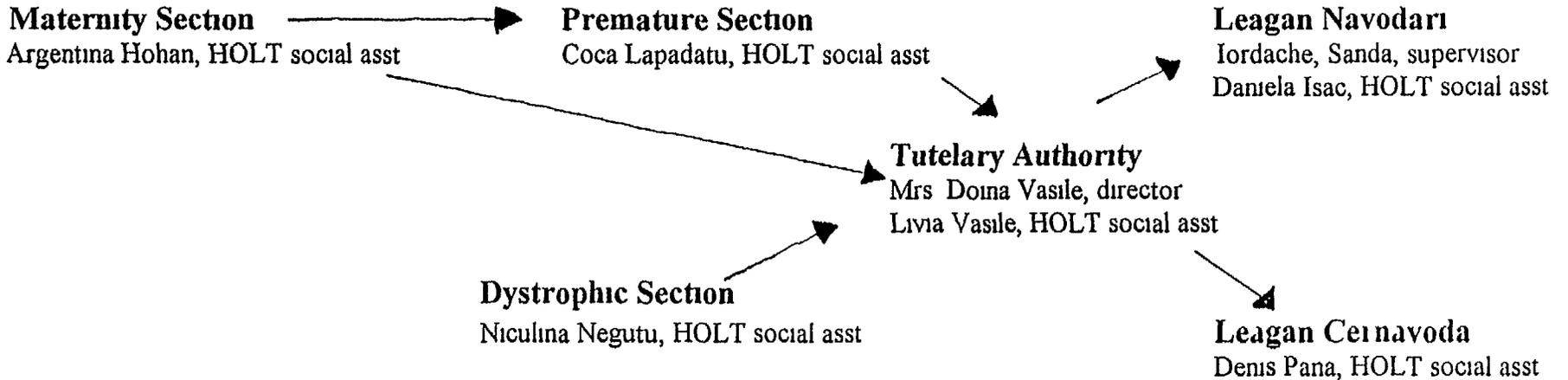
Mrs Doina Vasile, director
Livia Vasile, HOLT social asst

Dystrophic Section

Niculina Negutu, HOLT social asst

Leagan Cei navoda

Denis Pana, HOLT social asst



(MEDGIDIA)

**Medgidia Hospital
Maternity Section**
Dr Iorgovan, M, supervisor
Margareta Marin, HOLT social asst

Pediatric Section
Margareta Marin, HOLT social asst

**Tutelary Authority
Medgidia**
Mircescu, M, supervisor
Doinita Ciuculin, HOLT social assist

(CERNAVODA)

**Cernavoda Hospital
Maternity Section**
Denis Pana, HOLT social asst

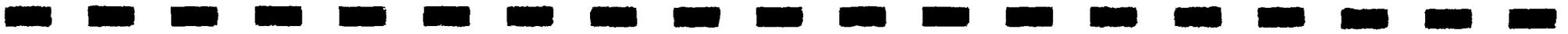
**Tutelary Authority
Cernavoda**
Dr Miu G supervisor
Denis Pana, HOLT social asst

Leagan Cernavoda
Denis Pana, HOLT social asst

(MANGALIA)

**Mangalia Hospital
maternity section**
Dr Turtoi, supervisor
Adriana Necula, HOLT social asst

pediatric section
Adriana Necula, HOLT social asst



PROJECT DESCRIPTION
HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES
"FUTURE OF ROMANIA (FOR) CHILDREN"

INTRODUCTION:

Holt International Children's Services is a private, non-profit, American social services agency which has served children around the world for over 36 years.

In Romania Holt has successfully conducted a program of family re-unification and permanency planning since January, 1991. In July of 1992 Holt was awarded additional funding by the United States Agency for International Development to establish a three year pilot project to reduce incidences of child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization..

PROJECT GOALS:

There are three overall goals of this project and a variety of specific service objectives. The overall goals are;

(1) To develop and strengthen the capacity of the people and government of Romania to reduce child abandonment and unnecessary institutionalization. This goal will be met by providing training and manpower to such key agencies as maternity hospitals, maternity, pediatric and dystropic wards of general hospitals, tutelary authorities and leagana.

(2) To provide and thereby demonstrate the effectiveness of certain services which are not well known in Romania in improving quality of life for children and families. This goal will be met by establishing and managing services such as counseling, emergency shelter and temporary family care directly from a Holt Center.

(3) To develop a "network" of trained Romanian Child Welfare Specialists (CWS) and a corresponding "network" of agencies collaborating in innovative ways to reduce child abandonment. This goal will be reached by conducting an intensive training program for the CWS their supervisors and colleagues and by promoting the importance of communication between agencies serving children.

STRATEGY:

The Holt pilot strategy to reduce abandonment is based on its 18 months of experience in the family reunification effort and the research conducted by Ocrotiti Copiii. This strategy recognizes that certain agencies of government function as "entry points" into the Romanian system of children's services and that early intervention by trained workers at these "entry point" agencies reduces the likelihood of abandonment. Holt has identified these agencies as maternity and children's wards of hospitals, tutelary authorities and leagana. It is also apparent that these agencies often do not have enough trained personnel to successfully intervene in these cases.

Therefore Holt is prepared to enter into conventions with these agencies to provide them with trained manpower who will initiate these early interventions. CWS placed through these conventions will work under the day to day supervision of the agency to meet the objectives agreed upon. These conventions will spell out all the responsibilities of each party and specifically stress the importance of the agencies working cooperatively with Holt and each other.

In addition to providing trained manpower to Romanian agencies Holt will provide directly such services as counseling, emergency shelter and temporary family care not presently available. These services will be coordinated with the services offered through the government agencies.

This strategic approach will promote the development of the "network" of CWS as well as a "network" of agencies whose close collaboration will insure a reduction in the number of abandoned children.

PROJECT DESIGN:

In the cities of Bucharest, Constanta and Timisoara Holt will establish a Center which will be called the Center for the Provision and Development of Services for Children and Families. These Centers will serve as the HUB or focal point of the program.

Each Center will be directed by a Site Coordinator(SC) who will have a staff of CWS. The Site Coordinator will be responsible for developing a Site Plan to effectively provide a range of services geared to reduce child abandonment. The plan will include the outplacement of staff for work in the government agencies identified above. The plan will identify which services will be offered directly through the Center and describe how all of these services will be coordinated. Finally the plan will set specific targets or objectives in the number of service units to be delivered.

The plan should also insure that the participating hospitals, tutelary authorities and leagana are already linked by the responsibility to serve the same children and therefore lend themselves to being formed into a "network" of collaborating agencies.

Once these agencies are identified by research and analysis the SC will begin discussions regarding the purpose and design of the program with the chief of the agency. If the Chief is interested in participating in the pilot, a convention will be negotiated and concluded spelling out the rights and obligations of both parties. This convention will fall within the provisions of a broader convention previously negotiated with the appropriate ministry.

SOCIAL SERVICES:

The following services will be delivered in the project. Some will be delivered by CWS outplaced in collaborating agencies while others will be delivered directly form the Holt Center. The Site Plan will insure that the services are delivered in a coordinated manner.

1. Crisis counseling and intervention for families when the crisis may result in the abandonment of a child,
2. Social evaluations of families and children for the purpose of establishing a long range plan when a child is about to enter an institution,
3. Evaluation and follow-up services to children leaving institutions to insure their successful reintegration into the family,
4. Temporary family care of a child in the home of another family while a more permanent plan is being devised for the child,
5. Promotion and facilitation of adoptions by Romanian families in which focused and innovative steps will be taken to increase the number of permanent homes in Romanian for Romanian children,

6. Provision of emergency shelter for families where the provision of appropriate shelter may prevent a child from being abandoned and

7. Provision and promotion of training in social work and child welfare to insure the ability of the CWS to provide the above services in an effective and professional manner.

CHILD WELFARE COUNCILS:

A regional Child Welfare Council (CWC) consisting of representatives of ministries, local agencies and community leaders will be established at each site to monitor the program and provide suggestions for improvements.

In addition a National Child Welfare Council composed of members of the local CWC will be established to monitor the project on the national level, offer advice, disseminate information and bring the project to national attention.

MONITORING/EVALUATION:

Ongoing monitoring of the project will be conducted by the Holt staff, representatives of the collaborating agencies, representatives of US/AID Romania and the Child Welfare Councils.

A mid-term and final evaluation of the project will be conducted by outside evaluators.

November 30, 1992
DCC/NE

HOLT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES
BUCHAREST, ROMANIA
"FOR CHILDREN" PROJECT
Project Definitions

Target Population

Abandoned children Children at risk of being abandoned and their families

Definition of Terms

Abandoned Child A child who is left in an institution or public place without an established plan for the child's future and well-being. The child may have existing, known parents or the identity of the parents may be unknown. Examples of abandonment would include a mother leaving the maternity hospital in the middle of the night without her baby, and discussing no plan with the staff; a child in a leagan or other institution without an established plan of visitation by a parent and/or the child's future; a child left in a public place with no identifying information and ability to provide for his/her needs.

Child at risk of abandonment A child who because of a special family situation existing at that time is in danger of being abandoned. Examples of these characteristics are: mother's entering the hospital to give birth without having an identity card in their possession; mother's disposition; parent(s) age, marital status of parent(s), economic indicators; evidence of poor material conditions in the home and family; absent parent in the family; information regarding past social history; health status of parent; health status of child; and a child who is left in an institution, where the parent is not being consistent in following through with the plan.

Institutionalized child with family visits A child who is residing in an institution, having ongoing contact with birth family. Social work activity would focus on assessing the child's ability to return back to the birth family, and provide services to the family, which would strengthen their capacity to care for the child and/or retain ongoing, regular contact with the child according to the child's best interests.

Permanency Planning Permanency planning is a systematic effort to provide long-term continuity in dependent children's care. Permanency planning places emphasis on the environment most suitable in meeting the child's needs. The systematic effort prioritizes the importance of a family for a child beginning with the child's natural family. If it is not possible for a child to remain or be returned back to the natural family, the facilitation of an adoption is the next action considered. Foster care and institutional care are considered as temporary alternative of care for a child, while a permanent plan is being established. Specialized long term foster care or institutional care may be considered as a last resort for a child when other options for permanent family care have been assessed, and found not suitable for meeting the child's needs.

Intervention An intercession or action taken on behalf of the client (child or family) to resolve a problem or situation. Interventions should be made within the philosophy of assisting clients in taking responsibilities for themselves when possible, and exploring personal resources within a family's environment or support network. Interventions should also be in agreement with the ultimate goal of permanency for the child. Intervention services would include counseling, temporary foster care for a child, shelter care for families and children, assisting with legal procedures for official documents such as identity papers, birth certificates, notarized relinquishments in adoption cases, initiating court procedures, referrals to other community resources and services, etc.

-- **Crisis Counseling** Counseling services are provided to families in crucial situations, which affect the permanency, protection and well-being of a child. Services provided would assist clients in resolving immediate problems in hopes of preventing more serious problems. In FOR CHH DRFN Project, a crisis situation is one that involves an abandoned child, or a situation which places a child at risk of being abandoned.

-- **Evaluation of children being referred to institutions** An evaluation is a written assessment which would explore whether institutionalization is the best option for the child. It includes an assessment of the birth family, reasons for considering institutional placement for the child, other alternative options of care for the child available and considered, and would assess the permanency plan established, or develop a permanency plan. The evaluation could include an intermediary plan for the child which might include temporary services for a child. The evaluation will also include a written plan of visitation the parent(s) are responsible for following.

-- **Evaluation of a child leaving an institution** An evaluation is a written assessment which would be initiated on any child identified to leave the institution at least 90 days prior to their departure, but earlier if possible. In extreme circumstances, an evaluation may happen after a child has left the institution, but should be completed within 30 days of the child's departure from the institution. The evaluation would assess the present situation of the family, the new location, and ability to meet the child's needs, permanency plan for the child, and how the child's move is connected to reaching the goal of placement for the child. The evaluation would also include a plan to prepare the child for leaving the institution, and transferring to another location. An evaluation of a child leaving the institution is the responsibility of the social assistant in the institution. A copy of the evaluation and recommendation for the child's move should be sent to the tutelary authority for final approval.

-- **Follow-up services of children leaving an institution** Follow-up services for a child leaving an institution would include at least one visit by the social assistant of the institution in which the child came from. The first follow-up visit will occur within 30-45 of the child's departure of the institution. A follow-up service plan including person responsible and length of service will be included in the evaluation of a child leaving the institution. Follow-up services are provided as a means for insuring the protection of the child, assisting in the transference and adjustment process of the child in a new environment, and providing supports to strengthen families when children go home.

-- **Evaluation of an institutionalized child visited by family** An evaluation is a written assessment of any child residing in the institution, who is seen to have the ability to leave the institution. A child's ability to leave the institution would be determined by ongoing regular contacts with the parents, relative's interest in caring for the child, or another's person's interested caring for the child. The evaluation would assess the suitability of the identified family/home environment as an option for the child's capacity for meeting the child's needs, need for additional interventions, and actions needed to allow the child to move.

-- **Foster Care or Temporary Family Care** Foster care is a provision of physical care and family environment for children who are unable to live with their natural parents. Foster family care is a temporary option used in an intermediary child care plan, while a more permanent plan is being established. The target population of children included in Holt's FOSTER CARE PROGRAM will be assessed by the child's ability to be returned to their natural family or be placed in an adoptive family within 6 months.

-- **Facilitate Domestic Adoptions** Intercessions on behalf of children and Romanian families in the process, which will assist in initiating, supporting and finalizing an adoption of a child with a Romanian family in country. Activities that would facilitate domestic adoptions would include obtaining notarized relinquishments from birth parents for a child to be adopted, initiation of termination of parental rights hearings to legally declare a child adoptable, recruiting Romanian adoptive families, home study and post placement supervision.

-- **Emergency Shelter Care** A service provided for mothers and their children to remain together in the same physical location, when other options are not available to provide a safe and secure environment for the child.

Inactive Case Identified by the period of time, the social worker and client have not had contact with each other. Decisions regarding follow-up action should be discussed by the social worker and Site Coordinator.

Closing a Case A case will be closed when all services available through the Holt Center or community resources have been provided to the client, or the client chooses not to continue receiving services at their request. Procedures for termination sessions and completing case files should be followed. The final decision for closing the case will be the responsibility of the Site Coordinator.

Child Welfare Council An advisory group at the local or national level who shall advise the staff on the implementation of the program.

Position Description A listing of the specific work related duties and responsibilities of an employee.

2/13/93 sjm

Counseling a procedure used by social workers and other professionals from various disciplines in guiding individuals, families groups and communities by such activities as giving advice, suggesting alternatives, helping to articulate goals, and providing needed information

PVO/NGO COOPERATING AGENCIES

1. AGAPE

AGAPE is a Swedish non-governmental organization assisting HOLT in Constanta with material goods to poor families. AGAPE has a store, where HOLT social assistants can bring clients or go to, to obtain necessary clothing items or other basic essentials as available.

2. AID TO ROMANIA/NIGHTINGALE

Aid to Romania/Nightingale is an English volunteer group working in Leagan Cernavoda, Constanta judet. HOLT social assistants have provided consultation to the volunteers in the social situation of children, and received referrals of children to intake into HOLT's program through the volunteers.

3. CASE WESTERN/CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Victor Groze and Alice Johnson led a team of social work trainers in June 1993. The training was designed to develop social work practice skills for practitioners. HOLT provided for the directors in the Bucharest, Tutelary Authority directors in Sector 1, 5,6 and Municipal Town Hall.

4. FULBRIGHT PROGRAM

Rebecca Davis, Ph d, Fulbright professor with the University of Bucharest, Social Work Department provided training in social work practice skills, consultation in the foster care program development and supervision of social work practicum students in 199.

5. HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL

Handicap International is a French non-governmental organization presently working with HOLT through the Bucharest Social Service Center. Handicap International has a Counseling Center, and established a relationship with HOLT to refer clients when appropriate.

6. INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS

HOLT's Romanian management staff has participated in ISC's management training series thus far.

7 NASW

The National Association of Social Workers has assisted HOLT with contract staff recruitment for training purposes. In addition, HOLT and NASW have supported the efforts of the a Romanian Association of Social Workers

8. PEACE CORP

Peace Corp has provided master's level social workers to the University of Bucharest for a two (2) year term. The three social workers are involved in assisting to develop a practicum component to the social work curriculum. HOLT has worked cooperatively with Peace Corp, to share information through training, and consultation in program development

Holt is working cooperatively to promote a more quality practicum program for students

Felicia King, MSW has been assisting HOLT's program assistant Miora Marcu in researching issues related to the development of an Emergency Shelter Care Program

9. RAY OF HOPE/BABIES OF ROMANIA

Ray of Hope, an Irish NGO is working in Constanta judet, Negru Voda Camin Spital. HOLT's site coordinator in Constanta has provided consultation in the process to resolve cases of abandoned children

10. ROMANIAN ANGEL APPEAL

Romanian Angel Appeal, a British NGO manages the SUNSHINE CLINIC in Constanta. HOLT's social assistant works with families of children with HIV/AIDS on Saturdays at this clinic

11. ROMANIA CHILDREN'S AID/ST. LAWRENCE HOSPICE PROGRAM

St Lawrence Hospice Program is sponsored by a British NGO to provide assistance and safe care for children with HIV/AIDS in Cernavoda. HOLT- Constanta has worked with this organization in consulting regarding children's cases, and referring children to this program when appropriate

12. ROMANIAN ORPHANAGE TRUST

Romanian Orphanage Trust, a British NGO has worked with HOLT regarding child welfare issues in Romania, and the role of social assistants

13 SALVATI COPII

Salvati Copii, a Romanian NGO has actively cooperated with HOLT in family reunification efforts. Salvati Copii has provided training to HOLT's social assistant staff, and provided financial and material assistance to families whom HOLT has worked with.

14 SECS (Sexual Education and Counseling Services)

SECS, a Romanian NGO specialized in providing medical services and counseling to young teenage mothers. SECS has provided training to HOLT's social assistants, providing information about their program.

15 UNICEF

HOLT has cooperated with UNICEF in efforts surrounding the role of social assistants and the development of a training program for social assistant practitioners.

UNICEF's TRAINING PROJECT WITH THE TUTELARY AUTHORITY AND COM overlap in Bucharest, Sector 1,5,6. HOLT is cooperating with Bob Vitillo and David Tobis regarding the training, using HOLT's "Future of Romanian Children" Project.

16. WORLD VISION

World Vision has cooperated with HOLT in two (2) major areas: Bucharest, Leagan nr 1 and Constanta HIV/AIDS project.

-- Leagan nr 1 - Bucharest

Mr. Graham Nance of World Vision provided supervision to HOLT's social assistants, Geneveva Tunsoiu, and Rodica Grigore beginning March 1993 - October 1993. This agreement was arranged between HOLT's former director David Crowley and Loch Le Chau, former director of WV-Romania. In October 1993, Loch Le Chau made the decision, Graham could not provide supervision for HOLT's social assistants, but thought Graham was providing supervision to HOLT's student interns placed in the Leagan during summer 1993, which he also was involved in.

-- Constanta

Rachel Cook of World Vision's project in Constanta has been active in the field of HIV/AIDS for the last 2 years. World Vision and HOLT agreed to collaborate together in the area of HIV/AIDS. World Vision is the leader in the area of HIV/AIDS and recently entered a collaboration with the Romanian Association Against Aids (ARAS) to develop a multidisciplinary team with social assistants to address the issues and problems of children with HIV/AIDS and their families.

World Vision has taken the leadership in the field of HIV/AIDS, and provided training for HOLT's social assistant staff in this field

HOLT has designated one (1) social assistant to work as part of the multidisciplinary team, and in the past provided social work training for WV's social assistant as well

-- Administrative Issues

HOLT and WV have cooperated together in program development, legislation issues, social work issues, training, consultation and administrative office procedures



Hundreds of Millions of Dollars for Social Reform from the World Bank

by Alin Theodor Ciocârlic
NINE O'CLOCK

The reform of the social sector in Romania is strongly backed by the World Bank through an extensive cooperation programme stipulating the financing of vast projects in four major domains: employment of labour force, social protection, health and education. Mr Ralph Harbison, head of the Operational Division for Human Resources in Central and Eastern Europe, told a news conference held together with Mrs Arntraud Hartmann, resident of the World Bank in Bucharest, that the Romanian government's commitment to the carrying through of the project was appreciated highly. He also said that new laws were needed particularly in the fields of social protection and insurance, the promotion of which should be speeded up.

Until now, the financial institution in Washington endorsed a loan for Romania worth 150 million dollars meant for the rehabilitation and modernisation of the health care network. It is estimated that another 50 million dollars will be ear-

marked in the third quarter of this year for the strategy worked out by the Ministry of Education for the reform of pre-university education (also financed by the European Union under the PHARE programme of non-reimbursable assistance with 25 million dollars) while 1995 will see the beginning of the reform in higher education, research and technology. It will be a process of improving higher learning oriented towards the demands of the market, a prime place being held by the programme for prodigy students for the so-called elite. Mr Ralph Harbison made the point that it was the domain where Romania had made the most substantial contribution.

Under negotiation is also a project for the Minister of Labour and Social Protection that will focus mainly on the improvement of the labour force, the development of a flexible system of professional retraining of the unemployed, the social insurance reform and the channelling of assistance towards the most disadvantaged categories. Mrs Arntraud Hartmann said that they would

help the government make painful but necessary decisions as concerns the enterprises that cannot survive. She also stressed that few active measures as regards labour force had been undertaken. Mrs Hartmann went on saying that officials in Romania were used to make decisions concerning enterprises and not people, objectively assessing that social protection and professional retraining of the unemployed had no tradition in Romania and had to be built from scratch, starting with the law system. Mr Harbison confirmed that it was the major aim of minister of state Dan Mircea Popescu, who assured the guests that the government would submit the necessary bills to Parliament, which will allow for the loan agreement to be signed this autumn. To give a better image of the complex character and difficulty of the topic, the head of division with the World Bank made the point that in the industrialised OECD member states that there was one out of 80-100 workers receiving unemployment benefit. That is why the costs of the project for Romania are put at present at more than 150 million dollars.

The Romanian Industry Oscillating Between Standstill and Reform

A Matter of Political Intrigue

by Constantin Răduț

ICCS/MI OBSERVER

THE STATE BUDGET for the financial year 1994 has not been forwarded to Parliament for debates and approval yet. The situation is quite normal for 1989 almost each of the four cabinets which have succeeded each other to power one year to another did not have a clear image of the ratio between the state's revenues and expenditures. Due to the disorder in all fields of economic life the Romanian Finance Ministry has hardly succeeded in working out the budget for the next accounting period. In the past two years the two chambers of Romania's Parliament had heated debates on budget expenses and it was only for fear of not having their summer recess that they managed to reach an agreement and adopt the state budget law.

History repeats itself in 1994 but with specific elements. If in the past years the government fulfilled its duty of forwarding a budget draft law to Parliament within the legal period the executive has now become the target of strong attacks by word of mouth on behalf of the opposition forces and of certain pro-government representatives. Actually everything is like an abortive fight taking into account the fact that the motivation of this state of things is well known by both sides of the political barricade. In vain do certain senators and deputies of the Romanian Parliament try to pass the ball into the Executive's playing ground when the legislative forum is well known to have its share of guilt as far as the inception of debates on the 1994 draft budget is concerned. According to the Memorandum concluded between the Romanian government and the International Monetary Fund and approved by Parliament, the cabinet could not draft the sections on revenues and expenditures for this year unless they met two essential conditions. The first one referred to a precise knowledge of macro economic, financial and currency results in 1993 and to the IMI's desire for a more exact assessment of the indices for 1994. The second condition was the adoption by Parliament of a package of three to four laws concerning the introduction of a new fiscal system in Romania and the liberalization of the exchange rate of Romania's national currency.

Although these things equally depended on the Government and Parliament the political game between opposition in Romania and pro-government parties found a new matter of dispute and artificial tension of the political climate. Everything is nothing else but cheap Balkanisms and all rows at the news conferences of various parties or the statements made by certain politicians are nothing else but a gratuitous and tedious show.

Beyond this political game there is the sad reality that the policies of curbing economic crisis and adjusting various imbalances facing the Romanian economy do not have an instrument which is absolutely necessary for decisions to be made at central and local level. This is the state budget which neither the government nor the local councils have as a working and economy management instrument.

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The Ides of... April

The monetary policy of the National Bank was estimated as positive especially when taking into account the results scored by it that is the growth of interests for money deposits and the fact that exchange

rates have been brought closer to each other. All these reassessments have led to a three month delay of the initially scheduled agenda.

Early in April the Monetary Committee of the European Union will start the debates on fundings within the European Union and the Group of 24, while this topic is to be debated by the Administration Council of the International Monetary Fund late in April.

Taking into account all these reasons the first to announce the stand by loan is supposed to reach us early in May.

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund delegation was particularly interested in the budget execution for 1993 when an improved conclusion of its execution was reported. What is the implementation of higher revenues than anticipated?

It referred in fact to the anticipated loss forecast on the occasion of the introduction of the Value Added Tax which has not been registered actually.

Another re-dimensioning issue has also appeared during the talks and it referred to the improvement of the situation of exports which had registered a level of \$4.9 billions as against the previously supposed \$4.5 billions. All these have implied a re-dimensioning and correction of macro economic indicators.

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International Monetary Fund is satisfied by the latest developments in Romania but delays loan granting

The Ides of... April

The First Companies Adjudged Bankrupt

BUCHAREST. Out of the first 30 commercial companies on the financial operation three have been approved to be adjudged bankrupt. Four have rehabilitated themselves and will be granted credits while 23 companies are being worked out by the other 23 and State Administration Director of the State Restructuring Department with the State Property Fund. The commercial companies that have been approved to go into liquidation are: Comercial SA Bucharest, Arhim SA Arad and Domitru SA Cluj. The liquidation process will consist of selling assets and liquidating the companies.

Of the enterprises will be liquidated: Comercial SA Bucharest, Arhim SA Arad and Domitru SA Cluj. The liquidation process will consist of selling assets and liquidating the companies.

See BANKRUPT page 4

April—the Inflation Month

by Constantin Răduț
NINE O'CLOCK

BUCHAREST — The price and tariff increase for petrol, electric and thermal energy starting on 8 April will trigger off rises throughout the whole Romanian economy bearing

on the population's living standards. The Finance Ministry experts estimate that the general price index will reach 14-15 per cent as to the average 15 per cent during the first term of the year. This will turn April
See INFLATION page 2

Relations between Romania and IMF in the straight line

was aimed at establishing a recalibration of the 1994 budget by mutual consent as well as at examining the stage of the liberalization of the national currency rate formation mechanism.

Experts with the National Bank consider that the outcome of the talks is favourable and that the Memorandum with Romania will be appreciated as positive by the IMF at the meeting of the executive board in the second half of April.

macroeconomic restructuring. From the technical point of view the finalization of the problems laid down by the Memorandum concluded in December last year requires certain new dimensions due to the fact the Romanian's 1993 budget year did not end with the planned deficit of about 3.9 percent but with a deficit very close to nil particularly as a result of the favourable application of the value added tax. Mr. Watson's mission

ECONOMIC OBSERVER

The very short visit by the head of the IMF mission to Romania, Mr. Maxwell Watson last week should not surprise anyone and should not be a reason for ungrounded speculations worn experts of the National Bank of Romania. This is due to the fact that the basis of the conventions between Romania and the IMF is very strong at present as a result of a wide package of measures for curbing inflation and for

Two Thousand Orphans Drink Milk at Self Help

MEDIA TAX

SUCEAVA — The Christian orphanage Nathanael of Suceava has a cow farm Self Help with 80 cows and 45 calves of Holstein breed brought from the United States in 1993. The about 1700-1800 litre daily milk production meets the requirements of the orphanage with the surplus being offered to other child care institutions in Suceava and the county. Two thousand children drink the milk produced by Self Help.

Is Peace Corps Guilty ?

ECONOMIC OBSERVER

The national news agency ROMPRES announced last week that Miss Lucretia Rowlette, a Peace Corps volunteer in Romania granting technical assistance to small entrepreneurs in county Bacău disappeared unexpectedly and without any notice. Moreover, the local Chamber of Commerce specified that Miss Rowlette had run away with confidential economic and commercial information. As we participated in launching this assistance programme and carried its good intentions—in our publication in an interview with Mr. Arthur Flanagan, country director for Peace Corps Romania—we would like to supply clear information on this case to our readers.

American lessons for Romanian bankers

BEGINNING WITH MARCH 21st, a cycle of six seminars on financial-banking subject matters is under way in six towns of Romania. This training programme for Romanian bankers and entrepreneurs is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The aim of the seminars is to familiarize the participants

with the Western banking procedures, the credit analysis and management, risk assessment, financial management in the small and medium-sized businesses.

The experts, who are voluntary Peace Corps members, are intent on familiarizing Romanian businessmen with ways of access to credit insurance forms. ■



Thursday April 7 1994

D O M E S T I C

Are You Prepared for Early Elections?

by Iulia Neacșu
NINE O'CLOCK

Ever more political leaders of various orientations have launched of late the idea of early elections to be held in the second half of this year. Are the political parties ready to cope with such a possibility? We have asked some of these politicians to answer the question above.

"Inflation monster got wounded but not killed"

January and February results are encouraging for the policy and objectives established by the National Bank of Romania



by Eugen Rădulescu
DIRECTOR WITH THE BANK OF ROMANIA

The monetary situation in February expresses the direction and objectives pursued by the National Bank of Romania for redressing the macroeconomic processes. The monetary mass went up from 424 billion lei in January to 476 billion lei in February that is 12.3 per cent. The increase is within the envisaged level and it is of good omen because by exceeding the rate of inflation it means something extremely important: an increase in money demand. Even more significant is that the increase took place in the conditions in which

hard currency deposits in the Romanian banking system have registered for the first time after a long while a tendency to drop from 1045 million US dollars at the end of January to 1027 million US dollar in February. The tendency of limiting economic agents and population's foreign currency deposits is very good because the ascendancy of the dollar in the economy is not suspicious. The faster increase in the national currency component than in the foreign currency component taking place in a long time show that we are on the right path.

Non governmental credits that is the

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"Inflation monster got wounded but not killed"

Continued from page 1

credit granted by the banks to the economic agents and the population also increased in February. It is 8.7 per cent more credit from 155 billion lei in January to 168 billion lei in February. The increase shows that credit relations are getting normal for the time being.

Another encouraging sign is a slow increase in the banking system's international reserves from 267 million US dollars in January to 285 million US dollars in February. As to foreign currency assets per they have remained at the same level in the banking system and have seen a slight increase at the National Bank.

As to interest rates are concerned in February there was a

10.5 per cent rise in the average interest rate to credits granted by the banks to the non governmental agents against 9.7 per cent in January so that the average rate of credit operations in the banking system went up from 5.7 per cent to 9.4 per cent. If the rate of inflation maintains at the level of the first months of 1994 the 9.4 per cent average interest rate already positive in real terms and it will undoubtedly contribute to normalization of the ratio in the economy.

One of the most encouraging signals for us was the increase in the population's deposit in banks without taking into consideration the Savings Banks where the population's deposits have always been large. Nevertheless if 2 billion lei were deposited in each in

the banking system throughout 1993 deposits in January this year went up to 352 billion lei and in February to 364 billion lei. The reasons for the decrease in the foreign currency demand on the free market and which is actually a method used by the population to protect itself against inflation.

The results of the last few months show that the money and fiscal policies have managed very well in an interdependent way to wound the terrible monster which inflation is. I say wounded and not killed because it is too early to rest on victor's laurels. But with the gradual diminishing of inflation there will be a careful relaxation of the monetary condition coordinated by the National Bank.

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Energy and Inflation

by Constantin Răduț
ECONOMIC OBSERVER

APRIL IS EXPECTED to be a month of inflation. According to Finance Ministry experts the general price index in the economy this month will top 14.15 percent as against an average of only 4.5 percent in the first quarter. The main cause of this price boom in the Romanian economy is a rise in the price of motor fuels which came into force on April 8 and a hike in the price of electric power and thermal energy. If prices for fuel have not increased too much those for electric power and thermal energy have topped a 100-150 percent rise.

According to Romanian Finance Minister the major reason of the new price upsurge is a devaluation of the national currency while prices for energy resources have remained unchanged for more than half a year.

The rise in the price of electric power and thermal energy will trigger off a hike in the price of most products and services in the Romanian economy. This is to the power consuming structure of the Romanian economy which involves a big consumption of power resources.

As is known Romania gets about half of its oil needs from abroad.

As far as natural gas is concerned the imports share in the overall domestic consumption is about 80 percent. Under the circumstances although the Finance Ministers believe he will control the changes in prices of the products made in various sectors of the Romanian economy reality will be different as also proved by the experience of previous years.

The impact of the new of price increases jeopardize the programme aimed at keeping the inflation rate under control in 1994.

For after the effect of a genuine quake which inflation had on the stable character of the Romanian economy last year when it reached 275 percent a peak quota for the all Central and East European countries a repetition of this phenomenon would topple and policy of economic stability and retrenching in Romania. For 1994 the Romanian Government and the National Bank established most of the economic and financial banking by taking into account an average annual inflation rate of 70-80 percent. The outcome of the first months would give hopes for such forecasts.

Although April is expected to be a month of inflation the Finance Ministry recently specified that the price boom was included in the forecast for the whole year. We believe that the power consuming structure of the Romanian economy on the one hand and on the other hand the ongoing depreciation of the national currency within a tendency of exchange rate liberalization will obviously effect the rise in prices and therefore will trigger off a higher rate of inflation.

If the Government and the National Bank will not be able to cope with inflation it will be again a proof of the precarious character of the fiscal and money programmes for economic stability with an immediate impact on the credibility of the public institutions which have pledged to keep the inflation monster behind bars.

The "Silicon Valley" in Romania

by Mihaela Vitcu
ECONOMIC OBSERVER

The Romanian of Microtechnology was created on the initiative of the Ministry of Research and Technology at moments of difficulty for the Romanian electronics and microelectronics. It concentrated the largest part of its highest level human and material resources which could be wasted otherwise.

The Institute of Microtechnology Băneasa deals with microtechnology and microsystems based on micron techniques and on system design and signal processing non conventional methods a

very new filed ion Romanian science and technology.

With its great specialists in the filed and unique equipment in Central and Eastern Europe the Institute has concluded cooperation contracts with famous US companies whose residence is in the Silicon Valley. SUN a world leader in the field of working stations and CADENCE number 1 in the world in the field of automatic electronic design. The collaborating with the two big companies provides for the initiation of a transfer of technology in the domain of electronic design covering the

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MINISTERIAL MEETING IN MARRAKECH

World Trade Enters a New Stage

ECONOMIC OBSERVER

This week Marrakech Morocco venues the ministerial meeting of the 119 states participating in the Uruguay Round. The meeting is aimed at finalizing the most ambitious and complex stage of multilateral trade negotiations in the over four decades history of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round by the hands of the delegations of the participating states and at the same time at establishing a World Trade Organisation which will represent a multilateral forum for supervising the implementation of the liberalization commitments and of the rules agreed upon for international trade.

According to experts the outcome of the Uruguay Round will concentrate in four major objectives for the future of

See TRADE page 4

COOPERS & LYBRAND IS "NUMBER ONE" among the Foreign Consultancy Companies in Romania

Interview with Mr. IFAN PII RRI VIGROUX general manager Coopers & Lybrand Romania S R I



by R. Constantin and Mihaela Vitcu

ECONOMIC OBSERVER

Coopers & Lybrand is the first consultancy company having opened offices in Bucharest after 1989. What have been the main assignments of C&L during these years?

Yes we are the first consultancy company having opened offices in Romania. We started our activity being nominated by the Romanian Government in 1991 to outline the framework for the Privatisation Law.

Within the I.H.A.R.F. Financement Programme in bank audit we are currently auditors for the Bank of Foreign Trade the Romanian Bank for Development Bankcoop as well as for private banks such as Ion Ionescu Bank Franco Romanian Societe General Bank.

Further to a number of auctions which we won we elaborated studies for the agricultural and machinery sectors and a restructuring project for Romtelecom Apart from the Europe in

Community financing the American Government is also helping Romania through the USAID. In this context we have won the technical assistance project for the Private Ownership Fund in Brasov. Otherwise some of our main assignments include restructuring system for IUB Brasov for Autoautomat Romania Brasov for Itran Machine Tools Bucharest and for IMAR which is the largest furniture manufacturer in Romania.

As a consulting company you are some what like a doctor taking the pulse of the economic and business life of the country. Do you think that Romania now has a favourable business climate?

In fact it looks like starting with the beginning of this year things have been rapidly improving. The first indicator is the unanimity of all the political forces for the reform which was obviously required before and which as we according to the media is something almost obvious. The image of the country through admission to the European Council through the granting of the Most Favoured Nation Clause and some other things less visible has improved. One of the most important features not only for business is the stability of currency and the putting an end to the double system of the interbanking trade. This last feature is brand new in fact this started at the beginning of March. I people will want to make sure that it lasts because we have already experienced such a situation in August 1992 which lasted more than a month. The fact that this double system has stopped now is not enough in itself there will be a demand for observation for a longer period of time six months. So normally if this unity of rates is kept in 1995 it should mean a take off for Romania. But already now I think that the climate is far better.

Do you agree with the opinion that major foreign investors have certain reticence towards Romania?

It is true. And once again the major reason for that is the currency problem. Romania has adopted a very liberal system of incentives for foreign investments with tax holidays ranging from two to five years depending on the industry and exemptions from excises, from customs duties and all this is, of course interesting but

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