

## **Interim 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 Austria on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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. The 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.

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. 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. 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 during the first half year of implementation to reach out towards parents and bridge existing communication gaps between teachers, social workers and parents. In some locations where the targeted communities are exclusively of Roma origins (namely, Ojdula and Periam in Romania) the methods and approaches need to be adjusted to the context: implementing organizations have to find a fine balance between encouraging parents to participate and establishing constructive relations without being rejected.

The results of the first months of implementation will be analysed by the research partner in the Program, University of Newcastle. A mid-term evaluation report covering activities carried out during fall and winter 2017 will be shared with the relevant stakeholders (namely, implementing partners and the donor) within the first quarter of 2018.

However, 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 in 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 which will be ready by end of March 2018.

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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>	<u>Ukraine: Lviv, Kyiv and Kharkiv Oblasts</u> <u>Moldova: Edinet, Fetesti, Balti&amp;Petropavlovca</u> <u>Romania: Ojdula, Periam, Iasi</u>
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<b>PROJECT DURATION</b>	From	01.06.2017	To	31.05.2019
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<b>REPORTING PERIOD</b>	From	01.10.2017	To	01.01.2018
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## OVERVIEW OF BENEFICIARIES REACHED IN THE REPORTING PERIOD

### Ukraine

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children Age 6-8y</b>	8	7	15
<b>Children Age 9-13y</b>	56	61	117
<b>Children Age 14-18y</b>	13	11	24
<b>Total</b>			<b>156</b>
	Male	Female	Total
<b>Parents 18 – 25 ys</b>	0	0	0
<b>Parents 26 – 40 ys</b>	4	42	46
<b>Parents 41 ys – 60 ys</b>	2	26	28
<b>Parents &gt; 61 ys</b>	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>77</b>

### Moldova

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children Age 6-8y</b>	1	5	6
<b>Children Age 9-13y</b>	74	93	167
<b>Children Age 14-18y</b>	42	78	120
<b>Total</b>			<b>293</b>
	Male	Female	Total
<b>Parents 18 – 25 ys</b>	-	-	
<b>Parents 26 – 40 ys</b>	18	137	155
<b>Parents 41 ys – 60 ys</b>	16	39	55
<b>Parents &gt; 61 ys</b>			
<b>Total</b>			<b>210</b>

### Romania

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Children Age 6-8y</b>	2 / 5 / 3	10 / 1 / 2	23
<b>Children Age 9-13y</b>	10 / 29 / 28	8 / 29 / 34	138
<b>Children Age 14-18y</b>	5 / 14 / 15	14 / 20 / 16	84
<b>Total</b>			<b>245</b>

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

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

#### Self-Organized Learning Environments

For the three countries the main positive results for the teachers, social workers and students involved in SOLE methodology are:

- positive group dynamics between children:
- Improved use of internet as research tool
- Improved critical thinking
- Engagement and enthusiasm from students
- Self-presentation skills have improved
- Children spontaneously initiate the search for new information and generate new ideas.

In day-care centres where staff interact with particularly vulnerable children (e.g. Fond Aspern in Kyiv, caritas Alba Iulia in Ojdula, Diaconia in Edinet), pedagogues worked in a special format with the most vulnerable children. Before SOLE sessions, the staff held mini exercises to improve communication and interaction between children.

In Ojdula, given the fact that children are from Roma communities and have difficulty in basic literacy skills, the sessions have been adapted to the children's pace and ability to learn and absorb concepts.



Some “big” questions used for the SOLE sessions are:

- What is human happiness?
- When did human rights appear?
- What about children's rights?
- What does the expression “crocodile tears” mean?
- Can robots replace people?
- Why do the flowers smell?
- How was the mobile phone invented?
- How do the stars appear?
- How big is the space?
- Who made an alphabet?
- Who am I?
- Why is school important?
- How do you imagine your future?

The most important activities of the reporting period included a set of trainings at the national and local levels and implementation of the methodology in schools and day-care centres.

Ukraine
<p>In Ukraine, trainings were held on November 21-22 in Kyiv by the expert Helen Burns from the University of New Castle. A total of 21 participants from 6 organizations and 2 schools attended the training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialists from schools in Valky and Medenychi and DARE program's implementing partners Caritas Drohobych, Partnership 4 Every Child, Fond Aspern, and Social Services of Assistance</li><li>• Project coordinator from Caritas Odessa who manages implementation of SOLEs in Odessa region</li><li>• Social workers from Caritas-Kyiv who were particularly interested in SOLE and will implement it in their day care centre for children</li></ul>



The general feedback to the training was very positive and participants commented that they will use the knowledge gained during the training and experiment with SOLE methodology in schools and day-care centres (including participants who are not part of DARE program).

The training was preceded by pilot sessions in the targeted school in Medenychi and day-care centres.

A total of **126 SOLE sessions** were held during the reporting period in one school and three day-care centres.

The number of children who participate to the sessions is 78. In the school in Valky teachers will engage 30 students in SOLE sessions.

Establishment of cooperation with the Hub school in Valky has taken longer than expected. Teachers in Vlky participated at the trainings and plan to engage 30 students in SOLE sessions.

### Moldova

In Moldova, trainings were held on November 16-17 for all staff involved in the DARE program (20 participants including social workers of 3 day-care centres, and teachers from 5 local schools). The training was held by James Stanfield from the University of Newcastle.

In the reporting period **407 SOLE** sessions were organized: 336 sessions supervised by Regina Pacis, 12 sessions supervised by Caritas Moldova, 59 sessions supervised by Diaconia). On an average one SOLE session lasts from 1.5 to 2 hours and is organized twice per week in schools and 4-5 times per week in social centres. Regina Pacis has the highest number of schools (3 schools) thus the highest number of SOLE sessions.

Caritas Moldova decided to change the implementation of SOLE from the daycare centre in Balti to the day-care centre in Petropavlovca. The decision was due to the lack of cooperation of local staff in Balti. The centre in Petropavlovca provides assistance to highly marginalised and vulnerable children and was chose to increase the quality of services for final beneficiaries and to improve the work with the local community.

Implementation in the local school in Balti continues as planned.

In the reporting period, the quality of SOLE sessions increased considerably due to training of staff by New Castle University but also thanks to the Mindfulness and Positive discipline training. The SOLE sessions were enriched with socializing games, team-building games, mindfulness exercises for forming and strengthening the group. Teachers showed to be more confident in their actions which also had an impact on children.

The number of SOLE session 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 of DARE 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.

### Romania

In Romania, the SOLE training took place on November 15-16 in Bucharest and was held by Helen Burns form the University of Newcastle.

A total of **83 SOLE sessions** were held in day-care centres and schools in Romania. Staff took longer to establish cooperation with local schools and SOLE sessions started after the training in November. Implementation of the first SOLE sessions in day-care centres started in Iasi in October. The day-care centre in Iasi had to stop using SOLE methodology for three weeks as children's interest decreased. After a meeting with experts of the University of Newcastle, staff was advised to let the children choose the way they would collect and present results of their research on Big Questions. This led to the use of various artistic methods that allow children freedom of expression. By doing this, children's interest was renewed.

The SOLE sessions in Ojdula face another set of challenges. Children attending the day-care center in Ojdula are from a Roma community. Children show interest but the level of literacy of the attendants to the day-care centre is low and their ability to focus for a long time on any given subject

is not very developed. The DARE local coordinator for Alba Iulia promote SOLE activities and DARE methodologies in other locations and projects by Alba Iulia, namely in Sf. Gheorghe in a centre in Örkö for Roma children from a very disadvantaged community. In Örkö, SOLE methodology is adapted and used as a motivational method to introduce primary school children to alphabetization.

In Periam SOLE is used in day-care centre for Roma children and two different age groups, as well as in the local school for children aged between 9 - 10 and 14-17 years. Teachers in the local school are very engaged and happy to have the possibility to experiment with new methodologies.

The number of SOLE sessions in Romania is lower than in any other country because most day-care centers and schools involved started implementing SOLE session only after the training was delivered in November. Also, the efforts of local coordinators to reach out to teachers and ensure the cooperation and engagement was challenging in Romania in certain locations (e.g. Ojdula and Iasi).



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	
<p><u>Teacher, 57 years old, Floresti, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>My activity as a teacher is directed at every child's soul and helps me to establish intrapersonal / interpersonal relations in the social and emotional contexts. At the SOLE sessions, I learn many new things together with the children. My success lies in the fact that I've mastered time management. We have established friendship and trust relationships with more difficult and marginalized children. During the sessions, I have enough time to observe how children get involved in activities and decide how their work can be further improved at other sessions.</i></p>	<p><u>Girl, Kyiv, 7 years old, Ukraine</u></p> <p><i>I like the topics which we explore during SOLE sessions. I get to know answers to the questions which I never thought about. I retain new information from SOLE sessions much easier. I started to study better in school. I like to do some interesting and useful things. It's very funny at the sessions.</i></p>
<p><u>Social worker, Kyiv, Daycare centre, Ukraine</u></p> <p><i>Due to my participation in the DARE program the term "teacher" has another sense for me now. A Teacher is not a person who is teaching, but a person with whom children can learn by themselves, and who is a facilitator. I realized that the world is changing, and the education system should change as well. I expanded my views about the reasons of independent learning, why children should own their learning</i></p>	<p><u>School girl, Medenychi School, Ukraine</u></p> <p><i>Our first SOLE sessions started in September 2017. At first they were difficult for us. We could not organize ourselves and cope with the tasks during the session. But now we can do it easily! We can share tasks among the group participants and at the end of the session we are ready with interesting presentations. We love to split into groups. We love to make Power Point presentations. We love to make posters. We are</i></p>

<p><i>experience, and I understood how it should be implemented.</i></p>	<p><i>fond of DARE handbooks. We learnt how to fill the Map of Stars and how to assess our emotions during the session. SOLE sessions are very cool, and we want to continue this work.</i></p>
<p><u>School teacher, 43 years old, Medenychi School, Ukraine</u></p> <p><i>At the beginning of the DARE program the children could not fully understand the reason and objectives of SOLE sessions. However, with every next SOLE session their interest has grown. Splitting into groups, choosing a leader, working at computers, searching for information – these are things which engage children a lot. The children and I were very surprised to see a new leader in our class. It is a girl who revealed great leadership and organizational skills at the sessions. Everyone wants to be in her team, because her team always prepares good presentations and finds great things in all "Big" questions.</i></p>	<p><u>Social pedagogue, 22 years old, Drohobych, Daycare centre, Ukraine</u></p> <p><i>It has been 5 months, since I have started to work in the DARE program as a social worker and SOLE teacher. I came to Caritas without self-confidence and with fear that I won't manage to do the job properly. But after participation in trainings for the staff and parents of the DARE program and after holding several SOLE sessions I saw that everything is not as dramatic as I thought. This job helped me to gain self-confidence, to get new knowledge and new methods of work with children. I feel that I am growing as a specialist. I am developing my communicative skills, skills to work with children and with people in general. The new learning methodology SOLE appeared to be very interesting not only for children, but, first of all, for me. I am convinced that this methodology must be applied in schools. It brings me great pleasure to watch children who are looking for information, working in different teams, making creative decisions in presentations and developing themselves as good learners. I am really happy that I got a chance to work in DARE program, because here I can grow professionally and as a personality.</i></p>
<p><u>Social Worker, Balti School, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>I have noticed a change that I enjoy very much. I have become more open, I express my opinion more freely, without the fear of being analysed and roughly evaluated by the people I interact with. I was educated in the frame of the proverb, "You have two ears and one mouth, use them as much as you can." When I encourage children to speak without inhibition that also reflects on me. I have noticed that even when I speak in public I feel more at ease, and it is a new experience for me so far. This helps me in my professional activity, especially when I have meetings with parents.</i></p>	<p><u>Girl, 10 years old, School Balti, Moldova</u></p> <p><i>My mother became more curious about my school life, she wants to know the questions that were discussed at SOLE sessions and she listens carefully to me when I give her the answers. Before, she just asked me what marks I received; now I discuss about my marks and a lot about what I learned at SOLE sessions. My mother studied at school history, mathematics, nature etc, but when she was my age there were no SOLE sessions in school, that's why she is so curious.</i></p>

## Children's Parliaments in Action

Children Parliaments are implemented in four locations in Ukraine, one location in Moldova and three locations in Romania.



### Ukraine

The training for specialists was organized and facilitated by experts from Partnership for Every Child. In Ukraine, the representatives of the following organizations and institutions participated at the training:

- Drohobych social city center for family, children and youth
- Novi Petrivtsi social city center for family, children and youth
- Valky lyceum
- Social Service of Assistance

Additionally, the representatives of the National Children Council under the President's Ombudsman for Children's Rights in Ukraine participated at the training. Though the National Children Council is not a direct project beneficiary, its representatives were interested in the methodology and are going to apply some components in their activities. In the end of the training the participants were able to take part in a skype-meeting with colleagues from Diaconia (Moldova), who have participated at a similar training and already started implementation of the children parliament component.

During the reporting period 5 parliament sessions were organized in Kharkiv, including:

- Two meetings of Children Parliament. The first two meetings have been used to set up the Parliament structure, to provide information to children about what they will do, elections of the Chairperson and Vice-Chair person, identification and tasks, schedule of activities and meetings, plans. Ideas for project proposals will be developed in 2018.
- 2-day training "Active Citizens", facilitated by trainers from British Council
- 1 day training "Leadership", facilitated by trainers from British Council

3 more trainings are planned to be held for children in January and February 2018, namely on project management, development of presentation skills, team work. The need for trainings on topics related to project development was detected by the responsible social worker after a preliminary needs assessment. Participation in the training provides children with basic knowledge and skills how to organize parliaments and to write project proposals. All trainings are being facilitated by engaging external and internal experts on volunteer basis.

### Moldova

In Moldova the Children Parliaments in Action is implemented by one partner: Diaconia.

The Children Parliament engages 27 children from Fetesti region. Children used sociocratic\* election method to choose their president, vice presidents and other responsible persons. There were 5 departments created within the Children Parliament:

- 1) Administrative Department
- 2) Education Department
- 3) Culture Department
- 4) Sports Department

#### 5) Media Department

Each department has 2 responsible members to come up at the Parliament meeting with news and proposals from the department.

A total of 14 meetings of Children Parliament have been organized in the reported period. The meetings take place once a week for about 3 hours each.

The meeting were used to understand the work flow of the Children's Parliament and team elaborated leaflets and posters and organized in December together with the Parliament members an informational session in the High school to motivate and recruit more young children to involve in the activity. So, if before the event, there were 15 children engaged in Children Parliament, after the informational session there are 27 active members of the Parliament.

Children divided themselves into three working groups and started to work on project ideas to be presented and voted for financing.

It is worth mentioning that 15 children from the Parliament, started their active involvement in community life and applied a draft proposal to the local municipality and won 1000 MDL (48.5 Euro) which they want to spend to buy maps for the geography classroom.

The main project ideas that they developed are:

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

Through this project, children have decided to set up two dressing rooms next to high school gym: high school students don't have the space to change clothes before sports' lesson. For this purpose they proposed the following: to set up two rooms, one for boys and one for girls, with dressing room furniture, within the budget limit as in the project.

- sports locker for 150 students.
- equip each room with 1 metal wardrobe with 8 sections, 2 benches and 50 hangers.
- involve the board members of the high school students in the arrangement actions.

*"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 at physics, biology and chemistry classes. For this purpose, they proposed the following: Providing the school lab with chemicals, microscopes, lab equipment.

- arrange a space for students from I to XII grades, where experiments can be performed.
- equip the laboratory with four microscopes and five sets of solutions and substances according to the curriculum
- buy five sets of clothing and five pairs of laboratory glasses

*Project No.3 - "Sport is for us!"*

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

- To improve sports equipment with five balls and five sport's sets for primary classes
- To provide 16 sets of sport's uniforms for high school teams.
- To appoint a responsible person for sports equipment in each class during sports classes and competitions.

\* Sociocracy is a governance method that makes collaboration, self-organization, and distributed authority practical and effective. A Deeper Democracy uses the methods of sociocracy to achieve the values of democracy—transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability. (Source: <http://www.sociocracy.info/>)

#### Romania

P4EC specialist delivered trainings in Iasi on October 26th and 27th for staff of implementing organizations on methodology.

The aim of trainings was to prepare participants for the organization and coordination of the activities of the Children Parliaments, to draft steps of implementing the component.

After the training the implementing partners started engaging children for participation in children



parliaments. They informed children about the aim and process of meetings within parliament, and held initial meetings with stakeholders to support the implementation of the program component (e.g. local department of youth and sports, local department of education, NGOs).

In **Iasi**, Children Parliaments have organized six sessions. By the end of February 2018, the Parliaments planned to implement the first projects. Two parliaments are set up in Iasi, one for children aged 18 and one for younger children aged 12. The ideas developed by the older group are:

1. Painting and drawing the wall at the entrance of the oncological paediatric hospital St. Maria in Iasi. Members of the Children Parliament felt that creating a more child friendly environment will help the children who are oncological patients to stay at the hospital. By creating a joyful and friendly environment they wish to have a positive impact on the feelings of the children who are sick and contribute in some small ways to improve their wellbeing for as long as they stay at the health center.
2. Re-establishing a popular historical park in Iasi. This park influenced the greatest romantic Romanian poet, Mihai Eminescu, to write one of the most famous love poems called "Passing by the odd poplars". Children want to promote the cultural heritage of Iasi.
3. Arranging the outside yard of one of the greatest hospitals in Romania: Emergency Clinical Hospital "Sf. Spiridon" has been - for decades, traditionally a landmark of healthcare trust not only for Iasi, but for the entire population of Moldova. By creating a patients-friendly and harmonious environment children want to have an impact on the wellbeing of the patients at the hospital.

The second parliament by younger children had the following proposals:

1. Re-arranging two parks for children in two various locations which at the moment cannot be used by the children.
2. Refurbishing a skating park. The skate park already exists and they plan to 'redecorate' it.

In **Ojdula**, children of two different age-groups form the parliaments. The activities within the Children Parliaments allowed children to get to know each other better, allowed to have more integration of children from different communities and is used also as a tool for social integration. Ideas for projects are developed in 2018.

The projects' ideas developed by the parliament include:

Ecological:

1. Planting saplings and flowers in the park in front of the school; the name of the project: Together for our environment!
2. Cleaning of streets

Social:

1. Organize an event by cooking a warm meal 'of solidarity' for the elderly who are alone and helping them voluntarily with their household chores; the name of the project: Do not lose hope at all!
2. Organizing a charity event (a charity ball) and raise funds in order to invest those funds in treatment of a sick girl.
3. Organizing, collecting and distributing packages of food for the elderly

Campaign:

1. Anti-alcohol and anti-smoking campaign

Infrastructure:

- Renovation of the school gym and the sports field in the school yard.

The Children Parliament already voted the ideas and will implement the following two: Together for our environment! And Do not lose hope at all!

In **Timisoara**, the local school was engaged in the organization of Children parliaments. 31 children from the school take part in the Children Parliaments. They developed visibility material to make publicity about their activities. The sessions of the Parliament are held each week.

The projects' ideas developed by the parliament include:

Ecological:

- Organizing a skate park. The park doesn't exist and they are searching other sources of funding. They also are negotiating with local authorities for the location of this park

Cultural:

- Initiating a youth club. They need a location for this activity and they are looking for it.

Infrastructure:

- A bike parking in the school yard. This is the most supported project. The members of the group are also looking for external resources in order to be successful in implementing it.

The projects will be submitted to community elections in 2018.

The following quotes are from children attending the Parliaments:

**Extracts from interviews with target groups:**

Vladyslav, 12 years old, Kharkiv, Ukraine

*When I started to participate in Children's Parliament, I didn't feel bored, like I felt earlier in my leisure time. I extended my circle of interests. I get to know a lot of new information at the parliament sessions and trainings. Participation in children's parliament makes me do better in school. I learn how to plan my time. I tell to my friends and schoolmates what I am doing at the parliament.*

Catalina, 15 years, Fetesti, Moldova

*In this project we realized that we are all equal and that we have to make ourselves heard because our opinion really matters. I learned to express myself more easily; I learned to organize my time, to have a friendlier attitude towards my colleagues in the school, whether they are younger or older than me. I have a strong desire to change something in my community.*

Children from Parliament in Iasi aged between 14 and 17

*We want to have an impact. We want to make a difference. We see the problems in our community and with this project we can do something about them. We have so many ideas. We make them real.*

## Mindfulness and Positive Discipline



MAGIC Education and Mindfulness trainings were held for two days in each of the three countries. The main objective set for the two-day training was to plant seeds that experts and DARE coordinators could then continue to water throughout the supervision period. It was recognized in advance that two days was a short time frame for training in mindfulness (which was further reduced because of translation). However, due to the limited availability of the participants, this was

considered a maximum.

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.

- In Romania the level of involvement was lower compared to the other two countries. Issues related to understanding the link between mindfulness and resilience and thus the place of mindfulness in a holistic child-protection approach was not clearly understood.
- Because Romania was the first country where the training was given, the following trainings in Ukraine and Moldova were adapted based on the realization that the objectives of the training and the connection between mindfulness and resilience had not been fully understood in Romania.

Future action:

- The training is being followed up by monthly supervisions and weekly peer group meetings scheduled to further support the participants' understanding and integration of self-care tools. Supervision is done by skype by experts and facilitated by National Coordinators.
  - o Supervision sessions will target deepening the conceptual basis of mindfulness and building on the experience from the training.
  - o Appropriate time will be assigned for exchanges, questions and clarifications.
- The manual had originally been designed as a complement to the training and not as a standalone document. However, given some small differences in application in each country and the feedbacks from the local implementing partners during the training and during the first phase of implementation of the mindfulness approach, a manual revision will take place. The new manual will be modified in order to incorporate additional theoretical background and all support material for the supervision.
  - o Also, national coordinators will identify more skilled translators in psycho-education methodologies. Finding skilled translators on topics of education and child protection was a challenge.

### Supervision and coaching session

Dates for supervision sessions have been agreed upon in each country: seven sessions per country, from January to June.

Plan for the supervisions:

- Written material will be prepared ahead of each session. This material will contribute to the chapters of the new manual. Emphasis will be put on clear explanation of mindfulness, its applications and benefits including scientific evidence and personal accounts.
- This year's training of mindfulness for the teachers and social workers constitutes the foundation upon which the second year can be developed where the direct involvement of the children will be prioritized. Hence the manual will reflect that approach by separating the two





- parts and providing background material for each section.
- The content of the supervision is planned both for people who have attended the two-day training and for people who have not had any introduction to mindfulness. Some people participating in the supervision in each country have not attended the two-day training and some people in Romania missed significant parts of the training (arrived at the end of the morning of the first day and/or left after lunch on the second day).
- We propose one individual skype session for each of the people that have not attended the two-day training or participated only partially.

Ukraine																														
Training on Mindfulness and Positive Discipline saw the participation of 26 specialists from the implementing partner organizations and school teachers involved in DARE. The training became introduction to the concept of Mindfulness and its link with Child Protection. Few comments, provided by participants in evaluation forms:  <i>"Practical exercises for self-awareness were great, sharing feedback with others"</i> <i>"I liked interesting and useful content of the training as well as interesting format"</i> <i>"Super. Immersion in ourselves was great"</i> <i>"A lot of useful information for myself, and I will practice it"</i> <i>"Opportunity to analyze my own feelings and emotions"</i> <i>"Breathing practices and focus of attention were great"</i> <i>"I didn't understand the sequence of exercises with children, lack of theoretical part to accompany those exercises"</i>  Currently DARE staff of implementing partners, including Caritas-Ukraine and Caritas-Kyiv, participate in monthly online supervisions with experts, and team leaders practice exercises weekly or on a bi-weekly basis with their colleagues.																														
Moldova																														
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. Follow up by National and Local coordinators showed that more coaching was needed to assist social workers and pedagogues to apply the knowledge with children and themselves. To address this challenge, together with trainers and the local management team, a followup supervision plan was set up; 3 focal points have been selected for each region to coordinate mindfulness activities on local basis. Monthly skype calls are planned with the local team and the trainers, and weekly meetings with people involved in DARE in each region.																														
Romania																														
In Romania, the Mindfulness Training targeted social assistants, social pedagogues, psychologists, and teachers involved in DARE activities. The evaluation of the training showed that knowledge of specific topics improved:																														
<table><tr><th>BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING</th><th colspan="5">1 = low, 5 = high</th></tr><tr><th><i>Before the training, please, evaluate your level of knowledge about:</i></th><th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th></tr><tr><td>Coping with stress</td><td></td><td></td><td>50%</td><td>50%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Resilience and self-care</td><td></td><td>21%</td><td>43%</td><td>36%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Development of empathic relationships</td><td></td><td></td><td>28%</td><td>44%</td><td>28%</td></tr></table>	BEGINNING OF THE TRAINING	1 = low, 5 = high					<i>Before the training, please, evaluate your level of knowledge about:</i>	1	2	3	4	5	Coping with stress			50%	50%		Resilience and self-care		21%	43%	36%		Development of empathic relationships			28%	44%	28%
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The general feedback to the training showed that, as in Ukraine and Moldova, more coaching and																														

supervision are needed to implement the component in a successful and impactful way. The subject of the training is very new to the participants who appreciate having extra support to integrate mindfulness in their work. The supervision sessions will help answering further questions. A platform of open discussions has been set up so that participants can have their doubts clarified.

Some comments made during the general feedback collection were:

*"I will apply things I learned in my personal life and in the Day Centre"*

*"I will apply these in my work at the Centre."*

*"I will apply mindfulness through choices that will follow mindfulness principles: attention+ intention + positive attitude + receptivity."*

*"I will use mindfulness at work. In various activities. In inter-human relationships."*

*"In my relationship with my students. More patience."*

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:

##### Social pedagogue, Kyiv, Daycare centre

*I participated in many trainings within DARE program, and they had very positive impact on me. I got the opportunity to improve my work. Due to the training "MAGIC education and Mindfulness" I practice mindfulness skills and use those skills in the work with children. I am inspired by meetings with Monica and use materials provided by her.*

*I am happy to see the positive changes in children and to understand that I am a part of their development. I share new knowledge with my colleagues, teachers and parents, and I inspire them for changes.*

##### Project Coordinator, DARE Implementing Partner, Ukraine

*The training in Mindfulness was not a typical formal training, but a space where participants could open and feel themselves "here and now". This experience was very important for those who deal directly with children and young people, because they encourage them to work on their own, to feel their bodies and thoughts, to know when to stop and realize every moment in time. These are the elements that are so lacking in modern formal education.*

##### Teacher, DARE Implementing Partner, Moldova

*As a teacher participating in this project, we have had many significant changes both professionally and personally. After eight years of classical pedagogy in which I have always been suppressed and forced to do what the ministry and the "Political Party" want, here I feel at home, I feel appreciated, and know that I have a lot to learn from the people I will meet in this project. This project gives me everything I need to grow professionally:*

- professional trainings with information and many new experiences
- materials needed to develop the personality of the emerging generation
- community parenting activities

*The biggest change was that I began to see children, young people and people in general, with other eyes, perceive their vulnerability and help them with a word, respond with a smile and make them have trust in future.*

##### Social workers, Ukraine and Romania

*Participation in DARE trainings promotes my professional and personal development, exchanges of experience with my colleagues, to receive and to implement new knowledge in my daily professional activities. I start to understand better and to open my own stereotypes of the activities. I observe that my communication with colleagues becomes more active, and feel better in taking decisions in personal and professional areas.*

## Positive Parenting

Training for parents and outreach activities were implemented during the reporting period.

During the period from October 2017 till January 2018, experts of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine have delivered 29 trainings for parents and specialists in Ukraine. The topics of the trainings delivered are:

	#	Topics	Dates of training	Location
For parents	1	Parental potential development: attachment; upbringing without punishment; effective communication between parents and children	14-15 October 28-29 October	Kharkov Kyiv
	2	Age features of development and needs of children from 6 to 17 years, age crisis and how to help your child	18-19 November 25-26 November 02-03 December	Drogobych Kyiv Kharkiv
	3	Deviations of attachment of children to important adult and their influence on children's behaviour and development	11-12 November 18-19 November	Kyiv Kharkiv
	4	Safe use of Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games	04 November 05 November 02 December	Kyiv Kharkiv Drogobych
	5	Support of your child creative potential development	03-04 February	Drogobych
	6	Stress management	04-05 November	Drogobych
	7	Trainings for caregivers and specialists who work with them	27-28 January	Kyiv
	8	Conflicts and ways to solve them. How to avoid conflict. How to solve it. How to find a common language	14-15 December	Kharkiv
For NGOs	1	Mentoring and coaching	15-16 January 22-23 January 25-26 January	Kyiv Kharkiv Drogobych
	2	Case-management, incl. best practices of SOS	19-20 October 09-10 November 30 November – 01 December	Drogobych Kharkiv Kyiv
	3	Peer support groups	10-11 October 17-18 October 25 January – 02 February	Drogobych Kharkiv Romania
	4	Violence against children: cause, manifestations, implications, indicators. Identification of neglect and abuse of children in their families (manifestations; how to talk with a child; what to do in case of detection, etc.)	13-14 November 16-17 November 04-05 December	Kyiv Kharkiv Drogobych
	5	Stress-management in child protection work: prevention of professional burn-out	16-17 October 02-03 November	Kyiv Drogobych
	6	Conflicts and ways to solve them. How to avoid conflict. How to solve it. How to find a common language	16-17 December	Kharkiv



The following are the country-level general results and plans:

## **Ukraine**

Parenting trainings were targeting 69 parents from Kharkiv, Kyiv and Drohobych as well as 72 specialists from Caritas Drohobych, Fond Aspern, Social Services of Assistance, 33 specialists of 6 regional state institutions and 25 participants from 9 non-government organizations.

### **Kharkiv**

During the reporting period 6 trainings for parents were organized by Social Service of Assistance and facilitated by trainers from SOS Children's Villages. The participants were key staff of Social Services of Assistance and 22 parents, including 6 parents of foster families with 8-10 children who live in children's village "Otradnoye" run by Social Services of Assistance. The following topics and following results of evaluation by participants were provided:

1. "Development of Parental Potential: Education without Punishment, Effective Communication Between Parents and Children": 100% of training's satisfaction, 53.1% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation.
2. "Age features of development and needs of children from 6 to 17 years, age crisis and how to help your child": 100% of training's satisfaction, 69.7% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation
3. "Deviation of attachment of children to a significant adult and their influence on the behavior and development of children", 100% of training's satisfaction, 37,9% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation
4. "Safe use of the Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games", 100% of training's satisfaction, 59.5% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation
5. Stress management: 100% of training's satisfaction, 61.9% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation
6. Conflicts and ways to solve them. How to avoid conflict. How to solve it. How to find a common language: 100% of training's satisfaction, 78.9% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation

### **Drohobych**

In Drohobych, Caritas Drohobych hosted four out of six trainings held by SOS Children's Villages". In total 22 parents and DARE staff of Caritas Drohobych participated in trainings facilitated by SOS Children's Villages. The most successful trainings were the following:

- "Age features of development and needs of children from 6 to 17 years, age crisis - how to help your child" (80.5% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation)
- "Parental potential development: attachment; upbringing without punishment; effective communication between parents and children" (59.6% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation)
- Safe use of Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games (105% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation)

At the end of December 2017, the first peer support group among parents - coordinated by a social worker of Caritas Drohobych - was held in the format of "Tea-party" to share the impact of SOLE sessions on their children and to increase motivation of parents to participate actively in trainings provided by "SOS Children's Villages". 8 parents visited the first peer support group.

## **Kyiv**

During the reporting period, 4 training sessions for parents were organized in Fond Aspern and conducted together with trainers from "SOS Children Villages". In total 25 parents from crisis families participated in the trainings, including 7 IDPs, 10 single parents, 3 caregivers, 5 crisis families, 3 parents with 3 and more children. The following topics and following results of evaluation by participants were provided:

- "Development of Parental Potential: Education without Punishment, Effective Communication Between Parents and Children": 100% of training's satisfaction, 27% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation.
- "Age features of development and needs of children from 6 to 17 years, age crisis and how to help your child": 100% of training's satisfaction, 93.3% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation
- "Deviation of attachment of children to a significant adult and their influence on the behavior and development of children", 98,3% of training's satisfaction, 37,9% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation
- "Safe use of the Internet. Prevention of cyberbullying. Computer games", 100% of training's satisfaction, 75% of knowledge increase according to self-evaluation

In addition, during this reporting period, five training sessions were organized for the specialists of Fond Aspern working on projects with children and families, including following topics:

- "Organizing peer support groups",
- "Case management",
- "Stress management in children's protection work: prevention of professional burnout",
- "Violence against children: causes, manifestations, consequences, indicators. Detection of neglect and bad treatment of children in families",
- "Mentoring and coaching with an emphasis on parenting skills".

After training on case management, staff of organization integrated the learnings in the process and procedures of case management in their organization, namely at the stage of planning and implementation.

Trainings for specialists were also attended by the staff of the subdivisions of the Darnytsky District State Administration in Kyiv, namely the Children's Services and the Center for Social Services for Family, Children and Youth. The representatives of these state agencies were quite interested to improve their knowledge and to learn about new methodologies and best practices for their work.

In the three countries SDQI\* questionnaires for parents were used to measure the levels of self-perception and self-awareness.

\*Self-Description Questionnaire (SDQI) used to measure multiple dimensions of self-awareness.

## **Moldova**

Trainings for Moldova are held in 2018.

In the reporting period organizations completed the 236 SDQI\* questioners with parents involved in the DARE program.

The Moldovan staff will start Positive Parenting trainings from February 2018. During the reporting period, social workers organized meetings with parents, formal (within school parents meeting) and non-official (individual or in small groups) to discuss on the DARE program, to offer information about plans and activities, to talk about expectations and responsibilities, also to gather information about children, their specifics and personality.

The contact with parents helped to better draft individual plans and to understand more in-depth the situation of children and families in adversity.

Also, in many locations the contact with parents was not established before the Program started and intense work in awareness raising and community outreach was and is needed to involve parents in key activities and improve the parenting skills and attitudes among the target groups.



The relations being established between parents, social workers and teachers form the basis of long-term cooperation.

### Romania

Trainings for Romania and Moldova are held in 2018.

The staff in Romania undertook a similar approach as the staff in Moldova. Community outreach and awareness raising are deemed essential to be able to have a long lasting positive impact on parents and to ensure their involvement.

In Ojdula (Location covered by Caritas Alba Iulia) and Periam (location covered by Caritas Timisoara), DARE staff work with Roma communities. The necessity of engaging in a paced and consistent way with the community is the precondition to any success.

Namely, in Ojdula, there have been 30 family visits. A meeting with the parents was organized where 11 parents were present. In November, the team organized the Open Door Day of the Center. This is a day when everybody is invited to the Center: teachers from school, local authorities, parents and other interested community members could visit the location and participate in activities.

In Timisoara, meetings with parents were organized within the Day Center, in an informal setting. There have also been cases when the staff members visited the families at home in order to keep the parents informed and to get acquainted with the background and social situation of each family.

SDQI questionnaires were introduced to parents especially in IASI. In Ojdula and Periam, the local coordinators evaluated that more time is needed for the involvement of parents before presenting them DDQI questionnaires to fill.. Other data collection methods are used, like interviews, home-visits and observations. Also, the literacy levels of targeted parents in Ojdula and Periam is lower than in Iasi.

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

### Extracts from interviews with target groups:

Mother, 40 years old, Kyiv, Ukraine

*Due to participation in the training, I learnt how to cope with my anxiety and stress in relations with children and husband. I started to understand what is happening with my child and why he behaves himself in this or that way. Now I understand very well the changes I can achieve, what I should do for those changes, I know the ways of solution of problems in relations with children. Those trainings provided me with a lot of useful information so that the parents could create the best conditions for the development of children in the families.*

Parents, Drohobych, Ukraine

*We are very thankful for possibility to participate in a very interesting and interactive training on children's creative potential development. At the training we discussed different methods and practices for creating an atmosphere between parents and children. We were pleasantly surprised how good the trainer organized the second training day. As it was Sunday, we were allowed to take our children with us. We played some games together and practiced a lot of theoretical things learnt on the first day. This training was very useful for us. We are parents of 4 children, 3 of which are of a school age.*

Single-mother of two boys: Vlad, the 7th form and Denis, the 5th form. Housewife and seasonal worker, Floresti, Moldova.

*Vlad had inappropriate behaviour 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 organised 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 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 behaviour; I have tried to develop the relationship with my sons and they improved their relationships with their classmates and other children in the neighbourhood; I try to spend more time with them and talk about different issues. This year, Vlad's behaviour has changed; he does his*

*homework daily and helps me about the house.*

*Both attend classes and participate at the SOLE sessions. I will continue to attend the meetings in order to improve my parenting abilities.*

## Advocacy

Ukraine
<p>Since November 2017 Zinaida Kyianytsia who is Deputy Director on Programmes of Partnership for Every Child started to work as Advocacy Officer within DARE program. Zinaida is a member of the Interagency High-level Group on Child Protection, member of working group on Deinstitutionalisation Strategy at the Ombudsman office. She is known as one of the leading experts in child care reform and social policy in Ukraine. In P4EC she is working very closely and has strong partnership relations with the Ministry of Social Policy, Child Rights Ombudsman Office and Human Rights Ombudsman Office, as well as related Committees in the Parliament.</p> <p>Her priorities are to promote De-Institutionalization (DI) Strategy at the national level and to draft the new Law on social services. In particular DI Strategy Goal #2 is about development of social services for families and children at community level to prevent institutionalization, and one of the actions is development of 'social contracting' mechanism. Social contracting will provide possibility for Ukrainian NGO's to be paid by government for providing social services. In addition, the law on social services will also promote developing social services at local level, based on the needs of the community.</p> <p>Zinaida is merging her role as Advocacy manager on DI with her role as Advocacy representative for all DARE Implementing organization in Ukraine. She promotes the development of social services at local level.</p> <p>During the reporting period, Zinaida took part in a number of working meetings and high-level events to promote sustainable development of social services on the local level. In particular she presented her approach at the all-Ukrainian seminar "Implementation of the first stage of the National Strategy for the Reform of the Institutional Care and bringing up children for 2017-2026" (November 28-30). Among the participants there were Child Rights Ombudsmen, Minister and Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, representatives of all regional (oblast) administration.</p> <p>On November 23, Zinaida presented the model of integrated system of social services within amalgamated communities at the seminar "Development of integrated system of social services within decentralization process: modern practice and perspectives" in Poltava region. At the meeting of Interagency High-level Group on Child Protection (December 14) Zinaida presented the challenges in protection of child rights with in vulnerable families and necessary steps for providing quality support to vulnerable families with children.</p>
Moldova
<p>In Moldova, the DARE staff of the three implementing organization is facing the challenge of identifying a person who can become the Advocacy officer for DARE.</p> <p>Call for application was published three times but either qualified candidate did not accept the offer proposed or candidates applying for the position were assessed by the directors of the implementing organizations as not sufficiently qualified.</p> <p>While the search continues, the National Program Coordinator of DARE in Moldova is taking up Advocacy related tasks.</p> <p>Also, the upcoming elections in Moldova may change the political landscape and alliances and lobbying may have to be renewed with new representatives in power.</p>
Romania
<p>In Romania, the position of Advocacy Officer for the DARE program is covered by the Executive Director of Caritas Romania Confederation. Nationally, Caritas Romania Confederation is one of the most important organizations actively involved in the public debates and consultations organized by the central authorities. With the start of the DARE Program, a consultation process with member and partner organizations was launched in order to develop an advocacy strategy and an action plan to influence child protection policies and increase the participation of member organizations in local processes.</p> <p>During the reporting period the stage of analysis of the child protection context in Romania started. This analysis unfolds in two directions: reading of official and public documents and interviewing representatives of the relevant central authorities and institutions, as well as those of those more</p>



active civil society organizations in the field of child protection.

- National legislation (laws, ministerial orders and Government decisions) published in 2016 on the website of the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA) has been analyzed. ANPDCA is a central authority with the task of monitoring the observance of the rights of all children and of taking all measures to create a worthy society for children, involving local and central public authorities, civil society, parents and children in this process. National legislation [http://www.copii.ro/categorii\\_legislatie/nationale/](http://www.copii.ro/categorii_legislatie/nationale/)
- Regarding, the international legislation [http://www.copii.ro/categorii\\_legislatie/internationale/](http://www.copii.ro/categorii_legislatie/internationale/) special attention was paid to Decision no. 1351/2008 / EC of 2008 aimed at establishing a multiannual community program on the protection of children using the Internet and other communication technologies. The UNICEF report "World Children's Condition 2017: Children in the Digital World" was consulted. It analyzes how digital technology has already changed children's lives and prospects - also trying to determine what will bring the future in this case. The report points out that the accessibility and rational use of digital technology can change the lives of children left behind - for reasons of poverty, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, dislocation or geographic isolation - connecting them to a space of opportunities and equipping them with skills needed for success in a digital world.
- Three other legislations relevant to the program were also analyzed:
  - Child's Law  
[http://www.euroavocatura.ro/legislatie/1223/Legea\\_272\\_2004\\_Actualizata\\_2016\\_privind\\_protectia\\_si\\_promovarea\\_drepturilor\\_copilului](http://www.euroavocatura.ro/legislatie/1223/Legea_272_2004_Actualizata_2016_privind_protectia_si_promovarea_drepturilor_copilului)
  - The Law of National Education  
<http://lege5.ro/Gratuit/geztsobvgi/legea-educatiei-nationale-nr-1-2011>
  - Convention on the Rights of Child  
[http://salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p000600010000\\_Conventie\\_UNU\\_drepturile\\_copilului\\_2010.pdf](http://salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p000600010000_Conventie_UNU_drepturile_copilului_2010.pdf)

A DARE Program brochure (promotion material) is being prepared, which will be transmitted accompanied by an official letter to the central authorities and the School Inspectorates across the country. This information campaign to the authorities will take place in April 2018.

Regarding the collaboration with other NGOs, during the reporting period, the DARE Program was presented at the following meetings:

- 16 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 an Ombudsman in its structure.  
The Caritas Confederation has rallied to this move along with Save the Children Romania in the belief that the establishment of a distinct department for the rights of children within the structure of the People's Advocate Institution is a priority for Romania. We have in mind both the perspective of the international obligations that Romania has assumed through the ratification of the UN Convention on the rights of the child, especially the difficulties faced by children in the country in the exercise of their rights (poverty, social exclusion, parental migration, school non-participation or limited access to education and quality socio-medical assistance).
- 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 Caritas Romania - FONSS partnership for lobbying and advocacy activities in the field of child protection. FONSS is a federation of NGOs active in the Eastern region of Romania, including among its members Caritas Iasi, a local implementing partner in the DARE Program.
- 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, reps 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 has been expressed positive appreciation for the project 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 will restart) to discuss about a concrete collaboration. We were 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. It is planned to have first 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 representatives and of public institutions 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 not mentioned in the law we will do common lobby for it to be introduced.

Until now, 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.

- Regarding the innovative methodologies implemented in the DARE Program, two organizations (Concordia and SOS Children's Village Romania) and principles of two schools in Prahova County have already expressed interest in taking the SOLE method.

In order to align with the advocacy efforts in the region (Ukraine and Moldova) a meeting between Advocacy managers is organized in Bucharest in March).

## DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND SOLUTIONS PROVIDED

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 organization 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.

In Romania, the biggest challenge is related to the involvement of parents from Roma Communities as well as the level of work and engagement from children. Children attending the day-care centers in Ojdula and Periam come exclusively from Roma communities. The level of literacy and ability to focus on the same activities for a long period of time is rather low. Intermittent activities are needed as well as meals and snacks to cover primary needs. The pace and the rhythm of children are fully taken into account by the staff thus planned activities are sometimes halted or slowed down.

In all three countries DARE staff face the same challenges when it comes to the formulation of “big” questions for SOLE sessions as well as to the full application of Mindfulness practices.

In order to mitigate these challenges, University of Newcastle and the Mindfulness expert Boaz B. Feldman are providing one-to-one coaching to teams and staff.

## 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, weekly Skype coordination meeting between National Coordinators and Regional Program Manage 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 to ensure that the implementation is smooth and assist them to find solutions should problem arise.

##### Government

- In Ukraine, the cooperation with Ministry of Education and its structures is going on within DARE program. The official letter about program and request for meeting and cooperation was sent to Ministry of Education. Ministry addressed the request to Institute of Modernization of Education Content that is engaged in research and validation of innovative methodologies. The institute provided an official letter of support to the DARE program and responsible specialist who will support implementation of SOLE.
- In Ukraine, 49 representatives of 13 state institutions participated in DARE capacity building trainings for specialists at the national and local levels. The entities participating in DARE trainings were:
  1. National Children Council under President Ombudsman for Children's Rights in Ukraine
  2. Novi Petrivtsi Center for Social Services for Family, Children and Youth of Kyiv oblast'
  3. Drohobych Center for Social Services for Family, Children and Youth of Lviv oblast'
  4. Darnytsky District Children's Service and the Center for Social Services for Family, Children and Youth in Kyiv oblast'
  5. Kharkiv Center for Social Services for Family, Children and Youth
  6. Valky lyceum of Kharkiv oblast'
  7. Medenychi school of Lviv oblast'

8. Kharkiv National University
9. Kharkiv local library
10. Kharkiv local school
11. Bolekhiv school of Lviv region
12. Drohobych school #2 of Lviv region
13. Drohobych local kindergarten

In Moldova:

- The changes in the actual government were made in the end of the reported period. In the first week of 2018 seven new Ministers will be appointed to new functions and start their activity. Due to this, it was decided to postpone any contacts with the Government until the beginning of 2018. Also by spring 2018, the advocacy officer will be in place to take over the lead in communication at government level.

In Romania:

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

#### Other NGOs and Stakeholders

In Ukraine:

- 20 representatives of 15 NGOs participated in DARE capacity building trainings for specialists at national and local levels. The NGOs involved in trainings were:
  1. Caritas Ukraine
  2. Caritas Kyiv
  3. Caritas Odesa
  4. Caritas Kharkiv
  5. Caritas Austria
  6. Woman's Consortium of Ukraine
  7. Mir Montessory
  8. Solly Plus
  9. Nasha Khata
  10. Sotsialnyi Vsesvit
  11. Children Centre "Parents"
  12. SOS Children's Villages
  13. Centre "Nazareth"
  14. Kharkiv Christian Eparchy
  15. Volunteers: adults to children
- Social Service of Assistance in Kharkiv promoted cooperation with British Council to facilitate the set of trainings for Children Parliament group. National Coordinator participated in regular Child Protection cluster meetings for coordination of activities and sharing information.

In Moldova:

- 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 behavior management and support for staff.
- Self-evaluation is a key strategy in monitoring specific quality indicators or improvement strategies.

The main results of the monitoring on the first months of implementation have been collected by the University of Newcastle and will be analyzed and compiled in the mid-term evaluation report.

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

## 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

## 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. Organizations have revised and developed basic Codes of Conduct and CPPs.

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

- Improve implementation procedures of CPPs and Code of Conduct,
- Risk assessments with children
- Reporting
- Prevention

The methodology used for 2018 will be a mixture of peer review of documents and procedures developed (organizations peer review each others works), 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 learnt in the process.

### Research:

An integral part of DARE is accompaniment of implementation by scientific research. The results of the mid-term review will be presented in the first quarter of 2018 by the University of Newcastle.

## LESSONS LEARNT

- 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 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.

## 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.
  - o In 2017 logistics costs were covered by Confederation of Caritas Romania, Caritas Iasi, Caritas Moldova, and Partnership 4 Every Child were increased to cover the logistics costs;
  - o In 2018 logistic costs will be covered by Confederation Caritas Romania, Diaconia, Social Services of Assistance
- Reduction in the overall program budget from the submitted sum of Euro 2.207.992 to Euro 2.000.422. The reasons behind the reduction are related to a change in the use of service providers. While University of Newcastle (SOLE), SOS Children Villages (Parenting Skills), Child Rights Information Centre (Child Protection), and Boaz B. Feldman (Mindfulness in Education) remain the main stakeholders and providers of content for the Program, the cooperation with Somos Más (specialists of organizational capacities development) was concluded at the end of the preparatory phase in May 2017. It was a decision taken by the management team in Caritas Vienna based on the understanding of the implementing partners needs in terms of organizational development. The decision was taken to work more intensively with internal resources in Caritas Vienna and to promote a consistent organizational development approach that would fit to the individual needs of the organizations involved.

The overall budget contributions from the donor for the first year of implementation (June 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 to May 31 2018) amounts to Euro 588,000 or 52% of the total budget applied for and Caritas Vienna own contribution for the first year amounts to 534.992.or 48% of the total budget applied for.

The spending incurred in the reporting period from 01.06.2017 to 30.11.2017 amounts to Euro 177.498 or 30% of the donor's budget for the first year; and Euro 161.497 or 30% of Caritas Vienna's budget for the first year.

The reasons behind the underspending are due to:

- 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 unavailability of trainer before October 2017.
  - Difficulties in finding Advocacy officers in the three countries. Challenges related to:
    - o Alignments between all DARE organizations to draft the Terms of References and define work packages;
    - o 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 DARE Partners are still in the recruitment process.

The detailed financial report is attached separately.