



## **ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE IN MOLDOVA**

*New Perspectives for Women*

FINAL REPORT

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## I. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

In August 2004, the USAID Regional Mission for Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova awarded Winrock International the four-year, \$3,987,115<sup>1</sup> Moldovan Anti-Trafficking Initiative (MATI). Branded in Moldova as *New Perspectives for Women* (NPW), the project was designed to achieve the over-arching goal of reducing the criminal trade in human beings in Moldova through a comprehensive set of anti-trafficking activities, with a particular focus on addressing the economic roots of trafficking and improving access for young women and girls to employment within Moldova. Specifically, the project worked to increase the capacity and overall ability of Moldovan NGOs to address aspects of human trafficking through the following objectives:

- Strengthening Moldovan NGOs' provision of assistance and support services for at-risk women and returned victims;
- Extending outreach services to, and improving access to information by, at-risk women and girls in under-served rural areas;
- Strengthening linkages among local, national, and international actors working to combat trafficking in Moldova;
- Improving the ability of rural and young women to find employment locally and/or to launch small businesses; and
- Improving public awareness about human trafficking.

New Perspectives for Women's beneficiaries were young women and girls (primarily between the ages of 16 and 25) who were economically disadvantaged, had limited access to information and training opportunities, and/or lived mainly in remote rural areas in which other donor-funded programs were either limited or completely absent.

Winrock International and its local implementing partners performed a variety of tasks under five project components:

1. Victim Assistance and Support Services;
2. Effective Outreach Program;
3. Promotion/Strengthening of Linkages with Concerned Organizations;
4. Development of Employment and Business Opportunities; and
5. Awareness Enhancement Program.

Through the MATI program, Winrock successfully implemented a complex, innovative program that achieved the following results:

ü	Linked young women into adult social networks invested in the success of young women and girls in their home communities.
ü	Developed portable job readiness and job skills to equip young women and girls for changing jobs in a changing labor market
ü	Identified income-generating and employment opportunities for young women
ü	Built individual job relationships between young women and socially responsible employers in communities of origin
ü	Developed independent, self-sufficient young women and girls through psycho-social training in extracurricular educational activities
ü	Trained and utilized successful role models and mentors for young women in their home

<sup>1</sup> This original estimated amount was decreased to \$3,187,115 on April 19, 2007.

communities
ü Created peer groups to support individual growth and empowerment for young women
ü Established peer support systems to assist potential and actual victims in social and economic reintegration, while maintaining anonymity and confidentiality
ü Integrated local NGO partners into National Referral System to support the reintegration
ü Provided social and psychological assistance programs to victims and at-risk groups
ü Provided anti-trafficking information to rural communities through mobile technical unit (MTU) mechanism
ü Linked with the main existing regional and national anti-trafficking players

Each of the MATI program components is described in detail below. These sections include both regular recurring activities envisioned in the original project concept as well as special initiatives that were undertaken as additional needs were identified, new partnerships were established, and supplemental funding was obtained.

### A. Victim Assistance and Support Services

This component strengthened Moldovan NGOs' provision of assistance and support services for at-risk women and returned victims. By supporting the establishment and operation of five Regional Support Centers (RSCs) across the country, each of which was managed by a local Moldovan nongovernmental organization, MATI provided crisis intervention assistance to clients as well as economic empowerment services (described further in section D below). The components of the Crisis Intervention Program, which included trafficking awareness and related trainings, psychological and legal consultations, helpline services, and other assistance, are outlined below.

- **Leadership for Trafficking Prevention (LTP) Trainings.** Winrock's LTP trainings, which included four modules, "Work Abroad: Myths & Realities," "Two Views on Domestic Violence," "Gender Equality," and "Personal Leadership," addressed the main vulnerability factors that push women to go abroad, and consequently, put them at greater risk of being trafficked. The trainings incorporated a variety of interactive activities, group work, role playing, and exercises contributing to increasing young women's self-confidence and self-esteem. Most of the LTP trainings were conducted for students of high schools, professional schools, and to a lesser extent, universities and colleges. The trainings were highly interactive and particularly appealed to young girls, in part because they utilized a non-traditional teaching methodology. Also, since there is no formal component within the official state curriculum that teaches girls basic life skills, these trainings often allowed participants to learn for the first time about their rights, gender discrimination, and exploitation, and built leadership skills that helped them address these problems and educate their peers. Over the course of the project, LTP trainings were provided to more than 9,621 young women, including 9,101 from the target group (16- to 25-year-olds).
- **Psychological Assistance.** RSCs provided free, walk-in individual consultations to beneficiaries by full-time staff psychologists at each of the Regional Support Centers, as well as referrals to other providers. These consultations and referrals helped beneficiaries address a wide range of psychological and personal issues. Following each consultation, the RSC psychologist filled out a standard form with a detailed description of the problem, her diagnosis, next steps and referrals, if necessary. The MATI database made it possible to classify psychological problems encountered by beneficiaries, enabling in-depth analysis of individual and broader trends associated with victims and at-risk women. Most commonly, consultations addressed interpersonal relations, work-related and financial issues, and health and domestic violence problems. Over the life of the project, a total of 3,941 psychological consultations were provided by RSC psychologists, including 3,181 from the target group.

- Support Groups. An innovative component that the MATI program brought to Moldova was the introduction of peer support groups at each RSC. Group members were selected from among young women facing similar issues, and meetings were overseen by the RSC psychologist. By enabling young women to share their experiences with peers facing similar challenges, the groups helped women support one another, identify workable solutions to problems, and recognize in themselves the ability to help others. A total of approximately 100 beneficiaries took part in support groups over the course of the project.
- Referrals. One of the fundamental goals of the MATI project was to develop and implement a referral mechanism through which returned victims of trafficking and at-risk women could gain access to medical, psycho-social and economic services. Throughout the MATI implementation period, the number of quality referrals grew steadily. A total of 11,765 referrals were made, with 7,971 (68%) of those for target group clients. The largest numbers of referrals from the helpline were noted in Balti and Cahul. Helpline calls related to migration and possible risks of trafficking were usually referred to the national toll-free hotline, operated by La Strada. Becoming an integral part of the National Referral System (NRS) helped the RSCs further build their capacity to provide professional referrals. The largest number of professional referrals were made to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the MSPFC National Rehabilitation Center (for the package of emergency assistance to actual and potential victims), national and regional NGOs working in the area of social work, the National Employment Agency and its regional branches, educational institutions, law enforcement authorities, financial and credit institutions, and local businesses.
- National Referral System. The NRS concept was developed by the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child (MSPFC) with close guidance from the IOM. The concept of the NRS was based on a pilot referral system implemented in five raions of Moldova in 2006, and gradually extended to twelve in 2007-2008. Focal points of the MSPFC regional offices were appointed as coordinators of multi-disciplinary teams of specialists, representing various governmental and nongovernmental organizations, to provide multilateral reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking through a detailed reintegration plan developed for each individual case. A National Coordination Center was established within MSPFC to collect, process, analyze and refer all necessary case data, while maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of those referred. The Balti, Cahul and Soroca RSCs became integral parts of the NRS and underwent comprehensive NRS training on the improvement of assistance to victims of trafficking at the raion and community level. For MATI, the RSCs' participation in the NRS increased the number and quality of both incoming and outgoing referrals, increased the range of their local partners, and helped them enhance their reputation as reliable service providers for vulnerable women.
- Helplines. Confidential helplines at each RSC served as a critical source of information and assistance both for trafficking victims as well as those at-risk in each of the regions. RSCs established professional referral relationships with local medical, psychological and other service providers to which callers were referred, and coordinated with other existing national hotlines (e.g., La Strada's) and helplines (e.g., those of local employment agencies). Helpline operators received comprehensive training and developed a special call classification system in order to assess the most frequent callers' problems and define regional trends. During MATI's implementation, RSC helplines received a total of 24,621 calls, 19,383 of which were from the target group (79%). About 25% of the overall number of RSCs helpline calls requested information or services offered by the RSCs, 25% of calls related to work, unemployment and other financial problems faced by young women, 10% were related to interpersonal relationships, and 8% of calls related to domestic violence or legal issues.
- Victims Assisted. RSCs identified and provided assistance to 183 victims of trafficking throughout the life of the project. All trafficking victims received a variety of reintegration services tailored to their individual needs, and some of the most severe cases also received

complex assistance packages from partner organizations. The table below shows the countries to which assisted victims had been trafficked.

**Table 1. Victims Assistance by RSC and Countries of Destination**

Destination Country	Number of Victims Assisted
Bosnia	1
Chechnya	1
Cyprus	5
France	2
Italy	6
Kosovo	1
Moldova	1
Portugal	3
Russia	18
Serbia	1
Turkey	8
Ukraine	1
United Arab Emirates	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>

- Total Number of Clients Assisted. Over the life of the project, a total of 35,451 women clients (29,047, or 82%, from the target group) received various types of services from the Regional Support Centers, including trainings and legal and psychological consultations (please see Table 2 below).

**Table 2. Number of Women Served by Each RSC**

	Balti	Cahul	Comrat	Edinets	Hincesti	Soroca	MATI North Strategy <sup>2</sup>	Total
Total women served	8,743	5,588	6,453	1,286	5,264	5,034	3,083	<b>35,451</b>
Target group served (% 16-25 years)	7,731 (88%)	4,103 (73%)	5,082 (79%)	1,015 (79%)	4,267 (81%)	4,348 (86%)	2,501 (81%)	<b>29,047 (82%)</b>

- Provision of Legal Consultations to Beneficiaries. The MATI Legal Assistance Program provided free, walk-in individual consultations to beneficiaries by full-time staff lawyers at each of the Regional Support Centers, as well as referrals to other providers. These consultations and referrals helped beneficiaries to address a wide range of family and economic legal issues. Legal assistance was provided by RSC staff lawyers on a wide range of legal issues. These included divorce, alimony and custody issues for young women who had ended or were considering

<sup>2</sup> The North Strategy encompassed an extensive series of MTUs in order to provide ongoing service to communities in northern Moldova that had been previously covered by the Edinets RSC, during the period between that RSC's closure and the October 2006 opening of a replacement RSC in Soroca.

ending their marriages, legal options for securing work and employment rights, and assistance in legal registration and other issues encountered by young women starting or expanding small businesses. Consultations were also frequently sought on the potential consequences of engaging in illegal work abroad, addressing domestic violence, and on options for former victims of trafficking to testify against their accusers, seek redress for damages, or regain custody of children born abroad. Such assistance raised the awareness of beneficiaries by informing them of their legal rights, and also helped to solve the beneficiaries' legal problems. At least 3460 legal consultations were provided to beneficiaries over the life of the project. A large network of referrals was also developed, with MOUs and collaboration agreements signed with many of these stakeholders. As a result of this collaboration, a larger number of beneficiaries were assisted and provided with more extensive legal assistance. Monthly meetings of RSC lawyers with American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA/ROLI) attorneys also helped participants share information and experiences, thereby enhancing the professional capabilities of all involved as well as the quality of services provided to beneficiaries.

- Legal Internship Program. Each RSC coordinated with local law schools and universities and placed **71** students in one-month internships at the centers. The interns, with mentoring and oversight from the RSC lawyers, provided legal consultations to RSC clients and prepared legal information materials for beneficiaries and training participants. This activity developed the abilities of young lawyers to combat trafficking and assist trafficking victims, thereby expanding the pool of local expertise.
- Legal Publications. MATI coordinated with ABA/ROLI to develop and distribute relevant legal publications to beneficiaries. The materials were distributed to beneficiaries primarily through the RSCs and included reports and studies from international rights assessment agencies, comments on existing legislation, and excerpts from international treaties to fight trafficking. In addition, RSC lawyers were provided access to a database of all Moldovan legislation in order to increase the efficiency and accuracy of legal assistance provided. In all, legal brochures on **16** different topics were produced and provided to beneficiaries.

## **B. Effective Outreach Program**

Mobile Technical Units (MTUs) and peer-to-peer volunteer assistance were MATI's primary mechanisms for outreach to rural areas. Each enabled the project to provide distant areas with support services, increase public awareness, and strengthen linkages between anti-trafficking, economic empowerment and other actors and institutions relevant to providing services and assistance to former trafficking victims and at-risk girls and young women. Specific Effective Outreach activities included the following:

- National and Local Mobile Technical Units. Regional Support Centers developed a Local MTU (LMTU) team that was responsible for the provision of trainings and consultations across each RSC's region. LMTU programming consisted of visiting a village for a two-day period and conducting a range of activities, including a roundtable with local community leaders, one-day trainings for the MATI target group on both Trafficking Prevention and Economic Empowerment, and individual consultations with a lawyer and psychologist. The MTU visits served as a catalyst for initiating public discussion among local authorities, medical professionals, police, local NGOs, school directors, and target group members, among others. Participants discussed ways to increase local opportunities for women. The participation of local authorities at each roundtable was essential because they were in a position to use the information covered to make changes to increase opportunities for young women and provide referral services to members of the target group. The National MTU (NMTU) supplemented the LMTU efforts in parts of the regions that were especially difficult for the LMTUs to cover sufficiently on their own, such as Causeni, Stefan Voda, Orhei and Telenesti raions in the Balti

and Hincesti regions, due to their relatively large area. The NMTU also covered the northern region during the interim period between the Edinets RSC closing down and the opening of the Soroca RSC approximately ten months later. Chisinau-based trainers conducted these MTUs. An NMTU was also conducted in Transnistria during the summer of 2008. In all, 275 MTUs were conducted, including 275 LTP trainings that were attended by 4146 women, of which 3774 were from the project's target group. In addition, 250 Economic Empowerment trainings were attended by 3953 girls (3497 from target group). In addition, 1252 psychological and 986 legal consultations were provided to MTU attendees.

- Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program. MATI also utilized volunteer peer-to-peer trainers to communicate the potential dangers to young women of pursuing work abroad and the opportunities at home in Moldova. The Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program consisted of current university students or recent graduates who were interested in volunteering their time to assist their less fortunate peers from remote professional and vocational schools. MATI recruited about 20 new volunteers each year at each Regional Support Center, as well as in Chisinau. They participated in an extended training program, including team teaching with experienced trainers, to prepare them to conduct interactive trainings and discussions on topics including trafficking and domestic violence awareness, personal leadership, employment, and entrepreneurship. Once they completed the training program, volunteers traveled to schools in pairs to conduct actual interactive trainings and discussions, as well as to disseminate information about MATI resources available to the project's target group. Since its launch in November 2005, Peer Perspectives engaged approximately 200 local volunteers and trained them as peer educators. These volunteers, in turn, trained more than 2,700 beneficiaries in the areas noted above, while also collaborating closely with Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs), including Moldova TIP, Peace Corps' local anti-trafficking group. More than 20 PCVs have been involved in helping MATI fight human trafficking in Moldova.
- Summer Schools of Leadership. Outreach to rural areas was enhanced by four summer schools and camps that Winrock made possible through the Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program and leveraged non-USAID supplemental funding over the past two years. In June 2007, Winrock conducted the Summer School for Leadership (SSL), a one-week program implemented with nearly \$9,000 in outside support from Catholic Relief Services' Moldova Employment & Training Alliance, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. In June 2008, Winrock received over \$28,000 in supplemental funding from OSCE's Mission to Moldova to coordinate three more summer camps for disadvantaged young women, including the 2<sup>nd</sup> Summer School of Leadership, which was directly implemented by Winrock staff and volunteers, and two additional camps that were primarily implemented by Peace Corps Volunteers. All of the camps had similar goals of helping to build young women's leadership and life skills, raise their awareness about trafficking, domestic violence, and gender quality, and empower them to better investigate and take advantage of educational and professional opportunities. Through these combined initiatives, the project reached over 500 young women from rural areas, including nearly 250 camp participants and over 250 beneficiaries of trainings to be held by camp participants after returning to their home communities.

The MTUs, Volunteer Program, and summer camps Peer Perspectives made it possible to increase employability and raise awareness among target clients about the activities conducted by and resources offered by MATI and other anti-trafficking organizations and institutions. In follow up to participation in NMTU and volunteer activities, many girls signed up for long-term entrepreneurship and professional courses, and a significant number changed their mind about going abroad, while many of those who did not became more informed on human trafficking and domestic violence, and ways to escape or otherwise address these situations.

### C. Promotion/Strengthening of Linkages with Concerned Organizations

The primary objective of this component is to strengthen linkages among local, national and international actors working to combat trafficking in Moldova. The following activities were implemented by MATI.

- Perspectives Brown Bag Briefings. Starting in December 2004, the project instituted a monthly Brown Bag Briefings series to create an opportunity for informal exchange of ideas and information among organizations working toward the eradication of trafficking. Conceived of as informal event with guest speakers, the concept proved to be a useful tool for building a network among counter-trafficking (CT) actors. Discussion topics included combating domestic violence, the implementing mechanism of the ICMPD project, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), women’s business associations, media relations and journalist training, building NGO social products and contemporary human resources management standards. The Brown Bag Briefings were discontinued in February 2006 as the Anti-Trafficking Technical Coordination Meetings organized by OSCE in Chisinau were considered to be a sufficient mechanism to bring CT actors together on a regular basis.
- National and Regional Technical Coordination Meetings (TCMs). National TCMs are organized by and held at the OSCE Mission to Moldova each month, and typically bring together 20-30 leading anti-trafficking organizations active in the country. MATI was an active participant at nearly all of the meetings, providing colleagues with updates on MATI implementation, frequently conducting detailed presentations on activities, issues and accomplishments, and contributing to discussions on AT issues affecting the entire field. In addition, MATI and its RSCs collaborated with OSCE to conduct over 10 Regional TCMS across the country.
- Local Roundtables. Independent of OSCE, the local RSCs also organized numerous open discussions to increase information sharing and access to service providers in remote regions of Moldova. The discussions were focused on such varied topics as trafficking prevention and victim identification, accessing MATI project services, developing business ideas, starting up businesses, training at vocational schools, and work with local employment agencies.
- Memoranda of Understanding. During the life of the project MATI signed MOUs with a wide variety of organizations in order to formalize its collaboration with them to combat trafficking. These organizations included: the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Heifer Project International, the Italian Consortium for Solidarity, the International Organization for Migration, La Strada, UNDP’s Better Opportunities for Women and Youth project, Catholic Relief Services’ Moldovan Employment and Training Alliance, and Moldova Mosaic.
- RSC Leaders Forums. These monthly meetings of RSC leaders and Winrock staff provided directors and other RSC staff with opportunities to present the results of their activity; showcase their facilities and employees; and highlight special activities. They also allowed leaders to share experience, discuss problems and get answers to questions. MATI invited guests from partner organizations, projects and international agencies to present useful information to the RSCs and to strengthen linkages regionally. Leaders Forums were typically held monthly during the first three years of the project and quarterly during the project’s final year.
- Anti-Trafficking Website. In 2006, together with OSCE, MATI launched a new website to improve coordination among anti-trafficking actors. The website, called the Moldova Anti-Trafficking & Gender Network, is accessible online at [www.ATNet.md](http://www.ATNet.md) in English, Romanian and Russian. The centerpiece of the website is its Partner Network, a directory of over 220 NGOs and 70 governmental bodies working to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings. The website concept originated with the desire to bring together in one place information on and from the monthly anti-trafficking technical coordination meetings hosted by the OSCE Mission to Moldova.

- Project Development Course Implemented. In 2007, MATI organized a five-day training and a one-day follow-up session called “Getting Funded: A Training Course in Proposal Writing.” Trainees included representatives from the four organizations then managing MATI’s RSCs, as well as local NGOs such as Casa Marioarei, Gender Centru, Interaction, World Window, Gender DocM and the National Institute for Justice. With supplemental funding from OSCE’s Moldova Mission, MATI helped trainees to begin adopting a strategic, long-term approach to their fundraising activities. As a result of these trainings, the RSCs obtained funding to implement five new projects, including one on delivering anti-trafficking trainings for local social workers, law enforcement, and at-risk group members, and a summer camp for victims of trafficking. In addition, a project proposal drafted by Casa Marioarei was financed by OSCE to provide domestic violence victims with a medical insurance policy and medical aid for women maltreated by their families. Gender DocM also received funding from OSCE for organizing a summer school on combating sexual discrimination through a human rights perspective.
- CEDAW Report. MATI and the RSCs assisted in the implementation of this assessment tool, which measured the degree to which Moldova’s laws promoted and protected the rights of women, as required by the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the degree to which women are accorded these rights in practice. On Nov 8, 2006 the CEDAW Assessment Tool Report was launched at a conference organized by the American Bar Association Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI), together with Winrock. Much of the field research for the report was conducted by MATI.
- National Action Plan and National Referral Strategy. The National Committee to Combat Trafficking drafted a National Action Plan for 2007-2008. MATI worked closely with the participating governmental institutions to provide input on its own activities and how it would support the plan. In addition, MATI provided feedback to the National Referral Strategy (NRS), which was developed under the auspices of the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- Referral Guide. As part of the Crisis Intervention Program, MATI published and distributed a Referral Guide to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the professional referral systems in place at both MATI’s Regional Support Centers and at other anti-trafficking actors in Moldova. MATI worked in partnership with other anti-trafficking actors, like La Strada, IOM and OSCE, in order to update information on appropriate services and information available to at-risk women and victims of trafficking. MATI gathered and sorted the information for inclusion on the [www.ATNet.md](http://www.ATNet.md) website, intended for use by professional partners working with at-risk groups, and incorporation into the printed version of the Referral Guide.

#### **D. Development of Employment and Business Opportunities**

The main objective of the Economic Empowerment Program (EEP) was to improve the ability of young rural women to find employment locally or to launch their own small businesses. In so doing, the project helped to decrease the economic need that often serves as the root cause of young women seeking work abroad, and which makes them especially vulnerable to the false promises of traffickers. The EEP program’s components provided beneficiaries from rural areas with opportunities to develop and build successful career strategies and generate income, while staying at home close to their families and communities. The provision of training, consulting assistance, and in-kind grants helped young women in rural communities to start private registered or non-registered micro-businesses across a wide spectrum of industries, from agriculture and handicrafts to internet services.

## 1. Leadership for Employability

The Leadership for Employability program helped a wide variety of beneficiaries to better understand the job search process, develop valuable professional skills, and successfully find work with existing employers. Specific project activities are outlined below.

- Trainings on Leadership for Employability. These trainings were comprehensive one- or two-day sessions that concentrated on developing elementary skills in the job search process, including resume writing, interviewing skills, and job search strategies, while also incorporating self-esteem building and key life skills, such as conflict resolution and simple money management. Myths and realities about working abroad were also discussed. Trainers were prepared to lead these sessions through Trainings of Trainers for 35 instructors held during 2005 and 2006. During the life of the project, 515 Leadership for Employability trainings were provided to 8088 participants from across the country, including 7551 or 93% from the target group.
- Skills/Vocational Courses. In close coordination with local businesses, MATI through its RSCs developed various vocational skills courses designed to meet the demands of the local labor market. Each course was designed to correspond to a specific area of employment or industry sector and provided beneficiaries with an opportunity to acquire practical skills and appropriate work habits to help them secure viable employment. During the project, MATI conducted a total of 51 skills courses for 914 young women, of whom 778 or 83% were from the target group.
- Employment Generation Projects. Within the scope of MATI, Employment Generation Projects (EGPs) leveraged government resources, NGO assistance, and private sector investment in order to jointly provide vocational training and guaranteed employment for participants upon the course's successful completion. Through partnerships with the National Employment Agency, Catholic Relief Services, and private employers such as Fouchette supermarkets, German retailer Metro, apparel manufacturer Tricon, and Banca de Economii, MATI-supported EGPs trained more than 250 girls from the project's target group, 160 of whom were provided full-time employment with the aforementioned companies.
- Regional Employment Seminars. In 2006, four three-day Regional Employment Seminars were designed and implemented by MATI in Balti, Cahul, Comrat and Chisinau to develop and strengthen partnerships between the project and the National Employment Agency and its local employment offices. The seminars assisted participants to improve collaboration in order to better provide MATI beneficiaries with job search and training services, including referrals. A total of 114 specialists from employment agencies from 37 raions of Moldova and RSC trainers participated in these seminars.

## 2. Leadership for Entrepreneurship

While employability efforts were successful in assisting many beneficiaries to find work with existing employers, other beneficiaries lived in rural areas and other places where few employers were active. The Leadership for Entrepreneurship program, therefore, was designed to help young women from rural areas to start their own small businesses and income generation activities and often, in so doing, to provide new products and services to their communities. Specific project activities in entrepreneurship are outlined below.

- Introductory Trainings in Leadership for Entrepreneurship. “Could I Be an Entrepreneur?” and “I Am an Entrepreneur” Trainings were, respectively, one- and two-day trainings which introduced key business topics (such as business planning, financial management and basic marketing) and provided participants with skills and information necessary to start their own small businesses, thus improving their lives and the lives of other women through employment opportunities.

Trainers were prepared to lead these sessions through Trainings of Trainers for 83 instructors held initially during 2005 and 2006 and then repeated later in the project. Overall, a total of 361 trainings on Leadership for Entrepreneurship were held for 5733 young women and girls, including 5188 from the target group.

- Long-Term Entrepreneurship Courses. These courses built on the material covered by the one- and two-day trainings and include the process of identifying and quantifying market opportunities, as well as conceptualizing, planning, starting, and operating new businesses. Topics included opportunity assessment, value propositions, legal issues, marketing and advertising, business planning, management and business accounting and identifying possible sources of start-up funding. At the conclusion of the two-month (96 hours of classroom training plus 44 hours of individual consultations) course, each participant developed a detailed business plan for a start-up business. The plan was presented at the course's closing ceremony to a committee composed of trainers, RSC and MATI staff, and outside experts, including representatives of local government agencies, local employment offices and micro-credit institutions. A total of 705 women, 507 of whom were from the target group, participated in long term entrepreneurship courses conducted across Moldova.
- In-Kind Grant Programs. Beneficiaries completing the Long-Term Entrepreneurship course were eligible to apply to MATI for small in-kind grants worth up to \$1500 which financed the purchase of basic equipment or supplies required to turn their business idea into a real venture. During 2005-2006, MATI collaborated with the Italian Consortium for Solidarity (ICS) to provide grants worth an average of \$800 to 58 young women in two southern raions of Moldova, Causeni and Stefan-Voda. In 2007, Winrock obtained \$150,000 in funding from the Argidius Foundation, a private donor based in Switzerland, to expand the in-kind grants program to cover the entire country. As a result, an additional 77 participants received in-kind grants worth a total of \$80,363. The provision of in-kind grants facilitated the establishment of 41 new small businesses and the expansion of 35 existing enterprises, generating 102 new jobs.
- Advanced Regional Entrepreneurship Trainings. In 2006, two-day follow-on trainings in Causeni and Stefan-Voda were conducted for the 58 recipients of in-kind equipment grants from ICS. The trainings addressed some of the issues that the women entrepreneurs identified since receiving their grants and starting up their businesses, including legal registration, tax policy, marketing, and finance. In October 2008, Sector-Specific Advanced Trainings brought together similar client businesses to share experiences and lessons learned, explore opportunities to conduct joint purchasing or sales in order to reduce costs, attend sessions led by entrepreneurs from established businesses in their sector, especially those operating in Chisinau, and link clients with potential suppliers and partners in the national or regional capitals. These trainings will enable the project to provide essential assistance to help existing businesses grow, such as the nearly ten MATI clients who have started hair and beauty salons in their towns and villages. In all, 68 beneficiaries received advanced entrepreneurship training through the project.
- Heifer Project International Activity. In 2005, MATI collaborated with Heifer Project International (HPI) on the activity *Dairy Cows for Young Women in Buteni village*, through which HPI provided livestock (dairy cows) for 15 young women and direct expenses related to livestock such as equipment and supplies, transportation of stock, and best husbandry practices from Romania and Moldova. MATI provided vocational training and specialized materials, one-to-one consultations with lawyers and business consultants, and assistance with monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Microfinance Seminars. A microfinance seminar on improving access to start-up capital and microcredit was conducted in the project's Chisinau office in January 2006 for 14 of the RSC Economic Empowerment Program Coordinators and finance and business planning trainers. Professional trainers from Microinvest and the Rural Finance Corporation (the only two MFIs providing finance to start-up enterprises in Moldova) conducted the session.

- National Conference on Women’s Entrepreneurship. In March 2008, a national conference called “Women Entrepreneurs in a Changing World” was organized by the International Center for the Advancement of Women in Business (ICAWB) with financial support from the German Technical Support Bureau (GTZ) and in partnership with MATI. The goal of the conference was to stimulate female entrepreneurship in Moldova, promote women’s decision-making in business and society, establish and develop business contacts for women-entrepreneurs, illuminate new opportunities for collaboration, and consolidate participation in the Moldovan women’s movement. More than 80 individuals from Chisinau and other regions of Moldova attended, including numerous members of the project’s staff and RSCs beneficiaries.
- Youth Business Plan Competition. MATI helped sponsor the 2008 National Youth Business Plan Competition in Chisinau, together with its main implementer, the National Association of Youth of Moldova (ANTIM). The goal of the activity was to support and promote youth entrepreneurship in Moldova. Of over 60 business plans submitted to the competition, the seven best were selected and their authors invited to Chisinau to present them at the event. The finalists competed for a variety of cash prizes, including Winrock’s special award – a \$1,000 in-kind equipment grant – for the Most Viable Business Idea. A project beneficiary from Balti (Ina Puga) won both first prize and the Winrock award for her business plan to provide outsourced accounting services to microenterprises from northern Moldova.
- Regional Women’s Entrepreneurship Forums. In September 2008, in order to promote women’s entrepreneurship and mentoring, both among project beneficiaries and more widely, the project held two Women’s Entrepreneurship Forums, in Comrat and Soroca. The forums celebrated women’s successes, explored needed changes in the business climate and in institutional support, recognized the efforts of the project’s participating mentors, and encouraged additional successful women to consider mentoring potential and beginning entrepreneurs. A total of approximately 60 entrepreneurs, government representatives, NGOs, and project beneficiaries took part.

### **3. Complementary Economic Empowerment Activities**

- Internship Program. To supplement the trainings and skills courses available to RSC clients, MATI established one- and two-month internship programs at each RSC. These internships enabled 678 at-risk clients to obtain valuable hands-on work experience with local businesses, including 614 from the target group. In addition, MATI provided 329 of the most vulnerable participants with small stipends to help cover living costs while taking part in the internships. Stipends were in the amount of \$40 (paid in Moldovan leis) per month for one to two months.
- Mentoring Program. The mentoring program was designed to complement the existing economic empowerment services offered by the RSCs, with particular emphasis on assistance to new entrepreneurs. The program established relationships between RSC clients and individual entrepreneurs in the local business community. Mentorship activities were not designed to enable clients to learn about a specific business or business sector, as much as they were meant to allow clients to gain access to successful entrepreneurs who acted as role models, advisors, guides and trainers, regardless of the specific business or field that the young woman chose to pursue. During 2006-2008 approximately 398 persons participated in the mentoring program, including 254 from the target group.
- Winter Charity Holiday Bazaar. The Winter Charity Bazaar is an annual event organized by the International Women’s Club of Moldova (IWCM) in order to raise funds for the group’s charity work, while bringing together the local and international communities to share their cultures and customs. In December 2006 and 2007, MATI and its volunteer program took part in Holiday Bazaar. The project displayed for sale clothing and holiday items produced by project beneficiaries from regions as a result of their participation in project-led professional training courses and by the Peer Perspectives Volunteer program. As a result, several contacts also were

made with potential buyers interested in making wholesale purchases of some of the items on display, participants learned more about the types of items sold by their competitors and the prevailing market prices for them, and beneficiaries and volunteers made nearly \$800 in total sales.

As a result of the employment, entrepreneurship and professional courses 1309 young women were employed and 207 established businesses.

## **E. Awareness Enhancement Program**

The Awareness Enhancement Program combined activities targeting television, radio and print media conducted by Winrock subcontractor Independent Journalism Center (IJC) with information campaigns, publications and materials designed to supplement RSC's activities and raise overall awareness of human trafficking and related issues. Special awareness raising activities, such as those conducted as part of the annual "16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence" campaign, rounded out this component.

### **1. Destinies & Destinations Television & Radio Programs**

- Destinies and Destinations Television Program. The program was an important element of MATI's project's awareness enhancement efforts, which in partnership with Independent Journalism Center (IJC) sought to improve television, radio and print media coverage of trafficking in persons and related issues. The television and radio programs were first produced in December 2005 and have been broadcast on local Moldovan stations since January 2006, nationally since November 2006, and internationally since January 2007. The program had been aired on nine stations. In 2007, with supplemental funding from OSCE and CRS, MATI produced and distributed to interested organizations and institutions 300 DVDs sets of the first twenty episodes of the Destinies and Destinations television program. In cooperation with Catholic Relief Services' Moldova Employment and Training Alliance (CRS/META) twenty episodes of Destinies and Destinations were dubbed into Russian for broadcasting in Transnistria, Gagauzia and other Russian-speaking parts of the country.

### **2. Media Coverage of Human Trafficking**

- Quarterly Media Monitoring Reports. During the life of the project IJC monitored seven mainstream national newspapers and four regional newspapers from Balti, Cahul, Comrat and Soroca for their coverage of trafficking and trafficking-related topics. A media monitoring bulletin "Media Coverage of Human Trafficking and Its Prevention" was published every quarter in three languages (Romanian, English, and Russian) and was posted the IJC site ([www.ijc.md](http://www.ijc.md)).
- Media Monitoring Interim and Final Reports. In 2007 MATI published an interim report based on two years of media monitoring activities. Supplemental funding obtained from the Moldova Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) made possible the professional publication of 500 print and 500 electronic copies of the report in three languages: Romanian, Russian and English. In June 2008 MATI completed its media monitoring activities and published a final report. The report is based on the analysis of 419 articles that were published in the monitored newspapers over a period of 41 months.
- Media Coverage of MATI Project. In addition to the monitoring of all trafficking-related coverage in the publications noted above, the project cultivated and closely monitored coverage of the project itself and of its beneficiaries and activities. In all, the project identified at least 158 articles published on MATI and its beneficiaries in Moldovan newspapers over the life of the project through June 30, 2008.

- Monthly Syndicated Articles. The project supported the publishing of three syndicated articles per quarter on trafficking prevention and empowerment of the target group each month in the *Fermierul* (The Farmer). Drafted by award-winning journalist members of the Association of Independent Press (API), the articles were inserted into 11 Romanian-language and two Russian-language newspapers in Moldova.
- Media Relations Strengthened. MATI updated press information packets every quarter, met with regional press representatives during RSC visits, and provided ongoing consultations to RSC staff on working with the media at the local and regional level. Press releases were issued and generated significant media coverage.
- Anti-Trafficking Films and Television Programs Copied and Distributed. MATI continuously distributed to RSCs the TV and radio version of “Destinies and Destinations” programs to interested organizations.
- MATI Website Created, Updated and Expanded. For the purpose of providing comprehensive information about the project and its activities, trafficking in persons and related issues, and services and resources available to help prevent and combat these problems, MATI created a detailed webpage. The website was regularly updated and content was added, including the latest project television and radio programs, success stories, and other materials and links. To date, more than 133,000 users have accessed the website, including potential beneficiaries, representatives of other anti-trafficking projects and organizations, and myriad users from abroad.
- 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign. In 2007, for the third year in a row, MATI received funding from OSCE to conduct a wide variety of activities as part of this international campaign. Winrock implemented an integrated program of training, roundtable discussions, television broadcasts, press conferences, and a candlelight vigil to commemorate the victims of abuse and violence, engaging more than 5000 people from cities and villages in 25 regions of the country. In addition to paid professionals, about 100 volunteers were engaged in implementing the activities.
- ABC News Television Reports Broadcast. In the first quarter of 2007 The American television network ABC news broadcasted two short news reports on trafficking in persons in Moldova. Each report included short statements by MATI’s Chief of Party, and interviews with a project client and former trafficking victim, as well as footage of MATI various project activities. The reports were broadcast on the programs, “Good Morning America” and “ABC Evening News.”
- Stop Trafficking Book. In April 2006, MATI organized a writing contest for print journalists on trafficking and women’s empowerment issues. The winning 22 articles were published in Romanian and English in *Stop Trafficking*, a book on trafficking and women’s empowerment issues.
- Media Trainings. MATI organized numerous trainings to improve media relations skills for RSCs staff and to increase the professionalism of journalists who cover human trafficking issues in Moldova. Some of the conducted trainings were:
  - *Training on basics of strategic communication for RSC representatives, February, 2005*
  - *RSC Training – Strengthening Relationships with Mass Media, September, 2005*
  - *Preparation and delivery of training for print media, March, 2006*
  - *Advanced Journalism Training, November 11, 2006*
  - *Study visits for journalist to Regional Resource Centers and Ukraine*

### 3. MATI Internships

- MATI Internship. To supplement the trainings and skills courses available to RSC clients, MATI established an internship program, which helps selected clients obtain valuable, hands-on experience with local businesses. With oversight by MATI staff, each RSC developed a two-

month internship program, including selection criteria for program candidates, that provided young women from at-risk groups with work experience

- ATNet Internships. In August 2005, MATI initiated an internship program for the ATNet activity to utilize the expertise of its staff to acquaint qualified and eager young individuals with the basics of its anti-trafficking efforts. The volunteer interns assisted MATI staff to organize public events (trainings, workshops, study visits, etc.).
- Independent Journalism Center (IJC) Internships. Starting in the summer of 2006, MATI initiated Media Intern Program with the Independent Journalism Center. It offered qualified and eager young individuals a hands-on opportunity to become acquainted with the basics of media communication and awareness in general, and project implementation in particular. The interns helped the IJC staff to organize public events (trainings, workshops, study visits, and so on) and to support various other activities in the framework of MATI Project, such as media monitoring and the production and broadcast of the “Destinies and Destinations” radio and TV program
- Legal Internships. In 2005 The RSCs started organizing internships for law students to build the capacity of young lawyers to combat trafficking. The lawyers at the Centers supervised and served as mentors to the interns.
- Internships for Young Women with Local Media Outlets. MATI facilitated internships for young women from various regions of Moldova at local media outlets. As part of their internships, all interns had the opportunity to learn about the media business and to help prepare materials and reports for publication/broadcast by the host media organizations. Upon completion of their assignment, all interns wrote articles and prepared materials for broadcast.

#### 4. Project Publications

In addition to publications referenced above, MATI developed and published the following documents and reports during implementation:

- Women At-Risk. In the spring of 2005, Winrock oversaw the development of a population-based household survey of women using a cluster-sampling methodology for the purpose of assessing migration attitudes, practices and intended behaviors, other knowledge and behaviors considered to put women at risk of being trafficked, and women’s priority needs and perceptions of potential solutions. The data obtained from the KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) baseline research study, which was conducted by local market research firm IMAS, resulted from more than 1000 interviews throughout Moldova, excluding Chisinau, with the project’s target group. The resulting publication, *Women At-Risk*, eloquently demonstrated the convergence of the multiple forces of inequality, structural poverty and violence in women’s lives in the Republic of Moldova.
- Success Stories. The project drafted and distributed three success stories on project accomplishments to USAID, local partners, the project website, and the press.
- Project Newsletter. The project published its own quarterly newsletter, *Perspectives*
- Client Entrepreneur Profiles. A booklet with profiles of entrepreneurs from the project’s target group was elaborated and published to demonstrate how young women can successfully initiate income-generation activities in Moldova. The booklet included photographs and short profiles of each woman and her business venture, including a description of her own and project contributions to the start up of the business.
- Mentoring Handbook. Mentoring handbook was elaborated in closely collaboration and supporting of the Winrock International volunteer Edie Shannon and contained guidelines for establishing and running mentoring programs. This handbook was used by the RSCs in elaborating of the regional mentoring programs. As a result of implemented mentoring programs

there were created approximately 108 pairs in the regions which currently still continue to be active.

- Publication of Booklet on Income Generation through Art. Thanks to financial support from the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the project published a workbook designed to assist those interested in the economic development of the fine arts industry. The training workbook compiled materials, discussions and experiences gained through work with artists and entrepreneurs in 19 countries over the past 20 years. The publication had three key objectives: to familiarize artists with components, formats and ideas to successfully operate as an entrepreneur; to help the reader access information needed to assess his/her growth; and to assist him/her with market economy principles and practices. The book contained advice about how to become a successful entrepreneur in fine arts, including advice on developing successful business and marketing plans.

#### **F. Volunteer Technical Assistance Program**

The Moldova Anti-Trafficking Initiative utilized volunteer assistance to maximize the cost-effectiveness of its interventions, as well as to build local trafficking awareness-building capacity, thereby facilitating the sustainability of its anti-trafficking efforts beyond the life of the project. These activities encompassed both the use of U.S. volunteer consultants on short-term assignments and the development of ongoing local volunteer programs in Moldova as well.

Examples of assignments for US volunteers include development of training on organizational development for RSC and MATI staff, improving marketing and communications strategy, work with NGO partners on local government advocacy. Some volunteers did two terms of service such as Edie Shannon, who served as volunteer in 2006 and 2007. Ms. Shannon travelled to Moldova to work with MATI and RSC staff to evaluate the mentoring program of MATI. One final U.S. volunteer consultant is scheduled to visit Moldova under this component – during the October-December 2007 reporting period – in order to support the project in building RSC capacity and sustainability as a legacy that will extend beyond the life of USAID-funded activities.

In addition, Moldovan volunteers from Chisinau and the RSCs conducted awareness-raising activities for more girls and young women from across Moldova through MATI's Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program. Local volunteer also collaborated closely with a variety of outside organizations such as Peace Corps, CRS, OSCE, IOM, La Strada, and Youth Employment Center in order to expand their impact.

## II. METHODS OF ASSISTANCE

As described in the previous section, a variety of assistance methods were utilized to implement the project. These activities can be divided into a number of broad categories, including direct assistance to victims and at-risk women, capacity building of local nongovernmental organizations and institutions, mobilization of Moldovan citizens, leveraging private-sector support through economic empowerment efforts, and awareness raising through the local media. A brief discussion of the pros and cons of each of these methods is provided below.

- Provision of Direct Assistance to Victims and At-Risk Women. Through the project's National Mobile Technical Units, direct services were provided to returned trafficking victims and at-risk women and girls. The Chisinau-based trainers and staff provided high quality training and consultations to beneficiaries. Because of their direct subordination to project management, as well as the fact that these MTUs were often conducted in direct collaboration with project staff, this option was advantageous from a quality-control perspective. The relatively higher cost of utilizing Chisinau-based staff and trainers, however, due to both higher labor and transportation costs, was a drawback and limited the quantity of this type of activity that the project was able to conduct, due to financial reasons. It also demanded more oversight from the Chisinau office.
- Capacity Building of Local Nongovernmental Organizations and Institutions. The vast majority of MATI programming was provided through the Regional Support Centers, each of which was run by a Moldovan NGO, as well as through the Independent Journalism Center (IJC). This method of assistance required both funding for ongoing activities through sub-grants from MATI (a subcontract in the case of IJC) and significant capacity-building training and technical assistance by MATI staff and consultants. The advantages of this approach included lower implementation costs and greater sustainability, as MATI built local capacity that could be tapped into the future. Disadvantages included less control and flexibility in implementation, as the NGOs running the RSCs were grantees and not directly subordinated to the project. To a certain degree, each local NGO represented an extra layer of bureaucracy, with its own operating principles and procedures differing from those of the other RSC operators, and this sometimes slowed communication and responsiveness between the project and the appropriate RSC staffer. At times, bottlenecks were caused by RSC Directors who expected to be involved in all communication with the project, a trait that sometimes bordered on micromanagement.
- Mobilization of Moldovan Citizens. In addition to paid programming, mobilization of Moldovan citizens played an important role in project implementation. The Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program leveraged young volunteer trainers to provide peer-to-peer education, primarily by high school and university students and recent graduates. Advantages of this approach included the very minimal cost, since participants were volunteering their own time, its enhanced capability to tailor messages to young people in a way that they would respond to, since the trainings were led by peers, as well as the enthusiasm that volunteers brought to activities. Indeed, those individuals who chose to devote their free time to increasing trafficking awareness and access to relevant assistance were a self-selected group of highly-motivated individuals for whom these efforts were much more important than would have been just a part-time job. Disadvantages included the limited number of volunteers, the limited time they had available to devote to conducting trainings (usually they were available only in the evenings or on weekends), and their more limited experience in serving as trainers.
- Leveraging Private-Sector Support through Economic Empowerment Efforts. Some of the project's most successful economic empowerment activities entailed collaboration with the private sector to provide training and guaranteed employment to beneficiaries completing the training program. Identifying private employers looking to hire significant numbers of new staff and willing to guarantee jobs for trainees chosen by the project was difficult, but when it proved

possible this was an effective way to ensure that vacancies would be made available to young women – the Moldovans at the greatest risk of being trafficked. Typically, MATI engaged in recruiting of beneficiaries and together with its NGO partners (usually CRS) often subsidized part of the cost of the training, whereas the National Employment Agency subsidized some training, transportation and other logistical costs, and the employer guaranteed employment and sometimes stipends during the training program.

- **Awareness Raising through Local Media.** A significant share of MATI activity entailed raising awareness of human trafficking and the fight against this phenomenon through the Moldovan media. Training of media outlets through IJC, the production of television and radio programs, the drafting of articles for syndication through Moldovan newspapers, as well as the recognition of quality journalism through media monitoring and various awards programs all helped to build local capacity and incentives to cover human trafficking responsibly. While these reasonably low-cost activities were able to reach a national audience, there is no guarantee that the media will remain focused on this topic when donor support for these efforts is discontinued. That said, preliminary indications suggest that there likely will be options for continuing to produce and broadcast the award-winning *Destinies & Destinations* television program beyond the life of the MATI project.

While each of these assistance methods had the advantages and disadvantages noted above, each served as a valuable tool for project implementation and they complemented each other in many ways. Therefore, it would seem that each would be worthy of using in the future, although the limitations of each approach should be considered fully when planning those types of activities.

### III. PROJECT INDICATORS AND IMPACTS

#### A. Monitoring & Evaluation

The New Perspectives for Women project ensured the quality of its activities through regular Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). The M&E process was outlined in a Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) that was submitted to USAID and approved in June 2005. In response to a decrease in the project's estimated funding from \$3,987,117 to \$3,187,115 on April 19, 2007, the PMEP and its accompanying indicators were revised and subsequently approved by USAID.

Monitoring and Evaluation was conducted by using technical reports and indicators charts that were submitted monthly by the Regional Support Centers to the Chisinau office, which combined the data into a project-wide statistical database. The database enabled the project to substantially simplify the preparation of monthly narrative reports, ensure data accuracy, and analyze the data in a variety of ways. Information regularly collected and entered into the project database included data on activities conducted, services provided, beneficiaries' biographical data and participation in project activities, as well as quantifiable results of assistance, such as new employment and businesses created. Because the project assisted over 40,000 beneficiaries over its four-plus years of implementation, it would have been impossible to contact each of them every month or even every quarter. Therefore, suitable sample sizes were contacted in order to determine the outcome of assistance provided. As a result, some positive impacts of program activities were not immediately identified, and thus it was not uncommon for there to be a lag time between an impact being achieved and it being reported.

MATI representatives also conducted site visits to RSCs and project's beneficiaries to monitor the work done and to provide necessary assistance and advice to improve indicators and quality of provided services. In addition, the project utilized various tools to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of various MATI media activities, including TV programs, radio programs, print media, advertising, promotion and other public relations efforts. A survey developed by project estimated the number of viewers who watched the *Destinies and Destinations* television program and was distributed to television stations in order to receive feedback on the program from viewers.

#### B. Project Indicators

Project indicators were selected to measure the scope of project training activities and services to beneficiaries, including trainers trained, trainings and roundtables held, number of participants in these activities, legal and psychological consultations provided, helpline calls fielded, referrals made, and victims assisted, as well as the results of these activities. For example, the number of beneficiaries finding employment or starting their own businesses was measured, as were the changes in knowledge and attitudes brought about through project assistance. The table of the following page shows the project targets as well as the actual results achieved by the project through September 30, 2008, when most direct assistance to beneficiaries was completed. The indicator status column indicates whether or not the target was achieved and, if not, whether it was nearly achieved or there was a significant shortfall.

Of 44 distinct indicators, the project fully achieved 37 of them, in many of these cases significantly exceeding the approved PMEP targets. For four additional indicators, MATI nearly met the targets, but just barely came up short. Finally, for three of the indicators, there was a significant gap between the target and what MATI was able to achieve. Following the table on the next page, reasons for both some of the targets being significantly exceeded and others remaining unmet are discussed.

PMEP INDICATOR TARGETS AND ACTUALS

Anti-Trafficking Initiative, Moldova		Cooperative Agreement Number 121-A-00-04-00009-00				
Strategic Objective & Intermediate Result	Project Component	Objective	Performance Indicator	Revised Approved End of Project Target	Achieved End of Project Total	Indicator Status
<b>SO 3.4 Social safety net reaches vulnerable groups</b>	<b>Victim Assistance &amp; Support Services</b>	<i>Strengthen Moldovan NGO's provision of assistance/support service for at-risk women &amp; returned victims</i>				
<b>IR 3.4.2 Targeted assistance alleviates immediate suffering</b>	<b># of trainers trained to conduct Leadership for Trafficking Prevention</b>			58	58	Achieved
	<b># of LTP Trainings conducted</b>			566	619	Achieved
	<b># of women/girls trained in LTP</b>			8841	9621	Achieved
	<b># of women/girls 16-25 trained in LTP</b>			7572	9101	Achieved
<b>S.O.2 institutions more effective, responsive, and accountable</b>	<b># of calls to helplines</b>			23 432	24 621	Achieved
	<b># of walk-in consultations conducted</b>			6766	7401	Achieved
	<b># of legal internships at RSCs</b>			68	71	Achieved
<b>IR 2.3.2 Capacity of civil society orgs to represent/serve citizens increased</b>	<b>Effective Outreach Program</b>	<i>Extend outreach services to, and improve access to info by at-risk women and girls in under-served rural areas</i>				
		<b># of trainings conducted by mobile teams</b>		356	525	Achieved
		<b># of girls/women trained</b>		10 584	10337	Nearly achieved
		<b># of girls/women 16-25 trained</b>		9018	9168	Achieved
		<b># of interactive discussions run by mobile teams</b>		133	84	Not achieved
		<b># of gov't officials reached (at discussions/trainings)</b>		611	784	Achieved
	<b>Promote/Strengthen Linkages</b>	<i>To strengthen linkages among local, nat'l, and int'l actors combatting trafficking in Moldova</i>				
		<b># of referrals made at regional level (tracked by type)</b>		9411	11 765	Achieved
		<b># of NGOs receiving info from NPW</b>		101	502	Achieved
		<b># of regional roundtables organized by RSCs</b>		68	88	Achieved
	<b>Development of Employment &amp; Business Opportunities</b>	<i>To improve the ability of rural/young women to find employment locally or launch businesses</i>				
		<b># of trainers trained in Leadership for Employability</b>		45	83	Achieved
		<b># of Leadership for Employability trainings conducted</b>		423	515	Achieved
		<b># of women/girls trained in Leadership for Employability</b>		6667	8088	Achieved
		<b># of women/girls 16-25 trained in LE</b>		5753	7551	Achieved
		<b># of clients who find employment</b>		1099	1309	Achieved
		<b># of trainees 16-25 who find employment</b>		977	1139	Achieved
		<b># of women placed in internships</b>		465	678	Achieved
		<b># of women/girls taking skills courses</b>		541	914	Achieved
		<b># of women/girls 16-25 taking skills courses</b>		485	778	Achieved
		<b># of Entrepreneurship trainings conducted</b>		366	401	Achieved
		<b># of women/girls trained in Entrepreneurship</b>		5821	6438	Achieved
		<b># of women/girls 16-25 trained in Entrepreneurship</b>		5015	5695	Achieved
		<b># of women placed in mentorships</b>		112	398	Achieved
		<b># of clients who establish businesses</b>		175	207	Achieved
		<b># of jobs graduates create filled by target group</b>		177	37	Not achieved
	<b>Awareness Enhancement Program</b>	<i>To improve public awareness of trafficking</i>				
		KAP Study surveys 1,000 women			Completed	Achieved
		<b># of media and technical professionals trained</b>		45	45	Achieved
		<b># media monitoring reports published</b>		10	14	Achieved
		<b>% increase in # of print media output on AT issues</b>		100%	40%	Not achieved
		<b>% increase in quality of media on AT issues</b>		25%	25%	Achieved
	<b>CROSS-CUTTING</b>	<b># of women trained</b>		33 987	35 451	Achieved
		<b># of women trained 16-25</b>		27 724	29 047	Achieved
		<b># of women served (total, inc. hotlines &amp; cons.)</b>		70 353	74 545	Achieved
		<b># of women 16-25 served (total inc. hotlines &amp; cons.)</b>		58 047	62 420	Achieved
		<b># of trafficking victims served</b>		177	183	Achieved
		<b>Women not interested in migrating, as % of total</b>		90 0%	83%	Nearly achieved
		<b>% of women w/decreased interest in migrating</b>		50 0%	48%	Nearly achieved
		<b>% of women interested in migrating who can name primary ways to migrate safely</b>		75 0%	69%	Nearly achieved
		<b>% increase in women interested in migrating who can name primary ways to migrate safely</b>		35 0%	38%	Achieved

As can be seen in the indicator chart on the previous page, most of the overarching indicators capturing the level of programming activity and its ability to reach the target audience were successfully met or exceeded. Nearly 800 women and girls were trained in Leadership for Trafficking Prevention than targeted, and the total for 16-25-year-old beneficiaries, the project's main target group, exceed the target by over 1500 beneficiaries. Project targets were exceeded by similar numbers for Employability trainings, where Entrepreneurship trainings were provided to approximately 600 greater beneficiaries than projected, both vis-à-vis the target group and overall. Walk-in psychological and legal consultations surpassed the target number by about 10% and referrals exceeded the targets by over 20%. The results of economic empowerment activities were also impressive, including 1309 beneficiaries finding employment, versus a target of 1099 and 207 young women starting new businesses, versus a target of 175. Altogether, over 74,000 services were provided to over 35,000 women, versus targets of roughly 70,000 and 34,000, respectively.

Three of the targets that were nearly but not fully met were part of the project's cross-cutting indicators that attempted to measure how effective project activities were in bringing about changes in attitudes and awareness among MATI's target group. While the project slightly exceeded the target of a 35% *increase* in the percentage of clients who could name primary ways of migrating safely three months after receiving their first service from the project, the overall percentage of RSC clients that responded correctly to this question during monitoring was only 69%, slightly less than the project's 75% target. In addition, 83% of RSC clients denied having a strong desire to migrate, versus the project's 90% target and the decrease in this interest after receiving MATI service was 48%, slightly less than the project's 50% target. Of course, there is nothing unnatural about individuals having a strong desire to migrate from a country experiencing such economic hardship, and the target percentages were in many ways chosen arbitrarily, but the fact remains that these indicators were not fully met. Nevertheless, the results demonstrate that significant percentages of clients did benefit from increased knowledge or a reduced likelihood to conclude that leaving Moldova was the only way to pursue a better life.

Three indicators were more distant from being met. The first one related to Mobile Technical Units. Although MATI successfully held 275 MTUs, including 525 Trafficking Prevention and Economic Empowerment Trainings for 9161 16-25-year-old beneficiaries, the number of Interactive Discussions held during these MTUs was only 84, versus a target of 133. As was explained in the approved PMEP from the spring of 2007, since "these discussions are a voluntary follow-up to full-day training sessions, the project experience to date has been that project clients do not always elect to participate in these sessions." In fact, starting in the summer of 2007, it was decided to discontinue interactive discussions entirely, since it was felt that the remaining MTU agenda (a roundtable of local leaders, full-day trafficking awareness and economic empowerment trainings, and individual legal and psychological consultations) already provided a sufficiently comprehensive agenda during the two-day programs. In addition, the overall number of MTU trainees – 10,337 – was slightly lower than the target of 10,584.

A second indicator that was not met concerned jobs that graduates of MATI trainings created for members of the project's target group. While it was anticipated that a greater number of client entrepreneurs would hire target group members, the indicator target of 177 was much higher than the actually achieved figure of 37. However, many more new jobs – 105 – were created for non-target-group members. Nevertheless, a significant number of the 207 businesses created by beneficiaries have employed only the entrepreneur herself so far. However, as the assisted businesses grow and expand, it is anticipated that a greater number of MATI target group members will gain employment through them as well.

Finally, the anticipated 100% increase in Moldova print media coverage of human trafficking was not achieved. Whereas only five articles per month were published in monitored newspapers during the first quarter of 2005, by the project's final quarter of media monitoring (March-May 2008) the average had

increased to slightly over 7 per month, representing a more modest 40% increase. Interestingly, the volume of coverage peaked in June through August 2006, when the average was 13 articles per month, but this indicator leveled off thereafter and even began to slightly decrease toward the end of the project. More recent anecdotal evidence suggests that this indicator is on the increase again, likely due in part to the attention that was generated by Moldova's downgrading to Tier III status in the U.S. State Department's 2008 TIP Report, which was published in June. The final draft of MATI's final report will examine if this was indeed the case.

### C. Additional Results and Accomplishments

**Table 3. MATI Activities by Region**

In addition to the impacts communicated through the performance indicators outlined above, several additional indications of the scope and depth of project activities and resulting impacts are provided below.

#### Geographical Scope

One of the unique aspects of the MATI project was its national scope. In addition to activities implemented at each of its Regional Support Centers, a wide variety of efforts, including Mobile Technical Units, regional roundtables, volunteer-led trainings, summer camps, and RSC trainings held outside the centers, not to mention national television and radio broadcasts, contributed to increasing knowledge and awareness, providing individual consultations, and imparting job skills to target group members across the country, including remote rural areas. The table to the right conveys the breadth of this geographical reach through its estimation of the number of project activities conducted by Moldovan region.

	Raions	Total Activities
1	Anenii-Noi	21
2	Balti (municipality)	322
3	Basarabasca	29
4	Briceni	43
5	Cahul	1078
7	Calaras	43
8	Cantemir	225
9	Causeni	66
10	Ceadir-Lunga	90
11	Cimislia	23
12	Comrat	212
13	Criuleni	47
14	Donduseni	60
15	Drochia	101
17	Edinet	115
18	Falesti	91
19	Floresti	59
20	Glodeni	73
21	Hincesti	272
22	Ialoveni	23
23	Leovo	158
24	Nisporeni	28
25	Ocnita	48
26	Orhei	21
27	Rezina	25
28	Riscani	83
30	Sangerei	91
31	Soldanesti	22
32	Soroca	105
33	Stefan-Voda	43
34	Straseni	33
35	Taraclia	58
36	Telenesti	19
37	Ungheni	60
38	Vulcanesti	18

#### Feedback on Destinies & Destinations Television Program

The Destinies & Destinations television and radio programs have contributed to better public awareness in Moldova of human trafficking and its prevention, resulting in a better informed target group vis-à-vis the dangers of and alternatives to working abroad, and an enhanced understanding of new perspectives for women here at home. It is estimated that monthly national television broadcasts on Moldova One, which began in November 2006, are seen by over 100,000 viewers across the country. In addition, monthly viewership of the program is estimated at over 50,000 in Rezina and Transnistria (Rezina TV covers both areas), 40,000 in Comrat and Taraclia, 33,000 in Soroca, 20,000 in Drochia and 15,000 in Besarabasca. The program is also show on the Moldova International satellite channel, which is accessible across Europe and much of the Middle East.

Viewers, listeners, broadcasters and fellow journalists alike have recognized the programs' achievements. In 2007, for the second year in a row, Leontina Vatamanu-Margineanu, who directs, writes and presents the Destinies and Destinations television program, was awarded first prize in the television category at the Human Rights Gala for two episodes that she produced during the year. The ceremony was conducted

jointly by the United Nations and the Moldova Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, and Leontina received, in addition to the public recognition of her work, a monetary prize of \$750. Leontina also showed the program to participants at an international conference organized by Internews-Ukraine and the British Embassy in Kiev in March 2008. The conference focused on the media coverage of the human trafficking issue and the television program was widely appreciated.

As the MATI project comes to an end, several broadcasters have let it be known that they would like the program to be continued:

“It is a pity that the project is coming to its end because the films from the ‘Destinies and Destinations’ series are very relevant and important to people... Written and oral surveys revealed that the programs attracted many viewers and... many said that the programs remained in their memories and got them thinking about issues such as human trafficking.” *Ludmila Topal, Editor-in-Chief, BAS TV Studio (Basarabasca)*

“The quality of “Destinies and Destinations” programs is very good... These programs have been useful for the TV viewers from Soroca. They have learned many interesting things, such as how to behave while processing documents to go abroad and where to address if they have problems.” *Emilia Bobeica, Director of SOR TV Studio (Soroca)*

“We have got many responses from our TV and Radio audience regarding the shows. Some of our listeners have come to our office requesting further information, while others have shared their experience of working abroad.” *Rodica Nimerenco, Editor-in-Chief of Prime Radio and TV Prime (Glodeni)*

“The idea to produce this series of TV programs is very good. We think that the project has been very relevant and useful. We hope this project will continue. We would like to continue broadcasting these programs.” *Ana Golubenco, director, ELITA TV (Rezina)*

Winrock, in partnership with several other organizations, will be submitting a proposal to OSCE in late October requesting funding to continue production and broadcasting of the program during 2009.

#### Feedback on Destinies & Destinations Radio Program

MATI also received much positive feedback on the companion radio program, which was produced and broadcast twice a month on a variety of stations:

“The radio audience has expressed their interest mostly by telephone. One young lady who called said that she had experienced some of the situations described in “Destinies and Destinations” herself. She inquired about the telephone number of Winrock International and, as far as we know, took part in one of the activities (training courses) held by this organization later on. A continuation of the series would be welcomed, because it is also in the interest of the broadcasting radio stations.” *Tatiana Djamanov, Director of Radio Orhei (Orhei)*

“The programs are of high quality, presented in an accessible manner to be understood by young people. We will re-broadcast these shows together with our own programs on the same topic that we plan to produce. The radio listeners, among which there were victims of human trafficking, shared their views on the topics addressed by the shows, but only afterwards, and they requested anonymity. According to the National Bureau of Migration, Cimislia has the highest rate of outward illegal migration in the country.

*Andrei Bargan, Director of Radio Media (Cimislia)*

“These shows have elicited great interest among listeners. Many of them have called the station to express their opinion about what they had heard. We received many phone calls during the live debate shows as well. Listeners went back to stories from these programs. We would like to continue broadcasting and re-broadcasting these shows, if possible, every six months. *Vasile Sofronie, Director, Radio Sanatatea (Edinet)*

## D. Overall Impacts

While the aforementioned intermediate results and impacts represent and have further contributed to enhanced awareness of trafficking, as well as improved provision of, and capacity to provide, services to vulnerable individuals and former victims, the overarching goal of MATI was to “reduce the criminal trade in human beings in Moldova.” Measuring the level of trafficking in persons is quite challenging, as it is an illegal and thus covert activity. However, there are some indications to suggest that the overall incidence of trafficking of Moldovans has decreased.

First and foremost, a decrease in the total number of Moldovan victims of trafficking (VoT) is implied by the decreasing number of referrals to the Ministry of Social Protection, Family and Child’s Rehabilitation Center shelter, which was established and is operated with assistance from IOM’s Mission to Moldova. The number of VoTs assisted by the shelter declined from 273 in the 2007 calendar year to 85 through six months of 2008 (which represents an annualized number of 170), after declining from 295 victims assisted the previous year. Because nearly all victims of trafficking identified nationwide through the National Referral System (NRS) are referred to the Rehabilitation Center and the NRS has expanded and deepened its coverage in recent years, one can reasonably argue that this number is as accurate an indicator of the change in the scope of the trafficking problem from year to year as any available. This suggestion of a decline in new victims is mirrored by the change in the number of victims assisted by MATI’s RSCs, which declined from 29 to 22 per year over the past two fiscal years.<sup>3</sup>

Second, the economic progress that Moldova has made over the past four years has undoubtedly had a positive impact, since economic need is one of the primary root causes of trafficking in persons. Moldovan GDP per capita nearly tripled between 2004 and 2006<sup>4</sup> (the latest figures provided), while the average monthly salary increased from \$88 to \$237 between 2004 and 2008.<sup>5</sup> As Moldova’s economic outlook has brightened, it is reasonable to assume that Moldovans as a whole have become less reliant on questionable offers of employment abroad as a means of supporting themselves and their families. To be sure, the share of Moldovans working abroad, most of them illegally or semi-legally, has remained high.<sup>6</sup> However, established networks of family and friends working abroad have likely imparted an opportunity for would-be migrants to better vet potential opportunities abroad for their legitimacy as well as provided a support structure to stay in contact with their fellow expatriates and seek their assistance if needed.

While MATI cannot take credit for the positive changes in the wider economic environment in Moldova, its efforts have certainly improved the capacity of beneficiaries to take advantage of these expanded

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<sup>3</sup> In terms of MATI’s contributions to this assistance, it should be noted that the total number of victims assisted by MATI (22) over the past year represents over 2/3 of all VoT identified nationally and referred to the Referral System from the four raions in which RSCs were located. In all, as previously noted, project programmatic and financial support of RSCs made the provision of assistance to 183 former victims possible over the life of the project, while also reducing the vulnerability of at-risk women to the threat of trafficking.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org).

<sup>5</sup> Moldovan Bureau of Statistics, [www.statistica.md](http://www.statistica.md).

<sup>6</sup> Over one-quarter of the economically active population, which sends home remittances amounting to over 1/3 of GDP, according to *Migration as It Is*, International Organization for Migration Mission to Moldova, 2007, pp. 3, 15.

economic opportunities in the country, which is evidenced in part by the verified 1309 beneficiaries finding employment and 207 young women starting new businesses. However, it is clear that not only these individuals have benefited. Increased job skills and awareness of how to find a job improves young women's self-confidence and employment prospects, leading to increased intentions and competitiveness of young women to obtain employment in Moldova, thereby reducing economic need and lessening the likelihood that young women will accept false offers of work abroad. While many offers of work abroad are more or less legitimate, or at least will not result in the recruited individual being trafficked, young women are particularly sought after by and vulnerable to the schemes of traffickers. Furthermore, even when the work secured abroad is completely legitimate, labor migrants often leave their children behind in their home country, so when young mothers are able to provide for their family's economic needs at home, this is more likely to facilitate better overall support and supervision of their children as well.

Third, increased awareness of trafficking as a result of prevention and awareness work conducted in schools, churches, community centers, RSCs and through the media by dozens of anti-trafficking actors across the country have equipped young people to better understand the risks entailed by seeking work abroad and ways that they can protect themselves. As noted previously, among RSC clients alone there was registered a 35% increase in the percentage of clients who could name primary ways of migrating safely between the time when MATI beneficiaries first received a project service and during follow-up monitoring three months later. In addition, the interest of RSC clients in migrating decreased by 48% after receiving MATI services. These figures don't capture the increases in awareness and changes in attitudes brought about through the over 133,000 visitors to the MATI website, nor the even larger numbers of individuals who viewed or listened to broadcasts of the *Destinies & Destinations* television and radio programs, not to mention extensive coverage in the print media, including the syndicated publishing of over 30 targeted articles in newspapers nationwide and over 200 additional articles generated through coverage of project activities.

All of these efforts led to increased availability of and access to information on 1) the problem of trafficking, 2) resources available to fight trafficking and help Moldovans protect themselves, and 3) how they can improve their economic future at home. This has undoubtedly contributed to a better informed public and thus one that is less susceptible to the false claims of traffickers and their recruiters. Furthermore, these accomplishments were not simply the result of one-off efforts, but laid the groundwork for ongoing public education and awareness activities, such as the anticipated continuation of the *Destinies & Destinations* television program with outside donor funding supplemented by free broadcasting by regional, national and international Moldovan stations.

Fourth, the establishment and expansion of the National Referral System has increased the capacity of a wide range of actors to identify and provide assistance to victims and individuals at risk. As previously noted, the Balti, Cahul and Soroca RSCs became integral parts of the NRS and underwent comprehensive NRS training and regional workshops on the improvement of assistance to victims of trafficking on the raion and community level among the members of regional multi-disciplinary teams. RSCs' participation in the NRS increased the number and quality of incoming and outgoing referrals and range of their local partners through a formal mechanism. Heightened RSC capacity and funding will lead to stronger anti-trafficking efforts in the future, based on MATI M&E efforts, assessments of MATI staff, and fundraising results to date. Recent news that legislation supporting the expansion of the NRS and its integration into the national social protection system had been approved by the Government and submitted to the Parliament is a further positive sign that the NRS will continue to be a positive force for assistance to Moldovan victims of trafficking. If passed, the new legislation will provide for improved victim assistance and statistical recordkeeping, the heightened capacity of the Center for Combating Trafficking of Human Beings to investigate and convict traffickers, and the signing of bilateral inter-governmental agreements on irregular migration, labor migration, social protection of migrant workers, and the promotion of circular migration initiatives with the EU and its member-states.

Fifth, local officials within and outside of the NRS have begun to view trafficking as an issue of more relevance to them thanks to a number of developments, including the NRS, but also the success of efforts to encourage their increased participation in regular roundtables and forums, such as the monthly national and regional Anti-Trafficking Technical Coordination Meetings that OSCE organizes each month, often with Winrock/MATI participation or assistance. Also, preliminary indications suggest that the downgrading of Moldova to Tier III status in the 2008 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report was a wake-up call to many senior officials that more action was required and this was noted in the State Department's provisional upgrading of Moldova to Tier Watch List status in the fall of 2008.

Nevertheless, human trafficking has remained a serious problem in Moldova. The desperation with which many seek employment abroad continues to make them particularly vulnerable to traffickers' schemes, and, as such, Moldova continues to be recognized as a major source country for trafficking recruitment, with a rate estimated to be several times greater per capita than in any other country in the region.

Moving forward, one of the big challenges facing all of those engaged in the fight against trafficking in Moldova is institutionalizing those structures providing information to the population at large and assistance to victims and those at risk, so that the structures are no longer dependent on the unpredictable nature of international donor funding. Despite significantly increased awareness and available assistance, those major risk factors that existed when MATI began four years ago – economic need, lack of parental guidance (often as a result of labor migration of parents), and domestic violence – have not disappeared.

In fact, as was noted in *Women At-Risk in the Republic of Moldova*, a survey of 1030 young Moldovan women that MATI published in 2005, the actual level of economic need may be less of a factor than relative or perceived poverty. In a discussion of why those surveyed indicated being inclined to seek work abroad, it was asked:

“whether such risk taking is about survival, or rather about failed expectancies related to the pervasive poor standard of living after the entry of a market economy. Among the top stated reasons for wanting to travel abroad, wish for adventure/travel figured equally as high as lack of money and ‘I don't know,’ each more than doubling the response ‘poverty.’” (p. 112)

While the failure of many of these women to attribute their desire to go abroad to poverty may have simply reflected a reluctance to acknowledge the desperation of their situation, it is important to note that Moldova is inevitably going to be a relatively poor country compared to others in the region for some time to come. Thus, continuing to work with young Moldovans to help them adopt realistic expectations, both of what legitimate opportunities they can hope to access, as well as the threats associated with seeking illegal work abroad, is going to remain important in the years ahead, regardless of the economic progress that their country achieves.

#### IV. ISSUES AND LESSONS LEARNED

While the project was a success overall, as evidenced by the results and accomplishments detailed in the previous two sections of this report, several major obstacles were encountered during implementation, particularly during the project's first two years. The departure of the Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party midway through Year Two of the project, while necessitated by several shortcomings in project implementation, slowed down the full-scale provision of project activities until a new permanent COP was identified. At the same time, however, the accompanying reassessment of the project's structure and implementation procedures by Winrock senior management and the input by a succession of short-term acting COPs enabled MATI to identify and extract valuable lessons from past failures, as well as to build on successful project components. Following USAID and internal reviews, as well as an external program review by Deloitte, significant changes were initiated to improve financial reporting, better ensure the accuracy of monitoring data reported by Regional Support Centers, and more narrowly devote project resources to those target group members deemed at greatest risk of being trafficked. Specific lessons learned, organized by project area, are described in detail below.

##### Regional Support Centers

- Requiring Greater Initial Government Buy-In Would Have Ensured Increased Sustainability. Because development assistance projects are, by definition, of limited duration, it is especially important to engage host country governments and organizations in project activities in order to ensure sustainability over the longer term. For this purpose, MATI's Regional Support Centers were designed to be operated by Moldovan NGOs. In some cases, local governments were supportive of these centers: in Balti, Edinets and Soroca they provided them with free use of office space in which to operate them, for example, and even subsidized some of the ongoing staff and other operating costs of the Soroca RSC. Three of the five<sup>7</sup> original RSCs, however, were not provided with free use of office space, requiring the project to cover these costs, as well as all of the costs of staff and programming. Once the RSCs were up and running, it became much more difficult to convince local government to support the centers, as they had already seen the project fully fund the local center's costs and had begun to take the RSC for granted. In retrospect, it would have been much more effective and equitable for MATI to have required applicant NGOs to secure space from the local authorities before it signed off on any sub-grant agreement. Such a shared commitment to supporting the costs of running an RSC would have provided the local authorities with greater buy-in to the effective management of the center, creating an incentive for the RSC to be especially responsive to local community needs, and provided for greater sustainability of the center beyond the life of the project.
- Conflict of Interest Training Essential for Local Sub-Grantees. Both USAID and Winrock place great importance on their staff and grantees making all reasonable efforts to avoid or, if not feasible, to declare and mitigate, any potential conflicts of interest in their work. Unfortunately, both the Edinets and Hincesti Regional Support Centers were eventually closed, in part due to undeclared conflicts of interest in their operations that were externally identified in the course of project implementation. In Edinets, it was discovered that family members were being provided with business from the RSC funds, whereas in Hincesti the RSC Director was found to be combining her RSC responsibilities with an additional salaried full-time job with another employer in Chisinau. While it would be inaccurate to suggest that those responsible for these ethically questionable actions were completely unaware that they were doing anything wrong, more extensive conflict of interest training could not only have broadened grantees'

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<sup>7</sup> The Soroca RSC was opened only in October 2006, in order to replace the Edinets RSC that had been closed earlier that year.

understanding of what constitutes a potential conflict of interest, but could have conveyed how seriously USAID and Winrock consider such infractions.

- More Proactive Victim Identification Efforts Could Prove More Effective. While MATI focused primarily on the prevention side of trafficking, it did provide assistance to 183 victims. However, the majority of victims assisted were referred to the RSCs by other organizations. Perhaps it would have been worthwhile to devote more targeted resources to the actual identification of victims. Having on staff a dedicated case worker or case manager and budgeting specifically for his or her identification efforts might have facilitated a stronger emphasis on identifying victims, since the wide range of training and services offered by each RSC entailed many additional responsibilities for the RSC Psychologist and the Crisis Intervention Coordinator (who often also served as the RSC Director).

### **Economic Empowerment Assistance**

- Entrepreneurship Training a Valuable Economic Empowerment Tool. Entrepreneurship training and assistance was included in the project proposal in order to assist young women to support themselves economically at home in Moldova, particularly in cases when they came from rural areas with few employers. While this project component was extremely successful – indeed, over 200 young women started new businesses with MATI assistance – providing would-be entrepreneurs with training, mentorships, and information about accessing credit was usually not enough to help them turn their business ideas into a reality. For one thing, by definition the target group had few economic resources of its own, while often they were either not creditworthy even by microfinance standards or reluctant to take on debt. Therefore, Winrock developed joint programs with the Italian Consortium for Solidarity and the Argidius Foundation, a private Swiss donor, to supplement MATI assistance with small, in-kind grants that provided for the purchase of equipment or supplies essential to helping beneficiaries start up their new ventures.
- Follow-on Assistance to Newly Created Businesses Essential. The first year is critical to any new business, especially in a developing country like Moldova. Market conditions are subject to rapid fluctuations, and the fact that one in work work-age adults is abroad at any given time means that it can be hard to maintain links with suppliers, service providers, customers and employers for extended periods of time. Furthermore, as businesses grow, they are more likely to appear on the radar screen of competitors, government authorities and other individuals and organizations that may legitimately or illegitimately choose to challenge the new business. In many cases, this requires a response from the business either to improve and scale up operations, or to abandon them. Therefore, it is important not to assume that new businesses experiencing initial success do not require additional assistance. On the contrary, it is essential that projects such as MATI continue to monitor how the new businesses are faring and provide additional assistance, if required, so that the successes are consolidated or even expanded upon.

### **Awareness Enhancement Program**

- Media Program Must be Integrated into Overall Project. For much of the first year and a half of project activities, the Media Assistance Program implemented through Independent Journalism Center's subcontract with Winrock was provided with little oversight. While the television, radio and print media products and trainings produced during this time were of high quality, they were not sufficiently coordinated with other project components. Therefore, in order to provide for an integrated program with common objectives and messages reinforcing one another, as well as to assure quality and consistency, it would have been much preferable that the Media program be closely coordinated with Winrock. Monthly meetings between Winrock and IJC starting in 2006

ensured that the Media Program became an integrated part of the overall project over the final 2.5 years of implementation.

- Peer-to-Peer Volunteer Assistance an Effective Awareness-Raising Tool. As noted earlier in the report, MATI's Peer Perspectives local volunteer program has successfully engaged approximately 200 local volunteers who in turn have trained more than 2,700 beneficiaries in trafficking awareness to date, plus an additional 500 beneficiaries through three summer camps for vulnerable young women. Mobilizing volunteer trainers is not only a cost-effective way to increase awareness, but its peer-to-peer nature provides for information to be imparted in a way that is interesting and relevant to the target audience. It has been the experience of the project that many young Moldovans leap at the opportunity to play a leadership role with their peers, while some at-risk groups are more likely to ask sensitive questions or open up to their peers on certain difficult issues, such as trafficking. Finally, tapping into this youthful energy and enthusiasm can prove valuable to paid project staff as well, providing insight into the target group and keeping the project's approach to clients grounded in the realities facing youth.

### **Transnistria**

- Trafficking Can Be Addressed in Transnistria. While a wide variety of anti-trafficking organizations and projects are active in Moldova, rural areas, particularly those farthest from Chisinau and Regional Support Centers, have less access to training and other types of assistance. The greatest dearth of programming, however, is in Transnistria, whose media and de-facto authorities have been particularly reluctant to acknowledge the trafficking problem, preferring instead to paint an idealized picture of the situation there. Through its work over the past year, however, MATI has discovered that it is possible to make inroads toward addressing this problem in the region. Over the past year, for example, MATI has been able to regularly attend NGO roundtables in Transnistria to learn about the situation there, share information and materials with local NGOs, and explore potential partnerships with local nongovernmental actors. In October 2007 MATI conducted a training of trainers (TOT) in Tiraspol on two crisis intervention modules: work abroad and domestic violence. The TOT was provided to a pool of local NGO trainers and provided participants with training materials for use with at-risk groups. MATI also has conducted Mobile Technical Units directly for target group members itself on the Nistru's left bank, both in Cosnita and just outside Tiraspol, although it was denied permission to hold an MTU in Camenca in the north of the region in the spring of 2008.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

- Simplify Reporting Procedures. While monitoring is an important part of any development activity, both for the purposes of identifying problems and registering project impacts, MATI's impact indicators may have been too numerous and unduly complex. For example, the project's intake forms, which each beneficiary filled out when first attending a project training or receiving a service, consisted of over 40 questions. While Westerners, for a variety of reasons, are well equipped to fill out such questionnaires quickly, MATI's target group consisted primarily of socially vulnerable young women from rural areas for whom filling out such an extensive form was often a new and challenging experience. This added a cumbersome exercise to project activities, took significant time away from delivering project services, and may have elicited inaccurate data on occasion, as there was not always time to explain each question in sufficient detail. It also resulted in a major reporting burden on RSC staff, who were tasked with inputting this extensive information into a database each month. In retrospect, it would have probably been preferable to simplify the intake form. While it may have provided for less comprehensive data on project beneficiaries, the resulting data would likely have been more accurate and there would have been greater time to analyze its content.

## V. FOLLOW-ON EFFORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Trafficking remains a serious problem in Moldova. Despite the myriad actors involved in counter-trafficking activities in country, trafficking in persons is likely to remain a real threat as long as there continue to be large economic disparities between Moldova and other countries in the region and limited mechanisms to provide for legal options to work abroad. Therefore, there continues an important role for the international community to play, both in terms of providing direct assistance and, ultimately, in ensuring that the Moldovan Government and Civil Society are able to take on an increasing share of the effort to protect the country's citizens from this form of modern-day slavery. This section outlines work that remains to be done, both by Winrock and its partners themselves, as well as by the wider community.

### A. Follow-on Efforts by Winrock and its Partner Organizations

Winrock has undertaken a number of efforts to ensure that it and its partner Regional Support Centers will be able to continue MATI-related programs beyond the project's end date. Some of these efforts include:

- Moldova Employment and Entrepreneurship Education and Training Activity. MEEETA is a two-year \$536,000 project, funded by Liechtenstein Development Service, which will teach life skills, employability and entrepreneurship to students and faculty of Moldovan vocational schools. Implementation began in September 2008.
- Microenterprise Development Activity. MEDA is a two-year project to provide training and financial assistance, including grants and loans, to young entrepreneurs. The \$661,434 proposal was approved for funding by the Argidius Foundation in November 2008 and will initiate implementation in December.
- Transnistrian Women's Support Project. This proposed two-year activity will replicate MATI's success in reaching over 40,000 young women in Moldova by providing them with psycho-social support, economic empowerment, trafficking awareness, and referral services through the establishment and operations of two Regional Support Centers (RSCs). A total of \$300,000 in funding has been requested from the U.S. Department of State's Office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons, and a response to the proposal is anticipated in December 2008.
- Destinies & Destinations Television Program. The OSCE has expressed preliminary interest in provided funding to Winrock and its production and broadcast partners to continue production and broadcasting of MATI's successful Destinies & Destinations television program through production and broadcast relationships that have been successfully forged under the current project. Winrock will draft and submit a proposal seeking funding from OSCE, in collaboration with other anti-trafficking actors, in order to continue the program, which is the only television show produced in Moldova that regularly addresses trafficking, migration and related issues, has won awards and plaudits for its coverage of these topics.
- Winrock Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program. The OSCE has also expressed preliminary interest in providing funding to Winrock and its RSC partners to continue some of its local volunteer activities through 2009. Winrock will draft and submit a proposal seeking funding from OSCE to facilitate the continued coordination and facilitation of the training of students and recent graduates to provide peer education in trafficking awareness, domestic violence prevention, as well as economic empowerment areas.
- 16 Days Against Gender-based Violence Campaign. For four years in a row, Winrock has implemented a wide range of activities as part of the 16 Days Against Gender-based Violence international awareness campaign, which takes place from November 26th through December 10th. OSCE has agreed to provide over \$8,000 in funding to Winrock and its RSC partners to continue this tradition in November and December 2008. In addition, UNIFEM has agreed to contribute \$4,500 to help support Winrock's role in coordinating participation of various

governmental and nongovernmental actors, including the Regional Support Centers and its Peer Perspectives Volunteer Program.

- Moldova Mosaic. Winrock has signed an agreement with Moldova Mosaic, a US-based NGO newly created by a former Peace Corps Volunteer to Moldova to create a new entrepreneurship development program. The program, to be funded by Moldova Mosaic's fundraising activities in the U.S., will provide up to 15 in-kind grants or loans to young Moldovans starting up new businesses each year. Winrock will implement the activities in Moldova, building on its experience conducting MATI's Economic Empowerment Program.

## **B. Follow-on Efforts by Regional Support Centers**

In addition to their anticipated involvement in several of the proposed initiatives outlined above, Winrock's partner RSCs have also independently sought funding to continue and sustain their anti-trafficking work. In many ways, they are well-positioned to continue their efforts. Not only have the NGOs operated the RSCs gained major capacities in preventing trafficking in persons, addressing vulnerability factors such as socioeconomic difficulties, domestic violence, and gender discrimination, and in reintegrating victims into communities through conflict intervention and economic empowerment activities, but they have the facilities and equipment to continue providing this assistance.

In addition to qualified staff and trainers, each RSC has benefited from the provision of a standard set of office equipment through MATI, including furniture, computers, phones, faxes and copying machines. Each RSC also is equipped with a wide variety of educational materials and information, including films and television programs, to support both its training and public awareness activities. In addition, links established by each RSC with local resource providers, such as other nongovernmental organizations and relevant governmental departments, will serve each center and its clients for years to come. Winrock has also assisted its RSC partners, in partnership with the Piedmont regional branch of the Italian Confederation of Workers' Union, to apply for several joint programs to promote circular, skilled labor migration to facilitate legal, temporary labor migration to Italy's Piedmont region by providing technical, life skills and language training to interested applicants. While applications submitted in 2007 and 2008 were not selected for funding, the RSCs are now well positioned to refine their proposals for resubmission in future years.

A brief examination of each RSC's other current and anticipated follow-on efforts is provided below.

### Balti RSC (Honor and Rights of Contemporary Women)

The RSC is well positioned to build on its institutional and financial capacity. The premises that the center currently utilizes comprise 265 square meters of space that the Balti municipal government has made available free of charge to the NGO for a 10-year period through 2015. Having previously implemented small anti-trafficking projects with outside funding from OSCE and the World Bank, the NGO will continue implementing a small project by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to continue its crisis intervention programming through at least January 2009. Through March, the organization will continue to provide vocational training to young men and women through UNDP's Better Opportunities for Youth and Women project.

### Cahul RSC (FEMIDA)

Upon the completion of the MATI project, the Cahul RSC will remain dedicated to its mission of assisting local women to realize their potential. To date, the organization has been successful in leveraging additional funding from a number of organizations, such as the International Women's Club of Moldova, Peace Corps, and the Ukrainian Fund for Women. Over the next ten months, Femida will

explore opportunities for additional support from these organizations, as well as other donors, with a focus on EU-based funding providers. It also will continue to take part in the Cahul Regional Anti-Trafficking Commission.

#### Comrat RSC (Association of Women of Gagauzia)

The Comrat RSC has a real opportunity to provide services beyond the life of the MATI project, particularly related to trafficking prevention activities such as promotion of gender equality and domestic violence awareness. It has recently moved into a new office space in Comrat that is being provided free of charge by a local professional school. Through March 2009, the organization will continue to provide vocational training to young men and women through UNDP's Better Opportunities for Youth and Women project.

#### Soroca RSC (Dacia Youth Center)

Dacia Youth Center fully intends to continue its anti-trafficking efforts beyond the anticipated end date of the MATI project, and is well equipped to do so successfully. The building in which the RSC is currently located has been provided by the Soroca city government at no cost through 2020. In addition, operational costs (water, plumbing, electrical power, heat, and some basic administrative personnel) are covered by the Soroca Raion Council. These constructive relationships with the local authorities have also directly benefited the NGO's programming, as they have helped to gain political support for the center's anti-trafficking efforts, including a real willingness by local social service representatives and law enforcement to take part in trainings themselves.

Starting in 2009, the Center will restructure itself into an integrated social service provider, offering a variety of services in the areas of human trafficking and domestic violence prevention, professional development and integration, social reintegration, civil participation and human rights protection, healthy life promotion, entrepreneurial initiatives development, and training and access to IT services. At present, Dacia already has obtained a variety of outside donor support, including the following projects:

- Social Residential Reintegration Center for Vulnerable Youth: funded by USAID through 2009, in 2007;
- Youth Professional Development and Integration: funded by UNDP through March 2009;
- Soroca Raion Strategy for Youth: supported by the Soroca Raion Council through 2010;
- Creation of 30 Local Youth Councils: supported by PASET/World Bank through December 2008;
- Social Entrepreneurship Development: supported through 2011 by UNDP and private donations (including credit and the Argidius Foundation), the project will provide both training and income for beneficiaries. Moreover, any profits generated by the activity will go toward supporting the center's assistance to orphans, including potential and former victims of trafficking;

### **C. Recommendations for Future Work**

While MATI will have a clear and lasting impact on trafficking in and from Moldova, however, the country continues to face severe economic, social, cultural and political challenges in fighting this problem. Some of the future work that could be done to continue anti-trafficking efforts includes the following:

### 1. **Extend Services to Transnistria**

As noted in the previous section, the greatest underserved population in Moldova vis-à-vis trafficking awareness and victim assistance is in Transnistria. While the media and local authorities there have been reluctant to acknowledge the problem of human trafficking, MATI implementation over the past year has demonstrated that there are ways of addressing the issue in the region. These limited efforts to date need to be expanded so that vulnerable individuals, particularly girls and young women, are provided with greater access to training and assistance, in the areas of both crisis intervention and economic empowerment. Eventually, it will be important to expand the National Referral System to Transnistria if the political situation permits.

### 2. **Promote High-Quality Media Coverage of Trafficking**

Through its work with media professionals, one of MATI's findings was that there is a feeling of "trafficking fatigue" among many Moldovan journalists. In other words, many journalists feel that human trafficking has generated sufficient media coverage and that anyone that is not aware of the problem just hasn't been paying attention. However, it has been the experience of MATI staff that this feeling is not limited to media professionals, but pervades Moldova society as a whole. But whereas journalists and government officials may feel sufficiently informed, and perhaps even dismayed by what some may feel is a disproportionate focus by international organizations and media on Moldova's connection to this problem, the same may well not be true of the wider population. As the final report of MATI's Media Monitoring Activity noted this past summer, while trafficking coverage has increased somewhat in quality in recent years, not only does it still have significant shortcomings, but the volume of coverage remains surprisingly low – only about one article per month in monitored newspapers – and has actually decreased over the past two years, at a time when the U.S. State Department deemed it appropriate to downgrade Moldova to Tier III status in its annual Trafficking in Persons Report. It is therefore recommended that efforts continue to be made not just to encourage and reward high-quality journalism on trafficking-related issues through training and journalism prizes and awards, as was done under MATI, but to help the Moldovan media to understand how this coverage can be made interesting and compelling to readers, as it is an issue that affects all of society and not just a few scattered individual victims.

### 3. **Advocate for Inclusion of Anti-Trafficking Awareness into Mandatory School Curriculum**

A great many local and international organizations are engaged in trafficking awareness activities across the country. While these efforts are undoubtedly providing valuable information to target groups, these efforts are generally not standardized or coordinated in any way. Therefore, there is neither an agreed-upon standard body of information being made available to young people, nor a mechanism by which it is ensured that all young people are exposed to this knowledge. It has been the experience of the MATI project that young people are receptive to this information when they are provided an opportunity to learn about trafficking and how they can protect themselves.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the question arises as to how best to systematically reach this target audience. It would seem that including this topic as part of schools' mandatory curriculum for students in their early to mid-teens would be a sensible strategy for ensuring that awareness is achieved across the board by those who are, or may soon be, most at risk.

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<sup>8</sup> A focus group of young readers (participants were chosen specifically because they had never benefited from trafficking awareness training) conducted by IJC as part of the Media Monitoring Activity in the summer of 2008 found that the participants were both shocked and interested by the articles about trafficking that they were given to read. *Media Coverage of Human Trafficking and its Prevention: Progress and Challenges – 2005-2008*, Independent Journalism Center, 2008, p. 53.

**4. Continue to Facilitate Economic Empowerment Opportunities for Vulnerable Women**

Economic need remains a major push factor for trafficking victims. While unemployment and underemployment affects men and women of all ages, and leads many to seek work abroad, young women are particularly vulnerable to the schemes of traffickers. Therefore, while broad-based economic growth will help reduce poverty and enable Moldovan society as a whole to become less vulnerable to trafficking, a focus on economic empowerment assistance to young women may have the greatest impact on reducing trafficking. With one-quarter of the country's work-age population abroad, it is unrealistic to expect income in the form of remittances to become a significantly less important income source for the country in the next few years. By focusing on creating opportunities for young women to stay and work successfully in Moldova, however, it may be possible to contribute to those at lesser risk to account for a larger percentage of those who do decide to seek work abroad.

**5. Maintain Pressure on the Moldovan Government to play a Larger Role in AT Efforts**

The large, active international donor community's role in combating trafficking in Moldova is undoubtedly increasing awareness that allows Moldovans to protect themselves and reducing suffering on the part of former victims. The downside of this groundswell of attention toward the horrible problem of trafficking, however, has been how it has enabled the Moldovan government to step back and play less of an active role in addressing the problem in a sustainable way. Furthermore, while awareness enhancement and victim assistance efforts can certainly be (and are being) undertaken by local and international donors and NGOs, certain important elements of this fight can only be taken up by the government itself, such as prosecution of suspected traffickers, appropriate sentencing for those who are convicted, and holding government officials accountable for neglecting or abrogating their duties. Continuing to insist that the Moldovan government play an increasingly significant role in the fight against trafficking should be an essential part of any strategy to assist in combating this problem and a necessary precondition for continued assistance.

**6. Promote Existing Opportunities to Facilitate Legal Migration**

As long as there are greater economic opportunities abroad than at home for a sizable share of Moldovans, yet legal work in those countries remains difficult to obtain, significant numbers of the country's population will put themselves at increased risk of being trafficked by seeking or accepting illegal employment outside Moldova. Furthermore, because of their illegal status, many of those working abroad are reluctant to ever return home, fearing that there may be legal repercussions when they try to leave and their illegal status is discovered, including being barred from returning to the host country. One logical approach to dealing with this issue, therefore, and one that the European Union supports, is to promote legal, circular migration. This approach enables non-EU citizens to obtain legal permission to work in a particular job for which labor is needed in the EU, in exchange for making a commitment to return to their home country after a fixed period of time.

When MATI met with Moldova's National Employment Agency to discuss the possibility of jointly sponsoring an activity that would train Moldovans to take advantage of these opportunities, however, it was told that the Moldovan Government's policy is to rule out collaborating on any effort that could facilitate Moldovans leaving the country for employment. While it is clear that Moldovan employers are struggling to find qualified staff at a time when so many citizens have gone abroad, and understandable that the Moldovan Government wants more of them to stay home, individuals cannot be kept here by force. If access to legal alternatives, both inside Moldova and outside it, is not provided, a great many individuals will migrate illegally. So the choice for many individuals, at least in the short term, is between legal and illegal

work abroad, not between staying home or leaving. Therefore, facilitating such legal work opportunities abroad and helping the Moldovan Government understand why doing so is so important are critical tasks to be considered when designing future assistance.

**7. Expand Definition of Target Group, Especially in Gagauzia**

Over time, trafficking patterns change. One such change that has been identified recently is an increase in victims of trafficking for labor purposes from Gagauzia, especially among women older than those from MATI's 16-25-year-old target group. Therefore, there is a need to adapt identification and assistance methods so that they are appropriate for this category of victim as well, and not just aimed at victims of sexual exploitation. In addition, identification efforts need to take the particularly patriarchal structure of Gagauz society into account, as it can be more difficult to reach women in that environment. As in Transnistria, expanding the National Referral System to Gagauzia should be an important part of improving identification and referrals in the region.

**VI. APPENDICES**

- A. Performance Evaluation and Monitoring Chart
- B. Success Stories

## APPENDIX A – Performance Evaluation &amp; Monitoring Chart

Project Component	Performance Indicator	Project Total
<b>Victim Assistance &amp; Support Services</b>	# of trainers trained to conduct Leadership for Trafficking Prevention (LTP)	58
	# of LTP Trainings conducted	619
	# of women/girls trained in LTP	9621
	# of women/girls trained (16-25 years)	9101
	# of calls to Help Lines	24621
	# of calls to Help Lines by target group (16-25 years)	19388
	# of referrals made by Help Lines	9732
	# of referrals made by Help Lines to target group (16-25 years)	7491
	# of legal consultations provided	3460
	# of legal consultations provided to target group (16-25 years)	2474
	# of referrals from legal consultations	1627
	# of referrals from legal consults. for target group (16-25 years)	1178
	# of legal internships at RSCs	71
	# of psychological consultations conducted	3941
	# of psychological consultations	3181
	# of referrals from psychological consultations	1563
	# of referrals from psychological consultations (16-25 years)	1158
	Total # of NPW Chisinau referrals	171
	Total # of referrals	11765
Total # of referrals (16-25 years)	7971	
<b>Effective Outreach Program</b>	# of MTU trainers (national & local)	83
	# of MTU roundtables conducted	275
	# of participants at roundtables	2820
	# of governmental officials attending	784
	# of MTU Crisis Intervention trgs	275
	# women participating in CI trgs	4146
	# women participating (16-25 years)	3774
	# of MTU Econ. Emp. trainings	250
	# women participating in EE trgs	3953
	# women participating (16-25 years)	3497
	# of interactive discussions run by MTUs	84
	# women participating in interactive discussions	1369
	# women participated in interactive discussions (16-25 years)	1216
	# MTU legal consultations	986
	# MTU legal consultations (16-25 years)	681
	# MTU psychological consultations	1252
	# MTU psych. consultations (16-25 years)	992
	# of beneficiaries from MTU services	11859
	# of beneficiaries from MTU services (16-25 years)	9542
<b>Promote, Strengthen Linkages</b>	# of NGOs abroad receiving info from NPW	502
	# of regional roundtables organized in RSCs	88
<b>Development of Employment &amp; Business Opportunities</b>	# of trainers trained in Leadership	83
	# of Leadership for Employability trainings conducted	515
	# of women/girls trained in Leadership for Employability trainings	8088
	# of women/girls 16-25 trained in Leadership for Employability	7551
	# of trainees who find employment	1309
	# of trainees 16-25 who find employmt	1139
	# of Leadership for Entrepreneurship trainings conducted	401
	# of women/girls trained in Leadership for Entrepreneurship	6438
	# of women/girls 16-25 trained in Leadership for Entrepreneurship	5695
	# of clients who establish businesses	207
# of jobs graduates create filled by clients	105	
# of jobs graduates create filled by target group	37	
<b>Awareness Enhancement Program</b>	KAP Study surveys 1,000 women	1050
	# of television professionals trained on topic of human trafficking	45
	# of TV reports about project activity	117
	# of printed articles about project activity	212
<b>CROSS-CUTTING</b>	# of radio reports about project activity	138
	# women/girls served (total)	35451
	# women/girls served (16-25 years)	29047
	# services provided (total)	74545
	# services provided (16-25 years)	62420
	# of trafficking victims served	183
	Number of women not interested in migrating in %	83%
	Decrease in interest in migrating in %	48%
	Of those interested in migrating, who can name primary ways to migrate safely in %	69%
Increase of women interested in migrating who can name primary ways to migrate safely in %	38%	

## **APPENDIX B – Success Stories**



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## *New Perspectives for Women*

### **POULTRY INCUBATION BUSINESS INITIATED**

Viorica Burlac, an unemployed mother of two, decided to establish an egg incubation business as a result of her participation in the NPW-conducted entrepreneurship training program. Combining her in-kind grant of \$800 from ICS with \$120 in her own borrowed funds, Viorica was able to purchase an incubator with a 500-egg capacity. In May, she launched her operations and has since hatched 3 batches of chicks, resulting in 1050 live chicks. Viorica's incubator is not only the largest in her village, but she is the first to offer chicks for sale to the public. She sells them at the market price of 3.5-4 lei (27-31 U.S. cents) apiece. In addition, she sells chicks at the two markets closest to her village. As a result of the refinement of her incubation techniques, Viorica has improved her yield to 85% from an initial 65%. She also is using the incubator to hatch ducklings and goslings, which garner an even higher price and are more profitable.

Luckily, Viorica's neighbors are happy for her success. "I don't feel any jealousy from people," she says. "On the contrary, all my neighbors and buyers tell others not to go into the city, but to buy birds from me, because they are cheaper and of higher quality." Next year, Viorica will be able to make a greater profit, since she will hatch her first lot starting in February, which will enable her to sell them in March for 10 lei (77 cents) apiece, or nearly three times the summer price. Already looking to the future, Viorica is currently saving up for a small feed mill, as well as a generator, so that she can ensure a steady power supply through the winter months and prevent the major losses that an unexpected electricity outage could cause.

Viorica is clearly very proud of her success. "Now I have my own source of money," she says, "so I can take care of my children. I feel a deep responsibility for the quality of my product in my customers' eyes, because (their satisfaction) is essential to my success."



New entrepreneurs from Antonesi share their stories.

### **About the Winrock - Italian Consortium Entrepreneurship Activity**

*In September 2005, the USAID-funded New Perspectives for Women (NPW) project signed an agreement with the Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS) to collaborate on a project to help vulnerable and at-risk girls and young women in the Moldovan regions of Causeni and Stefan Voda, including the village of Antonesi, to generate additional income. Through this collaboration, NPW conducted intensive, long-term entrepreneurship training for 67 girls from Causeni and 60 girls from Stefan Voda. From this initial group of trainees, 58 girls who had developed business plans for new start-up operations were selected to receive \$800 in in-kind grants. The grants were made possible by funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and were provided in the form of equipment required for the start-up of these new businesses by ICS. In addition, participants benefited from extensive follow-on training and consulting assistance facilitated by both Winrock and ICS.*

# Success Story August 2006



## *New Perspectives for Women*

### **YOUNG VILLAGER OPENS ANTONESTI'S FIRST HAIR SALON**

When Liliana Banaru graduated from professional school as a seamstress, she couldn't find employment. However, since she was a child she had dreamed about opening her own hairdressing salon. In the fall of 2005, she took part in the long-term entrepreneurship course offered by New Perspectives for Women. Based on the business plan that she wrote for the course, Liliana was selected to receive an \$800 in-kind grant from the Italian Consortium of Solidarity. The grant was used to purchase a dresser, mirror, and basic hairstyling tools and supplies. Late this spring, Liliana opened the salon in the entryway to her house in order to save money on rent.

Today she is already serving clients, including both women and men. Word of mouth regarding her business has travelled fast in Antonesti, since villagers previously had to journey to the town of Stefan Voda to get a professional haircut, and thus Liliana is successfully attracting clients. She serves the public both during the day and in the evenings, so that customers with jobs have more flexibility in scheduling appointments.

In order to improve her own skills, Liliana was interested in taking formal hairstyling courses. The project referred Liliana to the Stefan Voda branch of the National Employment Agency, which sponsors vocational courses, including those for hairstylists. As a result, Liliana recently began attending hairdresser courses in Chisinau several times a week. Although attendance requires her to make the 1.5-hour trip to the capital for each class, Liliana has committed to making this investment in her own capacity. Her future plans include adding hair dyeing to the list of services she offers.

"I really enjoy my job," Liliana commented during a recent visit by Winrock staff. "I see my future here, in my village, by my family's side, working in my salon with two or three assistants."



New entrepreneurs from Antonesti share their stories

#### **About the Winrock - Italian Consortium Entrepreneurship Activity**

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# Case Study September 2006



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### *Irina's Story*

Irina, a 23-year-old woman from a small village in northern Moldova, recently returned home from the United Arab Emirates, where she had been a victim of trafficking. In September, she came to the Balti Regional Support Center (RSC) accompanied by her mother, who had heard about the center and the variety of social and economic support services that it provides to young women at risk and former victims. The story Irina told was an all-too-familiar one of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. She had progressed through a typical cycle of trafficking, which began with her being deceived by her own boyfriend from her native village, continued with her being forced into prostitution in Portugal, and ended with her enslavement in one of Dubai's major brothels. When Irina left her village she was only 19, and now, four years later, she has lived through one of the most horrible experiences imaginable.

Irina did not have to pay in advance to get to Portugal. All of her expenses were covered by intermediaries and then subtracted from her future earnings. However, she was treated like a slave and her "debt" never fully repaid. Irina felt she had no choice – she understood immediately that her survival demanded that she obey rather than protest. Ultimately, she was resold to a trafficker in the UAE, where her situation was further complicated by the birth of a child fathered by one of Irina's 'dedicated' clients. Irina spent most of her time abroad in the Dubai brothel, before a local NGO finally assisted her to get out of the country and return home with her one-year-old son.

When she visited the Balti Regional Support Center, the staff psychologist determined that Irina was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and needed immediate intervention. Irina was referred to the IOM Rehabilitation Center's Mother and Child Friendly Wing, where she is receiving in-depth rehabilitation assistance. This emergency rehabilitation assistance package includes accommodations and meals, comprehensive medical assistance, including STD/HIV testing, individual and group psychological therapy, legal assistance, and support in contemplating a professional career. An integral part of the package is support and assistance for her child.

After her stay at the Rehabilitation Center, Irina will be prepared to make a conscious decision about her future and the future of her son. She plans to return to the Balti area and utilize the RSC's economic empowerment services, including vocational and skills courses, employment and entrepreneurship trainings, assistance in job placement, internship programs, and referral services to other resources and professional service-providers. Irina also intends to share her experiences with other young girls at risk of falling prey to false promises of work abroad, and has already volunteered to do so through an interview with NPW's *Destinies and Destinations* television program. It is hoped that hearing about the ordeal that Irina went through will help young Moldovan women to make safer choices and avoid her fate.



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## *New Perspectives for Women*

### **ORPHANS HELPED TO START A NEW LIFE**

#### **Vocational training enables young institutionalized women to gain employment**

In the spring of 2006, as a result of a presentation on the threat of human trafficking to students at a public boarding school for orphans, several instances of attempted trafficking recruitment were brought to the attention of staff of the USAID-funded New Perspectives for Women (NPW) project. The students of the school, which is located in a village in northern Moldova, explained how young men would come by the school just prior to graduation and promise the female students jobs abroad, with all the travel expenses paid, including passports and visas.

In response, NPW organized a joint visit to the students with representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in order to investigate the claims further. In addition, NPW's Regional Support Center in Balti initiated an integrated program of trafficking awareness and economic empowerment assistance to the students, including trainings in finding employment here at home versus the myths and realities about working abroad, voluntary consultations with trained psychologists, and interactive discussions with the girls in the graduating class.



Ina Balan at work at the job she received as a result of USAID vocational training.

Photo: Tatiana Fuga, Balti Regional Center

***"At the boarding school all the decisions were made for me, but now I feel that my life depends on me and I can make decisions about my future."***

As a result of these interventions, the girls decided not to accept the potential traffickers' assistance in going abroad. But because graduates of Moldovan boarding schools lose their housing privileges, and orphans usually have nowhere to go and nobody to look after them, NPW utilized both its own resources and those of its partners to assist 12 of these students at this critical time. NPW provided three of the most vulnerable female graduates with vocational training, including a two-month tailoring course and three-month, paid internship with a local apparel manufacturer. The project covered the cost of housing for the girls during the training and secured donated food for them from a private charity, and the employer provided them with full-time employment upon completion of the internship. As one of the girls, Ina Balan, recently remarked, "At the boarding school all the decisions were made for me, but now I feel that my life depends on me and I can make decisions about my future." In addition, five other female and three male graduates were referred to the recently-opened USAID Youth Reintegration Center in Soroca, where they are presently provided with housing, meals, and employment.

Unfortunately, attempted trafficking efforts like those identified here are not uncommon. Traffickers know that many of these orphans have no home to return to upon graduation, and no money with which to support themselves until they are able to find work. Thus, traffickers prey on young people like these with false promises of well-paid jobs in glamorous foreign locations. Therefore, USAID will continue to work closely with boarding schools in order to ensure that orphans and other particularly vulnerable young women have information on, and access to, opportunities to protect and support themselves here in their native country.

# Success Story

October 2006



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## *New Perspectives for Women*

The *New Perspectives for Women* project is implemented in the Republic of Moldova by Winrock International with financial support provided by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The program strives to create new opportunities for women ages 16-25 through a complex network of economic empowerment and crisis intervention programming and assistance services implemented through Regional Support Centers serving rural clients across Moldova.

### **FROM HOUSEMAID TO ENTREPRENEUR**

**After working as a maid in Turkey, Moldovan woman starts business at home**

When Oxana's husband left her, she and her two children had no place to go. Having married when she was 18, Oxana had no work experience, since her husband expected her to attend to domestic responsibilities while he worked to provide income for the family. In her desperation, Oxana left for Turkey, where she found a job as a housekeeper for a local family. She was miserable, due to both the manual labor the job entailed and the low status associated with the position. However, it did allow her to save some money, which she used to begin building a house for her family. Eventually, she decided that the separation from her children was too much to bear and she returned home.



*note:* Svetlana Paraltova, Center Regional Support Center  
Oxana shows off the high-end shoes she sells at her kiosk.

Back in Moldova, Oxana decided to start her own business to support her family, despite the fact that she didn't have any educational qualifications and didn't even know which skills she needed to acquire. Therefore, when she heard about USAID-funded *New Perspectives for Women's* Regional Support Center (RSC) in Comrat earlier this year, Oxana eagerly seized the opportunity to access the center's free courses in job skills and entrepreneurship. After undergoing consultations with RSC staff, Oxana decided to attend the two-day "Am I an Entrepreneur?" training. Subsequently, together with the RSC staff, Oxana developed an idea for a new business and conducted an analysis of similar businesses already operating in Comrat.

Oxana decided to import and sell high-quality footwear. In February 2006, she used her savings to buy a kiosk with a large glass display window and rented a space for it at the local market. Oxana took out a \$3,000 loan (for 12 months at 24% annually) from the local branch of ProCredit, a non-bank financial institution, in order to purchase new spring 2006 footwear. Thanks to the entrepreneurial skills that she developed at the NPW training, Oxana successfully initiated operations and has been making her loan payments on schedule. In August, she took out a second loan from ProCredit, for \$2,000, in order to purchase shoes from the fall collection. The Comrat RSC also continued to provide Oxana with consultations in various areas in order to help her overcome the various challenges she faced, and it continues to do so.

Overall, Oxana is pleased with the results she has achieved. She earns over 1000 MDL (\$77) in profit per month from her operations at present, but anticipates that she will be able to increase her income significantly as she expands her customer base. Moreover, her profitability should really take off once she fully pays off her loans and is able to finance future wholesale purchases from her own savings. Finally, being back in Moldova has improved her quality of life. As Oxana says, "I am very happy that I am at home here with my children and family."

# Success Story October 2006



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### **VOCATIONAL TRAINING ENABLES YOUNG RURAL WOMEN TO EARN INCOME IN THEIR NATIVE VILLAGE**

The collapse of state-sponsored agricultural production has impoverished rural communities across Moldova and led large numbers of villagers to relocate to large cities and destinations abroad in search of work. Young women who do so are at particular risk of falling into the hands of traffickers and their false promises of well-paid employment in exotic locales. The *New Perspectives for Women* (NPW) Project, however, recently demonstrated how rural women can be assisted to identify and take advantage of opportunities to support themselves here at home, in the safety of their own communities.

Since the summer of 2006, the Balti Regional Support Center (RSC) has been providing a wide range of training and services to young women in ten regions of north-central Moldova through the NPW Project. During a roundtable in Balti organized by the RSC earlier in the year, Silva Turcanu, the mayor of the village of Chiscareni, asked the project to help find jobs for local women as an alternative to their going abroad. Together with Jade, a newly-opened, Italian-Moldovan apparel manufacturer that exports its goods to Western Europe, the Balti RSC designed a seamstress training program to help women without previous sewing experience learn the skills required by Jade to expand its production and meet increasing demand.



Photo: Vascesita Palan, Information Coordinator / *New Perspectives for Women*  
Two NPW seamstress course graduates at work at Jade.

***"Being a seamstress in the village will substantially decrease my living costs: I will not have to pay for transportation and accommodation."***

In collaboration with Jade and the local office of the National Employment Agency, which identified and registered local women in search of employment, the RSC designed a three-week training course that provided participants with valuable professional skills and full-time employment. The course for seamstresses was conducted in July for 20 young women, including 15 from the project's target group, all of whom were unemployed or had been engaged only in seasonal work. In order to enable the most vulnerable participants to support themselves during the training and the first month of employment, when new employees are still getting up to speed and thus earn very little (the jobs are paid on a piecemeal basis), NPW provided three of the trainees with stipends.

Upon completion of the training at the end of July, all 20 women were provided with full-time jobs as seamstresses with Jade. As of October 31st, all 20 women remained working at Jade. While their monthly salaries are relatively modest so far, this work provides young women with vital cash income. In addition, as one of the new Jade employees has noted, "Being a seamstress in the village will substantially decrease my living costs: I will not have to pay for transportation and accommodation." Furthermore, since the women are paid based on their output, they have the opportunity to increase their incomes as they gain experience and gain the ability to produce quality goods more quickly. Jade is pleased with the partnership as well. Business is going so well that it anticipates further expanding its operations in the near future. In so doing, it expects to create additional new jobs for vulnerable women in Chiscareni and surrounding areas.

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# Success Story December 2006



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### Former Victim Escapes Cycle of Domestic Violence

**Soroca** – In October, twenty-five-year-old Daniela, exhausted from her attempts to deal with her abusive husband's behavior, visited the Soroca Regional Support Center (RSC), one of five such Centers established by the USAID-funded *New Perspectives for Women* Project. Four years earlier, Daniela had married a young man from her village. She recounted to the staff psychologist how her husband's irrational jealousy had grown into a destructive force that she could no longer endure. "I had known him for ages, but the last three years of our marriage turned him into a sick man, insulting me all the time and accusing me of being unfaithful," explained Daniela. He began stalking her and berating her in public. At her workplace, Daniela's husband began making accusations of her supposed infidelities. These outbursts led Daniela to quit a series of jobs in shame. Later, her husband forbade her to work altogether, declaring that a good wife should stay at home and take care of the family. "I ran out of patience with him," says Daniela. "I was not allowed to go anywhere and had to stop seeing my friends, relatives, and everyone I enjoyed being with. I turned into a fearful and hysterical creature... hollow from the inside."

While gender-based violence affects women around the world, it can be particularly destructive in countries where the phenomenon is seldom acknowledged and rarely addressed. In Moldova, violence against women is perceived by many as a private family matter, not a social problem requiring attention and action. Gender stereotypes perpetuate the belief that women are responsible for ensuring harmony in the home. Thus, a victim may perceive violence as a personal failure and a source of shame. This lack of understanding of the scope of violence and its consequences not only limits the resources available to help young women and perpetuates the cycle, but can also influence a woman's choice to accept risky offers of work abroad. In part because traffickers target desperate young women, the rate of prior domestic violence among victims of trafficking is often twice as high



as among young women in general. The efforts of *New Perspectives for Women* to provide direct services to young women, as well as its implementation of a wide variety of public awareness activities through the international 16 Days Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, which takes place in late November and early December of each year, are designed to help young Moldovan women avoid this fate.

In Daniela's case, consultations with the RSC psychologist and attendance at the Center's trainings on "Domestic Violence" and "Gender Equality" helped Daniela to understand that the violence she experienced is unacceptable. She also began to recognize that her tolerance of violence likely stemmed from her experiences growing up, as she and her mother were often the recipients of her father's insults and, sometimes, his beatings. These events, coupled with the prevalence of situations like this among neighboring families, resulted in Daniela beginning to perceive physical and psychological violence in the family as normal.

With the help of the RSC, Daniela is gradually recovering and regaining her lost sense of optimism and hope for the future. After a number of sessions with the RSC psychologist and lawyer, Daniela decided she wanted a divorce. She is working with the RSC lawyer to move this process forward. Daniela also wants to return to work and pursue a career, and thus will attend either a long-term skills course or entrepreneurship course through the Center. Regardless of which career path she decides to follow, she is confident that she will succeed and serve as an example to other women of how they can find the strength to break the cycle of violence in their daily lives and build a brighter future.

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### **Former Trafficking Victim Regains Positive Outlook**

*Orhei* At an age when many Moldovans are only finishing university, Viorica—a 24-year-old mother of two, is struggling to overcome a traumatic personal history of victimization and abuse. With assistance from the Winrock International's USAID-funded *New Perspectives for Women* (NPW) project, this former trafficking victim has begun building knowledge and skills that will enable her to start a new business and support herself and her family without leaving her native country.

In 2002, Viorica, a recent high school graduate from a small town near Moldova's capital, was approached on the street by a woman who offered to help her find work. The woman, who introduced herself as Alina, promised to arrange a well-paid job as a dancer in a casino in Cyprus. Viorica accepted the offer. Upon her arrival in Cyprus, however, Viorica was met by a man who explained to her that she would need to work off a \$2500 debt that she incurred for travel expenses. She was to do this, she learned, by having sex with patrons at a local bar. From 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. each day, she was forced to have sex with numerous men, after which she was expected to dance in the bar for three hours, followed by additional sexual enslavement until the morning. If she disobeyed these orders, she was punished and beaten.



***"I am not afraid to face my past anymore," she says. "I also look to the future with confidence because I see hope for me and my children."***

After three long months of humiliation and beatings by the trafficker and his drunken clients, the size of Viorica's "debt" had barely decreased. "All I wanted was to get some sleep or die," she recalls. One day, however, Viorica managed to place a call to Alina back in Moldova. She threatened to contact Moldovan police and expose Alina's role in her abduction if a release was not arranged. Three days later, Viorica was released and sent home by plane together with other deported Moldovan citizens.

Upon her return, Viorica received emergency rehabilitation assistance from IOM and attended professional cooking classes. She fell in love with a man and soon thereafter they had their first child. The man, however, had an alcohol problem, disappeared for months at a time, and showed no interest in the child whatsoever. Last year, after Viorica gave birth to a second child, she found it more and more difficult to raise a family on her own, and decided to seek outside assistance.

After seeing an episode of the *Destinies and Destination* television program, Viorica contacted NPW in Chisinau. After relating her experiences as a former trafficking victim, Viorica was referred to the project's Balti Regional Support Center (RSC). The RSC's Economic Empowerment Coordinator met with Viorica on several occasions and helped her develop a career development plan. Following these consultations, Viorica decided to enroll in a Long-Term Entrepreneurship Course being offered by the RSC. Viorica successfully completed the training course and developed a basic business plan for a small tailoring workshop, which she continues to refine. To supplement her business skills, Viorica was referred by the RSC to the National Employment Agency, which arranged for Viorica to attend a state-funded, six-month course in tailoring that she will soon complete. In December, Viorica began receiving a small supplemental stipend through NPW's Economic Empowerment program to help her support her family as she focuses on her studies.

While only time will tell how successful her venture will be, Viorica is excited about her business prospects. "I am not afraid to face my past anymore," she says. "I also look to the future with confidence because I see hope for me and my children."

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# Success Story March 2007



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### **Former Trafficking Victim Reconnects with Daughter**

*With help from Regional Support Center, single mother returns home to pursue a better life*

**Balti** — Given the harsh economic realities of Moldova today, it is not surprising that so many of its citizens choose to seek work abroad. Because, in so doing, many parents leave their children behind, however, it is ironic that improving the welfare of their children is often the impetus for such a decision.

The story of Ala, a 31-year old single mother from Balti, is one such example. In October 2006, economic desperation led her to visit a travel agency in Chisinau that helped her arrange a job as a dancer in a nightclub in Lebanon, which required her to leave her 6 year old daughter Iana behind. Upon Ala's arrival in Beirut, she quickly learned that her job dancing at the club also necessitated providing sexual services to its male patrons. When she refused, the owner threw her out onto the street with nothing but \$100 to her name. Ala eventually contacted the police for assistance, but was arrested and deported back to Moldova.



Photo: Marin Ilut, OWH TV Studio

***"I know it is just the beginning, but the fact that I am together with my daughter fills me with hope."***

Upon her return to Balti, Ala visited a local center for vulnerable youth, which provided her with a medical examination and treatment, including therapy for severe post-traumatic stress disorder, and referred her to the New Perspectives for Women Project's Balti Regional Support Center

(RSC). The welcoming atmosphere of the RSC and its psychologist helped her open up and share some of her innermost thoughts and fears. Ala also began attending a support group for single mothers. As Ala notes, "I was amazed how much it means that someone cares about you and understands what you have been through." In addition, the RSC helped Ala to find employment as a waitress at a local restaurant and she later accepted an even better job with a small casino that pays her a relatively generous \$240 monthly salary.

Despite these achievements, Ala's recovery is still a work in progress. She is saving money so that she can eventually move out of the apartment she shares with her grandmother, who considers that Ala is at fault for having worked as a "prostitute." Repairing her relationship with the daughter she left behind has also been difficult, and is compounded by the psychological wounds that she suffered during her ordeal abroad. The efforts that Ala is making to improve her relations with Iana, who visits the center frequently with her mother, as well as her new income, are enabling Ala to start building a better future for her family. As she says, "I know it is just the beginning, but the fact that I am together with my daughter fills me with hope."



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### Peer Power

#### *Innovative Methods Improve Trafficking Awareness in Remote Areas*

**Cahul** – It is not surprising that many rural youths from Moldova look to working abroad as the most certain path to economic freedom. The ensuing exodus from rural areas of the country only exacerbates the downward trends in the economic and social life of the communities that are left behind, which in turn encourages more people to leave. Reaching rural youth with information about the potential dangers of looking for work abroad and ways to protect oneself, however, has traditionally been a challenge. Efforts by young villagers themselves, though, are resulting in expanded outreach, allowing these important messages to reach youth in a wider range of communities.

Ina and Aurica, two high school students from Colibas village in Cahul raion, are representative of the many volunteers working throughout Moldova to demonstrate that young people can make a difference for their peers. After participating in a *New Perspectives for Women* Employability training, the girls visited the Cahul Regional Support Center (RSC), where they learned about the Center's Volunteer Program. They quickly signed up and became active volunteers. Based on their own experiences, they knew that many of the girls in their village did not grasp the depth of the human trafficking phenomenon, nor did they understand the severity of the likely consequences of becoming a victim.



Photo: Aliona Avetisean, VTA Coordinator

**Aurica and Ina**

***"I liked that this discussion was led by girls like us."***

After receiving comprehensive training at the RSC, Ina and Aurica began conducting interactive discussions with young women in their village, designed to increase trafficking awareness among beneficiaries. As one participant said, "I liked that this discussion was led by girls like us." In addition, as part of the 2006 "16 Days against Gender Violence" Campaign, they held several

interactive discussions on domestic violence in their village and conducted a public opinion poll on this topic. In the future, they will deliver their message to young women in other villages in southern Moldova.

Aurica and Ina are not just volunteers. Not so long ago they too thought seriously about leaving Moldova. For Aurica, whose parents both work abroad, the logical choice was to follow in her parents' footsteps. Now, instead of seeking work abroad, the girls are planning on going to college in Cahul and are currently studying for their entrance exams. As Ina says, "At the RSC I learned to be confident [and] to speak in public, something I thought I could never do before." Even after they matriculate, they plan to remain NPW volunteers so that they can continue to help their peers to pursue a successful future in Moldova.



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### Young Soroca Mother Rebuilds Life at Home

**Soroca** – Four years ago, Maria appeared to have an ideal life. She graduated at the top of her class from the Psychology and Pedagogical Science Department of Balti University. Shortly thereafter, she met and married an affluent young man from Chisinau, and the young couple moved to the capital to start their family.

At first, their life seemed perfect. In time, however, Maria began to notice her husband exhibiting increasingly strange behaviors. When she confronted him, he admitted that he was using drugs but was hoping to quit for the sake of his family. After Maria gave birth to their daughter, her husband underwent treatment. The improvement was short-lived, however, and after a few months of relative calm, the situation deteriorated. Maria tried to no avail to help her husband. When expensive things started to disappear from the house, she decided to leave.

Together with her daughter, Maria moved back in with her parents in Soroca. The 25-year old had no work experience, and needed help in launching a job search to get her on the road to self sufficiency. After learning about the USAID-funded New Perspectives for Women's Soroca Regional Support Center (RSC) through the *Destinies and Destinations* television program, Maria decided to come in for help. In addition to obtaining assistance with her job search, Maria also took advantage of the RSC's free legal and psychological counseling, as well as all of the trainings offered by the Center.



Photo: OWH TV Studio

***"I suddenly became very mature and realized that my child's future depended on me."***

After regular visits to the RSC, Maria decided to start a new independent life. With help from the RSC lawyer, she filed for divorce from her husband. "I suddenly became very mature and realized that my child's future depended on me," says Maria. With assistance from the RSC, Maria secured a part-time job as a switchboard operator in a local government office, where she earns 900 lei (\$68) per month. She also was hired as a part-time employee at the UNDP Youth Reintegration Center, which is co-located with the RSC, thereby allowing her to uti-

lize her psychology and teaching skills to work with at risk youth.

Maria now looks to the future with newfound hope and determination. She says, "I am glad that the sufferings I came through did not discourage me but only made me a more mature individual who understands [her] priorities in life."



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### **New Venture Provides Hope to Former Trafficking Victim**

**Cahul** – For a repatriated victim of trafficking, the difficulties are often far from over upon returning home. After Natalia escaped from her traffickers in Bosnia and returned to Moldova four years ago, she found herself a single mother, pregnant, unemployed and faced with the same limited prospects that had originally led her to seek employment abroad. Situations such as this help explain why an estimated 10% of trafficking victims are eventually re-trafficked. "There were a couple of moments after my return when I felt like leaving again," she even admits now, "but I am glad I didn't."

Eight years ago, Natalia, had been offered a job as a dancer in a nightclub in Bosnia by a local woman. Earlier, after an unhappy childhood with her poor, alcoholic parents, Natalia had been eager to escape and married young. Soon after she gave birth to a daughter, however, her husband abandoned the family and she was forced to return home. Now, since dancing was one of her life-long passions, Natalia gladly accepted the job offer in Bosnia. Little did she realize what the work would actually entail.

When Natalia and several other girls arrived in the small Bosnian town, they were told that each of them needed to pay back the nightclub owner the \$3,500 he had supposedly spent on their journey. Forced to have sex with client after client, an interminable cycle of nightmares, violence, alcohol and drug abuse was set in motion.



*Photo: Cahul Regional Support Center*

Eventually, Natalia met a local man who fell in love with her and helped her to escape. When he found out that she was pregnant, however, he disappeared, leaving Natalia with no documentation and no money to her name. With assistance from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Natalia was repatriated home to Moldova in 2003. She was provided with emergency medical and psychological assistance through IOM's Rehabilitation Center. Not long thereafter, she gave birth to a second daughter and married a young man from her village.

Nevertheless, Natalia and her family continued to struggle financially. Natalia's husband's job as a coffin maker provided only a very modest salary. Natalia worked at a small supermarket for about a year until a dispute with her employer left her jobless again. In order to supplement the family income, Natalia began cultivating strawberries to sell at the local market. She knew very little about running a business. When a local NGO referred her to New Perspectives for Women's Regional Support Center (RSC) in Cahul earlier this year, she eagerly investigated the various economic empowerment activities the Center had to offer.

Natalia decided to enroll in the RSC's long-term entrepreneurship program. By the end of the course in mid-July, she had completed a business plan to expand her strawberry cultivation business. By increasing her arable land use and utilizing improved growing technologies, including heartier seedlings and chemical fertilizers, Natalia hopes to build on last harvest's 3000 lei (\$240) profit. As she notes, however, "It is not just about the money – I get real satisfaction from the fact that my family supports me and is together with me, here at home, and I am truly thankful to everyone who has helped me to achieve this level of success."

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### **Sold by Their Own Mother, Two Sisters Find New Life in Cahul**

The image that trafficking in persons often evokes is that of a charismatic stranger making beguiling promises to a young woman, and then ultimately betraying her trust. The truth, however, is that more often than not, trafficking victims are recruited by someone they know, even a close acquaintance or relative. A particularly distressing example of this took place not long ago in southern Moldova.

Last summer, Zina, a 17-year-old girl from a village outside Cahul, came to the local office of the Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW) in a desperate state. She explained that she was broke, jobless, lacked a higher education, and had no one to turn to. Zina's own mother, unemployed and a severe alcoholic, had recently sold her into sexual slavery to a local man who was recruiting young women for the purposes of trafficking. Moreover, the mother had done the same to Zina's sister only months before.

In Zina's case, the trafficker took her passport and drove her and two other local girls to the border with Romania, where she was to be handed over to several men from Turkey. After examining the girls closely, however, the Turkish boss rejected Zina because of burns that covered half of her face from a childhood accident. "My scars saved my life. I understood that only after escaping from those men," Zina confided to the psychologist at NPW's Cahul Regional Support Center (RSC), which she learned about through referrals by the local branches of CPTW and the National Employment Agency.



After providing her with extensive counseling sessions, the Cahul RSC helped Zina and 18 other women enroll in an Employment Generation Project, implemented in conjunction with Catholic Relief Services' Moldova Employment and Training Alliance, the National Employment Agency, and Tricon, a local apparel manufacturer. Following three months of classroom instruction for seamstresses, the women were placed in a three month internship program at Tricon. Throughout the program, the Cahul RSC provided the women with individual psychological consultations and trainings on women's leadership, trafficking awareness, and gender equality. Through the trainings and consultations, Zina and the other participants

learned about their rights in the workplace and how to realistically assess their prospects at home versus the threats involved in seeking illegal work abroad. In September, following the successful completion of this program, Zina and the other 18 young women were provided with full-time jobs as seamstresses at Tricon.

"I now feel that life has started to show some of its positive sides to me," Zina says. "Having told the RSC psychologist about what had happened to me, I began to see things in a different light. I realized that I could start an independent life." Recently, Zina's sister was able to return home from Turkey. She has found a job as a waitress and is living together with Zina in a rented apartment in Cahul. Like many former trafficking victims, she has been reluctant to talk about her ordeal. In the coming weeks, however, Zina hopes to convince her sister to seek assistance from the RSC and its psychologist. As for her mother, Zina has no desire to seek retribution, but has chosen instead to focus on building a positive future for her sister and herself.

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### Young Soroca Woman Establishes Elite Salon

It is said that the Chinese characters signifying "danger" and "opportunity" together form the ideogram for "crisis," since difficulties often serve as the catalyst for necessary changes or reform. A similar principle is utilized to help young women generate ideas for starting new businesses through New Perspectives for Women's entrepreneurship training program. Trainees are taught to look at problems that they encounter in their everyday lives as an indication of needs that are not being met by existing businesses, and thus as potential ideas for new start-up enterprises.



Photo: Soroca Regional Support Center

#### Angela (center) and several of her employees

Inspired by this recognition, Angela decided to turn her plan into a real business. Though trained as an attorney, Angela had lost her job while on maternity leave. Now, by taking out a loan for \$2000 and combining it with her own \$1000 savings, Angela was able to finance a lease on a space for the salon as well as buy the necessary start-up equipment. In August, she opened "Marilyn Monroe," which, in addition to the usual haircutting and hairstyling services, offers its clients manicures, pedicures, massage therapy, and cosmetology and fitness services.

From the beginning, the business was a hit with the local community. It now serves 15-20 customers per day during the week and two to three times as many on weekends. During the first month of operations, the salon generated over 11,000 Moldovan lei (\$1,000) in revenue and its client base continues to grow. Once she manages to pay off her loan, Angela will be generating increased income to support her three-year-old daughter. In addition, the business now employs eight young women from the local community, each of whom earns an average of 1200 lei (\$107) per month. Thanks to the salon, local community members now have access to services that were not previously available in Soroca as well. An anticipated grant from the UNDP-implemented Better Opportunities for Youth and Children project may help her expand her offerings even further. Angela hopes to use the funds to launch several new skin and nail-care treatments as well as hire two new employees.

Despite her accomplishments, Angela understands that major challenges remain. "Only by providing high-quality services and reasonable prices will we continue to be successful," she says. "Having invested a major portion of the family budget into this business, it is important that we achieve profitability." Nevertheless, she is proud of what she has achieved. "We have faced many problems and conflicts," she says, "but through patience and a great deal of work we were able to open a salon that we are proud of."

Angela, a 25-year-old woman from northeastern Moldova, did exactly that as she attended a long-term entrepreneurship course offered by the Soroca Regional Support Center this past May and June. Through discussions with her friends, Angela says she "asked what goods and services were not available in our town... and someone mentioned a beauty salon. I liked the idea and started to think seriously about this type of business." As the future venture began to take shape in her mind, Angela and the other 16 young women attending the course benefited from training sessions on topics including human resources, marketing, financial reporting, and legal registration. With assistance from individual consultations with the course trainer, Angela developed a detailed business plan for an exclusive, full-service beauty salon. At the course's closing ceremony she presented the plan to an evaluation committee of business development and microfinance experts, and was awarded second place.



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### Former Trafficking Victim's Outlook Brightens Following Birth of Son

Balti -- Growing up in a small village in northern Moldova, Elena and her older brother spent a childhood that was anything but carefree. Raised by poor, alcoholic parents, who eventually divorced, Elena had few prospects and little support upon completing the nine grades offered by the school in her village. When a neighbor suggested that she go to Moscow and find work there as a salesperson in an outdoor market, Elena seized the opportunity. It seemed to her only natural that this path, which many of her fellow villagers had chosen, would lead to a better future for her as well. But that was not her fate. When Elena returned home a year later, she found herself penniless, pregnant, scared and alone.



At first, things in Moscow seemed to go according to plan. Elena found a job at a market and began dating a seemingly nice young man. This illusion was cruelly shattered a few months later, however, when he discovered that she was pregnant. He became enraged, took her money and passport from her, and literally dragged her to someone he knew at a seedy local casino. Elena was forced to work in shifts – one night as a gaming machine operator and the next night – as a prostitute, servicing the casino's patrons. For five months this horror continued, and none of the casino staff or customers attempted to help her. Only when she told the owner that she was pregnant did anything change.

The owner took her to the police, ostensibly to report her for staying in Russia illegally, but in reality to shift the blame for her wretched state onto Elena herself. The police drove her to the train station and deported her back to Moldova with no money, no documents and no hope for the future. "There was a moment when I was close to suicide," confesses Elena, "because I was certain nobody was going to help me or my future baby."

In her village, Elena found nothing but alcoholism and poverty; neither her mother nor brother had any sympathy for her and what she'd been through. However, a neighbor told her about the NPW Project's Balti Regional Support Center. When Elena arrived there, according to the staff psychologist, "She immediately said that she intended to abandon her future child because she couldn't support it."

The RSC staff provided Elena with extensive psychological consultations and facilitated the provision of free medical assistance, including an urgent gynecological exam through the ATIS Center, a residential facility for youth located in Balti. During the counseling sessions, the psychologist tried to help Elena change her attitude towards herself and her unborn baby. Elena also was referred to the IOM Rehabilitation Center in Chisinau for more in-depth care and support. In parallel, the psychologist met with Elena's mother several times in an attempt to improve family relations and create a better home environment to which Elena could return.

"When I left the Rehabilitation Center, I was determined not to abandon my child," Elena says. In July, she gave birth to a healthy baby boy, whom she named Iulian. Now she reports that "no matter how difficult your life gets, there are always people who will help you and teach you very important things."

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# Success Story November 2007



## *New Perspectives for Women*

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### STOPPING THE VIOLENCE

#### Project assistance helps Cahul mother and daughter escape abusive home

**Cahul**— Violence is a regular part of daily life in the homes of one out of every four families in rural Moldova. Natalia, a 23-year-old from Cahul, knows this reality all too well, having suffered beatings, sexual abuse, insults, and humiliation from her husband Sergiu for years before she managed to break the cycle of violence. Sergiu came from a poor family and witnessed violence between his own parents, which led him to live alone on a farm, where he worked as a shepherd. Shortly after he and Natalia started living together, he began to drink and abuse her, beating her frequently even after she became pregnant. Sergiu continued to perpetrate this violence even after their baby was born.

When Natalia attempted to flee and return to her parents in her native village, they forced her to return to Sergiu because of their fear that the community would ostracize her for leaving her husband. Afterwards, she moved in with her sister, but eventually returned home again because she did not want to be yet another burden on an already impoverished family. Natalia felt like she would never be able to break free.



Eventually, Natalia and her baby came to New Perspectives for Women's Cahul Regional Support Center (RSC) together with her neighbor, Ana, herself a former victim of domestic violence. Thanks in part to assistance from the center's psychologist and lawyer, Ana built up the courage to separate from her husband and the self confidence to build an independent life. After examining Natalia's case, the RSC and the Center for Single-Parent Families, a local NGO, mediated with her parents, who eventually accepted her back home after gaining a deeper understanding of the severity of her situation.

Today, Natalia is living with her parents and raising her baby. She is calmer, more hopeful about the future, and plans to enroll in a tailoring course through the RSC as soon as her baby is old enough to go to the local daycare center. When her husband visited and demanded that she return home, Natalia called the police, who told him that Natalia was not willing to see him anymore. According to Natalia, "it was like something instantly changed inside me. There is no way anyone could raise his hands against me again." In addition, Natalia now helps to counsel other women from her village who suffer from domestic violence. Having had the fortune to escape from an abusive situation, she wants to make sure that other women realize that they too have alternatives to accepting the role of a victim.

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Putting Ideas to Work

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### **BREAKING OUT**

#### ***Straseni Student Entrepreneur Starts Dance Studio***

Ask someone in Moldova if they would like to start a business, and they may laugh. To many people here, such an idea seems unrealistic, given their lack of experience and the country's status as Europe's poorest. As the case of a recent Winrock beneficiary shows, however, neither minimal experience, limited capital, nor the lack of an innovative idea must necessarily serve as obstacles to generating income through the establishment of a new business. Not even for a high school student.



*Breakdancing students during their January 2008 performance.*

Marina, a 17-year-old from the small town of Straseni, dreamed of opening a beauty salon. After hearing about *New Perspectives for Women* through a local NGO where she volunteered, Marina decided to enroll in an entrepreneurship course offered in Calarasi, a nearby town, by the Balti Regional Support Center. In July and August 2007, Marina got up each day at 6:00 am, travelled 40 minutes to Calarasi for the entrepreneurship training, and then went immediately to Chisinau for cosmetology and massage therapy courses before returning to Straseni.

The entrepreneurship course gave Marina the opportunity to learn about starting a business, develop her business idea, and receive feedback from the trainer and fellow students. As part of the training, Marina conducted market research on the business potential of her salon. She realized that similar businesses already existed in Straseni and that

school would not leave sufficient time for her to manage a salon. However, Marina had a close friend, Cristi, who was a skilled breakdancer. She proposed to him that they open a studio to teach this popular modern dance style to area youth, with Marina serving as the business manager and Cristi as the instructor.

During the course, Marina developed her idea and drafted a business plan, which she presented at the course's graduation ceremony in August. Then she began trying to make the idea a reality. By the end of September she negotiated an agreement with the local cultural center to use its disco for her dance lessons, and used her own savings to pay the initial rent, transportation and buy basic equipment. Then Marina began recruiting customers, signing up 15 local students by October, each of whom paid just over \$6 per month for three two-hour lessons each week. A month later, Marina enrolled 10 more students. At the same time, she applied to Winrock's Women's Microenterprise Development Activity, which is funded by the Argidius Foundation, a private donor based in Switzerland, for an in-kind grant to purchase a professional audio system and safety mattresses for use when practicing acrobatic dance moves. In December, her application was approved and she received the equipment the following month.



*Two dance students demonstrate their windmills.*

In order to raise the profile of the dance studio, in January 2008 Marina organized a public performance in the cultural center's main auditorium. Her students prepared a special performance to demonstrate to the community what they had learned and raise interest among local children in signing up for the classes. Several hundred local residents attended, as did the deputy mayor, who spoke to the audience about how he had been skeptical when Marina, who was just a high school student, had approached

him with a request to use the culture center space for her business. However, he continued, he was glad to have been proven wrong.



*Female dance students show off their moves.*

Although Marina's current profits of \$75-90 a month may sound modest, this self-generated income is quite high for a high school student in rural Moldova, not to mention the fact that she also is providing part-time work for her dance instructor. She also is currently considering expanding her business, including sending a team to the national breakdancing championship in Chisinau and offering courses in new types of dances. In some ways, however, the biggest beneficiaries are her students. In an age of computers and video games, breakdancing promotes a healthy lifestyle, teamwork, and a positive way for young people to express their creativity and build their self esteem.



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### **A HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE**

#### **Young Mother from Vulcanesti Expands Health Salon**

After graduating from college, Galina, a young woman from a small town in southern Moldova, found a job as an accountant. After three years of working for a salary of only about \$70 a month, however, she decided to go abroad in search of a better future. Galina had already contacted friends in Turkey to ask for their help in finding work when she heard about an opportunity to start her own business at home.

Through the local Association of Women's Entrepreneurs and Vulcanesti employment office, Galina learned about a free entrepreneurship training course being conducted in her town. In November, she signed up for the course, which is offered through each of Winrock's four Regional Support Centers (RSCs). During the training, Galina came up with an idea for opening an automated massage salon in Vulcanesti similar to one in Cahul where she herself had received massage therapy previously. However, she was not certain that there would be sufficient demand for the business in her relatively small town. Galina, together with help from her course instructors, developed and conducted a market survey of potential customers, and was relieved to identify great interest in the potential service. This was important to Galina because the required massage equipment was not cheap, and she would need to borrow money from her relatives. By the end of the course, thanks to her persistence and desire to become financially independent, Galina registered her enterprise and rented a space next to the regional health clinic.



*Galina presents her salon*

In December, Galina borrowed the necessary funds from her family and purchased equipment for the salon at a discounted price during a holiday sale. Then she began attending courses to learn how to properly operate the equipment. In addition, Galina and physicians from the neighboring health clinic came to an agreement to refer appropriate patients to one another. By the end of December, her salon opened for business. When she presented her business plan at the course's closing ceremony, she was able to report happily that her financial projections for the first month of operations had already been achieved. She had generated approximately 8,000 lei (about \$700) in revenue, which allowed her to begin repaying her loan and to finance additional business expenses.

In addition, Galina applied to Winrock's Women's Microenterprise Development Activity for a small grant to expand her business. She requested just over \$1,000 from the Argidius Foundation-funded program to purchase additional specialized massage equipment, and her application was approved. The addition of this equipment will require her to hire an additional employee and enable her to increase her revenue, thereby creating increased employment and income.

Currently, the business serves about 15 customers on a typical day and is open seven days a week, including half days on weekends. Although operating the business demands a great deal of Galina's energy and time, she has no regrets about the path she has chosen. "Prior to the start of the entrepreneurship course, I was seriously thinking about going abroad," she says, "but thanks to *New Perspectives for Women* I gained knowledge and practical business skills in a field that allows a woman to realize her potential, become her own boss, and be a leader, all while making a profit."

# Success Story April 2008



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### LONG WAY HOME

#### Having escaped labor exploitation in Turkey Gagauz woman pursues career at home

**F**or many former victims of trafficking and labor exploitation, returning home is but the first step in a long-term recovery process. Such was the case with Ludmila, a woman from a small village in Gagauzia who returned to Moldova last year after nearly ten years abroad. Ludmila had been exploited in Turkey, where she was often paid only in room and board for her labor. Thus, she was unable to save any money, which was the entire purpose of her leaving Moldova. After her passport and visa expired, Ludmila lived in fear of being sent to jail if she was discovered. For this reason, and due to the cost, Ludmila had no access to medical care in Turkey, and her worsening kidney disease and anorexia did lasting damage to her health. Eventually, she was arrested by the police during a raid and deported by ferry to Odessa, Ukraine.



*Returning home is often only the first step in the recovery process for victims of labor exploitation*

Upon her return home, Ludmila had no place to go except the empty house that she had inherited when her parents had died. Devastated by her experiences abroad, Ludmila spent her first months alone at home, only going out to scrounge for the food she needed to survive. Luckily, her neighbors looked out for her and contacted the Regional Support Center (RSC) in Comrat to request assistance. After visiting Ludmila several times to provide her with counseling, the RSC staff referred her and provided for her travel to the International Organization for Migration's Rehabilitation Center in Chisinau. Following a month of medical assistance and rehabilitation services, Ludmila returned home energized and committed to starting a new life in her hometown.

However, winter was approaching and Ludmila had no income that would allow her to pay her heating bills. Thus, the RSC provided her with ongoing psychological counseling and helped her register with the National Employment Agency for possible job vacancies. In late 2007, Ludmila was hired by the laundry department at a child daycare facility in Comrat. The monthly salary of 400 MDL, however, barely covered her utility bills. "Life was so difficult that when winter came I started to think about going to Turkey again," Ludmila confesses. But in February 2008, Ludmila's efforts were rewarded, as she found work as an events organizer in the community's cultural center. She now receives 1000 MDL per month and feels like her old self again. "You can drown in depression and idleness," she says, "but you can also fight to the end and find people who are willing to help you – it is your choice how to build your life."

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# Success Story June 2008



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### LEAVING VIOLENCE BEHIND

#### Young woman from near Singerei starts new life with her child

**A**na, a twenty-one-year-old woman from a village in northern Moldova, was a victim of regular domestic violence at the hand of her boyfriend, with whom she and their daughter lived. After nearly a year, Ana decided to return to her parents' house in order to escape the physical and psychological abuse. Unfortunately, her parents abused alcohol and also subjected her to violence. Ana saw no way out, as she had to support her daughter on just the 100 leis (\$10) that the government provided her in monthly child welfare payments.



*Ana and a fellow trainee attending a seamstress training course*

Ana contacted the Balti Regional Support Center, which she had previously learned about through an NPW Mobile Technical Unit that had visited her village. She asked for help in placing her child in an orphanage temporarily, so that she could seek work in Moscow where she could live with her cousin. However, the RSC lawyer persuaded Ana not to go to Russia, but try to solve her problems at home without abandoning her baby. Ana was provided with legal consultations, including assistance in drafting and submitting to court a petition requiring her former boyfriend to pay child support. When the child's father refused, the court required Ana to prove that he was the father by paying for him to take a paternity test. However, Ana could not afford the 700 leis (\$70) that the test would cost.

In response, the RSC lawyer helped Ana access funds for the test from *Medicins du Monde*, a French NGO. Once the father was informed about the legal consequences of the paternity test, however, he decided to acknowledge that he was the baby's father without taking the test. The court ruled that he should pay child support amounting to 25% of his earnings until the child reaches 18 years of age.

After the paternity and alimony issues were resolved, Ana began to address another pressing problem: finding a job. The RSC enrolled Ana in several professional courses, including a seamstress training program. Ana was also counseled on employee rights and employer obligations. In July 2007, the Balti RSC helped her to find work as a seamstress at a joint Moldovan-Romanian-Italian garment factory in Balti. This job allows Ana to earn 2500 leis (\$250) per month plus benefits, including transportation to and from work. The RSC also helped Ana to place her baby in daycare, which was essential for her to work outside the home.

At present, Ana is happy that she is together with her daughter and has a job, that allows her to rent her own apartment. She remains in touch with the Regional Support Center staff and her two sisters have even contacted the RSC to thank its staff for the support they have provided to Ana.