

# Annual Narrative Report

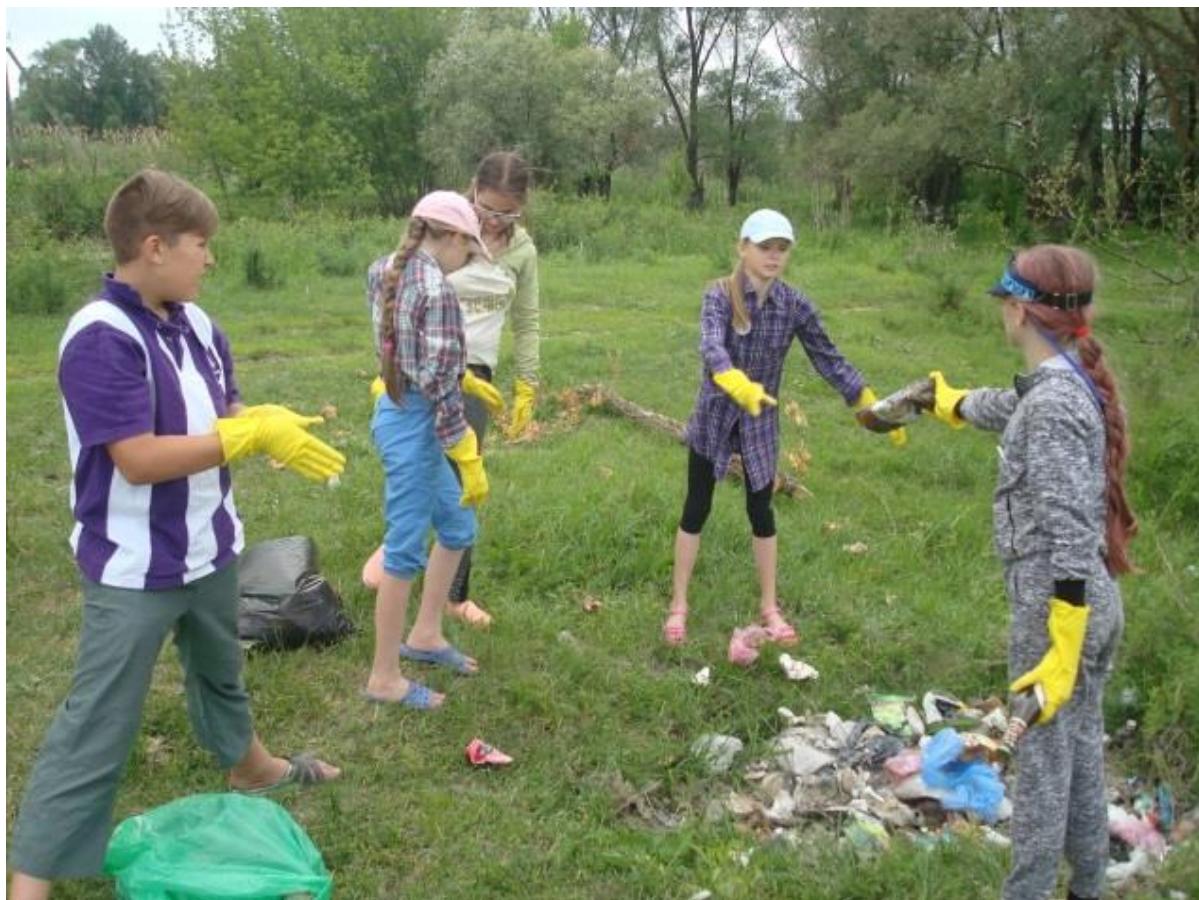
## Dream Achieve Realize Express DARE Regional Program:

Education and social innovation in Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Romania for “a good life for our children”

Submitted by Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien – Hilfe in Not on September 04, 2018

**Donor grants' numbers: 423.162419\_Romania, 440.162411\_Moldova,  
438.162421\_Ukraine**

Reporting period: 01/06/2017- 01/07/2018



Children's Parliament in Action, Kharkov Ukraine. Eco-Beavers' project: Children clean river beds from garbage and waste.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DARE Program is a strategic Program for Caritas Vienna and falls under the strategy of Caritas Austria on “Future for Children” (“*Zukunft für Kinder*”). While children have been a key focus group of Caritas Austria interventions for many years, the organization is more and more orienting towards Regional Programs where synergies between countries can be better identified and promoted; at the same time participation of civil society organizations and beneficiaries in programming, implementation and evaluations is a key topic which we see rather consistently practiced in the DARE program. Many of the methodologies used and here below described are highly participatory in their essence and allow for different target groups to take a leading role throughout the program's implementation.

The current program aims at addressing child protection challenges that children in adversity face in the Eastern European Region, in particular in the targeted countries of Ukraine, Moldova and Romania. Civil Society Organizations that are the implementing partners of the program in the three countries face similar problems: children from vulnerable backgrounds (namely socio-economic vulnerability and ethnic minorities) lack protective and conducive environments that allow them to grow and blossom. With the word “environment” we understand the ecosystem in which children live and that includes various stakeholders and actors: schools/teachers, day-care centres/ social workers, home/families/parents/caregivers.

Three Pathways to Success are pursued within the DARE program to achieve a supportive and conducive environments for children. These three pathways, also called pillars, are: **Grow&Achieve**, **Love&Support**, and **Impact&Sustain**. Each pillar focuses on key groups of stakeholders: Grow&Achieve focuses on children and youth, Love&Support focuses on adults capabilities, namely, parents, social workers and teachers, and Impact&Sustain focuses on Civil Society Organizations or the implementing Partners of DARE program. DARE program addresses the needs of the child in a holistic way by aiming at: a) increasing children's resilience and their feeling of empowerment; b) improving the capacities of adults (teachers, social workers and caregivers/parents) to take care of children using positive attitudes and child-rights based approaches, c) joining forces to improve the advocacy outcomes of the implementing partners and making sure that the needs and voice of children and beneficiaries are heard.

This is done by introducing innovative methodologies in existing day-care centres and state-run schools, by engaging directly with children and adults in the targeted communities, and by intensifying advocacy and lobby efforts at local and national levels as well as strengthening the management capacities of the organizations to achieve higher sustainability.

The main methodologies under the pillar **Grow&Achieve** are **Self organized Learning Environments (SOLEs)** and **Children Parliaments in Action**; the approaches used under the pillar **Love&Support** are on the one end **SOLE** as it impacts the way educators teach, **Mindfulness** and **Positive Discipline**, and **Positive Parenting**; under pillar **Impact&Sustain**, implementing partners are supported to increase and improve the **Advocacy** efforts on **Child protection**, develop and revise **Child Protection Policies** and ensure their implementation, and increase their fundraising outcomes by improving their capacities to write and manage grants.

The approach and aim behind each of the methodologies used is extensively explained in the sections on results; however we outline here below the characteristics of the main innovative methodologies and approaches in use:

- **SOLE:** Self-Organised Learning Environment (SOLE) is a methodology developed by Prof. Sugata Mitra of the Newcastle University. Research on SOLE has been carried out for over 13 years and the methodology has been used and experimented in many schools in England, as well as schools in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Italy, Uruguay, and the

USA. SOLE is designed to help educators support students as they tap into their innate sense of wonder and engage in student-driven learning. The creative potential of each child and the collective intelligence of the group of children are used to make learning a new experience. The SOLE learning path is fuelled by big questions, self-discovery, sharing, and spontaneity. These parameters are needed to create a non-threatening environment in which children feel free to explore<sup>1</sup>. SOLE also changes the way teachers and educators teach and the role of the adults in a self-organised learning experience is to support the creativity and collective intelligence of children. Teachers in SOLE sessions are not any more holders of the knowledge who determine the speed and intensity of the learning, and the type of information to deliver to students; the leaders of the learning experience are the children while teachers become facilitators and support conducive processes for learning to happen.

- The Children Parliaments in Action provide a space to children to speak and be heard. They provide the children with an opportunity to create a movement to fight for their rights. They provide an arena for children to involve in actions that have a positive impact on neighbourhoods and communities. Through the identification of needs, development of project ideas and their implementations, Children Parliaments in Action promote the participation of children in issues of importance to them and their communities. They spur children to come together, to discuss and decide together and to take responsibility for their own and their peer's lives. They are an instrument to strengthen the resilience of children and children learn to be responsible for their lives in all their complexity – they learn to care for the people, realities and challenges in the given neighbourhood / community.
- **Mindfulness and Positive Discipline:** Mindfulness is a humanistic and positive psychology approach to healing, well-being and developing resiliency through individual and relational contemplative practices of awareness and self-compassion. Its key purpose in the DARE program is to provide a conducive environment and teaching methodology for children to feel safe and blossom. It is a methodology that in the DARE program connects to the implementation of Child Protection. The methodology during the first year targets adults (teachers and social workers) and in the second year is transferred to children. When targeting adults, Mindfulness is seen as a method to help care professional to prevent burnout, emotional exhaustion and depletion. The negative impact of emotionally exhausted care professionals has reverberations on the beneficiaries that they serve, including children. Mindfulness helps professionals to break the negativity and compassion-fatigue cycles and helps both adults and children in self-regulating emotions, thus having visible and studied impacts on decreased aggressiveness, hyperactivity, depression and improved attention and (self) compassion.
- Positive Parenting is a set of trainings targeting parents and social workers that touches key topics of relevance for caregivers, related to child development: parental potential development (attachment; upbringing without punishment; effective communication between parents and children age-related challenges); age features of development and needs of children from 6 to 17 years; deviations of attachment of children to important adult and their influence on children's behaviour and development; safe use of Internet, prevention of cyberbullying; support to children's creative potential development; etc.
- Under the third pillar on Impact&Sustain, we find:
  - Joint advocacy efforts to reinforce the work of implementing partners in advocacy at local/regional levels, as well as accessing national platforms on child protection. Three advocacy officers (one per country) are responsible of strengthening the advocacy network by building on a large network of NGOs in the region and to make their work more impactful vis-á-vis of governments as well as main stakeholders.
  - Capacity building: National Program Coordinators and Regional Program Manager have been engaged in ad-hoc support to organizations to improve capacities to write

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theschoolinthecloud.org/>

grants' proposals and improve the quality assurance in existing projects. Also, in July 2018, a regional workshop on Project Design was organized for all DARE partners to improve their understanding and skills in using participatory methods to design and plan projects. Full report on the Workshop will be delivered in the mid-term report of the second year of DARE Implementation.

- Fundraising as part of the sustainability component of the organizations has been included in the following way: organizations developed terms of references for the staff needed (Fundraisers or Grants Managers) and recruited qualified personnel for this position (in some cases internal staff was recruited in others external candidates). The fundraisers mapped key stakeholders and developed a first stakeholders' communication plan. Fund raising events and grants proposals were developed and organizations have become more proactive in looking for opportunities. More activities to aim at increasing sustainability will continue to be implemented in the second year.

The first half year of implementation has seen implementing partners engaging fully to appropriate themselves of the knowledge and concepts behind the methods used, in order to be able to support local targeted communities during the implementation. Capacity building of stakeholders took place through various key trainings followed by implementation and short revision sessions to adjust the methods and approaches to the reality of each context. During the second half of the implementation year, the methodologies have been fully implemented while adjusting them to the local contexts. Local contexts differ substantially between the three countries, with more similarities to be found between Ukraine and Moldova. The target groups in these two countries are predominantly beneficiaries with vulnerable backgrounds, and mostly poverty-stricken. The differences between rural area and urban areas can be noticed mostly in the amount of offer and access to social services and alternative services for children which are more abundant in cities. The target groups in Moldova all live in rural areas, while in Ukraine the target groups are predominantly more from rather urban settings. In Romania, the overwhelming majority of targeted beneficiaries in the DARE program are Roma children and Roma families. The work with Roma communities has implied a radical adjustment of the used methodologies to the context, which is characterised by low literacy levels both in children and in adults, and by the resistance of the parents and Roma communities to be engaged in activities. Staff of local implementing partners defined the appropriate tempo for the introduction of methodologies adapting them to the communities' needs and capacities, while at the same time a lot of efforts from local teams were invested in outreach and awareness raising activities to prepare a solid ground which would allow interactions and eventually working together with the targeted communities.

In general, the implementation of methodologies for children has been very positively received: children show a high degree of engagement and enthusiasm and have used the methods successfully. Adults targeted by the intervention (teachers and social workers) have shown a lot of openness to learn and introduce new methods in their schools and day-care centres. Many of the targeted teachers feel like pioneers of new approaches and are eager to show and share results with other teachers from the same school establishments.

Parents have been in general more resistant to take active part in community activities. Implementing organizations have worked hard to reach out towards parents and bridge existing communication gaps between teachers, social workers and parents. However, in most locations especially in Ukraine and Moldova, parents participated and engaged in support groups and meetings with other parents, and took part in trainings showing a high degree of interest in the proposed topics.

All in all, the data collected during the reporting period by the National and Local Program Coordinators show positive trends in the following directions:

- Positive group dynamics – improved cooperation between children;
- Increased feeling of empowerment for children in SOLE and Children Parliaments: children feel that they have a voice, they are heard and have means to act;
- Parents who initially underestimated the value of trainings, attend weekly meetings and find solace and support in exchange among parents and with experts about topics relevant to child development;
- Parents notice that children who are part of the program are less confrontational and more willing to explain their points of view;
- Parents also notice that children share much more willingly information learnt during SOLE sessions compared to information learnt in normal class settings;
- Social workers perceive the methodologies as powerful to let the children's capacities emerge fully;
- Teachers see the methods used as "game-changers": teachers' role becomes less prominent as children take over the ownership of their learning experience.
- Teachers feel part of an innovative project and are proud to be multipliers of innovation in their communities and countries.
- Organizations have set the foundations to improve or develop Child Protection Policies and practices in their organizations and projects. The follow up on CP will be done during the second-half of 2018.
- The links between the methods (hardware), the attitudes (software) and their respective impact of protection of children and development of safe and conducive environments is becoming clearer through the implementation.

The present narrative report is submitted together with the interim financial report, and will be followed by the results of the mid-term evaluation. Due to the great size of data collection, computing and analysis took longer than foreseen. The evaluation for Moldova will be submitted together with this report in Annex 2a. The evaluations for Ukraine and Romania will follow during the month of September.

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<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Dream Achieve Realize Express DARE Regional Program: Education and social innovation in Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Romania for “a good life for our children”
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<b>COUNTRY / REGIONS</b>	Ukraine: Lviv, Kyiv and Kharkiv Oblasts Moldova: Edinet (Fetesti), Floresti (Rosietici,Varvareuca, Stefanesti) Balti & Petropavlovca Romania: Ojdula, Periam, Iasi
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<b>PROJECT DURATION</b>	From	01.06.2017	To	01.07.2018
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<b>REPORTING PERIOD</b>	From	01.06.2017	To	01.07.2018
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## OVERVIEW OF BENEFICIARIES REACHED IN THE REPORTING PERIOD

### Ukraine

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children Age 6-8y</b>	12	16	28
<b>Children Age 9-13y</b>	129	142	271
<b>Children Age 14-18y</b>	83	112	195
<b>Total</b>			<b>494</b>
	Male	Female	Total
<b>Parents 18 – 25 ys</b>		3	3
<b>Parents 26 – 40 ys</b>	2	48	50
<b>Parents 41 ys – 60 ys</b>	7	40	47
<b>Parents &gt; 61 ys</b>		10	10
<b>Total</b>			<b>110</b>

### Moldova

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children Age 6-8y</b>	11	13	24
<b>Children Age 9-13y</b>	80	89	169
<b>Children Age 14-18y</b>	73	99	172
<b>Total</b>			<b>365</b>
	Male	Female	Total
<b>Parents 18 – 25 ys</b>	2	2	4
<b>Parents 26 – 40 ys</b>	45	271	316
<b>Parents 41 ys – 60 ys</b>	25	118	143
<b>Parents &gt; 61 ys</b>	-	6	6
<b>Total</b>			<b>469</b>

### Romania

The first figure reveals data from Day Centre Don Bosco, Iasi (Caritas Iasi), the second figures – data from Ojdula (Caritas Alba Iulia) and the third figures – data from Periam (Caritas Timisoara).

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children Age 6-8y</b>	16	10	26
<b>Children Age 9-13y</b>	56	71	127
<b>Children Age 14-18y</b>	37	55	92
<b>Total</b>			<b>245</b>

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Parents 18 – 25 ys</b>	0	4	4
<b>Parents 26 – 40 ys</b>	15	31	46
<b>Parents 41 ys – 60 ys</b>	7	14	21
<b>Parents &gt; 61 ys</b>	3	5	8
<b>Total</b>			<b>79</b>

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### *General Overview of the achievements and challenges*

The Program's main outcomes targeted three different and yet interlinked groups of beneficiaries: 1) children, 2) parents, teachers and social workers, 3) Civil Society Organizations through which the DARE program is implemented.

The LogFrame of the Program was revised in July 2017 during the MEAL workshop (Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning) where the staff of the implementing organizations was given the space and the tools to revise and adjust the Logical Framework, they learnt how to implement the monitoring of progress and quality, while maintaining the overall approach at the different levels of Outcomes/Objectives, Outputs/Results and Activities as agreed with the donor.

The outcomes of the program planned for the two years of implementation from May 2017 to June 2019 – and which indicate the intangible long-term changes that affect the target groups and targeted communities - are spelled out as follows:

- **Outcome 1:** 1219 Children develop *Voice* and are empowered to construct and express their ideas

The main aim behind this outcome is that children establish a sense of self-worth and resilience to grow and blossom as human beings. The approach undertaken is the use of innovative tools and technology to stimulate creativity and to improve children's ability to find solutions; self-paced and personalized approach to learning allows children to adjust and progress while respecting their own specific needs; active participation in social and civic life allows children to become engaged community members and active citizens.

- **Outcome 2:** 869 Parents /Caregivers, 26 teachers and 20 social workers create a supportive learning environment

The main aim behind this outcome is that parents, caregivers and teachers increase their capacities to better-focus on child-development, to improve their skills to address the multiple needs of children and to play a positive role in their growth.

- **Outcome 3:** 11 Civil Society Organizations forming DARE Community of Practice (CoP) positively impact Child Protection systems in their countries and become more sustainable.

The main aim behind this outcome is that Civil Society Organizations that are implementing the program are agents of change and by improving their child protection standards, their capacity to advocate and to become sustainable, they can create and maintain environments conducive for children's development.

The impact on the change that the Program brings about under Outcomes 1 & 2 are evaluated by the University of Newcastle and annexed as a separate Program Evaluation document.

Outcome 3 is described further below under the relative Outputs' descriptions.

Below is the description of the Outputs and how the targets were achieved in each of the three countries.

## OUTPUTS TARGETING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Under “**Outcome 1:** 1219 Children develop *Voice* and are empowered to construct and express their ideas”. To achieve Outputs 1.1 and 1.2, two innovative methodologies were introduced to children in day-care centres, community clubs (or parishes) and in schools:

- SOLE, Self Organized Learning Environments: SOLE is designed to help educators support children and students as they tap into their innate sense of wonder and engage in child-driven learning. SOLE is a method that leads to learning being a child-driven process. The creative potential of each child and the collective intelligence of the group of children are used to make learning a new experience. The SOLE learning path is fuelled by Big Questions, self-discovery, sharing, and spontaneity.

Each SOLE session is based on the following elements:

- A powerful Big Question that triggers curiosity and conversations;
- The “self-organization” means that children organize themselves in groups, divide the roles and responsibilities of the group members, use the space as they feel most appropriate, etc.;
- The use of resource material for research (Internet, libraries, people experiences etc.);
- The changing role of teachers from knowledge holders and protagonists of the learning process, to supporters and facilitators of the children-drive learning experience.
- Children’s Parliaments in Action provide a platform for children and youth to be heard and speak up, they promote the participation of children in issues of importance for them and their communities. They spur children to come together, to discuss and decide together and to take responsibility for their own and their peer’s lives. They are an instrument to strengthen the resilience of children. Children who are organised in children’s parliaments learn to be responsible for their lives in all their complexity – they are answerable and responsible for the people, realities and challenges in the given neighbourhood / community.

## Self-Organized Learning Environments

### **Output 1.1** Targeted children develop positive dispositions to learning

Achieved: **1104 children** reached during Year 1 of implementation

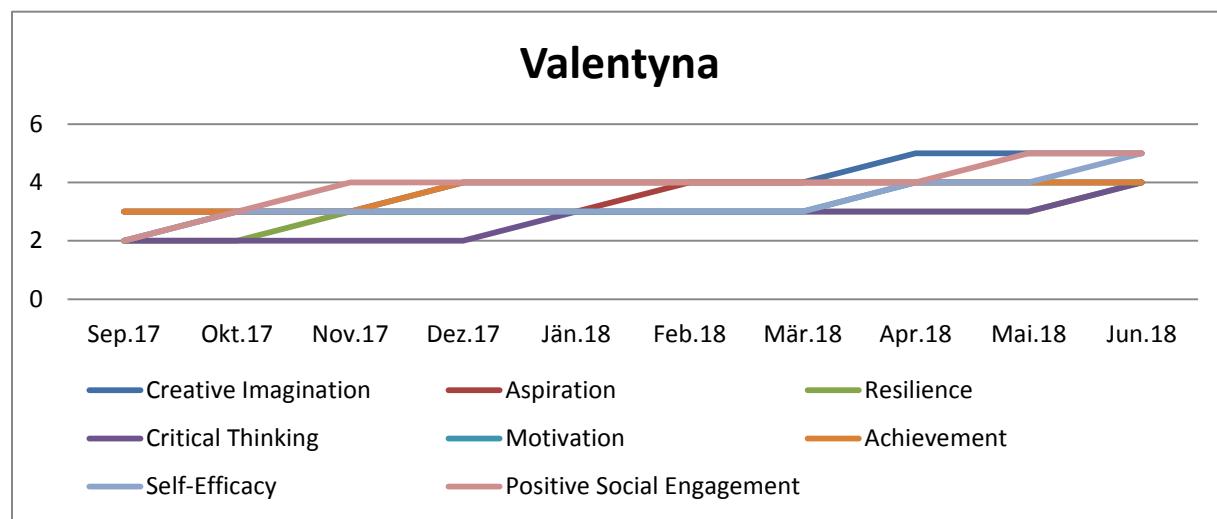
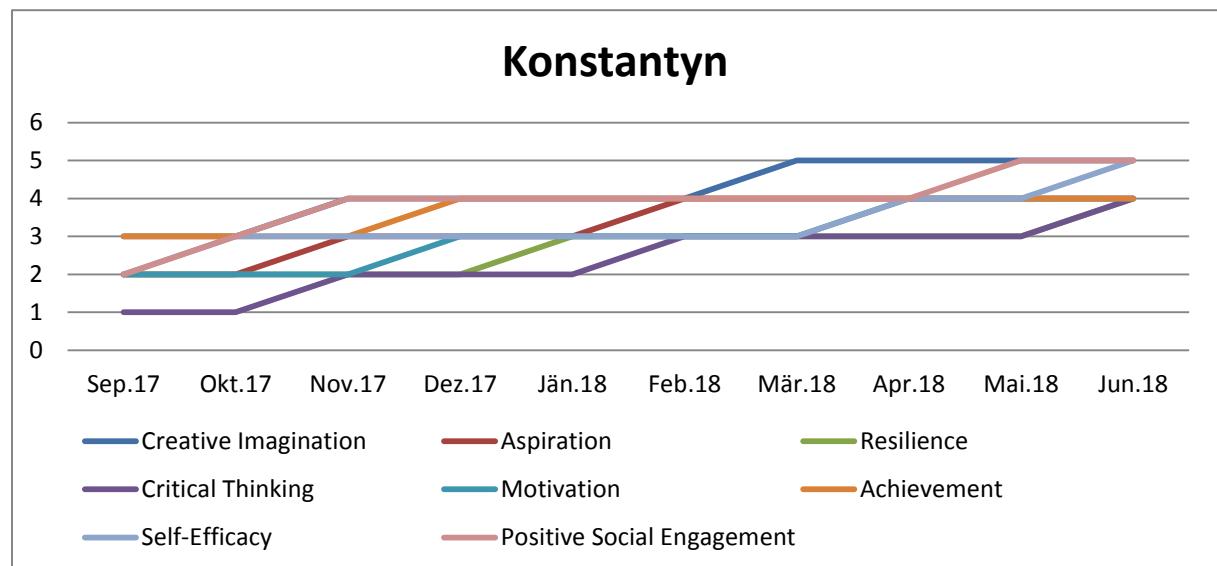
Program Target Indicators	Current Value
❖ 80% of Children demonstrate capacity for self-organized learning* *Self-Organized Learning is connected to life-skills **SDQI tool to be used – the measurement includes quantitative and qualitative data SDQI = Self Description Questionnaire I developed by the Psychology Department; of the University of Oxford UK)	>80%* of targeted children demonstrate capacity for self-organized learning
❖ 80% of Children demonstrate increased self-confidence	>80%* of children demonstrate increased self-confidence
❖ 70% Teachers perceive children who attend SOLEs to have higher educational attainment	70% <>85%* of teachers perceive children who attend SOLEs to have higher educational attainment

\*The data analyzed for the narrative annual report comes from in-depth monitoring done through qualitative methods during the course of the implementation and in parallel to the evaluation. Key Interviews and Focus Groups Discussions with sample groups of different beneficiaries have been carried out in the three countries. Contrary to the evaluation which has measured the results for all beneficiaries participating under pillar one and partly under pillar two, the results of the in-depth monitoring show the general trends. The evaluation on Moldova received by the University of Newcastle confirm the trends (Ukraine and Romania will follow later in September).

Ukraine
<b>Ukraine</b>
SOLE is a method that is based on a powerful Big Question that trigger curiosity and lead a group of children to coordinate together to find an answer.
SOLE trainings for a group of 21 teachers and social workers were held in Ukraine on November 21-22, 2017 by the University of Newcastle. After the training, the participants started to implement SOLE in schools and day-care centres.
453 SOLE sessions for Program Year 1 (319 in 2018) were delivered at 7 locations by 12 teachers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valky lyceum of Kharkiv region,</li> <li>• Medenychi school of Lviv region,</li> <li>• Centre of psychosocial rehabilitation for children withdrawn from families in Kyiv city,</li> <li>• Day care centre for children "Otradnoye" in Kharkiv city,</li> <li>• Children's Village "Otradnoye" in Kharkiv city,</li> <li>• Day care center for children "Stronger together" in Drohobych of Lviv region,</li> <li>• School #52 of Kharkiv city (new additional location since June 2018)</li> </ul>
14 groups of 317 children for Program Year 1 (288 in 2018) participated in SOLE sessions. At least 34% of them belong to official vulnerable groups in Ukraine, like children from foster families, IDPs, children with single parents, children from poor and disadvantaged families.
Targeted educators and children feel much more confident and creative to use different formats of SOLE sessions both in schools as well as in day-care centres. SOLE sessions are being organized both inside and outside, including within summer camps. At first educators mostly used powerful "Big Questions from SOLE cards (guidelines), but now they often link questions to the topics of the school curriculum, create Big Questions by themselves and together with children. Teachers acknowledge that the most powerful big questions are being created by children.
The following sessions were scored by educators as the most engaging and impactful on the learning of children:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are dreams and how do they impact us?</li> <li>• What does Easter mean?</li> <li>• Can astronauts cry in cosmos?</li> <li>• Could we live without muscles?</li> <li>• How to become successful?</li> <li>• What are the greatest threats to our planet Earth?</li> <li>• What cannot be purchased with money?</li> <li>• Why is it important to study foreign languages?</li> <li>• What is at the bottom of ocean?</li> <li>• What is self-confidence?</li> </ul>
Each SOLE session was evaluated by children who fill in child-friendly questionnaires developed following learning attitudes (these questionnaires are filled in all three countries and by all children using SOLE)
Attitudes that are evaluated include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creative Imagination</li> <li>- Aspirations</li> </ul>

- Resilience
- Critical Thinking
- Motivation
- Achievement
- Self Efficacy
- Positive Social Engagement

Questionnaires allow educators to assess the improvements of the child over a period of time. For example the graphs below show the improvement in attitudes and abilities of two children who attended SOLE sessions for 10 months in Kharkiv. The close follow up on these two children was because they showed a high level of general disinterest and disengagement at the beginning of the program. The average score of each learning attitude was calculated monthly, and the final results confirm good progress in learning attitudes of both children.



Monitoring data show that there are positive trends in development of learning attitudes and skills among almost all who regularly participate in SOLE, as SOLE teachers confirmed it during focus groups discussions. Children are getting more confident, they develop skills to search for the new information and make presentations, they learn to cooperate effectively and solve internal conflicts. With creation of their own big questions their curiosity is growing.

More than 80% of targeted children gave a positive feedback on SOLE methodology and they confirmed their interest in using it regularly in school and day-care centres.

There is quite big difference between SOLE organized in schools and children's centres with different challenges. When SOLE is organized in school with school teachers, children always have perception of sessions as school classes and of SOLE teachers as school teachers, rather than of a facilitator. It is a big challenge for teachers to switch to the role of facilitator with children for whom they have authority as school teachers. At the same time, it is not easy for children to overcome this barrier and to feel free to self-organize and experiment at SOLE sessions. More support to teachers to understand how to change their role during SOLE sessions will be provided during the second year of implementation.

At the same time, because of the school setting, children have high levels of discipline during SOLE sessions, and they listen to presentations of other groups quite carefully. Also, because targeted children in school are supported by the same teachers, teachers can better follow the impact and improvements of children who use SOLE throughout the school year. In fact, all school teachers confirmed improvement of individual learning skills of children, their curiosity, presentation abilities, communication and computer skills as well as general group dynamics.

On the other hand, children who participate in SOLE sessions organized in day-care centres feel much more at ease and free than children in schools. They appreciate a lot the fact of organizing themselves independently during SOLE sessions. Children in day-care centres perceive SOLE more like a fun activity, a game and an entertainment rather than a learning process, unlike children in schools. However, the biggest challenge for teachers is to keep discipline at the sessions and make sure that there is active listening when other groups are present.

Where organizations work with children who suffer from complex multiple traumas (e.g. Fond Aspern), the educators and psychologist use the methodology in an adaptive way. However, educators and psychologists engaged with traumatised children confirmed that the use of SOLE helped children to feel more confident and that they are less timid and withdrawn.





### Extracts from interviews with target groups

#### Child. Drohobych, UA

*My name is Darynka. I am 9 years old. I have been attending SOLE session since December 2018. I like SOLEs a lot. They are very interesting. We are asked a lot of interesting big questions and I discover a lot of new and interesting things. When we have newcomers, I always teach them what and how to do SOLEs, because SOLEs are different from school lessons, and newcomers do not know that they can do here a lot of cool things. What I like the most are presentations. During presentations I can tell different interesting stories I learn from other children. I try not to miss SOLE sessions. Thanks for SOLEs.*

#### Parent. Drohobych, UA

*SOLE is really new for me, but it's important to break stereotypes of formal education. It's great when children can educate in this way, not in a conservative way. At SOLE sessions children learn how to communicate and interact with each other.*

#### Parent. Kharkiv UA

*It is amazing how my kids start to look around and get interested in everything there is.*

*Feedback of children from focus groups discussions with National Coordinator:*

- *SOLE is very interesting for us. We get a lot of interesting information about the world through big questions, and we develop ourselves. After each session we can propose new big questions for the next sessions. Our Facilitator often selects big questions from those proposed by us.*
- *We feel very confident now to make presentations, because we know what and how to present. We like to make presentations publicly. We started to use PowerPoint recently. We like PowerPoint, and we like drawing as well. We make videos of our presentations and observe later how we look like and what we do when we make presentations and this helps us to see our mistakes.*
- *We think that skills to search for new information on the Internet are very important for us. It helps us in school. We love SOLE sessions, because we like to research information and make a good presentation. These are useful skills for us.*
- *We analyze when we choose information from different Internet sources. Not all information on the Internet is true. We compare different pages and choose what to present. Our Facilitator helps us sometimes.*
- *We need SOLE, because we learn how to work in the team. We became friends with each other here. It's great.*
- *Here at the SOLE sessions we have freedom to organize ourselves. We can change the groups, and we can express our opinion. In school we don't have this freedom. We feel very comfortable here, and the atmosphere is nice at SOLE.*
- *Comparing with school classes, SOLE is much more interesting, because we can search for information by ourselves and present this information. School classes are boring. I want all school lessons to be like SOLE!*
- *We like to fill DARE handbooks. It's interesting to choose emotions and to draw stars. The emotions we feel the most often at SOLE sessions are happiness, excitement, energy, interest, worrying. We see positive change in our participation in SOLE at stars mapping in DARE handbooks*

### **Moldova**

Nine months after introducing the concept, SOLE is in use in 7 sites in Moldova (3 day care centres and 4 schools). The traditional school is an environment where students are expected to memorize and repeat facts - which is the lowest level of educational development - and the teacher is seen as the source of knowledge. In a SOLE session, instead of lecturing facts, teachers are allowing learning to happen. For students today, it is more critical to know how to find information. Teachers set the stage for critical thinking - encouraging students to be curious and seek the answers on their own.

After the initial stage of planning and training from Newcastle University (November 16-17 for all staff involved in the DARE program, 20 participants) teachers started to experience and implement the new methodology.

A total of 727 SOLE sessions were held during the reporting period in four schools and three day-care centres. 365 children experienced the Self Organized Learning Environment.

The number of SOLE sessions in Moldova is higher than in any other country because: 1) the program is implemented in more schools (four local schools), and in more classes per school; 2) The teachers decided to experiment SOLE under the supervision and weekly support of DARE local coordinators before the SOLE trainings were given. In that way they joined the trainings with a list of questions and challenges for which they could find solutions and answers.

The new method and innovative approach was more challenging for teachers, rather than for children. It was difficult to 'step back' from the conventional role of a teacher and assume the role of a 'friendly mediator'. It took time and support to help the teachers gain confidence with the technique and, where possible and appropriate, act as partners, rather than mentors, exhibiting/showing curiosity.

In the very beginning phase, expectations of the outcomes were not met, due to lack of experience, lack of trust in children from teachers, pre-set soviet type of educational methods and beliefs about education. So the teachers didn't experience 'instant success' in the first months of the project. This challenge was particularly visible within the school setting more than in day-care centres.

The second biggest challenge teachers faced while experiencing SOLE was the formulation of "BIG Questions". The key to SOLE sessions is having a powerful question that triggers curiosity and conversations. It took time to learn making questions interesting and challenging for children to stimulate the discovery process.

Some of the most appreciated "big" questions are:

- How do people learn things?
- What would happen if the Earth had a different shape?
- How big is the universe?
- How would a person's life be if he could not read or write?
- How can the past teach us about the future?
- Why do the leaves have different shapes?
- How can an adult discipline a child without beating him?
- What do we find at the end of the rainbow?
- Could robots ever replace people?
- How do animals count?

Although the recommended age ranges were divided in 3 age groups (6-8, 9-13. & 14-18), it often happened that groups were mixed, when the number of children was not enough. Mixed age group encouraged the children to use each other's strengths to succeed. Younger ones who may not be able to read fluently could use their curiosity to build momentum while older children recorded the findings.

To summarise the results from these 9 months of SOLE activities carried out, it was observed that:

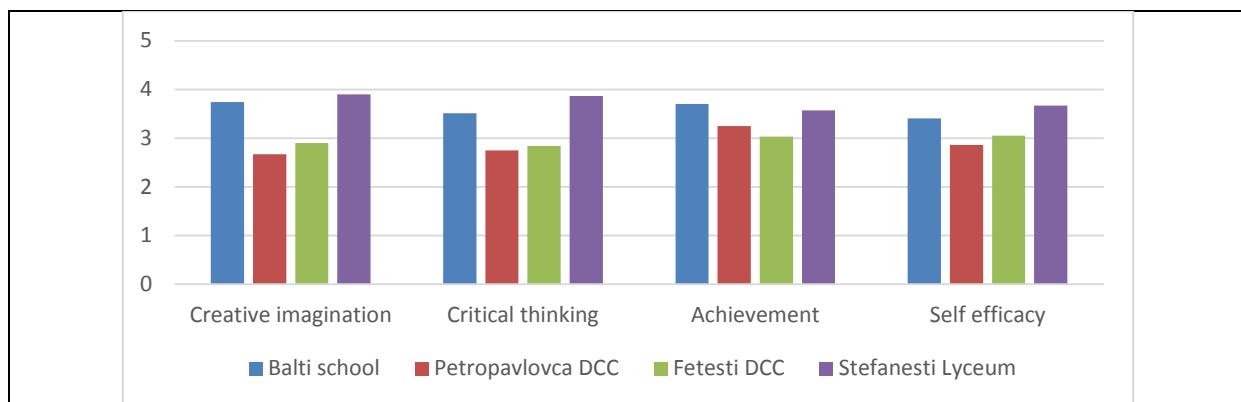
- **Children** in Petropavlovka village (Balti) **can learn to use computers and the Internet** by themselves. As most of them come from a social vulnerable background, some of the children never had access to a computer and didn't know what the use of internet was or how to use internet browsers.
- **Children show self-organising behaviour.** Initially - due to the educational beliefs and background they were used to - children were confused and a bit frustrated, as they were used to be told how to behave and what to do. When choosing the group, most of them were not confident in taking over some responsibilities or roles. It was noticed that some children tend to leave most or all of the work to a few, more diligent, members. There was a tendency of group members to exert less effort than they could or should because of the reduced sense of accountability. During the last monitoring visit (June 2018), it was clearly seen that this attitude changes and children were comfortable with one another, they easily and quickly divided in groups, they distributed roles within the group and tried to keep each other accountable.
- **Positive group dynamics between children.** In most of the SOLE sessions, children formed certain groups simply because they already knew one another. It was common to see only groups of boys or groups of girls. There was competition between groups and children didn't perceive the option of changing groups at all. Later, when the accent was shifted from the form (how organize the activity) to its content, children started to appreciate the benefits of changing groups. It has to be mentioned that teachers have been encouraged to set up frequent "getting to know you" and "icebreakers" activities for group cohesion. As children became more familiar with each other, their curiosity began to trump their desire to be with known friends. Children started to move from one group to another because they either wanted to remove themselves from a potentially distracting situation or were more interested in another group's direction of research.
- **Research skills have improved.** In the very beginning, they had no idea of how to manage the large chunks of information resulting from their research using the internet. As such they simply copied chunks of information by adopting a "copy and paste" approach when writing their

presentations. First months observations showed that children needed to be taught how to identify and evaluate credible websites relevant to their question. They clearly needed to be engaged in critical thinking when selecting, reading and adapting a piece of Internet-based information. Teachers often were hearing complaints like "*I don't find the right answer*", "*I do not know how to summarise the information*" and "*I don't know how to use the ideas and information*". As a result, children either were losing the focus and the interest for the question or most of the groups were presenting the same "copy and paste" information from the first sources available. After half a year, essential improvements have been noticed. Students try hard to present a different perspective from other groups. They saw that they were producing the same answers as some of their classmates so they dug deeper and were searching for different information, different sources. They went beyond their gut reaction to a question and really looked at all sides of the question.

- **Presentation and communication skills have improved.** First SOLE sessions showed that children have poor skills in communication and presentation. They were very shy, coming in front of the class was a real challenge for many children. Usually the role of presenter was delegated to the most active group member and others were just holding the poster. The poor listening capacity of the class was worsening the situation, as well as the teachers' tendency to correct and give the "*right answer*". Step by step, such comments from teachers as "it is/ it's not correct", "It's a good / it's not a good answer, do / don't do that, it's ok/ it's not ok" disappeared. The understanding that within SOLE there is no wrong answer and the point is the argumentation of children and their capacity to extract and analyse and present information with confidence considerably increased
- **Improved sense of confidence and friendship.** SOLE encouraged collaborative learning. Children were helping and supporting each other in learning or drawing the posters for presentations. They easily could play a theatre scene or work together at some hand made stuff.
- **Positive engagement and voluntarism .** A higher level of civic activism and engagement has been observed at "*SOLE children*". *SOLE children* is a group of children from the Varvareuca Social Centre and "Ion Creanga" Theoretical Lyceum in Floresti (implemented by Regina Pacis), who attended the SOLE sessions, together with their social assistants and teachers, and actively participated in the Easter Campaign and collected food for needy people and children from socially vulnerable families, and distributed food packages to those needy people in order to offer them a decent meal on Easter Day. Also "Regina Pacis" Social Centre in Varvareuca held the Summer Camp - 2018 (June 11 – 15), for 100 children of different ages from the community. Children who had been attending SOLE sessions during the year volunteered in the Summer Camp and, guided by social workers, organised SOLE sessions with younger children.

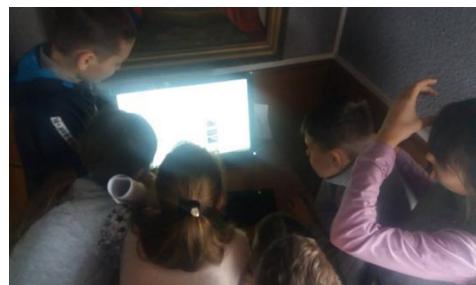
The situation in day-care centres, where staff interacts with particularly vulnerable children, is quite different from the situation in schools. If in day-care centres, educators are more open minded and easy going for changes, in schools it is more challenging to change teachers' perceptions and educational behaviour. The opposite is true with regard to children: children from schools are going through changes more easily, they have less problems with confidence and communication skills, while children from day-care centres, due to their vulnerable background, have more behaviour problems, lack basic social and educational skills and the expected changes take more time and efforts.

This is also confirmed by the field notes reports written by the Social Workers (this monitoring tool – Field Notes - is used in all three countries to monitor children progress), where school children have a bit higher results in learning attitudes than children from day-care centre (*Chart with figures from Caritas Moldova Schools and Day Care Centers DCC*)



Although teachers and educators see the impact and enjoy the results of their first SOLE year, there are several challenges that will require more attention and effort the next year of implementation:

- **BIG questions.** Crafting the big question is the most challenging piece of the SOLE experiment. The success of the SOLE sessions was almost always depending on the question. Teachers and children still learn to formulate large, open, and interesting questions.
- **Listening abilities.** Children lack listening abilities in the phase of presentations of results from groups. Teachers have to work more on developing the feeling of respect for others and active listening.
- **Behaviour management.** Most children attending SOLE are vulnerable to behavioural and emotional problems, hyperactivity, and peer-related problems. Teachers have to take actions to enhance the probability that children choose behaviours which are personally fulfilling, productive, and socially acceptable.





The following quotes are from social workers, school teachers and children who use SOLE methodology. The quotes are an extract of interviews made with random selected target groups:

Extracts from interviews with target groups	
<u>E.R., 7<sup>th</sup> form, Balti school, Caritas Moldova</u> <i>"I think that SOLE sessions help me to be more creative and smart in answering the questions I don't have an answer. I learned to work in group, to express my opinion regarding the asked question and to put it down."</i>	<u>J.N. a mother of a boy who is attending SOLE sessions since January 2018, Petropavlovka Day Care Center, Caritas Moldova</u> <i>"My son is now more responsible, more friendly and kind. The SOLE sessions are very beneficial."</i>
<u>Victor, 10 years old, Fetesti Day Care Center, Diaconia</u> <i>"It is a positive experience. Here I feel better than in school, here there are fun questions. Here, at SOLE, we are fewer than at school and we are praised and encouraged."</i>	<u>Minodora, 58 years, Fetesti, Edinet (grandmother)</u> <i>"It is a good project; it is welcome in our community. The children in the village gather at the day centre, they have funny activities, they sit at the computer, and they draw. My nephew says it's interesting, he likes it and he attends the Centre very often."</i>
<u>Andrea, 9 years old, Fetesti Day Care Center, Diaconia</u> <i>"I have noticed that it is easier than at school, there is no homework at the centre, but just a question and many other interesting things, like experiments. I have developed my memory here and learned the use of the computer better and I'm not afraid of it. Today I have learned, here at SOLE, that fear is a defence mechanism of the body."</i>	<u>Mirabela, social worker in Day Care Center Fetesti, Edinet, Diaconia</u> <i>"First of all I like that this project helped me a lot as a person, as a parent, as a professional. I realize how important it is for children to support them and accept them. The independent learning and development of critical thinking and life skills are more important for their future. It is a huge opportunity for us to change a little the system of education"</i>
<u>Sebastian, 10 years old, Fetesti Day Care Center, Diaconia</u> <i>"We like coming at the Centre and doing SOLE. We don't have marks here and teachers are not yelling at us. We will come here until we will grow up and became volunteers. We have a lot of ideas how to change the world"</i>	<u>Aliona, social worker, Petropavlovka Day Care Center, caritas Moldova,</u> <i>"I was so happy to hear from my student that through SOLE I discovered in her the talent of drawing"</i>

<p><u>Girl 15 years old, Social Centre Varvareuca, Floresti, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>"For me, this project was an extraordinary opportunity to develop my socialisation skills. I was very pleased with the way all the sessions were organised. The program we had during this activity was well balanced. I really enjoyed the elements of Mindfulness at the beginning or the end of the session. This project has been an unforgettable experience and I hope that the SOLE sessions will continue in the Social Centre in our locality in the future."</i></p>	<p><u>Marina, 31 years, Fetesti, Edinet (mother)</u></p> <p><i>"Children communicate with each other, those who do not have a computer at home here can develop computer skills."</i></p>
<p><u>Girl 14 years old, "Ion Creanga" Theoretical Lyceum from Floresti, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>"At first I was timid and was not very active at the first sessions, I did not really communicate with the group members because I thought my ideas were not good enough and I did not know how to surf on the Internet properly. Due to insufficient financial resources, I did not have a computer at home and did not know how to use a computer. I gradually learned how to search for different information, how to distinguish a fake account from an authentic profile, how to find out a lot of new things with the help of a computer, things that are often necessary in everyday life. Successively, working in groups and collaborating with peers and project volunteers helped me to make a lot of new friends."</i></p>	<p><u>Social worker, 26 years old, Social Centre Varvareuca, Floresti, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>"Using the SOLE methodology, together with the children, we gain new knowledge. Teamwork and practical activities have made both adults and children develop new skills and become more united and friendly. For me, this experience as part of the DARE team has been extremely useful as it has helped me develop my communication skills, establish and maintain relationships, which will be useful to me in my professional experience."</i></p>

## Romania

### **Iasi:**

In the reporting period there have been about 150 SOLE sessions in Iasi at 'Don Bosco' Day Center targeting 56 children. These sessions have the duration of 1,5-2 hours in which children divide themselves into teams and worked together to find answers to big questions, work out presentation and present the answer to the other colleagues. During these activities 32 children, aged between 5 and 10, who attend regularly the Center, had the opportunity to explore various areas, such as the world of science, nature, animals, the world of cooking; also they build a time machine and discovered the secrets of the human body. The way children assimilated new information was dynamic, interactive, practical, cheerful, characterized by curiosity and emotion of discovery, each session being like a long road at the end of which the treasure of knowledge was awaiting.

Children attending the centre in Iasi come from very disadvantaged backgrounds and some are of Roma ethnic minority.

In a year of SOLE implementation a significant change has been noticed by the social workers responsible for this activity. They say children developed the following two major skills: to find **solutions to life situations** and to **work in a team**. The 32 children that attend activities organized at Day Center 'Don Bosco' in Iasi are getting better in their attitude and approach to activities, at team work, assuming roles and responsibilities in the team. They developed their creative capacity, artistic spirit and curiosity.

During summer holidays there is a tradition of organizing a summer camp in the mountains. This is a

great opportunity for children to enjoy nature and work together with volunteers on different activities. The summer camp organized this year was dedicated to the SOLE methodology. Children were involved in discovering nature by working in teams and finding answers to big questions.

A problem the team in Iasi faced in December was lack of children's interest to continue SOLE activities. Children showed a big disinterest in searching the answers and working on the presentations. Some children started not to involve in these activities any longer and protest when they were announced that a SOLE session was to begin. The local team decided to interrupt the SOLE sessions for December and start again the implementation of SOLE sessions in January. The social assistant started to search and work more to identify the big questions that would trigger the curiosity of the children and open up for different possibilities for children to present their results. In January, children started being interested again and enjoyed working in teams.

SOLE questions considered most interesting for children were:

- *What happens in our body when we breathe?*

During this session children were invited to simulate human lungs. The presentations were very successful and the overall level of involvement was high, indicating that this session was a successful one.

- *What does abuse mean?*

During this session, the challenge of generating answers was accepted with interest by most of the children. The session was led by the social workers and pedagogues. The concept of abuse has often been heard by children and some children have been exposed to violence of some sort. The SOLE technique and the materials used helped children learn the meaning of this concept by analyzing concrete examples illustrating various forms of abuse. Participants also learned about the Rule "Nobody is allowed to touch me here" that refers to the fact that there are certain areas of the body in which a child does not have to accept being touched by other people. Another aspect targeted at the session was to identify the alarm signals and how to respond to situations that involve some form of abuse.

- *Do we understand traffic signs properly?*

The children had the task to work in teams and design a layout on which to place the main road signs. This activity proved its results later this year, when participating in different field activities children recognized those signs in the city.

### **Ojdula:**

The SOLE activities held in Ojdula took place both in the Day care Centre for children aged between 6-12 and in the local school for children aged between 12-16 targeting a total of 88 children.

Total number of SOLE sessions held in the Day care Centre in first project year is 34, the duration of each variating between 1 to 2 hours.

The target group in Ojdula is exclusively children from Roma communities. The beneficiaries are from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds and struggle with age-appropriate levels of literacy. Due to the particular needs of the target group, the social workers had to adapt SOLE to the capacities of the beneficiaries (especially with regard to attention deficit and literacy). The social assistants took into account the fact that a great number of beneficiaries lack reading and writing skills and developed an adapted style of SOLE. The majority of SOLE activities were **Art SOLE** (using art, creativity and hand workshops). At the same time, the local team focused on organizing a lot of activities to **experiment with the digital world**: letters on the keyboard, using the mouse, writing texts, saving, copying, searching information in the internet, etc. The majority of children don't know internet, so they are not able to look for information as it happens in other more "classical" SOLE sessions.

The local team decided to organize one session of Art SOLE per week and one or two activities to teach reading and writing skills using the laptops, so to be able to try out "classical" SOLE sessions starting from next school year.

Examples of big questions used during the reporting period are:

- *Why school is important?*
- *Who am I?*
- *How do you imagine your future?*
- *How music was born?*

- *What is imagination?*
- *How can mathematics be funny?*
- *What is trust?*
- *What Roma people want?*
- *What makes us to be a community?*
- *What are the stars?*

The biggest challenge that the implementing team in Ojdula faced at the day-care centre regards the capacity of children to self-regulate, a life-skill that is learnt early in life and in kindergarten. The majority of the beneficiaries did not attend the kindergarten and they are not used to be given rules by caregivers, such as waiting your time to speak or participate in the activities.

Children experimented with SOLE activities also in the local school in Ojdula where two teachers are using the **SOLE methodology to teach the national curriculum** of Physics, and general knowledge. The two teachers have organized a total number of 44 SOLE sessions. They asked big questions such as:

- *Do bugs see colours?*
- *How are human beings learning?*
- *Can human beings be replaced by robots?*
- *Is there sound on the moon?*
- *Why is the sky blue?*
- *Friction. When it helps, and when not?*
- *Can anything be less than zero?*
- *Why do people dance?*
- *Can we live on another planet?*
- *How do bees make honey?*
- *Does time-travel exist?*
- *What is the brain?*
- *Who invented the school?*
- *How far can we see?*

The biggest challenge for developing SOLE sessions in the local school remained the duration of the sessions: school hours last for only 50 minutes and these are insufficient for both children and teachers to complete a SOLE session. The director of the local school promised to work on the next school year schedule to plan SOLE sessions for two school hours. These should be enough for a full SOLE session.

Both social worker from Day Care Centre and school teacher reported that there is a significant change noticed in the attitude of children towards work. In the beginning they were not accustomed to team work. They were used to classical teaching methods where the role of the teacher is predominant and information is unilateral.

Children gradually became **familiar with team work**, which means sharing rules and tasks, working together efficiently and being part of a common work. But these changes did not come immediately. An important shift has also been reported in the dynamic of groups even though children got used to work in the same group and do not like to change groups.

Another significant change to be reported was related to the quality of the presentations of the groups work. The quality of the selected and **processed information** has improved during the reporting period, comparing the first SOLE sessions to the last ones. The presentations, themselves are more meaningful, bear more information and artistic spirit.

The local coordinator worked hard on spreading the SOLE methodology: she organized 1 SOLE training in order to transmit the knowledge about SOLE to 9 more teachers in local school. She also organized one SOLE training for 23 colleagues from Caritas, who are working in Harghita county, in 8 Day care Centres. Thus, in Caritas Alba Iulia SOLE sessions are organized in a new project, the Day care Centre from Örkő – a Roma community in Sf. Gheorghe. Considering the specificity of the beneficiaries and following the example of the team from Ojdula the local team decided to adapt the methodology and experiment a reframed SOLE. A number of 5 beneficiaries aged 13-16, mainly illiterate, work individually though helping each other during the sessions and each of them is

developing an individual answer. The space for individual work allows to follow the specific needs better while at the same time encouraging peer support helps them to develop openness and generosity in the relation with others.

### **Periam:**

In Periam, through the Caritas Federation of Timisoara, 114 SOLE sessions were held between May 2017 and June 2018 and targeted 101 children. The SOLE sessions were held both in the day-care center and in the local school, each location having SOLE in two different groups. In school the SOLE sessions were held once a week with children from the eighth grade and twice a week with children from the third grade. In the day-care center the SOLE sessions are organized for beneficiaries only belonging to Roma minority, while in the local school the majority are Romanians.

While the beginning of the implementation period is characterized by efforts for the implementing team and teachers to understand how SOLE sessions work, the end of this period shows a closer **understanding of SOLE by both children and social assistants**, e.g. the way SOLE sessions are held, how groups are formed, how the information is searched, how the presentations of the groups are delivered, etc.

However, there are challenges such as choosing powerful Big Questions in order to trigger the curiosity of the children and make them work efficiently. Another challenge is the role of educators and teachers and the difficulty in striking a balance between allowing children to self-organize and necessary interventions from the adults during SOLE sessions. Teachers and educators at the Day-care centers still tend to suggest answers to children and draw final conclusions of their groups in their stead.

The biggest work that the Local Coordinator faced was to **help educators to shift the mentality** and allow for a different learning environment to emerge. This is an ongoing process.

A significant change has been reported for the beneficiaries of the day-care center. Most of them developed a greater **sense of self-confidence** that is they have the courage to present the answers and solutions to the big questions to the rest of the children. At the same time, they became more flexible during the sessions, which shows the **courage to dare** moving to another group and admit when and why they may feel uncomfortable. They sometimes negotiate their move to another group with the leaders of the other group. But, above all, children are thrilled to use computers. In order to use computers, they are motivated to contribute and find an idea for a big question by themselves at home and bring it to the center.

Some examples of big questions are

- *Why is the snow white?*
- *How do human beings learn?*
- *When am I rich?*
- *Why are poor people poor?*
- *Why do people sigh?*
- *Why do tears have the shape we know?*
- *Why do people fall in love?*

The youngest children, who do not yet read and write, became very confident in expressing themselves through art.

Teachers used big questions also with younger children while playing a more active role in providing information and inspiring them to express their findings through art-work. Teachers made use of the DARE Community Facebook Page to get inspired by best practices with young children and found questions that were used in other centers by DARE partners and used with pre-school or illiterate children:

- *How do bees collect the honey?*
- *How do fish communicate?*
- *How was the fire discovered?*
- *How do ants communicate?*

A characteristic for SOLE beneficiaries in school is the "daring" factor. Children are very active in finding solutions, they express what they feel, think and dream. School children are happy to decide the pace specific for their study. Each of them has a specific pace to learn and they are happy to

accept and follow it.



SOLE Session In Iasi day-care centre



SOLE session in Ojdula day-care centre

The following quotes are from social workers, school teachers and children who use SOLE methodology. The quotes are an extract of interviews made with random selected target groups:

Extracts from interviews with target groups	
<u>Parent, Iasi, RO</u> <i>My children are very happy when they have SOLE. The day when they have SOLE sessions they come home and speak over and over about their new findings or the experience. Children have the possibility to work with computers and find information about various topics of interest.</i>	<u>Teacher, Ojdula, RO</u> <i>I consider myself adventurous and that this is why I agreed to participate in this program. If at the beginning of the project I was cautious and reserved with the SOLE activity because I thought it applies to the humanities and I am a teacher of Physics, after one year I realized how wrong I was. However I agree with those practicing SOLE who say that the biggest challenge is SOLE sessions is to find the powerful Big Question around which the session is then developed.</i>
<u>Teacher, Periam, RO</u> <i>Ever since I heard of SOLE methodology I felt it was something that touched my own heart because it gives children the opportunity to talk and bring to the surface everything that is in their hearts. Pupils like this method; they are looking forward to doing SOLE. They are interested in participating, being active, discovering and discussing. I believe that with this method we help children to value themselves, to realize the value of their peers, to work with their classmates to find the best solutions.</i>	<u>Teacher, Ojdula, RO</u> <i>It was difficult at the beginning because children had no experience in team work. Now they acquired some basic skills, such as role distribution, group formation, listening to each other and respecting another person's opinion.</i>
<u>Teacher, Ojdula, RO</u> <i>I re-read my notes and I realised that the evolution of school grades has significantly changed since we began to introduce SOLE in Physics classes. I am very proud of these results. Children became more curious and understood the subjects better. Out of 17 children, 14 have higher grades, 2 remained at the same level and only 1 case registered a lower grade. The higher grades increased of 1, 2 and even 3 points. For example at the beginning, a student had 6 and after one year of SOLEs in Physics now has 9. And he is not the only one! I am going to write an article for a</i>	<u>Social worker, Periam, RO</u> <i>After 7 months of SOLE method we notice an unexpected evolution among children. Flavius, for example, has changed a lot: has more self-confidence, has become more responsive, more responsible. I also noticed that even if we are not in a SOLE session, children when they do not know the information and find no answer in the textbooks ask for computers to search for the information they need. Now they are more and more eager to present the results of the group's work. They are not timid or inexpressive any longer. Children began to analyse and</i>

<p><i>specialized magazine about my experience with SOLE.</i></p>	<p><i>synthesize the content more effectively.</i></p>
<p><u>Students participating to SOLEs. Periam:</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like to do SOLE because I find many new things that even if they seem trivial, they still give interesting answers and explanations.</i></li> <li>• <i>At SOLE we communicate and enjoy ourselves. I like to search for information on the computer, and sometimes I find some real stuff.</i></li> <li>• <i>At first I was nervous when I had to present the 'answer', but now I can't wait for my turn to do it.</i></li> </ul>	

## Children's Parliaments in Action

<b>Output 1.2</b> Targeted children and youth contribute to the development of their communities Achieved: <b>313 youth</b> took part in Children's Parliaments initiatives in the communities.	
<b>Program Target Indicators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 90% of mini-projects formulated by children parliaments answer specific community needs</li> <li>❖ At the end of 2 year, 45% of projects are supported* by local actors**</li> </ul> <p>*Co-matching, in-kind contributions, cash contributions  **Municipal actors, schools, NGOs, CBOs, churches, Activists</p>	<b>Current value</b> <p>100% of mini-projects formulated by children parliaments during the first year answer specific community needs</p> <p>Positive trends during year one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of implemented projects by the Children's Parliaments in Ukraine are supported by local actors and 50% of them received funding and in-kind contributions.</li> <li>• 100% of implemented projects by the Children's Parliaments in Moldova are supported by local actors.</li> <li>• 100% of implemented projects by the Children's Parliaments in Romania are supported by local actors. 35% of them received funding and in-kind contributions</li> </ul>
❖ 25% of target youth in child parliaments take part in other community activities	>25%* of youth in Children's parliaments take part in other community activities (volunteerism through the local Parishes or day-care centers)
<p>*The data analyzed for the narrative annual report comes from in-depth monitoring done through qualitative methods during the course of the implementation and in parallel to the evaluation. Key Interviews and Focus Groups Discussions with sample groups of different beneficiaries have been carried out in the three countries. Contrary to the evaluation which has measured the results for all beneficiaries participating under pillar one and partly under pillar two, the results of the in-depth monitoring show the general trends. The evaluation on Moldova received by the University of Newcastle confirm the trends (Ukraine and Romania will follow later in September).</p>	
<b>Ukraine</b>	
<b>187 sessions of children's parliaments</b> for Program Year 1 (182 sessions in 2018) <b>in 4 locations</b> were organized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drohobych state Centre for Families, Children and Youth in Lviv region</li> <li>• Novi Petrivtsi state Centre for Families, Children and Youth in Kyiv region</li> <li>• Valky lyceum in Kharkiv region</li> <li>• Day care centre for children "Otradnoye" of Social Service of Assistance in Kharkiv city</li> </ul>	
<b>5 groups of 189 children</b> in total were organized and implemented children's parliaments in action. <b>46 mini-trainings</b> were delivered on various topics, often in cooperation with partner's organizations or institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kharkiv Regional Library for Youth</li> <li>• British Council in Ukraine</li> <li>• Caritas-Kharkiv</li> <li>• Kharkiv School of the new generation "STRIX"</li> <li>• Communal Kharkiv Enterprise "Animal Treatment Centre"</li> <li>• Kharkiv Zero Waste: Recreation Campaign</li> <li>• the Head of the Kiev District Administration of Kharkiv city</li> <li>• Local bakery in Valky city</li> <li>• Caritas-Drohobych</li> <li>• Mayor of Valky city administration</li> <li>• Mayor of Novi Petrivtsi village administration</li> <li>• Mayor of Drohobych city administration</li> </ul>	
<b>Four projects</b> of children's parliaments were implemented in full, namely: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Eco-beavers</u> by Social Service of Assistance. In June 2018 children with few adults floated</li> </ol>	

on kayaks for 80 km along the river for 4 days and cleaned 6 beaches. Plastic and glass garbage were transported on the raft made by children. One tourist accommodation place was equipped with garbage collection points and pointers indicating the location. The local TV channel reported the story about this event.

Additionally, children joined 2 city events "Clean rivers" on garbage collection at the river Kharkiv and 1 ecological event "Adopt the package", by helping to collect 2 tonnes of garbage at each event. Facebook page of project activists: <https://www.facebook.com/EkoBobry/>



"Eco-beavers"

2. Charity in Valky lyceum. The project's aim was to support elderly people who lived at the local institution in very bad conditions. Children purchased air conditioner and pillows for local residents and organized a number of supportive meetings with them. Additionally they negotiated with local bakery about free donations to the elderly people. Children are ready to continue to visit the institution as volunteers and organized concerts, celebrations and other events.



Shelter for elderly people in Valky

3. Youth day in Novi Petrivtsi 2018 based in Novi Petrivtsi centre for families, children and youth. 5 days of celebrations were organized in June 2018. Children spent 3 days in Pyliava camp where they played active games by engaging young people from neighbour communities, took part in the workshop "How to become successful" and organized marathon and streetball championships. Children took the decision to organize similar events each year.
4. Children's playground based in Drohobych Centre for Families, Children and Youth. Children decided to equip the playground for small children near the local hospital. They ordered new equipment for the playground, and after few meetings with city Mayor they received additional support to finish the process as soon as possible.



Playground in Drohobych

**Four more projects'** ideas were developed by children and are now **in the process** of implementation (will be finalised during reporting period for Year 2 of DARE):

1. "Dog's paradise" by Social Assistance Service. Its aim is to arrange and equip the playground for dogs in the local community. After holding the survey of local citizens, this need was identified as primary one, but the project was quite complicated. The decision was taken to split it onto 2 stages. The first stage was arrangement of the playground, and it's completed for now. Children organized charity market where they sold handmade collars and leashes for dogs. 2165 UAH were collected as additional budget for purchasing the fence. Municipal authorities supported instalment of the fence and arrangement of the territory as playground. Second stage, purchasing or producing and instalment of equipment for dogs training, which is planned for autumn.
2. "Reconstruction of the Park" by Valky lyceum. Near the school there is an abandoned park with partially destroyed monument of Lenin. City council voted against demolition of the monument recently, but children hold a wide survey of local citizens, and 95% of them voted for its demolition. Children managed to convince city council to vote one more time and support this decision. Together with city authorities children will clean the park, install benches and plant the trees.
3. "Safe city" by Valky lyceum. The aim is to decrease the number of criminal accidents in the city. Under the guidance and supervision of the social worker assigned to this component, children are going to prepare and to print information leaflets how not to become victim of the crime. Then they are going to shoot videos where they give advices to people. They already agreed with city authorities that their video would be presented on the stage of the central street of the city at the weekend. In the central park they will distribute information leaflets and deliver self-defence training course. Adults who are experienced in such topics (including the police department) will assist the children during the project implementation.
4. "Rollerdrome" based in Novi Petrivtsi Centre for Families, Children and Youth. Its aim is to create a place where all rolling skaters could gather together and practice skating. The project is supported by Novi Petrivtsi mayor who agreed to co-fund the project.



Charity market within the project "Dog's paradise"

During the reporting period, the expert on Children's Parliament Larysa Pietushkova from Partnership 4 Every Child provided online support to coordinators from all DARE partner organisations on request. One of the most challenging issues was involving young people and motivating them to visit meetings regularly. Besides, there was a delay with a start of children's parliament in Novi Petrivtsi, related to issues with recruiting of a coordinator and quarantine in local schools.

During March 13-16, training on the programme "How to become successful" was held in the premises of Partnership 4 Every Child training centre for all coordinators of children's parliaments, not only within DARE program. Participants learnt how to involve children to activities (outreach), motivate them and empower for achieving certain results, ensure their participation.

Extracts from interviews with target groups	
<u>Child, Kharkiv UA</u> <i>My life has changed since I joined to Children Parliament. I met new friends, visited school #52, got new knowledge and made a kayaking trip. It was excellent. Me and my friends cleaned the beaches and played a lot. We slept in tents and cooked food on the fire. I have never been in such trip before. It was amazing!</i>	<u>Child, Kharkiv UA</u> <i>My friends and I, whom I met in the parliament, decided to build a playground for dogs in our community. It isn't easy. We made posters, went to many shops to distribute advertisements about our Action, wrote project applications and planned the budget. But beside that, I was in a Kayaking Trip with the Eco-beavers project. We cleaned beaches, swam in the river and spent time in a useful and fun way. I want to go to the Parliament in autumn and make more useful things for my city</i>
<u>Children, Valky UA</u> <i>We understand the methodology as a role-model of parliament for adults, taking the responsibility on ourselves for solving some social problems in the city. We love it, because we can be active and engaging to so many important problems in their city. It prepares us for adult life. It makes us active citizens of Ukraine.</i>	<u>Facilitator, Valky UA</u> <i>Participants of parliaments are different from other children. They know how to take and hold responsibility. There were shy children in the school, but in the parliaments they expressed themselves a lot. Children voted for the representative who is a good public speaker. And two children who were very shy were voted by the members of the parliament to become project leaders.</i>
<u>Parent, Kharkiv UA</u> <i>My kids just cannot wait to attend the Children's Parliament sessions. Children feel like adults, feel that they are doing something responsible and important.</i>	
<b>Moldova</b>	

Children Parliaments in Action is implemented in Moldova by one single partner: Diaconia. Initially starting with 15 volunteers of the Social Center, it has now **extended to 40 children**. Children used sociocratic election method to choose their president, vice president, secretary and finance responsible person.

A total of **39 meetings of Children Parliament have been organized** in the reported period. The meetings took place once a week for about 3 hours each.

Child members of the Parliament developed a total of **6 project proposals** in the reporting period. Of these, 2 were voted by the community. The project proposals were developed in thematic areas that concern children's lives and living environments.

When working over the proposals, children tried to follow the necessary steps, such as:

- assess the community children's needs



- develop the problem tree
- choose 3 main problems and divide themselves in 3 working groups to find solutions
- organize meetings with school leader and teachers as implementing partners
- draft the project ideas
- organize an open electoral advertising event to present the 3 project ideas
- organize the open voting process (voting in the school in ballot boxes with participation of children, parents and teachers )

The project ideas presented for the first voting round

were:

1. **"Children's comfort - our main goal!"**

Through this project, Parliament intended to set up 2 dressing rooms (Male\Female) next to a school gym in Edinets, to offer the high school children a comfortable safe place for changing their clothes.

2. **"We have knowledge, we want to experiment!"**

Children have proposed to equip the school lab with the necessary equipment to be able to do experiments in physics, biology and chemistry classes.

3. **"Sport is for us!"**

Children have proposed to equip the sport class with equipment and sport uniforms for girls and boys in order to have the same uniforms to participate in local and regional competitions.

213 people voted and with majority of votes, the project **"Sport is for us!"** was implemented.

In the second stage, following project ideas have been presented for community vote:

1. **"Outdoor cinema"** – through this project, children wanted to arrange a place for the gathering of young people, interaction, spending free time together.

2. **"Volunteering, Sport, Health"** - professional fitness equipment. This project was largely proposed by the girls in Parliament to have a place to do fitness. Through the project children intended to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

3. **"Park for "St. Stelian" Daycare Center"** - Children wanted to arrange a picnic area in the park near the parish centre.



This time, the voting was organized on line, via Facebook and with majority of votes the **"Outdoor cinema"** project was implemented.

Children's parliament is a solid foundation from which to promote decision-making processes

that are more collaborative and inclusive for children and young people. Children's Parliament is helping children to develop their self-confidence and self esteem, their voices are heard and they feel more empowered. Social engagement and spirit of voluntarism also increased: 20 young people from the Children's Parliament participated as volunteers in the Easter Campaign "Table of Joy" organized by Diaconia. While one day of the campaign, they were volunteering in 2 supermarkets from Edinet and inviting people to donate different products. Later, they packed and distributed the gathered products to the needy people from the village.

Young Parliamentarians also respond to the priest's initiative and volunteer to help the elderly in their household chores.



In June, 10 young people from the Children's Parliament organized a summer camp for the group of children participating in SOLE activities. The camp lasted a week and children enjoyed many interactive and fun activities.

Also in June, the preparation for another important event started - Regional meeting of Children's Parliaments from Romania, Moldova and Ukraine. The event will take place in August and aims at creating a platform for dialogue between young people from Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine for sharing experience and active involvement of youth in decision-making processes in the field of child rights. The details of this event will be reported in the second year of implementation.

The following quotes are from children attending the Parliaments:

#### Extracts from interviews with target groups:

##### Adrian, 18 years, Fetesti, Moldova

*"I like this program very much, especially since we started the project. I felt that together with my colleagues, we were making a change for our village."*

##### Catalina, 15 years, Fetesti, Moldova

*"I feel I grow as a personality here. I want to leave something behind me here. I will go to University and leave the village, but my brother, my cousin stay here and I want them to have opportunities. I want to be the change!!!"*

##### Igor, 40 years, Fetesti, Edinet (priest and teacher)

*"The project has a very strong impact. I often hear from teachers about the children's parliament, children talk about doing this or that activity and project. Children are excited, they think together, they work in groups, they analyse, they look for what to buy, for prices. This is a life experience."*

#### Romania

**Iasi:**



Figure 1 Children Voting in a Parliament Session

Children's Parliament is a methodology that has enabled children to express themselves and feel useful for their community. Beneficiaries had the chance to learn and experience lessons like identifying the problems of the community, finding solutions to address the problem, writing a project, advocating for the project to be elected, finding alternative resources to implement the project, negotiating with local authorities for authorizations and implementing it properly.

On the other hand, local authorities were introduced to what children plan to do. Moreover, children were encouraged to form a Children's Parliament at the local level, where members could invite children from all social backgrounds, as well as representatives of socially or medically disadvantaged categories (e.g. children with autism, children with disabilities, children with Down syndrome) to join.

In the reporting period two distinct groups of 'Children Parliaments' were organized under the umbrella of Caritas Iasi. In the first group **11 children aged 12-13** participated actively. The rate of participation was rather high: 85%. There have been organized **20 sessions** with the average duration of 1 hour. Unfortunately the result of this parliament is not an implemented project. Children depend on documents that should be delivered by the City Hall of Iasi. The project aims at setting a belvedere zone in a place which is the property of the municipality. The risk of community projects in big urban areas is to depend on slow bureaucratic system. The project itself is rather daring: to rearrange a location on the top of a hill and install a smart map system in order to become a place for tourists to see the sights of the city and the map to identify the main tourist attractions in Iasi.

The second parliament registers **12 participants, aged 17-18**. The participation is lower in this case: only 60% of members participate regularly. The number of sessions held is **20 sessions** with the average duration of 1 hour.

In this case the project is already implemented and children managed to paint walls in a section of the largest pediatric hospital in the region of Eastern Romania.

Its inauguration will be in December as the management of the hospital needs more time to refurbish the section. Children were encouraged to proceed in implementation phase by the management and administration of the hospital. They welcomed children's vision and made children feel excited and courageous in making other attempts. The impact of this project was very powerful as they succeeded to transform a dream into reality, to express themselves in words as well as in colors and at the same time create a safe and ludic place for children in need. One should mention that Children's Parliaments received a lot of support from other children (from different schools) and even parents volunteered to assist with the details in implementation.

A challenge faced was the delay in project implementation because of school year (many days off) and school program (many exams). As a solution to this the following year's planning will take more carefully into considerations these two factors.

As a positive aspect it has been reported that youth from the Children's Parliaments became volunteers for the day-care center for the Christmas celebrations.

In conclusion children developed skills to identify community needs, to work in teams, to make a presentation of a project, etc. They **developed new partnerships** and **increased visibility of the DARE program**.

### **Ojdula:**

In Ojdula, the first Children's Parliament started in late November, as the training on how to set up and lead this methodology was delivered in Romania only in autumn. In the reporting period group meetings were organized in the local school and 45 children have been involved in the first parliament (13 of them are participating to SOLE activities as well).



Children Parliament Meeting session in Ojdula

The parliament is organized in three working groups, two groups of children in the 8th grade, who wanted to get involved before they leave their school and village for further studies, and one group of children in the 7th grade. In the reporting period, working groups met with a frequency of two hours per week (3 groups x 2 hours).

Group 1: 13 children; 10 meetings, with an average presence of 12 children per meeting. The members of this group were the most involved children up until the end of the project. The belief is that their presence and participation was mainly influenced by the fact that their project won in the elections.

Group 2: 16 children; 4 meetings with an average presence of 13 children per meeting.

Group 3: 16 children; only 2 meetings registered, with the presence of 15 participants. Some of them have participated on the plenary parliament meetings. Members of these two last groups are students of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and couldn't get involved more because of their school program (preparations for national examination). From the very beginning children decided to join the

parliament even if they knew they will be less involved. They wanted to participate in community work thus getting very involved in concrete tasks, especially during the organization of the charity ball.

These meetings were focused on development of group dynamics, brainstorming techniques, how to collect information, needs assessment and writing projects.

The total number of parliamentary plenaries was 11 with average of 15 children attending the meetings.

Seven project ideas were proposed to be discussed during the general meeting held at the beginning of February:

- 2 ecological projects,
- 3 social projects,
- 1 campaign and
- 1 project related to infrastructure renovation.

Three ideas, out of those seven, were developed and presented to the public. The parliament members organized the voting procedures for the school and all the community.

Based on the votes, the winning project was the Charity Ball aiming at supporting two members of the community: the first one with a severe disease and the second one with her house burnt. After the final vote - which was held in the middle of April - the parliament members have developed the action plan, roles and responsibilities and organization period started. They chose the date of 23<sup>rd</sup> of June to organize the Ball.

From March onwards, the group meetings were switched to plenaries, as implementation of the project started. Meetings were organized on a weekly basis. Children showed great responsibility with the project implementation: one team was responsible with designing the poster, another team went to talk with the Mayor and with the Police, third team talked with the beneficiaries of the ball, other few children were responsible for music, etc. All of them distributed the information within the community. In conclusion the event has been organized in a very participative way.

The parliament was supported by the local school – a part of the parliament meetings were hosted by the school. In the same time the local council offered the Community Cultural Center to be used for the ball for free. Also, the local police was very helpful and they supported children to set a list of security rules for the event and responsible adults were named.

The Charity ball, in the vision of the children was a great success. They made a target of collecting 1000 lei and at the end of the evening they counted an income of 1645 lei and 50 euro.

One challenge faced was the school vacation time that prolonged the timeframe between the different parliamentary sessions.

Also, for upcoming Parliament sessions the scale of the proposed projects will be seriously taken in consideration. The suggestion is to make further projects simpler to realize in order to respect the timing properly. Charity Ball turned to be a complex project, for which half a year was not enough.



Children parliament Ojdula: Support to Elderly

Because of no previous experience in the dynamic of parliament session, the local DARE team was not aware about the complexity of the task chosen by the children.

As positive aspects one can mention is that the local council and the school board have been very open and positive to children initiatives, so there is a great chance to continue them successfully and put them into practice. There has been a lot of support from parents too, e.g. two of them accepted to join and help the parliament members, and accepted to be responsible for the security of the event in the evening of the ball.

### Periam:

Children's Parliament component started in Autumn 2017 after the trainings were delivered to Romanian partners. Only one parliament round has been organized in Periam where children from community designed a project for their community. The membership modified over time: some children withdrew, others joined. Because neither children nor adults were accustomed with the functioning of this methodology the rhythm of the sessions has been slower than planned. In time participants became more familiar with the new environment and revealed signs of self-confidence. Children began to come to the meetings more open and optimistic. They developed the sense of observation oriented to their community needs, searched for solutions and discovered project ideas. Ultimately they realized that resources to community needs are within the community and local authorities, local school, local mayoralty could become reliable partners.



Children Parliament in Periam Designing Projects

In the reporting period 21 parliament sessions have been registered, out of which 15 group meetings and 6 parliament plenaries. The average number of the participants to a meeting is 16.

Out of the three proposed ideas only one was elected. The elections were democratic, where members of the parliament had the chance to have Power Point presentations of their projects and the rest of the children from Periam Lyceum together with their teachers voted one of them. The selected project was founding a local club for teenagers, called West World that responded to the need of Periam teenagers to have a place of their own for leisure and fun. The project was re-written and improved taking into consideration project's purpose, objectives, activities, budget (including in-kind resources), partnerships and supporters. In order to involve more local resources children went to the mayoralty to find a location for the club. They had the surprise to be offered a large room/hall free of charge and the mayoralty agreed to pay all administrative costs. DARE program covered the costs for club materials: furniture, audio-video equipment, office supplies, games equipment, t-shirts, etc. Children also received a lot of books in order to set a library in the location.

The aim of the project is to create a secure place where teenagers from Periam could meet, socialize, interrelate and feel good. During need assessment exercise they discovered that there was no space for teenagers in Periam to meet and socialize, only kindergardens and parks for smaller children existed.

The opening day of the West World Club was the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2018. Local authorities, represented by the mayor Cornel Dumitras, local school board, represented by the director of Periam Lyceum Usvat Viorica, teachers, representatives of the Day Centre, the local catholic priest, and other local community representatives were present at the inauguration of the club. Being a promising start this event encouraged children and gave them confidence to continue. Parents of parliament members supported their children and volunteered to prepare cookies for the event.

The club opens three times a week under the supervision of an adult volunteer or every time when children meet for parliament works. After the phase of implementation the parliament had a plenary in which children were invited to a debriefing in order to discover negative and positive aspects, what needs to be improved and what needs to be continued for further projects. During summer the parliament works ceased and children will meet again on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August. However children have a task during summer holiday: to re-discover their community and to search for new project ideas.

The following quotes are from children attending the Parliaments:

#### Extracts from interviews with target groups:

Children Parliament Members, Iasi, RO

*By coming to the Parliament meetings I feel I opened my horizons of knowledge to new things and this is only the beginning.*

*My feeling was that I belonged to a team. I love*

Social worker, Periam, RO

*I admit that initially I was afraid of this project where I had to work with children and young people in the community. But I gradually managed to get to know each one better and I am grateful for their involvement in these*

<p><i>the feeling of self-confidence and ownership that I developed together with my colleagues. We participated to various projects and Children Parliament is the most flexible and encouraging.</i></p>	<p><i>activities of the Children's Parliament. We have managed to implement a first project. I congratulate the children for the good and beautiful ideas they have, and hope to succeed to help our community becoming better and more beautiful with the involvement of children. I was glad to see that we had support from our mayor.</i></p>
<p><u>Parliament members, Ojdula, RO</u></p> <p><i>I come to the Parliament because I like the spirit of the group. We always have fun. I will never give up coming here because only here I meet my friends and it doesn't remind me of school. I know that we all together are strong and hard-working. And we never forget to have fun.</i></p> <p><i>We do have fun, but we are also serious in realizing our tasks. We had serious discussions and involved the Mayor and all our families and community members. They all take us into consideration now. This encouraged us and made us be more active.</i></p>	<p><u>Social worker, lasi, RO</u></p> <p><i>I developed a very close relationship with children. They consider me their friend. I can see how open, sincere and interesting they are and, at the same time, very intelligent.</i></p>
<p><u>Children Parliament Members, Periam, RO:</u></p> <p><i>I like the Children Parliament because here is a place where I don't feel alone, have new friends and I always felt good.</i></p> <p><i>I have many friends in the Children's Parliament. Although I knew the other children from school who also attend the parliament, I managed to know my peers better through the meetings in the Parliament, the activities we had together, and this made me feel that I can open myself without being judged.</i></p> <p><i>What I liked most in the Children's Parliament is the coordination of activities and that I felt that my ideas were listened to by the others. I'm sorry we did not win with our group's project 'Local Skate Park'. The mayor said that eventually Skate Park will be realised, but I was at least happy to bring this idea to our village.</i></p>	

## OUTPUTS TARGETING PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

Under “**Outcome 2:** “869 Parents /Caregivers, 26 teachers and 20 social workers create a supportive learning environment”, Outputs 2.1 and 2.2 see the use of the following methodologies:

- Positive Parenting is a component introduced by SOS Children’s Village Ukraine and based on their long-term experience working with parents and foster families in their projects. Within DARE, the component of Positive Parenting has been developed to cater for two main needs:
  - To support vulnerable parents to provide a safe and caring environment in their families and homes;
  - To empower parents and see them as key stakeholders in any child protection project, thus undertaking a holistic approach to child care and child development that targets, besides children, all main key actors.
- Mindfulness and Positive Discipline: Mindfulness is a humanistic and positive psychology approach to healing, well-being and developing resiliency through individual and relational contemplative practices of awareness and self-compassion. Its key purpose in the DARE program is to provide a conducive environment and teaching methodology for children to feel safe and blossom. Also, research has found that self-care is a useful complement to the professional training of mental health professionals. Across its 40 years of application, scientific studies have shown a wide range of solid evidence for the supportive role of Mindfulness-based stress reduction programs for helpers (i.e. Irving, et al. 2009). The first Year of implementation of the DARE program targeted mostly adults (teachers and social workers) to help them understand how to self-regulate, reduce stress and risks of burnout, thus becoming more resilient and also able to communicate better with others. The plans for the second Year of implementation of the DARE program were to empower the trained adults and target children in schools and day-care centres and tackle the following topics:
  - Metacognitive awareness
  - Attention regulation skills
  - Emotion regulation skills
  - Non-judgmental and non-reactive attitudes in relating to present moment experience
  - Habits of body, habits of mind
  - Qualities of kindness, compassion and care in relating to self and others

<p><b>Output 2.1</b> Targeted Parents/Caregivers use positive parenting skills</p> <p>Achieved: <b>212 parents</b> targeted by activities and training of Positive Parenting.  &gt;80%* of targeted parents confirmed the will apply the knowledge learnt</p>	
<p><b>Program Target Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 50% of parents and caregivers participating in the parenting program* use positive parenting skills** by the end of the project.</li> </ul> <p>* including training by SOS Children's Villages- UA and coaching by social workers</p> <p>Frequency: Baseline by SOS - an evaluation end of year 1</p> <p>** child development, positive interactions, responsiveness, sensitivity, nurturing, emotional and disciplinary communication, discipline and behavior management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Parents and caregivers lead* at least 1 support group in each project location</li> </ul> <p>*Setting the agenda, deciding the frequency, follow-up between meetings and content</p>	<p><b>Current value</b></p> <p>&gt;80%* of targeted parents who attended the trainings said they will apply the knowledge learnt. (Monitoring of application during Year 2 of implementation)</p> <p>-2 support groups in Moldova, 5 support groups in Ukraine and none yet in Romania (due to cultural context – see description on pages 48-50)</p>
<p>*The data analyzed for the narrative annual report comes from in-depth monitoring done through qualitative methods during the course of the implementation. Key Interviews and Focus Groups Discussions with sample groups of different beneficiaries have been carried out in the three countries. Contrary to the evaluation which has measured the results for all beneficiaries participating under pillar one and partly under pillar two, the results of the in-depth monitoring show the general trends.</p>	
<p><b>Output 2.2</b> Targeted Teachers and social workers consistently use innovative DARE methodologies</p> <p>Achieved: 50 social workers and teachers trained in Mindfulness (of which 80% practice)  &gt;50%* of trained teachers and social workers use SOLE consistently</p>	
<p><b>Program Target Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 80% of teachers and social workers *increasingly display a set of positive attitudes**</li> <li>❖ 70% of teachers and social workers consistently use* SOLE methodology</li> </ul> <p>* Is being used at least 2 hours a week per teacher</p> <p>**Positive attitudes (defined as set of behaviors as per Mindfulness/Positive Discipline training components)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 20% of DARE teachers/social workers will become ambassadors* of DARE methodologies within their larger communities by the end of the program</li> </ul> <p>*Training of Trainers, Sharing good practices, recruiting new people who will adopt the methodologies</p>	<p><b>Current value</b></p> <p>-Defined in the annual evaluation report*</p>

\*The data analyzed for the narrative annual report comes from in-depth monitoring done through qualitative methods during the course of the implementation and in parallel to the evaluation. Key Interviews and Focus Groups Discussions with sample groups of different beneficiaries have been carried out in the three countries. Contrary to the evaluation which has measured the results for all beneficiaries participating under pillar one and partly under pillar two, the results of the in-depth monitoring show the general trends. The evaluation on Moldova received by the University of Newcastle confirm the trends (Ukraine and Romania will follow later in September).

### ***Positive Parenting***

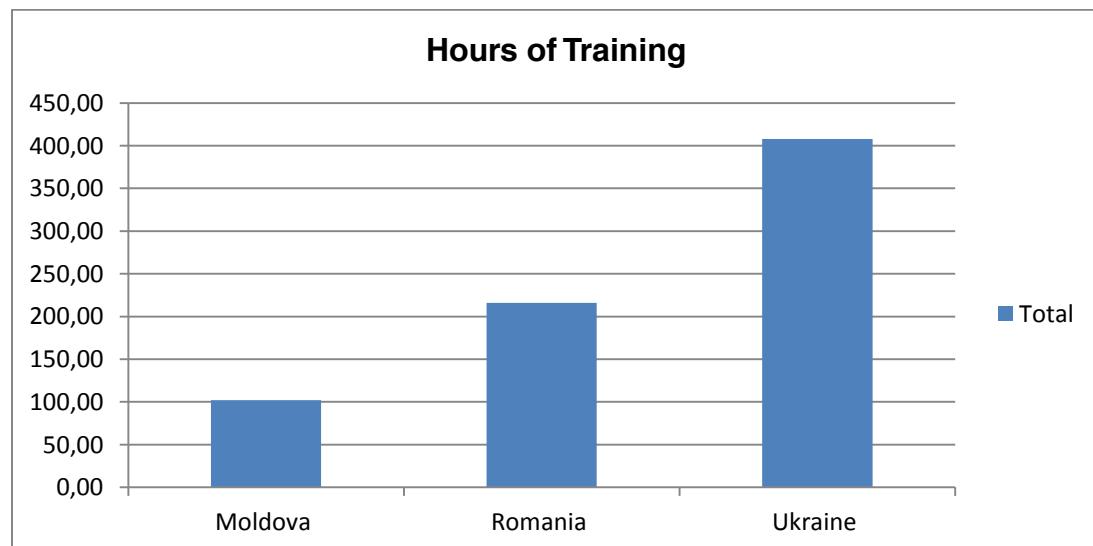
Within DARE Program, trainings on parenting is offered to parents, social workers and staff of implementing organizations, and in some instances teachers were also involved. The sets of trainings were provided by SOS-Children's Villages Ukraine.

The main topics of the trainings tackled during the first year of implementation are:

- Age features of development and needs
- Case Management
- Conflicts Management
- Deviations of children attachment
- Mentoring and coaching
- Parental development potential
- Peer Support
- Prevention of violence against children
- Safe use of Internet
- Stress management
- Training for guardians and specialists

The following is an analysis of the trainings held so far in the three countries. Most training during the first years were held in Ukraine while only some were delivered in Moldova and Romania. This was done also to test the usefulness and appreciation of content provided before offering them to other countries. During the second year a follow up will be done in Moldova and Romania to introduce more trainings for parents and social workers.

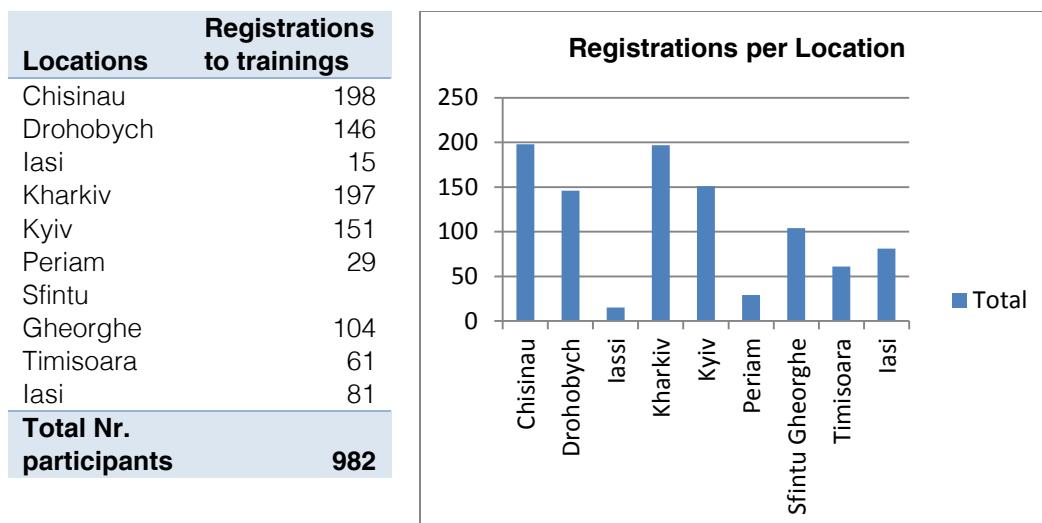
SOS-Ukraine delivered 726 hours of trainings in total, 408 hours of trainings in Ukraine, 216 in Romania and 102 in Moldova:



Further trainings in Moldova and Romania will follow during Year 2 of implementation.

The total number of participants to trainings in the three countries was 531. The participants were 40% parents and 60% members of staff of implementing partners. Also, 20% of participants were from Moldova, 30% from Romania and 50% from Ukraine.

During the implementation period, the number of participants' registrations to SOS trainings was 982 (individual participants registered to multiple trainings):



Participants were asked for each training topic whether they would apply the knowledge acquired and whether they found the training useful. On question 1 (Application of the knowledge) the average answer of participants who said will apply the knowledge is 96%; and on question 2 (Usefulness of the training) the average score of all applicants responses is 98%.

Below the responses of the participants on all trainings (on a 0% to 100% scale):



The following sections offer more details into the progress made and challenges faced under this component in the single countries and partners.

Ukraine
<p><b>24 trainings for 93 parents</b> were delivered during the implementation period to 3 organizations (Fond Aspern, Social Services of Assistance and Caritas Drohobych) by trainers of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 trainings on Stress management</li> <li>• 3 trainings on Parental potential development: attachment; upbringing without punishment; effective communication between parents and children</li> <li>• 3 trainings on Safe use of Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games</li> <li>• 3 trainings on Age features of development and needs of children from 6 to 17 years, age crisis and how to help your child</li> <li>• 3 trainings on Violence against children: cause, manifestations, implications, indicators.</li> <li>• 3 trainings on Deviations of attachment of children to important adult and their influence on children's behaviour and development</li> <li>• 3 trainings on Support of your child creative potential development</li> <li>• 1 training on Conflicts and ways to solve them. How to avoid conflict. How to solve it. How to find a common language – requested by Social Assistance Service</li> <li>• 1 training for foster families and specialists who work with foster families – requested by Aspern</li> <li>• 1 training on Time management, requested by Caritas-Drohobych</li> </ul> <p>Average percentage of satisfaction by trainings is <b>98.4%</b>, according to self-assessment of parents</p>

after the training:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Maybe	Agree	Strongly agree
Training was useful for me and responded to my needs				17%	83%
I'll apply knowledge and skills received at the training			1%	15%	84%
Trainer was qualified and adaptive				9%	91%
Training was organized on the high level				8%	92%

The general knowledge increase is quite high as well, according to self-assessment of parents after the trainings. Average score of knowledge level on key topics of the trainings before the trainings was 14.28, while average score of knowledge level after the training was 22.81. Thus, the average percentage of knowledge increase is **65.3%**.

**15 sessions of 5 support groups** in different locations **for 70 parents** were organized in 2018.

- Parents of children who visit the day care centre for children "Otradnoye" of Kharkiv city. Parents have clear requests to talk about their relations with children of adolescent age and pre-school age.
- Foster parents of family type houses from Kharkiv region at the state Centre for Families, Children and Youth of Kyiv district of Kharkiv city. Parents from Children's Village Otradnoye will be engaged as experts and facilitators for next meetings. Those support groups could be great basis for establishing network of foster parents in Kharkiv region who could share their experience, advocating for their rights and support each other.
- Elderly people in the club for elderly people "Second youth" of Kharkiv city. The funding of the project was recently terminated, and having the opportunity to gather together in order to support each other is of crucial important for elderly people.
- Parents in Caritas-Drohobych organization, Lviv region. It was not an easy task to develop good cooperation with parents in the beginning, because they couldn't speak honestly on the topics they were interested in. Every next group meeting was more and more successful. The most fascinating thing about parents is that by receiving assistance from staff they express their readiness to serve to other people from the support group and in the organization.
- Vulnerable parents who visit Aspern organization, Kyiv city. The topic of the first meeting was "Parental instructions and their impact on children", and the second one "Preventing conflicting communication in the family". At the focus group discussion parents recognized that they would like to invite some experts at their support groups, like doctors, children's psychologists or lawyers, to be able to discuss with them issues they are worried about.



**Case management** component is being implemented in various formats in 3 locations:

- In Caritas-Drohobych there is initial needs assessment of all children and their families who visit day care center "Stronger together". According to this needs assessment the plan of work with a child and family is being developed by engaging various specialists. DARE specialist within Positive Parenting component is being engaged to make home patronages and to provide individual consultations on request. Some parents ask for individual counselling after parenting support groups. 17 consultations were provided to parents within DARE program.
- In Aspern the package of documentation was developed for this component, according to case management standards. And 3 cases of vulnerable parents were taken for the work within DARE program. The DARE specialist is a psychologist with vast experience of working with vulnerable parents, so a professional approach is being provided.
- In Social Service of Assistance the specialists provide individual counselling to parents, however, they still have to introduce the package of documents for the component. In the organization there is highly professional case management project for crisis families, and project coordinator together with social workers will support DARE specialist in implementation of this component within DARE.

**2 seasonal community events** were successfully organized by Caritas-Drohobych. The first one was a trip to holy places in the village Stradch. Both parents and children were very satisfied. They told that they would never visit such beautiful places on their own. The second activity was a really joyful and united family festival in the village Rychtychi. Families could spend the whole day together out of the town doing different interesting indoor and outdoor activities with their children. This event is being considered by the organization like a top point in establishing good and friendly relations among family member of our beneficiaries and the staff of the organization.

Extracts from interviews with target groups	
<u>Foster parent Olexandra, Kharkiv:</u> "I want to say thanks for gathering us together. Today for foster families it is very difficult to understand many things and to choose the right way for our children. Only together we can overcome many difficulties and challenges for ensuring children a better life"	<u>Parent Ella, Kharkiv:</u> "Thank you for a pleasant communication and for many interesting information"
<u>Parent Pavlo, Drohobych.</u> "My name is Pavlo. My daughter is attending Daily center "Together stronger" and participates in SOLEs. These SOLE lessons are something new for me and my child. I think they are great as it is very important to use new studying approaches in education. My daughter likes to study in such an interesting and exciting way. My wife takes part in monthly parents' meetings and is very satisfied with them. I have often short talks with Iryna, the SOLE teacher, about SOLE and my daughter's participation in it. Our family took part in a family holiday organized in village Rychtychi. It was a great family holiday with a lot of joy and pleasant long lasting emotions."	<u>Specialist, Drohobych.</u> "People want dialogue and communication. There is a lot of information in Internet, TV, radio, but mostly it's negative information. People need positive communication, positive messages, support from others, hope and belief for future. Parents want their children to be good and happy. But when if we don't support parents, children will not be happy and fulfilled"
<u>Feedback of parents from Focus Group Discussions in Kyiv:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parents cried at the trainings by SOS-Ukraine. Everyone had too many worries and problems to share. At the trainings eventually all participants relaxed and could share all their issues and worries.</li> <li>• One woman with 6 children participated in the trainings. Before the trainings she even wanted to give her children to an orphanage institution. After trainings she told that she</li> </ul>	

manages to better understand her children. At first her children didn't want her to go to the trainings. But later they told "mommy, go to your trainings, because after the trainings you come to us as a different person, being relaxed, patient and stable. You don't yell at us". Keeping the family together is very important.

- "For me it's very difficult to deal with my children. I don't understand my son teenager, and my small baby is hyperactive. I received very precious information from trainers. Teenager age is just a stage of development of children. Trainers told us how to listen to children, how to communicate with our children."
- "We came to Kyiv from the conflict affected region of the Donbass in Ukraine. We are Internally Displaced Persons. When we arrived to Kyiv, we cried all the time. I took medicines and injections to cope with depression. Because of stress, my family and I had problems with the heart, then with the stomach. Children were stressed and laid under the radiator. We had to move all the time. We lacked communication between us, and here at the center we found friends. We shared our problems with other parents and became more open."

### **Moldova**

Training for parents and outreach activities were implemented during the reporting period. Experts of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine have delivered 9 trainings for parents and 5 trainings for specialists in Moldova. The topics of the trainings delivered are:

- Safe use of Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games
- Deviations of attachment of children to important adult and their influence on children's behaviour and development
- Parental potential development: attachment; upbringing without punishment; effective communication between parents and children
- Case-management, incl. best practices of SOS
- Peer support groups
- Mentoring and coaching
- 

Feeling more empowered and confident, teachers and social workers had organized several mini seminars with parents on such topics as:

1. Orphaned children whose parents are alive.
2. Bullying as a form of violence.
3. Solving conflicts between parents and children.
4. The importance of non-violent communication.
5. Avoiding corporal punishment.
6. How to help your child enjoy learning?
7. Teaching children how to use their free time judiciously/thoughtfully.
8. What a responsible parent should know.
9. The Bullying phenomenon - a new form of school violence.
10. Domestic violence. Emotional, cognitive and behavioural consequences felt by children.
11. Online safety and social networks impact on harmonious development of the child.

A total of 78 informative meetings with parents have been organized. 469 parents attended these meetings. 72 men and 397 women aged 26 - 61.

Parents showed enthusiasm and willingness to participate at these meetings. Many of them said they had learned many new things and gained positive experience in managing their relationships with children and overcoming daily problems. Many parents also admitted that there is still much to be learned about raising and educating children as sometimes children feel neglected and parents have to face and solve various behaviors, communication and relationship issues.

These seminars inspired parents to participate more actively in their children's life, to be more attentive with them and to take care of them. It helped them to realize that a strong bond with their children starts from the earlier childhood. Also, parents were motivated to participate actively in the life of the centers and schools and organize themselves in support groups.

#### ***Parent support group in Petropavlovka, Balti (Caritas Moldova)***

In Petropavlovka the self-initiative group of 10 parents meets weekly with the social worker within the Center to discuss children's and community problems. In the reporting period, the parents' support group decided on 2 social initiatives to support the Day Center and also to involve in community life. The projects and initiatives were the following:

**1. Hand made workshops.** With small financial support of DARE project, parents decided to buy beads and related accessories and organize weekly workshops for making jewellery and beaded icons. These activities are often organized together with children, in order to improve relationships between parents and children and contribute together to the centre's activity, by selling hand made products on Christmas fairs and yard sales.

**Renovation of the local kindergarten.** 12 parents from the DARE initiative group, decided to help the local kindergarten (the only preschool institution in the village) and help with the renovation of the space. With small financial support from DARE project for some materials and paint, they restored the furniture and the space for children.

**2. Renovation of the Day Centre.** Parents also actively participated at the renovations works of the day-care centre. They wanted their children to have a friendlier environment for SOLE.

**3. Easter cleaning activity.** Before Easter holidays, parent initiative group, together with their children, organized a cleaning action of the local roman- catholic parish and local cemetery.

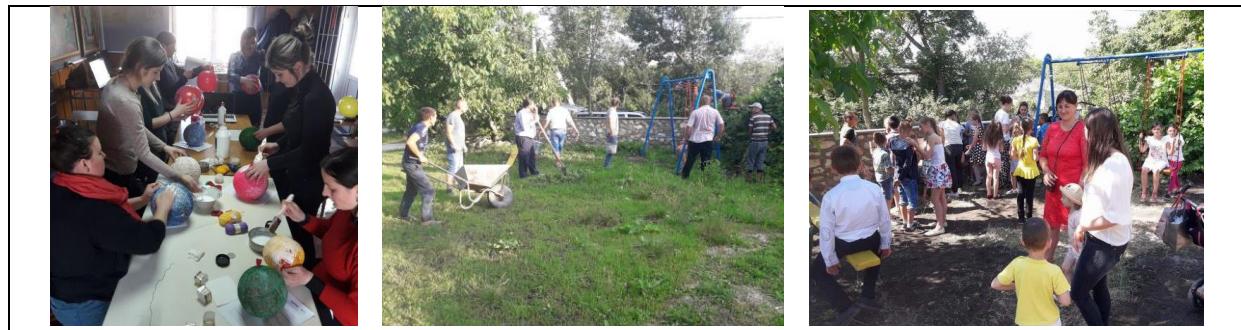


#### ***Parent support group in Fetesti, Edinet (Diaconia)***

Parent support group in Fetesti engages 22 active parents. In the reported period they have organized 2 social activities:

**1. Easter decorations.** The parent support group organized 2 hand-made workshops for making egg-shaped baskets for the fund-raising activity dedicated to Easter celebrations. Collected money that has been used to buy biscuits and tea for children attending the Daycare Centre.

**2. International Children's Day.** For organizing this event, parents gathered 3 times: first, to set up the space - they cleaned, painted and installed several objects (chairs, swings, swinging, etc.) for the children's playground; then they met to set up artistic program, made flags, masks, unfilled balloons, etc. and finally they organized the event itself - some mothers have prepared sandwiches, sweets and juice for children, others have been involved in organizing the artistic program.



The following quotes are from parents who attended trainings and activities in Moldova:

<b>Extracts from interviews with target groups:</b>	
<p><u>Ghenadie, 33 years, Fetești, Edinet</u></p> <p><i>"I am happy with the seminar I attended. From today onwards I will have another approach to using computers and internet for children. Even I will use it differently."</i></p>	<p><u>Elena, 34 years, Fetești, Edinet</u></p> <p><i>"I like coming to support groups. Parents exchange experience. Some passing through some problems are helped by others already surpassed."</i></p> <p><i>"The seminars I attended have been very important and interesting for me. I can openly say that my attitude towards my child changed a lot"</i></p>
<p><u>M.B., Balti, a mother of 2 sons who are actively involved in SOLE sessions from the very beginning.</u></p> <p><i>"I noticed that my children are more eager to come to the center, they said that the center is modern now, there are a computer class and they learn something different from the school program, something of general knowledge."</i></p>	<p><u>Mother, 53 years old, Social Centre Varvareuca, Florești, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>This project is very beneficial for our community. When my daughter became part of this project, came home and told me about the project activities, I was intrigued and decided to get involved. The project opened my eyes on many things and helped me to look at my child from a different perspective, become closer and have more things to talk about. As part of the project activities, we have become friends with other parents, we discuss various problems we encounter and try to find the best solutions to them.</i></p>
<p><u>Single-mother of two boys: Vlad, the 7th form and Denis, the 5th form. Housewife and seasonal worker, Florești, Moldova.</u></p> <p><i>Vlad had inappropriate behavior at school, refused to do his homework, was naughty, quarrelsome, and irascible, therefore my relationship with him became very tense and led to constant tension. As a parent, I have to admit that there is much to be learned about how to better raise and educate a child. That's why, this year, I attended all the meetings with parents organized within the project "A good life for our children". The purpose of going to these meetings was to improve my communication and relationship skills with my children.</i></p> <p><i>I want to say that these meetings helped me very much, the experience shared by other parents present at the meetings helped me improve my communication and relationship with my sons. I would like to mention that after these meetings I took the following steps in improving the relationship with my children, and especially with Vlad: we put an end to family conflicts that affected the children's behavior; I have tried to develop the relationship with my sons and they improved their relationships with their classmates and other children in the neighborhood; I try to spend more time with them and talk about different issues. This year, Vlad's behavior has changed; he does his homework daily and helps me about the house.</i></p> <p><i>Both attend classes and participate at the SOLE sessions. I will continue to attend the meetings in order to improve my parenting abilities.</i></p>	

Father, 48 years old, "Ion Creanga" Theoretical Lyceum from Floresti, Moldova

*We, the parents, usually live by the "work-house-work" model, and sometimes forget that our true vocation is to be a parent, to feel fulfilled with our children and family. Going to the meetings with other parents from our lyceum helped me to clarify some misunderstandings, become closer with my daughter, become a better parent and know her inner world better. I do not regret my decision to become part of this project and to attend the seminars organised within it as I learned a lot not only about my child, his interests and ways I could improve his life, but also about me as a parent. For example, at the "Internet Safety" seminar, I learned how to protect my child, identify the information he needs and select the most appropriate information. I understood that children need permanent support, love and assistance to develop stable emotional relationships with others and to fulfil their dreams and express their opinions. Also, this project has brought me closer to my child, helping me to become his best friend. It has taught me new, more interactive and positive ways of knowing and bringing him up better.*

### **Romania**

The topics of trainings delivered by SOS Children Villages for Romanian partners in the reporting period are:

- Parental potential development: attachment; upbringing without punishment; effective communication between parents and children
- Deviations of attachment of children to important adult and their influence on children's behaviour and development
- Safe use of Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games
- Case-management, incl. best practices of SOS
- Peer support groups
- Violence against children: cause, manifestations, implications, indicators. Identification of neglect and abuse of children in their families

#### **Iasi:**

DARE Parenting component was reported to be 'the missing piece of a puzzle' from most children projects and programs, and staff agreed that it should be present in any integrated intervention in the child protection field. Unfortunately the efforts social assistants put in working in child development are most of the times obliterated in family environments. The team of Caritas Iasi targets mostly vulnerable and Roma communities, and even though children attend the day-care centre, the outreach and engagement of parents is challenging.

There were two types of reactions from the parents' side: some were eager to participate and understood the possibility to develop and improve while others, on the contrary, were reticent and avoided the courses. For those who openly embraced the opportunity the impact was huge. They liked the topics, trainers and the environment for honest debates and discussions. Through the activities were entirely designed for parents they enjoyed time for themselves and the opportunity to learn, to exchange experiences, to ask questions and to receive responses from authorized persons. The local coordinator recognizes the effect of the trainings and plans to continue with such activities. The total number of parents in the 3 trainings provided by SOS Ukraine in Iasi is 38 (31 of them having their children involved in DARE Program activities). Those parents who rejected the invitations in the beginning were not accustomed to such activities as team work, training and learning atmosphere.

The introduction of the parenting component is transforming the way parents are perceived and they become closer partners in social interventions targeting child protection. During the activities in the Day Centre children are involved in activities that develop confidence and positive attitudes; they are listened to and understood; they are given the possibility to express open and freely. By working closely with parents, the same positive approach to children and child development can be pursued in the family contexts, thus reducing the negative discipline and negative attitudes towards children that are often found in the relation between parents and children at home. What children are exposed to in day-care centers and in the families are unfortunately two models that are often in antagonism with each other. In order to reduce the discrepancies between the approaches to children at day-care centers and at home, Caritas Iasi intends to introduce parenting trainings and positive parenting in other projects targeting children.

The psychologist of the day-care center in Caritas Iasi participated to all parenting trainings as well.

He is responsible for the activities with parents designed under the parenting component. So far, there have been 6 parents meetings of the support group. A lot more discussions and counseling sessions have been provided at an informal level by the psychologist. The psychologist is also responsible to solve personal and interpersonal conflicts in which children are involved.

### **Ojdula:**

In the first project year, the biggest challenge for DARE team in Ojdula was to work with parents. The day-care centre where the project is implemented is a newly established project by Caritas Alba Iulia, and the team had to engage in a lot of work to outreach to communities in Ojdula and establish a relationship of trust. The targeted communities in Ojdula are predominantly Roma communities, and the children attending the day-care centres are all from the local Roma minority. Because the communication with Roma communities is challenging and the issue of trust is key, the project team did not – and could not – follow the established pace of activities' implementation with parents as it was with other implementing partners (namely, training for parents and specialist, establishment of parents' support groups, events organized by parents, etc.).

The main activities carried out during the implementation period are visits to Roma families, as part of an outreach strategy to win their trust and establish a cooperation to benefit the lives of Roma children. A total number of 96 family visits and 56 individual social counselling (when parents are coming to the day-care centre to ask for help in different issues) were registered.

During the implementation period, only short and more general parents meetings were held, 4 in total: at the beginning of the school year, during Christmas period, at the beginning of the second school semester, and at the end of the school year.

In March - with great surprise from the local team - a number of Roma parents expressed their interest to meet with the psychologist employed at the centre, so the first parents' group meetings started. Three meetings were organized so far and participation is very variable.

As far as the trainings are concerned, due to the challenges in reaching out to the local Roma community, it was decided that the specialists and team members of Caritas Alba Iulia would receive the trainings, and once the time is assessed as appropriate, the knowledge will be passed onto the targeted Roma parents.

The local DARE team is planning to organize some events and provide opportunities for parents' involvement, for instance:

- Family day – quality time spent together with the children
- Involving parents of Children Parliament too in common activities
- One training course to be organized in Ojdula in the day-care centre, for parents and specialists together
- Continuing the parent group with psychologist colleague

### **Periam:**

In the first year of the DARE program, a number of three courses dedicated to parents, teachers and social workers were held in Periam. A total of 47 participants took part in these courses.

At the 'Parental Potential Development' course there were 13 parents aged between 25 and 55 years. Among the participants there were 3 teachers and 2 social workers, who in turn, will be responsible to pass the knowledge acquired to parents in their schools / work.

At the 'Child Attachment Deviation to the Adult' course there were 17 participants, including 6 teachers and 4 social workers. In terms of age, it ranged from 18 to 55 years.

There were 17 people in the 'Safe Use of the Internet' training. They included 5 teachers, 1 social assistant, 4 social workers and parents from community.

The knowledge gained during the courses by the specialists is implemented both in professional practice and within personal life.

In Periam, the parenting component of the project made it so that the staff had multiple opportunities to meet with parents from Roma communities. Team members, like in Ojdula, had to have multiple visits to the families before they came to the center for meeting with other parents. This allowed the local team to establish stronger relationships with the Roma community and also to get to know their personal situations and struggle better. The first meeting among parents led by specialists of the DARE team were held in the neighborhood of the Roma community. Later on Parents joined the day-care centre attended exclusively by Roma children.

The positive aspect of these trainings is the fact that a tradition to have meetings with and among

parents in a formal environment was established for the first time. Another positive aspect is the quality of information that the courses brought. Parents that participated acknowledged the need to have an improved relation with their children.

One aspect that needs further attention and improvement during the second year of implementation is the adaptation of trainings and inputs to adults with low literacy levels.

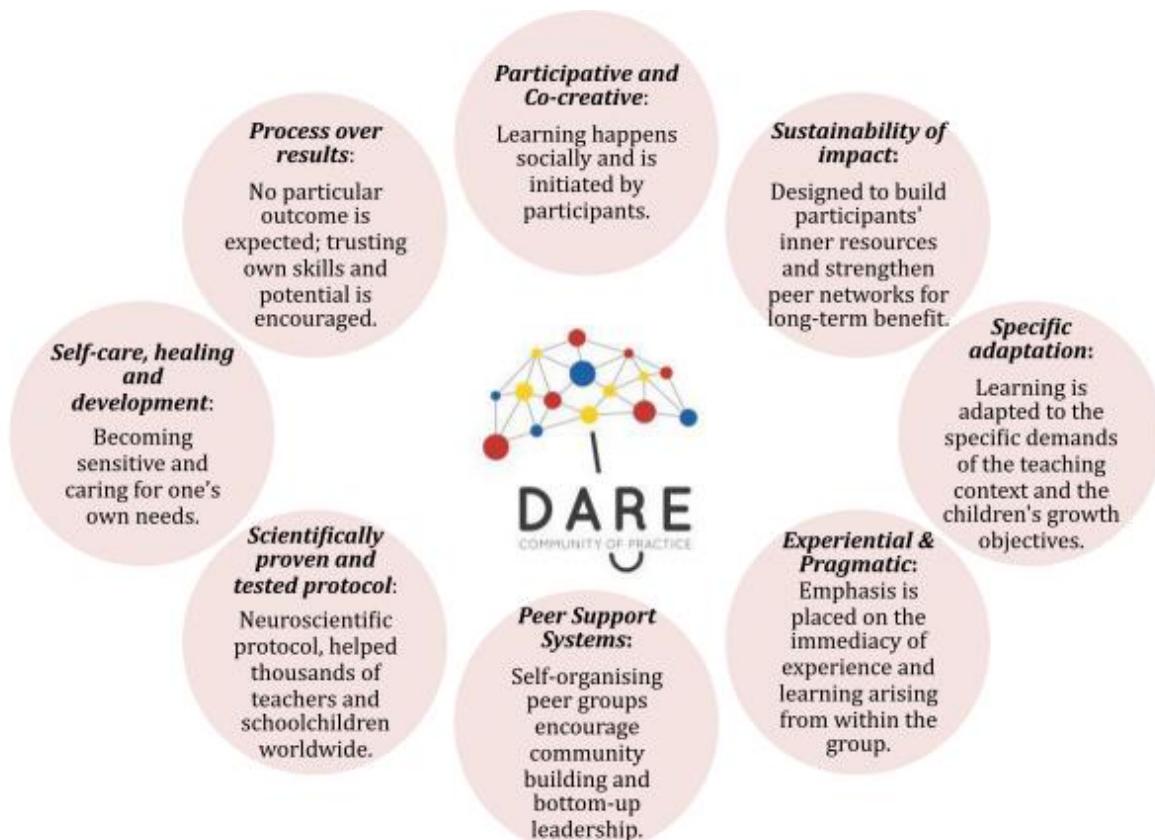
### ***Mindfulness and Positive Discipline***

Mindfulness is an evidence-based educational approach with humanistic and positive psychology principles. It focuses on healing, well-being and developing resiliency through individual and relational practices of awareness and self-compassion.

The Mindfulness approach is integral to the DARE Outcome 2 as a training for teachers and social workers in positive discipline and a peer-to-peer community-building approach. More specifically, Mindfulness supports teachers and educators to embody and model attitudes and behaviours to encourage positive growth in children:

- DREAM: by developing attitudes of curiosity and acceptance towards all that arises in one's own experience.
- ACHIEVE: by building resilience and focus through emotion regulation and inquiry.
- REALISE: by turning to difficulties skilfully and developing trust in one's own skills and capacity to learn.
- EXPRESS: Increasing capacity for emphatic relationships and growing self-awareness and self-care.

The Mindfulness program is based on the following empowerment and community-based methodological principles:



The program is divided in 2 parts running over 2 school years:

1. Foundational Mindfulness self-care training for the teachers and social workers. The results presented pertain to Part 1.
2. Mindfulness in the classroom, direct involvement with the children.

### **Part 1: Foundational mindfulness training for the teachers and social workers**

**2-day onsite training** in November 2017 were held to give participants an overview of the whole curriculum covering:

- Introduction to mindfulness and its foundational attitudes;
- Building community and taking ownership of learning experience;
- Resilience and self-care; building resources.

Greater emphasis was placed on the immediacy of experience and learning arising from within the group. Therefore, concepts were introduced as a result of and following experiential exercises by means of exploratory dialogues.

There were different degrees of understanding among participants in all countries. Different attitudes towards the training conditioned how open participants were to the new methodology of experiential learning. Supervisions were designed to further support the participants' understanding and integration of self-care tools.

### **Monthly supervision sessions**

The supervision period followed the 2-day onsite training and took place between January and June 2018. It consisted of 7 sequential 1h30 meetings between the trainer and the peer group leaders with an approximate monthly frequency. The goals of these supervision sessions were:

- To deepen the conceptual basis of mindfulness and to build on the experience from the onsite training.
- To further support the participants' understanding and integration of self-care tools.
- To capacitate a selected group of participants to replicate the mindfulness sessions in their peer groups to promote self-organized learning
- To prepare participants for the next phase: Mindfulness in the classroom with direct involvement of schoolchildren.

### **Weekly peer groups**

Weekly peer group meetings took place between participants in the program. A few summarizing principles include:

- Self-organisation: it was up to the participants to schedule them, discuss and practice any skills which they felt would be most relevant.
- Peer-led: participants who participated in supervisions shared materials from these supervisions with other participants.
- Peer support: any questions, comments and/or difficulties were discussed during the supervision sessions.

The following table shows the frequency and timeframe of the 2-day onsite trainings, supervision sessions with the trainers and the regional meetings where all DARE coordinators and participants of Mindfulness exchanges in a Skype meeting facilitated by the Regional program Manager about challenges and benefits of the use of Mindfulness on themselves and with children.

### Residential trainings 2017

	Moldova	Ukraine	Romania
Dates	29-30 November	23-24 November	9-10 November

### Supervision 2018

Session	Moldova	Ukraine	Romania
1	17 <sup>th</sup> of January	15 <sup>th</sup> of January	12 <sup>th</sup> of January
2	5 <sup>th</sup> February	29 <sup>th</sup> of January	31st of January
3	16 <sup>th</sup> of March	5 <sup>th</sup> of March	15 <sup>th</sup> of March
4	19 <sup>th</sup> of April	26 <sup>th</sup> of March	4 <sup>th</sup> of April
5	25 <sup>rd</sup> of April	23 <sup>rd</sup> of April	26 <sup>rd</sup> of April
6	16 <sup>th</sup> of May	14 <sup>th</sup> of May	17 <sup>th</sup> of May
Closing session	15 <sup>th</sup> of June	18 <sup>th</sup> of June	14 <sup>th</sup> of June

### Regional meetings 2018

	Meeting 1	Meeting 2
Dates	19 <sup>th</sup> of April	18 <sup>th</sup> of June

During the second year of implementation, the focus will be on empowering teachers and social workers to introduce Mindfulness practice and approaches with children in schools and day-care centres. The curriculum in use for the second year has been developed by Sarah Silverton (author, therapist and trainer) and Dr Dusana Dorjee (neuroscientist and researcher) from Bangor University. The approach has been designed and trialled by teachers for schools, and can be integrated into activities that typically take place in any primary classroom and in day-care centres.

The following section offers an insight in how the methodology was received and applied in the three target countries.

#### Ukraine

The Ukrainian team had **8 skype sessions on Mindfulness** with one of the trainers. During these sessions the trainees received basic information about Mindfulness in written and oral form, and did a lot of practical exercises. **4 peer groups of 19 specialists** in total had weekly mindfulness exercises as well as regular individual ones:

- 6 specialists of Caritas-Drohobych
- 3 specialists of Aspern
- 5 specialists of Social Assistance Service
- 3 teachers of Medenychi school
- 2 teachers of Valky school

Additionally at the first mindfulness sessions, external DARE staff - psychologist of Caritas Kyiv Liudmyla Sukhareva and Head of Children's Project of Caritas-Ukraine Zoryana Lukavetska - participated actively. Both of them appreciated the Mindfulness component in DARE program, and Liudmyla as a psychologist practices it regularly. As well, she uses materials shared by the trainer in her work with children.

Teachers from Valky school, while enjoying the skype coaching sessions with the trainer, were more resistant in applying the method within their group.

Leading a peer group and having a role of a group leader was a difficult task for most participants. However, in the process they learned how to communicate, received knowledge and practical skills on mindfulness with their teams.

In Medenychi school teachers practiced some mindfulness exercises with their school children. In Caritas-Drohobych specialists use short mindfulness elements at the beginning of the SOLE sessions or when there is a need to calm children down. Psychologist of Aspern regularly applies mindfulness exercises in the work with vulnerable children and parents, and as a psychologist she perfectly understands the value of mindfulness. Group leader of Social Services of Assistance uses mindfulness exercises in her work with children as well, and she is being inspired to continue to promote Mindfulness in Ukraine.

<b>Extracts from interviews with target groups</b>	
<u>Tetiana, Valky UA:</u> I feel that I need mindfulness sessions to distract from the hard working day and to have some moments for myself. It makes me better. But it should be led by psychologist as we practice it"	<u>Yulia and Anna, Kyiv UA</u> This is an opportunity to stop and focus. Without this attention, you cannot have mental health. This is a resource for yourself. This is preventing the defocusing of attention due to the Internet, smartphones, etc. Our organization will continue to practice this with children and parents, because they are very useful and important for vulnerable groups.
<u>Iryna, Drohobych UA:</u> I am a SOLE facilitator in Caritas Drohobych. For these 6 months I took part in supervision sessions on Mindfulness. I am very satisfied that such component as mindfulness is included into our project. Learning more about it and speaking about it with different people I found that mindfulness is becoming very popular and well known as positive approach used among people of different professions. I felt a lot of personal benefits in getting acquainted with this methodology. I have already known that I am not a mindful person but thanks to new knowledge I understood why I am not mindful, what can I do to become mindful and learn to treat myself positively and kindly. These required skills for sure will positively influence my behaviour and attitude towards my work, colleagues and children".	<u>Feedback of staff from focus groups discussions:</u> At first we didn't want to spend work time for those exercises, then we just relaxed and enjoyed. Since this moment everything started to be much better.  We didn't understand well for what we need mindfulness. Now we understand it more clearly. Now we even have more positive attitude to it.  It seemed to be funny at first. But when you dig deep in the essence of exercises, it becomes important and they make a lot of sense.  When you stop and start to reflect on small things, you can focus better on big things.
<u>Yulia, Kharkiv UA:</u> Sessions with the trainer, which supported my understanding and application of self-help tools, were very useful and fruitful for me. During these sessions, I exchanged the most relevant thoughts, problems and difficulties with other participants, received a timely feedback from the trainer. All materials were provided by email, I worked out and shared them with my team. The weekly meetings of our team dedicated to Mindfulness gradually developed awareness, which in turn helped us to implement and to model attitudes and behaviour in order to promote the positive development of children. During the classes we worked out the following basic topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here and Now</li> <li>• Focusing and choosing</li> <li>• Awareness in everyday life</li> <li>• Thoughts and feelings</li> <li>• Increased sustainability and self-help</li> <li>• Connect with others</li> <li>• Development of balance in our lives</li> </ul>	
<b>Moldova</b>	

In Moldova, Mindfulness specialists delivered the training on 29-30 of November for all staff involved in DARE program (**20 participants**). The training was highly appreciated by the participants. During the reporting period, **6 Mindfulness supervision and coaching sessions** were held.



After each coaching and supervision session, each focal point was organizing weekly meetings with their local staff. All these tools practiced and learned during the Mindfulness sessions helped DARE staff to successfully overcome daily challenges: stress, anxiety, work overload, tiredness.

Social workers and teachers tried to use some Mindfulness elements in their work with children, in order to overcome stressful moments, to improve children's focusing ability, to improve their attention and to help

them keeping an emotional balance.

The concept and method are still quite new for Moldova. Both social workers and teachers express the desire to continue with coaching and supervision so that they become more confident and skilled to practice mindfulness with children.

After the Mindfulness exercises used with children, the educators encouraged children to express how they felt. Talking about one's feelings is not common and a lot of fears of being judged need to be overcome before being able to freely share.

One crucial attribute of mindfulness is that it is practiced without judgement. Many of children are very hard on themselves and their internal critic is so loud that just a few moments of being given permission not to judge can bring huge relief to body and mind. In sessions where this was experimented, it brought adults and children to tears.

The following quotes are from staff and school teachers who were trained in the use of Mindfulness methodology. The quotes are an extract of interviews made with random selected target groups:

#### **Extracts from interviews with target groups:**

##### Cristina Boico, Social worker Day Care Balti

*"I have good impressions about Mindfulness sessions; it is a technique which I used not just like a homework exercise but I started to implement it in the real life and real situations. It helps me a lot in some real and concrete situation. I had a positive result, which I think I could not achieve earlier, without mindfulness techniques. It helps me also to discover better my colleagues, as I was the focal point for the organization, they shared a lot of interesting things with me."*

##### Arina, local coordinator, Caritas Moldova

*"At the beginning of mindfulness sessions I did not understand the usefulness of all exercises, till I started to implement it in my daily life. The exercises that the trainer had presented to us, showed how important is to listen to your inner world, to concentrate on things you feel, you love, it's about learning to listen your mind and your body, to make a balance between both of them, to be relaxed and concentrated on the way you are and things you need to change for a better life. I really love this mindfulness part in DARE project"*

#### **Romania**

In Romania there were different levels of understanding, openness and acceptance towards Mindfulness. The majority of the beneficiaries began to open up and grasp the value of the method only during the last supervision sessions. Reportedly, the introduction to Mindfulness and its important and connection with Child Protection and the link with the other Program's components was not sufficiently stressed out at the beginning of the Program's implementation.

However, during the supervision sessions with the trainers participants opened and sought for solutions, discovered their feelings and emotions and accepted them, shared and discussed about

problems, difficulties, satisfaction and joy.

In **Iasi** the Local Coordinator reported that the ability of the team members to work with beneficiaries improved and the individual performances of each member have increased and stressed levels reduced due to the mindfulness sessions they attended. The Mindfulness technique has helped the team to address more effectively the beneficiaries and promote positive attitude among children and parents.

The second year of implementation will help teachers and social workers to use mindfulness techniques with children in order to reduce conflict situations, anxiety, physical and verbal violence, bullying and tension between children.

In **Caritas Alba Iulia**, mainly in the Day Centre in Ojdula, the mindfulness component was not successful. The Local Coordinator has participated to the skype supervision sessions but expressed her intention of not committing further during Year 2 to use and implement Mindfulness. The cultural resistance from the target group and staff in Ojdula was particularly high.

In **Periam** the situation is similar to Ojdula. The Mindfulness component was not fully accepted and understood by the team. Nevertheless, the whole team realizes the need to identify methods to reduce negative interaction, stress and anxiety levels among children, due to spread bullying phenomenon and the continuation of mindfulness could be a solution.

The following quotes are from staff and school teachers who were trained in the use of Mindfulness methodology. The quotes are an extract of interviews made with random selected target groups:

#### **Extracts from interviews with target groups:**

##### Local Coordinator, Iasi

*Professionally speaking mindfulness exercises made me work better with my team and achieve better performance in results. Every time we are in an impasse, we pass it through mindfulness exercises.*

*Personally speaking, when I was doing a mindfulness exercise at home while drinking coffee in the morning, I realized it tasted bad and this made me unhappy. So I bought a coffee machine and now I am very satisfied every morning drinking a good, tasty coffee.*

##### Local Coordinator, 34. Caritas Timisoara

*Mindfulness was really a challenge for me. Initially I thought it was a practice specific to the Asian people. Later the trainer and my other colleagues from Romania helped me realize the benefits of this method. In all my professional and personal relationships, also in the relation with myself I understood the importance to approach all situations in a complete way; how important it is to dedicate time for noticing, understanding and accepting in order to find best solutions to problems instead of instinctively react to them. We need to know our body in order to notice how it reacts to various experiences, such as stress, and teach it to have an improved personal response to stressful situations.*

*Mindfulness supervision sessions have been a real support in getting to know me better, have given me the opportunity to interact more personally with my colleagues, and to get to know them better and so we could work together more easily. Personally I think Mindfulness can be a way we can support children in their education through a positive approach, with a lot of calm, understanding and patience.*

## OUTPUTS TARGETING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Under “**Outcome 3:** “11 Civil Society Organizations forming DARE Community of Practice (CoP) positively impact Child Protection systems in their countries and become more sustainable.”

Outputs 3.1 sees the engagement of national Advocacy Officers (one per country) who support the work that each organization does on a local level in the sphere of Child Protection to become more visible, more capable of advocating at local level and regional level with relevant stakeholders. At the same time, the Advocacy Officer bridges the gap between the local realities where the implementing partners operate and the national level and national platforms and decision making structures.

Output 3.2, focuses on strengthening the capacities of the implementing partners of becoming more sustainable and increasing their management capacities.

<b>Output 3.1</b> Community of Practice positively influence Child Protection policies and activities at local, regional and national levels	
<b>Program Target Indicators</b>	<b>Current value</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 40% of Child Protection-related policies and activities by local, regional and national authorities include DARE Community of Practice in the consultation and design processes</li> <li>❖ Children, caregivers, teachers, and social workers perceive the DARE program as a source of exchange and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work-in progress through National <u>Advocacy</u> efforts. To be measured at the end of the Program Year 2.</li> <li>- More than 80% of interviewed* members of different target groups have confirmed that they see the activities in the DARE program as a source of support.</li> </ul> <p>*Focus Groups Discussions led by National Coordinators with groups of circa 10-12 participants (groups with children of different age groups and with parents) &amp; Key Informant Interviews with teachers and School Directors in three countries between April and June 2018.</p>

<b>Output 3.2</b> Targeted Civil Society Organizations increase their capacities to become more sustainable	
<b>Program Target Indicators</b>	<b>Current value</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Project* and quality management** standards of organizations improved*** by the end of the program</li> </ul> <p>*project proposal writing and needs assessment</p> <p>** M&amp;E systems adopted by the organizations</p> <p>*** improve= capacity of organization to submit coherent proposals; adoption and adaptation of MEAL to other projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Strategic and annual action plans of critical* DARE Implementing Partners are developed</li> </ul> <p>*Organizations with no strategic plan or in urgent need of revision and that are dependent on single donor sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DARE National staff and Regional Manager could support closely 5 out of 10* organizations during the implementation year to improve the quality of project proposals and reporting. For instance, project proposals submitted by the organizations who are partners of Caritas Vienna (5 out of 10) were of higher quality compared to the previous years.</li> </ul> <p>*Excluding the Confederation of Caritas Romania that holds an advocacy and not an operational role.</p> <p>Also, in July 2018 a Project Design Workshop for all 10 implementing partners was held and the report on the event will happen with the mid-term report of DARE Year 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments held during 2017 helped identifying the most critical partners (4 out of 11 partners are given priority) Caritas Vienna decided to launch an Organizational Development project of</li> </ul>

	circa 200,000 Euro called FIT for 2020 investing own resources on these 4 key partners. This OD component in fact has been taken out from the DARE proposal for Year 2.
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## Advocacy

Three Advocacy Officers are engaged in the DARE program, one per each of the target countries. The sections below illustrate the work done so far in this sphere.

### Ukraine

The main results during the implementation period for the Advocacy efforts by the DARE partners in Ukraine regard:

1. Cooperation with Institute of Educational Content Modernization under the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has been established by signing the official cooperation agreement. The Institute provides necessary support in piloting SOLE in hub schools through its representatives at Lviv and Kharkiv Regional State Education Departments responsible for piloting SOLE.
2. Advocacy workshop was organized for DARE partners, resulted in increased capacities of partners in advocacy, developed common position of DARE partners and national advocacy strategy plan within DARE program. Support to implementing partners in advocacy activities is being provided on an ad-hoc basis by the Advocacy Officer who is staff member of Partnership 4 Every Child (P4EC).
3. Advocacy Officer is an active member of high-level working groups on development of legislation where she presents and advocates for DARE program priorities.

#### Cooperation with Institute of Education Content Modernization

In December 2017 the official letter was sent to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, asking for support in piloting SOLE in 2 hub schools in Lviv and Kharkiv oblasts. In response, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine delegated the task to the Institute of Educational Content Modernization to provide methodological support for **piloting the methodology**. After the official meeting between P4EC, DARE National Coordinator and the representative of the Institute the plan of cooperation was agreed. The expert from the Institute signed the **Memorandum of Cooperation** in April 2018 by providing legal basis for piloting SOLE in 2 hub schools. Also, the expert sent letters to Kharkiv and Lviv Regional Departments of Education and Science by instructing them on piloting SOLE in hub schools.

As a result, the **cooperation agreement** between P4EC, Valky Lyceum and Kharkiv Regional Academy of Continuous Education was signed in April 2018, aimed to ensure that piloting SOLE will be supported on the regional level and co-monitored by relevant state educational establishments. In accordance with the agreement, the Chief Specialist of the Academy, who was appointed to provide support and monitoring of SOLE, visited Valky lyceum together with the representatives of P4EC and DARE National Coordinator in May 2018. After the participation in SOLE sessions and in focus group discussions with children and teachers, the Chief Specialist gave positive feedback on SOLE and confirmed her interest to follow the results of SOLE implementation.

The similar cooperation agreement is in the process of signing between P4EC, Caritas-Drohobych, Medenychi school and Lviv Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education and will be reported upon in the mid-term report of DARE Year 2.

#### Advocacy workshop of DARE partners and their support

In March 2018, the Advocacy Officer and National DARE coordinator took part in the regional advocacy workshop in Bucharest (Romania). Colleagues from program countries were invited to meet together and discuss challenges and successes related to advocacy activities and develop key advocacy priorities within DARE program.

In April 2018, the Advocacy Officer sent the survey on advocacy capacity and needs to all DARE implementing partners in Ukraine. Following the survey the Advocacy Officer arranged online Skype calls and visits and became acquainted with partners' needs in the field of advocacy and provided

some advice on how to improve cooperation with governmental partners.

In the beginning of June 2018 the advocacy national workshop was organized for DARE partners. Based on the results of surveys and meetings, the Advocacy Officer included in the national advocacy workshop topics to improve capacity of partners to advocate for best interests of child on the local level. For example, the Child and Youth Friendly Community programme was presented as complex tool for monitoring and improving environment for children and young people. In addition, participants were encouraged to promote children rights within their organisations.

The **results of the workshop** were the following:

- Participants reached a common understanding of what advocacy means, useful tools, family and child protection systems in Ukraine, tools to engage children and youth in decision making processes;
- Participants identified the place of their organizations in the processes of deinstitutionalization and decentralization in Ukraine;
- The common position paper of DARE partners was developed, partially based on key advocacy priorities defined in the meeting in Bucharest. It confirmed the common priorities of partners in ensuring of child's rights to family, participation and education;
- The advocacy national plan was developed with common and separate steps for all organizations.

Furthering the engagement of DARE partners in Advocacy at local level will be part of the efforts during the second year of implementation.

#### Advocacy Officer engagement in Deinstitutionalization process on national level

The Advocacy Officer in Ukraine is a member of the Interagency High-level Group on Child Protection, member of working group on Deinstitutionalisation Strategy at the Commissioner office, she is well known as one of the leading experts in child care reform and social policy in Ukraine. She is working very closely and has strong partnership relations with the Ministry of Social Policy, Commissioner of the President of Ukraine for Children's Rights Office and Human Rights Ombudsman Office, as well as related Committees in the Parliament.

Her priorities are to promote Deinstitutionalization Strategy and draft the Law on social services. In particular DI Strategy Goal #2 is about development of social services for families and children at community level, and one of the actions is development of social contracts. Implementing social contracts will provide possibilities for Ukrainian NGOs in particular those participating in DARE program to be paid by government / regional and local authorities for providing social services.

In addition, law on social services will also promote developing social service at local level, based on the needs of the community.

#### **Moldova**

Moldova faced the challenge of identifying a person who can become the Advocacy Officer for DARE. The challenge was mostly due to lack of suitable candidates who would be willing to work under the proposed conditions.

Finally in April 2018, the decision was taken to hire a Child Protection specialist from Diaconia as DARE Advocacy Officer.

At the initial stage, a consultation process with DARE partner organizations was launched in order to define partner advocacy needs and their advocacy capacities and to develop an advocacy strategy as well as an action plan to influence Child Protection policies and increase the participation of member organizations in local processes.

At the same time, a mapping of existing stakeholders and networks in the field of Child Protection was done. The document created by the Advocacy Officer included government stakeholders and platforms (working groups), international organizations active in the field, other national NGOs, as well as several networks of high interest for each DARE partner organization.

Meanwhile, the Advocacy Officer participated in a regional conference "The Way to Financial Sustainability of Civil Society Organizations", which took place on 15-16 May in Chisinau. Several

representatives of civil society, international experts and representatives of central and local public authorities attended the conference, where they discussed about:

- better collaboration with the state and / or local authorities;
- improving and re-evaluating the organization's official documents and adapting them to the existing legal framework;
- organizational capacity building and mobilization to attract funds;
- promotion and use of the 2% mechanism;

On June 20-21 2018, Advocacy officer also participated in the conference "Multidisciplinary Aspects of Child Protection Against Violence" organized by the National Center for Child Abuse Prevention (CNPAC). This conference was attended by several representatives of NGOs in the field of child rights' protection, child-service providers, representatives of central and local public authorities and representatives of international organizations.

In terms of representation, the Advocacy Officer is representing the interests of 3 DARE partner organizations within the Alliance of Active NGOs in Child and Family Protection. A first initiative launched by the Alliance that involved DARE partners and is supported by the Advocacy Officer, is the participation of a teenager from one of the partners' beneficiaries groups in the advocacy campaign to promote children as defenders of their rights. The campaign was held in Chisinau on 25-26 July. Teenage children delegated to this workshop are trained on the history, principles and provisions of the UN Convention, as well as other national and international documents that promote the empowerment of children as defenders of their rights.

Another result of the work of the Advocacy Officer is the development of a document with recommendations and an action plan for each DARE partner organization, following the needs' analysis done. The advocacy directions to work on in the second year of DARE implementation are the following:

- **Child rights to education.** Children from Placement Centres by partner organizations face difficulties in enrolling in schools, due to school administration reticence and hidden obstacles. Relationship with school administration, as well as with teachers is tense and need to be mediated, in order to avoid discrimination of social vulnerable children.
- **Child abandonment.** Diaconia is planning to obtain accreditation of services provided within Maternal Centre and to work on elaboration of normative acts on the risk of child abandonment;

In August 2018, an important advocacy event will take place - DARE Children's Parliaments meeting - a platform for dialogue between young people from Romania, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine for active involvement of young people and their participation in decision-making processes in the field of child rights. The regional event will gather together about 50 youth from 3 countries in order to increase the level of youth knowledge on Convention on the Rights of the Child, involve children in the dialogue that identifies the needs and challenges they face and empower them to voice and formulate their position. As a result of this experience exchange, a position paper of children regarding their rights will be elaborated. The detail of this event and activities will be reported in the mid-term report of Year 2 of DARE.

#### **Romania**

In Romania, advocacy is implemented by Caritas Romania Confederation. The Advocacy Officer is appointed to this position since August 2017. During the first two months of implementation, the Advocacy Officer carried out consultations to identify the specific needs of the DARE implementing partners in Romania with regard to Advocacy. Specific needs of the partners concern the management of the relationship with local authorities and they face challenges in implementing services for the children in distress due to the difficult relations with public administrations.

The consultations were complemented by desk research. Also, the most relevant NGOs were listed and public institutions that are identified as stakeholders for the DARE Program and a calendar of meetings with their representatives was drafted.

The Advocacy Officer also consulted DARE National Coordinators in Romania and the Republic of Moldova on the advocacy activities within the DARE program in their countries. A template of the

strategy and action plan was developed and sent for consultation to both DARE National Coordinators and then shared with Advocacy Officers.

A significant number of NGOs have been identified to be invited, together with the central and local authorities, to the national consultative workshops. Regarding the collaboration with other NGOs, during the reporting period, the DARE Program was presented at the following meetings:

**November 16, 2017** - Participation in the public debate organized by Save the Children Romania at the Parliament Palace. The event was attended by representatives of the Presidency, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, the Government of Romania and its structures with responsibilities related to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, members of the People's Advocate territorial offices, the Students Council, international institutions and non-governmental organizations, journalists. The purpose of the debate was to amend and complete the Law no. 35/1997 on the organization and functioning of the People's Advocate Institution under discussion in the Parliament of Romania (PL-x 338/2017) by proposing to introduce a Child Ombudsman in its structure.

Caritas Confederation has rallied to this move along with Save the Children Romania in the belief that the establishment of a distinct department of children's rights within the structure of the People's Advocate Institution is a priority for Romania.

**November 29, 2017** - Meeting at the FONSS headquarters (The Federation of NGOs for Social Services). At the meeting, the advocacy officer presented the DARE Program, its objectives and activities. It was agreed to conclude a partnership between Caritas Romania and FONSS for lobbying and advocacy activities in the field of child protection. FONSS is a federation of NGOs active in the Eastern region of Romania, where Caritas Iasi - DARE implementing partner - is an active member.

**December 19, 2017** - Participation in the conference "Integrated Services for Families in Disadvantaged Areas" organized by the Concordia Humanitarian Organization. A PPT presentation of the DARE Program was held at the conference. The participants in the conference, approximately 80 people, were experts and social workers from NGOs active in child protection, representatives of central and local authorities (DGASPC, Social Inspection, representatives of three municipalities), school principals and teachers. The DARE program has received special attention from the audience, and at the Q&A session positive appreciation for the project has been expressed by many participants as well as during the breaks. One member of the Education Commission of the Romanian Parliaments who attended the conference invited Caritas Romania to a meeting in February 2018 (when parliamentary activity would restart) to discuss about a concrete collaboration.

The DARE Advocacy Officer was asked to facilitate the creation of a joint working group (NGOs, senators, deputies, representatives of the Ministry of Education, etc.) to formulate recommendations or amendments to the Education Law / 2011. This happened during initial consultation within the first "national workshop" in 2018. A call was made to Caritas Romania to collaborate with other organizations on the "parenting" component. Both, NGO and public institutions representatives have stated that parenting should be a priority in education policy in Romania, and that we need to make sure that it is included in the Education Law, and if it is not mentioned in the law we should do common lobby for it to be introduced.

Children's Parliaments in DARE Program raised a special interest from different audiences where DARE was presented; the idea to arrange a meeting between children and parliamentarians was outlined (to put political decision-makers face-to-face with children in order to listen to the children's expectations). This proposition will be discussed with local DARE implementing partners.

Regarding the innovative methodologies implemented in DARE Program, two organizations (Concordia and SOS Children's Village Romania) and the Heads of two schools in Prahova County expressed interest in taking over the SOLE methodology.

All three organizations have positively appreciated the implementation of the DARE Program and have confirmed their interest in a partnership with Caritas Romania in the advocacy component.

One important event organized by the Advocacy Officer was the Advocacy workshop where the counterparts from Romania and Ukraine were invited. The workshop was important to layout a general regional strategy of DARE. The main objectives of the meeting were:

- Establishing advocacy priorities and objectives for regional level (RO, UA, MD) and defining common issues in child protection

- Mapping the challenges and possible solutions, depending on the particularities of each country
- Developing strategies, tactics, tools. Analysis of the national contexts / PEST Analysis / Stakeholder analysis
- Outline a template for developing the advocacy plan: goals, timeline, action plan, and stakeholders' involvement
- Communication: slogans, visibility tools.

The activities carried out by the Advocacy Officer during the last quarter of the first year of implementation concerned the consultations to local DARE implementing partners on advocacy objectives and priorities, and involvement of local DARE implementing partners in a National Consultative Workshop with Stakeholders in Child Protection. The National Workshop was an initiative of the Advocacy Officer within the framework of the DARE program. The one-day workshop theme was "Access of children from disadvantaged backgrounds to social services and education" and saw the participation of 41 people, 16 representing the authorities and public services for child protection and 25 – the NGO sector.



## Fundraising

Within the DARE Program, under the sustainability component, engagement of Fund Raising/Grants Management staff was foreseen to contribute to improving the overall capacities of the organization and contribute to increasing the implementing partners' sustainability. Implementing partners hired one Fund Raising Officer / Grants Manager per organization.

Implementing partners have developed a total of 111 project applications to various donors: 97 were submitted by the Ukrainian DARE Implementing partners, 13 from Moldovan partners, and 1 from Romania. Also they have organized 31 Fundraising events in the reporting period: 7 events organized in Ukraine, 8 in Moldova, and 16 in Romania.

The following is a short description of the main achievements of the Fundraising/Grants Management staff during the reporting period.

Besides the mentioned FR activities, the Fund Raising Officers / Grants Managers carried out multiple other tasks related to updating the websites, developing newsletter content, engagement of volunteers, in-depth stakeholders' analysis etc.

Ukraine				
<b>Partnership For Every Child</b>				
<i>Applications and proposals submitted during the reporting period:</i>				
<b>No</b>	<b>Name and content of the project</b>	<b>Requested fund from donor</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Donor's response</b>
1	Entrepreneurship for youth from under care	Na	Erasmus+ agency in Turkey	Unsuccessful
2	Unity through Youth society Enterprise – Estonia and Ukraine'	Na	1. Erasmus+ agency in Estonia 2. National Endowment for Democracy (NED)	Rejected by both donors
3	Regional plan development and implementation to increase the scope of family care services delivery (residential institutions reform) for Ternopil oblast		World Bank project in Ukraine "Social safety nets modernisation project"	Unsuccessful
4	Development of Family-, Child- and Youth-Friendly Services in the Community of Zhovti Vody of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast	EUR 22700	German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)	Successful, the project is about to start,
5	Engaging Ukrainian Youth	Na	Global Affairs Canada	Developing
6	Family Patronage: Better Solutions for Children Temporary Left without Parental Care	USD 28 950	World Childhood Foundation British Embassy in Ukraine	Approved for the final project year,
7	Communities 4 Children: Developing Quality Alternative Care Services for Children in Amalgamated Communities in the Context of Deinstitutionalization and Decentralization Reforms in Ukraine	£ 19 400		Successful, started in July
8	Applying The Model Of Integrated Social Services At The Level Of Municipalities	USD 239 770	UNICEF Ukraine	Successful, started in July, Total budget –
9	Play on the side of law	Na	UNICEF Ukraine	Unsuccessful

10	No name	Na	UNICEF Ukraine	Unsuccessful
11	COMMUNITIES 4 PEOPLE: Building Capacity of Amalgamated Hromadas for Improving Social Protection System and Social Services Provision	EUR 401 900	U-LEAD with Europe Program	Successful, the project is about to start in September,
12	Civic engagement of vulnerable youth as peer educators and leaders	USD 24980	UNICEF Ukraine	Successful, the project is about to start,

#### *Fundraising events*

On January 25, P4EC held the first fundraising event. 20 representatives of different organisations, governmental and non-governmental, working with youth and representatives of donor organisation were invited to P4EC office. The round table on youth policy achievements in Ukraine was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, Oleksandr Yarema. This event became the platform for establishing new partnerships presenting DARE program (with focus on Children Parliaments and SOLE) and raising P4EC profile in the youth field as a result. The Fundraising Officer has already started to work on the next fundraising event. The event is planned to take place in November 2018.

#### **Caritas Drohobych**

*Applications and proposals submitted during the reporting period:*

<b>No</b>	<b>Name and content of the project</b>	<b>Requested fund from donor</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Donor's response</b>
<b>I</b>	<b>Approved projects (14 projects)</b>			
1	Program for the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse among children and youth in Drohobych/Ukraine (for 3 years)	160 700 Euro	Kindermissonswerk	approved
2	New windows and doors for a rehabilitation center for traumatized children in Drohobych/Ukraine	13 000 Euro	Kindermissonswerk	approved
3	Support in maintaining the All-Church Rehabilitation Center of UGCC "Nazareth" for Alcohol and Drug Addicts in Ukraine	16 881,60 Euro	UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS	approved

4	Construction of the roof in the shelter for homeless people "Our House"	13 625 \$	United Ukrainian American Relief Committee	approved	
5	Rehabilitation and recreation camp "Choose the life"	10 500 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
6	Summer school for the volunteers "From word to work"	18 000 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
7	"Charity market" for homeless people	14 000 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
8	"Integration summer school of icon painting"	40 100 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
9	"Series of weekends for the orphan children and children of ATO participants"	15 000 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
10	Family retreats "Overcoming addictions"	7600 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
11	Preventive trainings for combating human trafficking "Be free! Be happy!"	5 200 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
12	Success of the families of homeless people: methods and ways of achievement	21 000 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
13	"Charity market 2" for homeless people	30 000 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	approved	
14	«Integration camps in the Community "Our house" as a method of volunteers movement development and social service in the parish"	20000,00 UAH	Lviv Education Foundation	approved	
<b>II</b>	<b>Projects waiting for answer (29 projects)</b>				
15	Finishing storehouse and joinery in "Our house"	6 000 €	Missio proEuropa	waiting for answer	
16	"Counseling center for assisting addicted persons and their families"	60 000 UAH	through Sambir-Drohobych Diocese	waiting for answer	
17	Letter of Inquiry : Feeding 100 homeless people		Charley Matt foundation	waiting for answer	
18	"Roof for the shelter for homeless people in Ukraine "	11 700 \$	NWN 2018 Elrant Applicetion	waiting for answer	
19	"To provide better assistance to bigger number of homeless marginalized people through training and assisting volunteers for work with these people "	5 000 €	Referat Weltkitchen ED Wien	waiting for answer	
20	Letter of request: "Maintaining of one client in "Nazareth"	1000 \$	Winnipeg parish in Canada, fr. Ihor Shved o	waiting for answer	
21	Counseling centers for assisting addicted persons and their families	726000 UAH	Patriarch Curia	waiting for answer	
22	All-church international peace building festival for youth	17 500 €	Diozesse Rottenburg-Stuttgart HA	waiting for answer	

			Weltkirche		
23	"Partial subsidy for maintaining and preventing financial crisis in the UGCC "Nazaret" ALL - Chareh rehab. Center for alcohol and drug addicts in Ukraine	12 000 €	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	waiting for answer	
24	"Roof for the shelter for homeless people in Ukraine "	11 700 \$	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	waiting for answer	
25	All-church international peace building festival for youth	17 500 €	Diozesse Rottenburg-Stuttgart HA Weltkirche)	waiting for answer	
26	"Partial subsidy for maintaining and preventing financial crisis in the UGCC "Nazaret" ALL - Chareh rehab. Center for alcohol and drug addicts in Ukraine	12 000 €	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	waiting for answer	
27	"Roof for the shelter for homeless people in Ukraine "	11 700 \$	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	waiting for answer	
28	All-church international peace building festival for youth	17 500 €	Diozesse Rottenburg-Stuttgart HA Weltkirche	waiting for answer	
29	"Partial subsidy for maintaining and preventing financial crisis in the UGCC "Nazaret" ALL - Chareh rehab. Center for alcohol and drug addicts in Ukraine	12 000 €	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	waiting for answer	
30	"Roof for the shelter for homeless people in Ukraine "	11 700 \$	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	waiting for answer	
31	Dishwasher for Rehabilitation Center "Nazareth"	2100 CAD	Parish in Winnipeg Canada (Rev, Ihor Shved)	waiting for answer	
32	Motivation camp for ATO affected children	33 200 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	waiting for answer	
33	"Medicine for poor, elderly and lonely people in Drohobych district (Ukraine)"	15000 Euro	through Sambir-Drohobych Diocese	waiting for answer	
34	"Home care services for poor, elderly and lonely people in Drohobych district (Ukraine)"	15000 Euro	through Sambir-Drohobych Diocese	waiting for answer	
35	ROOF CONSTRUCTION FOR THE BUILDING FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE	5000 Euro	Caritas Italy	waiting for answer	
36	Social care for elderly people	130200 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	waiting for answer	
37	Social provision for elderly people	223200 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	waiting for answer	

38	Reconstruction of the building "Our House"	157 476 €	through Austrian volunteer Christian Schenner	waiting for answer	
39	Excess to good education for children from vulnerable families. Implementation of SOLE methodology in Drohobych.	23 170, 00 \$	U.S. Embassy in Ukraine	waiting for answer	
40	"Youth Civic Engagement"	50000 \$	NED	waiting for answer	
41	«I have rights» (Legal assistance to homeless people)	50000 UAH	Institute Respublica	waiting for answer	
42	The language of life (prevention of domestic violence)	25 375 £	The Maypole Fund	waiting for answer	
43	"De-ironing water system in the Rehabilitation Center "Nazareth" for addicted men"	1000 \$	Japan Water Forum Fund	waiting for answer	
<b>III</b>	<b>Rejected projects (16 projects)</b>				
44	"Installing containers for collecting used things in Stryi town"	200 000 UAH	Embassy of Germany	rejected	
45	" Through rehabilitation to assist ATO veterans who participated in the war in Eastern Ukraine and in result of it became alcohol / drug addicted and/or suffer from PTSD"	35 6250 CAD	Ukrainian - Canadian Congress - National The Defenders of Ukraine fund	rejected	
46	" Sustainable development and livelihood for homeless people through knowledge, innovation and transformation action " ( for reconstruction of the building №2 for homeless)	250 000 \$	OFID ( The OPEC fund for International Development )	rejected	
47	Reconstruction of the building №2 for homeless people"	460636 UAH	Embassy of Germany	rejected	
48	"Truck for the needs of vulnerable people"	25 000 \$	Embassy of Japan in Ukraine	rejected	
49	"Develop your critical thinking" (Program of critical thinking and media literacy in Lviv region)	924 000 UAH	Embassy of Czech Republic	rejected	
50	"Creating the Center of psychological counseling for people in crisis"	237 690 UAH	Embassy of Japan in Ukraine	rejected	
51	Concept Note : Pilot action in Lviv region (Ukraine) " Strengthening a family for a child". Assisting alternative care for prevention of unnecessary separation of	100 080 €	European Commission "Investing in people"	rejected	

	children from their families".				
52	New establishment for ambulatory treatment of addictions	224 000 UAH	Embassy of Germany	rejected	
53	Social and physical rehabilitation of people with special needs	28250 UAH	Lviv Regional State Administration	rejected	
54	Development of volunteers and work with the children affected by Anti-terrorist operation"	20 000 UAH	Lviv Education Foundation Development of volunteerism in communities	rejected	
55	"Youth Build Peace"	23000 USD	Black Sea Trust	rejected	
56	We are the creators of the future	20000 UAH	Lviv Education Foundation	rejected	
57	«Development of women's movement in small settlements of Lviv region	128813 UAH	Ukrainian Women's Fund	rejected	
58	Development of Drohobych community. Effective dialogue between the authorities and society.	20 000 £	Embassy of Great Britain	rejected	
59	Increasing an organizational capacity of the network "Caritas" in the towns Skole, Boryslav, Sambir, Stryi, Drohobych and in the village Dovhe-Hirske of Lviv oblast Ukraine	19000,00 USD	Global Fund for Community Foundations	rejected	

#### *Fundraising events*

The Fundraising officer conducted 2 fundraising events during the reporting period: ,

- Thanks to the first fundraising event "School bag", the staff organized an in-kind support action and they collected school items and bags for 35 children from poor families.
- The second fundraising event was "Easter prize 2018". The aim of the event was to raise money to support families in need. 5000 Easter tickets were distributed. An Eastern Lottery was organized on Palm Sunday. More than 300 people out of 5000 participants got different presents. The result of this fundraising action is raising of 27 229 UAH net, excluding costs for organizing the event. Money raised was spent to purchase different household items for the neediest families of our children.

#### **Social Service of Assistance**

*Applications and proposals submitted during the reporting period:*

<b>No</b>	<b>Name and content of the project</b>	<b>Requested fund from donor</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Donor's response</b>
1	Support of projects of the Children's Parliament within DARE program	na	Department of Innovative Development and Image Projects of the Department for Family, Youth and Sports of the Kharkiv City Council	Submitted

2	Application for the competition from "Active Huge". Topic: support of the Club for Elderly People "The Second Youth".	na	The Republic Institute	Submitted	
3	Installation of greenhouses for children of the Children Village "Otradnoe" and organization of bicycle for the children of the Children Village "Otradnoe"	11,000 EUR	Auchan foundation	Approved	
4	Funding of consulting services on Fundrising	15,000 UAH	ISAR Yednannia	Approved	
5	Organizational development of the "Social Services of Assistance".	40,000 EUR	Caritas Austria	Approved	

#### *Fundraising events*

- Organization of a fundraising event for the "Dog's Paradise" project within the work of the Children's Parliament of the DARE program. The event had 2 stages. The first one was participation of the children of the Parliament in partnership activities with the state institution the Center for the Treatment of Animals on May 27, 2018. The second was a fundraising event in the Center for Families and Children "Otradnoe" on June 9, 2018. The amount of funds collected: 2 165, 50 UAH.
- A new supplier of medicines and hygiene products has been found for the "Home-based and Palliative Care" project, the pharmacy "Receptica". This supplier provides a good discount on goods for the fund. At the moment, the installation of donation boxes is being agreed at the pharmacies.

#### **Fond Aspern**

*Applications and proposals submitted during the reporting period:*

<b>Nº</b>	<b>Name and content of the project</b>	<b>Requested fund from donor</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Donor's response</b>
1	Project "Mobile professional educational center.	na	na	Rejected
2	Selection of the partners for implementation of the program of UNFPA for 2018-2022.	na	na	Rejected
3	The first non-commercial information and consultative mobile point for children up to 18 years old and mothers with children in Kyiv city.	na	na	Rejected
4	Center of social protection for children-orphans, graduates of boarding schools and their families in	na	International Women's Club of Kyiv city.	Partially supported, the furniture was provided for the

	Darnytsia district of Kyiv city			center
5	Prevention of negative trends in youth environment, donor – International Women's Club of Kyiv city.	na	na	Rejected.
6	Inclusive professional education for children and youth,	na	Fund BEARR.	Waiting for response.
7	Social and legal protection of children in informal approach, donor – Embassy of Finland in Ukraine.	na	na	Rejected
8	Equipment for the rooms of individual and group work with families and children in crisis	na	Embassy of Germany in Ukraine.	Waiting for response
9	Trainings on media literacy for vulnerable children and youth and their parents	na	Embassy of Czech Republic in Ukraine.	Rejected.
10	Education of youth "Share your opinions openly"	na	Fund of Open Technologies.	Waiting for response.
11	Civil education for parents and children from vulnerable groups in Darnytsia district of Kyiv city	na	USAID.	Rejected
12	The first information and consulting point for pregnant women and mothers with children at the Center of mother and child in Kyiv	na	Embassy of Japan in Ukraine.	Waiting for response.
13	Education of young tutors "Independent person" in Darnytsia district of Kyiv city	na	Lviv Educational Foundation.	Waiting for response.
14	Video club for the rights of children from vulnerable groups in Darnytsia district of Kyiv city	na	Program "Movies that Matter".	Rejected.
15	"Step into Life"	na	Fund "Misk Foundation"	Waiting for response

16	Civil action through art	na	Embassy of Great Britain in Ukraine.	Waiting for response.
17	Civil action through equipment of children's video club for vulnerable children of Darnytsia district of Kyiv city	na	"Burners Without Borders".	Waiting for response.
18	City of children's masters "Aspern"	na	Public Budget of Kyiv city.	Waiting for response.
19	Legal education for parents and children from vulnerable groups of Darnytsia district of Kyiv city	na	DISCO.	Waiting for response
20	Equipping sensor and LFK-room for vulnerable children of Darnytsia district of Kyiv city	na	Embassy of Japan in Ukraine.	In the process of development
21	Innovative approach in the system of social protection for children in need	na	European Commission.	In the process of development.

#### *Fundraising events*

The following fundraising events were organized:

- Charity Festival "Lucky" on 2 June 2018, participation. The handmade soap was made by beneficiaries of the organization, and it was sold at the charity festival. 916 UAH was donated.
- New version of the website was developed, namely [aspern.org.ua](http://aspern.org.ua). The website has 2 languages, Ukrainian and Russian. English version will be developed soon.

#### **Moldova**

#### **Diaconia**

During the first implementation year, Diaconia managed to realize 2 fundraising initiatives:

- Promotion of the 2% law campaign (production and distribution of communication materials (flyers, web banners)).  
The results of the State Tax Service show us that citizens' civic responsibility increases, as well as the popularity of the 2% mechanism! In 2018, 29,671 people directed 2% to Diaconia, compared to 21,204 people in 2017, the increase being about 40%. Presentation of the State Tax Service available here: <https://goo.gl/UpuAsG>
- Workshops with private donors to raise funds based on project urgent needs (7 workshops)  
The workshops aimed to strengthen the relationship with loyal donors of Diaconia programs, who have been actively involved with financial or in kind contributions in supporting the beneficiaries of Diaconia in the past 3 years. These meetings were based on success stories and new cases Diaconia in raising funds for. Overall, this initiative had a very positive impact:
  - The donor community was created, consisting of people from various fields (eg journalists, judges, business women, etc.). Within this community, Diaconia will share the urgent needs of the beneficiaries' and will try to expand the area of people involved, through donor members.
  - Existing donors organized some awareness-raising and fund raising actions to support the beneficiaries (urgent needs: hygiene, dishes, perishable food).

- Donor community organized a dinner for the Maternal Centre "In Mother's arms" beneficiaries;
- a workshop for mothers in the Maternal Centre was organized on "Managing emotions and stress after birth" ;
- 2 charity auctions and several collections of goods were organized within donor community.

All actions were assisted by the PR Fundraising and Publicity Department. The outcomes to be mentioned are:

- 12 private and 2 corporate donors engaged;
- about 50 potential donors from the community members' network in contact with Diaconia
- 7 meetings organized;
- 19 active members of donor community;
- 10 fund raising events held;
- Many financial, service and in kind donations made for Diaconia.

Also during the reporting period, the Grant Manager achieved the following results:

- Project submitted: "ACCESS - Community Assistance for Children with Special Educational Requirements from Red Village, Cahul District";
- Elaboration and submission of documentation for accreditation as an organization participating in the European Voluntary Service (EVS);
- Report with recommendations to increase eligibility and competitiveness in transnational project calls;
- Analysis of the opportunity and work with the project project for the Romania-Moldova Program;
- Draft - database with international donors;
- Calendar of sources of funding;
- Contribution to the finalization of the project proposal for the Romania-Moldova Program;
- Support to Diaconia and individual contribution to the application for expression of interest for partnership with UNICEF Moldova 2018-2022;
- Elaboration of project proposal "VIS - Vocational Integration Services for Persons from Vulnerable Groups in the Republic of Moldova".

### **Caritas Moldova**

Grant manager of Caritas Moldova was assigned in April 2018. In the reported period, following initiatives have been done:

<b>No</b>	<b>Name and content of the project</b>	<b>Requested fund from donor</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Donor's response</b>
1.	Rehabilitation Centre "Transfiguration" for the needy, alcohol & drug addicted people.	na	Renovabis	The project was given to the Fr. Igor Plevschi
2.	Financial Literacy For Youth (FLY)	na	MiSK Grand Challenges	Assessment of the potential donor "desires and headaches" Project in stand-by

3.	Safety Among Friends in Europe (SAFE)	na	Programme funded by the European Union (Joint Operational Programme (JOP) Romania-Republic of Moldova 2014 – 2020.	Applied to donor
4.	SMS (Social Medical Services)	na	Swiss Cooperation Office SDC	Assessment of the potential donor "desires and headaches" Project in process
5.	PASS Project (Personal Assistants - Social School)	na	Swiss Cooperation Office SDC	Assessment of the potential donor "desires and headaches" Project in stand-by
6.	The theatre that unites us in solving common problems	na	The East European Foundation of the Republic of Moldova (FEE-M)	Applied to donor
7.	"Prevention of asocial behaviour of children"	na	Foundation	Concept in the process
8.	Prevention of Children and road traffic injury	na	Foundation	Concept in the process

### Romania

#### **Caritas IASI**

The Fundraiser in caritas Iasi implemented the following activities during the reporting period:

- 5 fundraising events
- signed partnerships with 4 new collaborators who have donated to the events
- signed collaboration agreements with 2 new Media partners - and he intermediated 1 radio interview and the participation in a TV show for the local coordinator, this were occasion to speak about DARE programme in Iasi
- attracted in the fundraising events persons from the community

The main achievements during the reporting period are the following Fundraising Events:

#### **'The Pancake Festival'**

Raised funds help children in the center to organize a dream-camp.

Profit - 250 euro

**'Handmade Land'**

Raising financial resources to support children and families  
Profit -340 euros

**"Guest at the charity table"**

Raising financial resources to purchase food for the Easter meal for needy children and their families.  
Foods worth: 500 euros

**Charity concert "Together we give smiles to children"**

Raising financial resources to support children from disadvantaged families from the Don Bosco Center for Resource for Children and Young People, Iasi.  
Profit: approximately 1500 euro

**'Charity Maraton'**

Raising financial resources to support the community initiates to improve the Iasi education offer for children.  
Profit: 900 euro

**"Swimathon"**

Raising financial resources for children of Don Bosco Centre  
Individuals donations: 200 euro.

**Alba Iulia**

The Fundraiser in Alba Iulia organized the following activities during the reporting period:

- Development and continuous update of a Donor/Sponsor database
- Getting in contact with existing donors/sponsors in order to introduce herself as further contact person
- Organizing the 2% campaign (people can offer 2% of their annual tax to a non-profit organization. This is not an automatic process, each person needs to be convinced and they need to sign a declaration for it.)
- Coordination of a local project in Odorheiu Secuiesc – a fundraising family festival entitled "Hang on (with) your family, not on your phone"
- Coordination of fundraising campaign for the "Volunteer Camp of Caritas" where 147 volunteers were present. The Camp is a strong community project, organized in every year. The hosting locality can benefit from "free" work force, Caritas volunteers are helping the local community in works like painting, renovating, building, cleaning etc.
- "Caritas city" – fundraising for another family festival in Odorheiu Secuiesc
- Publicizing the 25/2018 Emergency Government Decree, personal meetings with potential microenterprises. In March 2018, the Romanian government took the decision, that sponsorship can be offered only to legally licensed social service providers. This was a favorable decision for social service provider organizations, but there will be more changes in it, as it is discriminatory for all the other civil entities from culture, sports and youth.
- Fundraising for day camps in Covasna county (DARE location Ojdula and Sf. Gheorghe)
- Organizing and coordinating the "II. Elisabeth Charity Ball" in Covasna county – fundraising for beneficiaries of DARE Regional Program and home care for elderly.
- Continuous communication with donors, Feedback after donations, Thank You letters.

Main results was raising of € 6.848,17 and in-kind contributions from companies and individuals.

**Timisoara**

The Fundraiser carried out the following activities during the reporting period.

- *Collecting information on the specifics of the activities, results and impact of the Federation in the community:* in this respect the Caritas Federation Activity Reports for the years 2016-2017 were analyzed and a centralized material with main activities + results and impact achieved. The material will be used to develop new communication and reporting tools (*see attached material*);

- *Sustain the DARE project coordinator* in promoting the consultative workshop with the social actors on child protection, Bucharest, May 22 (*adapting communication materials, contacting relevant local actors and inviting them to the national workshop*)
- *Contacting by email a number of 5 construction companies to request product donations to complete the Periam Day Care Center.* Sporea, Kiki & Iri SRL-D, , Arabesque, Modicom, Hornbach. No company accepted the request
- *Analyzing available Funding Guidelines during the mentioned period and discussing these funding opportunities with the organization's manager* (see list of identified sources of funding)
- *Prepare a project proposal for NESsT Foundation:* the project idea was to develop the social economy component of the Federation â€“ to start a community supported agriculture project at Bacova Farm. The project proposal was not selected.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

### Coordination

#### Coordination within Ukraine, Moldova and Romania

##### Internal

- At the local level, the DARE team of each implementing partner meets on a weekly basis to discuss daily progress, problems and issues in program implementation.
- At the national level internal coordination in Ukraine includes bi-weekly Skype meetings of local coordinators with national coordinator to share information about implementation of the program and solving the issues. Very useful tool for coordination between countries is facebook page DARE Program Community where participants from all countries and institutions publish their achievements and important events.
- At the Regional Level, monthly Skype coordination meeting between National Coordinators and Regional Program Manager are held. Separate ad hoc individual meeting are arranged to tackle specific issues. The Regional Program Manager visits the project locations quarterly and exchanges with the Directors of the implementing organizations on a regular basis to ensure that the implementation is smooth and assist them to find solutions should problem arise.

##### Government

###### In Ukraine:

- The cooperation with the Institute of Education Content Modernization under the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has been established by signing the official cooperation agreement. The Institute provides necessary support in piloting SOLE in hub schools through its representatives at Lviv and Kharkiv Regional State Education Departments responsible for piloting SOLE.
- The Advocacy Officer closely cooperates with Ministry of Social Policy (to promote development of social services and deinstitutionalization during decentralisation reform), Ministry of Youth and Sports (to raise awareness about Children Parliaments and to disseminate the model) and Commissioner of the President of Ukraine for Children's Rights (development of regional deinstitutionalization plans).

###### In Moldova:

- The changes in the actual government were made at the end of 2017. At the beginning of 2018 seven new Ministers have been appointed to new functions and started their activity. Having not yet cooled off from the 2016 presidential election, the Republic of Moldova now faces preparations for its upcoming parliamentary elections in Autumn 2018. 2018 was also perturbed by frequent protest and political tension at all levels. Given the uncertainty of the present political landscape, it was decided to postpone the contact with government levels, until second year of DARE activity.

###### In Romania:

- Information campaigns and awareness raising about DARE within the Government structures started in April 2018. DARE Program brochure (promotion material) was prepared, which was transmitted accompanied by an official letter to the central authorities and the School Inspectorates across the country.

### Other NGOs and Stakeholders

In Ukraine:

- In 2018 the summer camp "Educational experiment" was organized near Vinnytsia. This is a big informal event where the key activists of innovative approaches in education participate with international and national speakers, various workshops for adults and children. This year 4th annual camp gathered together almost 400 teachers, social workers and families with children who are interested in innovative education. DARE National Coordinator and 4 SOLE facilitators from Kharkiv, Drohobych and Medenychi school participated in this camp as speakers. SOLE methodology in general was presented and mini SOLE session was organized for participants with big question "How will education in Ukrainian schools look like in 2048?" Then our facilitators presented their own successes and challenges in SOLE implementation as well as answered a lot of questions from participants. 100 SOLE guidelines and sets of cards with big questions were distributed. At the same day SOLE session for camp children was facilitated with the same big question "How will education in Ukrainian schools look like in 2048?", and children were much more creative than adults. After participation in the camp big online resource "4mama.ua" wrote the article about the camp with a chapter dedicated to SOLE, and in autumn the authors is going to write separate article about implementation of SOLE in Ukraine.
- In June 2018 DARE National Coordinator had a meeting with key representative of informal coalition of Ukrainian NGOs engaged in education. She was really interested to hear about SOLE methodology and proposed to highlight it in the biggest Ukrainian online resources about education "New Ukrainian School". 30.000 subscribers read the facebook page of this resource, and near 500.000 monthly views are being registered on their website nus.org.ua. DARE National Coordinator sent basic information to SOLE to journalist who is responsible for the article, and in autumn she is going to visit both schools to see SOLE in practice.
- In May 2018 P4EC prepared the study visit of youth workers from Ukraine to the Republic of Ireland within the project "BECOMING SUCCESSFUL: Increasing participation of care-leavers in public life and civil society", aimed to foster participation of young people leaving care in decision-making process and supporting them in becoming agents of change for vulnerable youth in Ukraine and Georgia through building capacity of civil society organisations working with youth and learning best European practices. Representatives of Social Service of Assistance and Caritas-Drohobych were selected to take part in the visit. During the visit participants learnt good practices of supporting of vulnerable young people and involving them to civic activism. During summer period the representatives of Social Service of Assistance and Caritas-Drohobych will be partially involved to the development of training module on working with vulnerable young people to share experience received on the national level.

In Moldova:

- DARE Advocacy officer is representing partner organizations within the Alliance of NGOs active in Child and Family Protection.
- All implementing partners had a good communication with local authorities and other stakeholders, such as Local educational Departments; State Social Assistance departments, the Hall, local school/gymnasium/lyceum, the House of Culture and the Church.
- The Regional Manager field visit to all DARE locations showed stakeholder's high commitment and involvement in successful implementation of DARE program.
- Common workshop and further cooperation with CRIC in the field of children's rights policy served not only as a good informational support, but also as a premise for collaboration with CRIC and other relevant Child Protection organizations and public structures.

In Romania:

- 9 NGOs have been identified as potential partners in the DARE Program: Save the Children Romania, Concordia, FONSS, FONPC, DizabNet, SOS Children's Village Romania, World

Vision Romania, Feed the Children, Fed. Coalition for Education. UNICEF will be approached to discuss how we can increase the impact of the DARE Program in Romania.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

National coordinators make regular visits to the program sites to provide technical support and to monitor program activities. All implementing partners fill the database where they include detailed information about beneficiaries within each component, (disaggregated data by age, gender, contacts, vulnerability group and regularity of participation in program activities).

Separately the database includes detailed information about all program activities:

- SOLE sessions, their date, responsible specialist, duration, big question and scores of each session according to teacher's reports
- Children Parliaments groups' meeting, responsible persons, duration and frequency of meetings and topic of the group, implementation of the project and its relevance to the community.
- Trainings for parents and staff, including scores on evaluation of training and percentage of knowledge increase, according to self-evaluation by participants.

Besides the monitoring of individual activities' implementation, the staff is provided with tools to monitoring quality and changes at the levels of behaviour and attitudes. In particular the monitoring component looked at:

- The analysis of Field Notes on the issues of 8 skills of self-organized learning, like creativity, imagination, aspiration, resilience, critical thinking, motivation, achievement, self-efficacy and positive social engagement.
- The use of SDQI questionnaires and surveys with pupils and parents which assisted in gathering information about teaching and learning attitudes.
- Interview with individual members of staff about the teaching and learning process, and issues such as effectiveness of methodologies, child behaviour management and support for staff.
- Self-evaluation is a key strategy in monitoring specific quality indicators or improvement strategies.

Capacity building for local staff on the consistent use of monitoring tools has been one major activity carried out during the implementation period.

The main results of the achievement during the first year have been analysed by the University of Newcastle, Caritas Austria research partner and provider of SOLE trainings. The University compiled the mid-term evaluation report which is attached.

## Other Quality Components

### a) Accountability to beneficiaries

The Implementing organizations use the following tools to make the DARE Program known and accessible to beneficiaries:

- Publishing news and updates of DARE project on web-sites and facebook pages of organizations
- Facebook groups for specific project components, like SOLE and Children's Parliaments (Social Service of Assistance)
- Information posters in schools and day care centre
- Sharing information at current groups and events in day care centres

Feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries are established in the organizations:

- Monthly meeting with parents to discuss the impact of the program
- Boxes for feedback from beneficiaries of SOLE and Positive Parenting components in day care centres and schools
- Evaluation of SOLE sessions and parent groups by beneficiaries through questionnaires, including level of satisfaction, comments, ideas and proposals for improvement

- Oral or written feedbacks collected in a systematic way after key meetings or events

Besides, the following applies to all implementing partners:

1. All Day Centers comply with state quality standards that are compulsory for all social service providers. This means that the functioning of the Centers depend on following these standards. They mostly refer to accountability criteria, such as: providing the beneficiaries with information about the details of Centers' activity, complaining procedures, etc. E.g. the programs of DARE activities and of the Day Centers are available to everybody and presented on the panel at the main entrance of the Centers.
2. The beneficiaries are represented by Caritas teams through regular transparent public reports, mass media and social media articles. In particular, in Ojdula monthly written and photo activity reports are sent to the Local Council about activities in the Daycare Center, and quarterly written and photo report are sent to the Local Council about activities held in the local schools. In Periam the Local Coordinator insisted to set up a common working team with specialists representing the school, the major office and the Day Centre to prevent school dropout within Roma community.
3. The beneficiaries participate in decision making processes through regular informal consultations. For example children are usually consulted about their activities, plans and food menu, etc. and parents are invited to meetings and consulted about individual intervention plans. Parents who do not come to the Centers are visited at home (especially those cases where children are left behind in the care of grandparents or other family members).
4. Representatives of local authorities, schools and community are informed on various issues related to DARE activities. These are also opportunities for children to be heard and listened.
5. Regular debriefings are organized by local teams to evaluate the performance.
6. Also, beneficiaries share the information about DARE activities within the communities.

### **b) Child Protection Standards**

Child protection trainings were organized in the fall and winter of 2018. The training provider is Child Rights Information Centre (CRIC) based in Chisinau, Moldova. Trainings were held in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania for key staff of the implementing organizations. The training are a first important step in a process that will continue in 2018.

Main achieved objectives of the workshops:

- increased awareness of importance of organizational policies and procedures to protect children from harm and potential harm happening in the organization and outside (e.g. family, school, other social services)
- increased knowledge of core components of a child protection policy (CPP)
- gained competence to conduct risk assessment and develop mitigation strategies in the context of their organizational work
- exchanged on good practices and difficulties/challenges in respect of child protection within organizations
- developed Terms of Reference for CPP Coordinator
- developed a feasible action plan for development/improvement of own child protection policy for the next year(s)

The general feedback from all participants to the workshops was positive. For most organizations it was the first time that they tackled the topic of Child Protection in organizational activities. Until then Child Protection was more of an abstract idea and the training helped them fill it with some more concrete content and made them realize the relevance for their work.

This workshop was an opportunity to start working on development of basic elements of CPP, e.g. Codes of Conduct or Reporting procedures.

Organizations have appreciated this opportunity because they could understand better the requirements of accessible and practical procedures and the examples developed could be used in their organizations to draft first CPP.

Most organizations did not have written and applicable Child Protection Policies and Procedures. Only one DARE partner had a written and practical CPP that fits their organizational work and context (Diaconia Moldova). Some other DARE Partners had examples of good practice and had

an understanding of some elements of organizational Child Protection, but these are not yet systematically applied nor documented (e.g., Caritas Moldova and organizations from Romania).

After the trainings were held, each organization appointed a Child Protection Coordinator in charge of following up with the next steps regarding the revision and implementation of CPP.

Among all the 10 organizations targeted (except Caritas Romania that has only an Advocacy function and Representative role within the Caritas Romania Confederation), six organizations are making good progress in the development of Child protection policies:

- One organization has prioritized CPP implementation and was rather swift in following the CPP development steps;
- Five others are reviewing their child protection procedures and made good use of the coaching offered by CRIC;
- Two organizations should finalize their revision with 2018;
- And two feel under-resourced and could not follow up as the others.

Particular attention to the last four will be given during autumn 2018.

The next steps for the second year of DARE Implementation are the following: CRIC will provide individual coaching to the organizations to apply the knowledge acquired during the first year, and assist in the peer review of results. In particular, the aims of the 2018 efforts are to:

- Integration of child protection into the organizational processes and practice: implement CPP and procedures;
- Mobilization and awareness raising around CPP and their implementation: awareness raising of staff, development of action plan, involvement of staff in all development;
- Adapt specific child protection procedures to the work of the organization;
- Risk assessments (RA) with children;
- Adapt prevention activities taking results of RA into account;
- Develop/review Code of Conduct based on results of above steps;
- Critical reflection on communication about children (images, messages)
- Reporting procedures

The methodology used for 2018 will be a mixture of peer review of documents and procedures developed (organizations peer review each other's work), accompanied by coaching and supervision to implement the policy and procedures. Building the capacities of key staff is included in the coaching and a joint workshop will be organized at the end of the implementation process to review best practices and lessons learned in the process.

## DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND SOLUTIONS PROVIDED

Ukraine
<p>The biggest challenges of program implementation in Ukraine were following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One of the DARE implementing partners, Partnership for Every Child, had few delays with starting program activities on time. Namely, SOLE implementation in Valky lyceum started only in March 2018 due to long process of purchase of laptops and long winter school quarantine. Due to problems with finding the relevant candidates for the position of Children's Parliament coordinator in Novi Petrivtsi, the first sessions of the Parliament started only in April 2018. Due to bureaucratic issues, some delays were present with purchase of air conditioner for the shelter for elderly people within the project of Children's Parliament in Valky.</li></ul> <p>Close monitoring of the activities implementation will be provided to avoid any delays or gaps in the future. However due to the major delays and the fact that the partner only used 44% of the budget of the first Year, a decision was taken to have the implementing partner use the unspent funds to fund the second year of implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In some cases, school teachers struggled to understand the concept of Self-organization within the SOLE sessions and were very forward in forming groups and appointing group leaders instead of letting children self-organize. Experts from Newcastle University</li></ul>

confirmed that it breaks the basic rules of SOLE as self-organized learning environment, and teachers were informed about it.

As this entails a behavioural change from the side of the mentioned teachers, closer follow up and support by the local and national Coordinators will be provided in Year 2.

- Improving the engagement of DARE partners in advocacy even on the local level is needed. In fact, partners are not fully engaged in advocacy activities, due to fears of repercussion on their organizations and cooperation with local public institutions and authorities. Therefore, finding the right balance between becoming a stronger social actor and maintaining key relationships will be worked on in the second year.

## Moldova

- **Advocacy officer position.** In Moldova, the biggest challenge faced in the reported period was the selection process of the advocacy officer. It took a long time for all partner organizations to come to a common understanding of the role and to define the work packages. The candidates who eventually applied for the position either were dissatisfied with the offer or not qualified enough. The solution was found in searching internal potential and capacities of organization. So, the Child Protection specialist of Diaconia was found fit for the position of Advocacy Officer. The salary budget line for this position was moved from Caritas Moldova where it initially was to Diaconia.
- **Big questions in SOLE sessions.** The second biggest challenge teachers faced while experiencing SOLE was the formulation of powerful "BIG Question". The key of successful SOLEs is having the right question. It doesn't have to be too easy so students can find the answer right away, but also not so difficult that they get discouraged. It took time and several on line consultations from the University of New Castle to learn how to make questions interesting and challenging to stimulate the discovery process.
- **Intense training program.** A difficultly faced by local teams was the intense training program provided by SOS Village. As the SOS Village was responsible for all 3 countries, the trainings have been organized almost every month. It was very difficult especial for school teachers, who are hired part time. A more flexible and adjusted training schedule is planned for the second year.
- **Evaluation forms and quality questionnaires.** SOLE filed notes and SDQI questionnaires represented another challenge for DARE staff. Teachers and social workers hardly understood the concept of resilience, aspiration and social engagement and how to measure them within one SOLE session. Several Skype meetings with Caritas Vienna team and New Castle experts solved this difficultly. The understanding of the importance of quality assurance and monitoring is still an area where we identified opportunities for improvement.
- **Children motivation.** A huge challenge of teachers and social workers is to maintain children's motivation to attend SOLE sessions 3-4 times per week. Certainly it depended on the quality of BIG questions first, but from first year experience it was clear that 4 sessions a week is too much for children. The ideal number of session per week to keep children happy is 2 sessions.
- **Parent's involvement.** Parents' engagement and motivation to involve in training programs, as well as other day-care centre and school activities is a big challenge for all DARE partners. DARE staff tries to find different solutions for parent's involvement, such as meetings on week ends if appropriate, or dividing parents in smaller groups, according to their availability, providing individual consultations, home visits, involvement of priest etc.

## Romania

### **Iasi:**

One of the problems reported by Caritas Iasi is the lack of a fixed calendar of events for the DARE program. The flexibility degree was too high and this interfered with the program of other activities and events implemented in the day-care center. The materials for the trainings came very late and this made difficult the role of the Local Coordinator to invite people and to organize the events.

There was identified a clear need to improve communication and to create a overall calendar of activities for the second year.

The greatest problem is the fact that the second Children Parliament has not implemented any project so far and Parliament's members are disappointed. Their project implementation depends on local authorities' decision and approval of their ideas.

The solution is to recommend children to have more specific approaches and to address their projects to a narrower level; to take into consideration the fact that in Lasi, being a big city, to work with local authorities is a long process. The social assistant responsible for the implementation of Children Parliaments should encourage children to reach implementable projects within a two-month period.

### **Ojdula:**

These are the three major problems encountered in program implementation in Caritas Alba Iulia:

- The biggest difficulty is the unpredictable situation of the Day Centre. For a long time there has been a strong concern about the funding of the second year of DARE. Still, the continuous struggle with the uncertainty is affecting the dynamics of the team. The solution found was the new contract discussed with local authorities. For a more sustainable work, Day Centre from Ojdula obtained the legal license for five years from the Ministry of Social Justice; this will provide the possibility to obtain in addition state funds / subventions.
- Another difficulty is the challenge of working with a certain category of parents. In the beginning of the project year, which coincided with the opening of the Day Centre, the staff has experienced a lot of negative attitude from community members and comments from parents' side. No one believed that significant changes could be achieved. Whether in previous reports the team reported this issue defining it a difficulty, now they refer to it more as to a challenge. Solutions came out from daily work, from all stakeholders, team members, children, beneficiaries, local authorities, school, etc. The team made great efforts to get closer to parents.
- Third major difficulty or challenge was the lack of reading and writing skills of children who participated in SOLE sessions in the Daycare Centre. The staff members worked hard to adapt the SOLEs and make them useful and successful. The social worker responsible for SOLE is experienced in conducting group work and games. This led to organising a lot of Art SOLE sessions and self-development sessions combined with digital literacy development.

### **Periam:**

The following difficulties have been encountered in the implementation of DARE program:

- Because the information, materials and the tools were delivered gradually or even with delay and because of the fact that a National Coordinator had been employed only in October and the communication with implementation team was poor the strategy of the program and all its details had been understood by recruited implementing staff only after the implementation started.
- Another problem refers to the employed personnel in the Centre. The lack of flexibility, rigid attitude and rejection to fully participate to all trainings made the team members apply the innovative methods in a clumsy way in the beginning. The role of the Local Coordinator was essential in this situation. The multiple meetings with lots of examples and explanations, effective coaching and mentoring, simulations and role-plays headed to increase and acceptance of the program.
- The third and most difficult problem was the fact that parents did not respond to the invitation to participate to the events organized in the Centre. The interaction with Roma parents is very fragile. In order to positively respond to those few parents who are open, the team decided to involve the local school in this component. Thus, parents from the whole community, not only those having children as beneficiaries of the Centre, were invited to the trainings. Unfortunately, people from rural environment are not familiar with such events and the rate of participation has still been low.

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

Some lessons learnt could be summarised as follows:

- Project activities should be monitored as closely as possible to avoid any delays or misunderstanding in project implementation. Yearly calendar should be updated and adjusted together with implementing partners, while striking a balance between flexibility and consensus building.
- It can be useful for staff to strike a partnership with colleagues from other organizations to share experiences and talk through some of the challenges of adapting to the SOLE enquiry method. Discussing and even arguing about practice beliefs and outcomes is important. Such argument is best informed by evidence and feedback from the pupils.
- Mindfulness works best as a sustained experience. Teachers and social workers need to experience mindfulness before they can pass on techniques to students. They can incorporate mindfulness through regular formal one-to-three-minute guided sessions or include mindfulness informally, through games.
- Crafting the big question is the most challenging piece of the SOLE sessions: more practice and exercise in the second year will help.
- Initially, the idea of self-organizing did not come spontaneously. Children often formed certain groups simply because they already knew one another. But because groups are formulated on common interests, it's important that students feel comfortable working with those they don't know as well. It's useful to set up frequent "getting to know you" activities.
- It is essential to work closely with parents/caregivers. Engagement of the whole family is key to long-lasting and holistic successful intervention for children.
- At local level, it is essential to continue working with teachers and parents to ensure adults are better equipped to discipline children both at home and at school without the use of violence and emotional blackmailing, and incorporate the principles of positive discipline into future training work.
- While planning the program activities, it is important to distribute trainings equally. Too big number of trainings within short period of time causes too much stress and overwhelming tension for staff.
- Building strong collaboration with staff from partner organizations is key to successful creation of the community of practice platform. Creating dialogue and joint ownership is crucial. But developing joint messages and tools is often not enough. Ideally people need to be enabled to work physically together (within trainings, working meetings), creating opportunities to learn from each other and to build each other's capacities and mutual understanding.
- With certain methodologies like SOLE, more support shall be given to implementing partners to focus not only on the results of SOLE session but also and possibly above all on the meta-level and the process itself. The shift from a success/achievement-oriented environment in school and daycare centers to a process-oriented one takes constant engagement and support from National coordinators.
- Support to partners in quality assurance is key and is part of capacity building efforts to improve the management skills of teams.

## CHANGES IN THE USE OF FUNDS

The main changes occurred during the implementation period are:

- Increase in budgets of implementing partners to whom Caritas Vienna transferred logistics costs for the organization of training for Parenting Skills, SOLE trainings, Mindfulness trainings and Child Protection. Logistic costs were initially on the budget of Caritas Vienna. Given the efforts implied in the organizations of trainings, Caritas Vienna assessed the organizations' capacities and also verified the willingness of organizations to take up the logistic arrangements of trainings.
  - In 2017 logistics costs were covered by Confederation of Caritas Romania, Caritas Iasi, Caritas Moldova, and Partnership 4 Every Child;
  - In 2018 logistic costs will be covered by Confederation Caritas Romania, Diaconia, Social Services of Assistance.

The reasons behind the underspending are linked to initial delays that started at the beginning of the project and that were reported in the half-year report submitted to the donor in February, namely:

- delays in recruitment of some key staff due to the summer period and not always competitive salary levels;
- Slowed down procurement procedures at national level when material was purchased jointly by DARE Partner organizations;
  - Engagement of teacher for trainings and activities was possible only from October 2017;
- Key trainings like SOLE and Mindfulness were initially planned for September 2017 but with the adjustments necessary for the participation of teachers, new possible dates for experts to hold trainings were found only in November 2017.
- Children Parliament training held by Partnership 4 Every Child was delayed due to unavailability of trainer before October 2017.
- Quarantine in one School In Ukraine (Valky School) and delays in getting approvals from Ministry made it so that SOLE activities in one school in Ukraine could only start in April 2018.
- Difficulties in finding Advocacy officers in the three countries. Challenges related to:
  - Alignments between all DARE organizations to draft the Terms of References and define work packages;
  - Unattractive salary has not made qualified candidates apply.In Ukraine, the Advocacy Officer was officially engaged from mid November 2017;  
In Romanian the Advocacy Officer was engaged from August 2017;  
In Moldova the Advocacy Officer was engaged from April 2018.

Unspent funds from the first year of DARE will be considered as income and contribution to funding of the second year of DARE implementation.

The detailed financial report is attached separately.