



PORTUGAL 2007



ECPA/BPC 2007

Please answer the following questions in English.

1. Is this your country's ECPA entry or is it an additional project? (Only one ECPA entry per country plus up to two other projects.)

This is the country's ECPA entry.

2. What is the title of the project?

"Defending Women's Rights in Romania: Between Use and Abuse!"

3. Please give a short general description of the project.

The project "Defending Women's Rights in Romania: Between USE and ABUSE!" aims to promote human/women's rights through actions of monitoring, information and support in order to prevent and combat domestic violence and any other form of violence against women. The project monitored the way in which the police takes over and handles cases of domestic violence and other cases of abuse against women. It also focused on the actions that public institutions, such as the police, the justice or the media take in order to prevent domestic violence.

Based on these main themes, a monitoring program was initiated, meant to identify ways of action that can help the police, the justice and the media to contribute to the prevention and the fight against domestic violence. It analyzed how the cases of human rights abuse are dealt with within the police institutions and courts of law in Timișoara and what is the approach of regional media. During the six months monitoring program, numerous cases of human/women's rights violation were encountered and the project team organized several meetings with the police, justice and media representatives in order to try and prevent these situations from happening again.

The project also established the first permanent public information and juridical counselling centre in the area, based on the support of volunteers and professionals from the field, a centre where more than 3200 persons received legal information and counselling.

The project encouraged around 10,000 citizens to use the legal means and procedures in order to protect their own rights through a public awareness campaign and through the promotion of the project in mass media.

In addition to that, the project also created informational resources, such

as monitoring manuals, several publications and a website. These resources can prove to be very useful at an institutional level, in actions meant to prevent and combat domestic violence.

4. Please describe the objective(s) of the project

The overall aim of the project is to promote human/women's rights through actions of monitoring, information and support.

The specific objectives of the project are:

1. Establish and develop a monitoring, research, and instruction program meant to cover the police institutions, the regional media and the system of justice, and supported by a team of volunteers and professionals in the field.
2. Establish a permanent public information and juridical counselling centre meant to encourage women and girls to follow the legal procedures in cases where their rights have been abused
3. Organize a public awareness campaign in Timișoara in order to raise public awareness and to encourage citizens and representatives of the police to appeal to legal procedures when human rights are violated.

5. How was the project implemented?

Constituting the monitoring team:

30 volunteers from the Law and Journalism Faculties from Timisoara were selected in order to form the monitoring teams and the team responsible for the Centre for Public Information and Legal Counselling. In the same time, four specialists working in the legislative and human rights area were designed to supervise the volunteers' activity. The teams held regular weekly meetings in order to analyze their work.

Creation of a legislative archive and of the monitoring methodology:

It contains the main laws and regulations regarding the project field of action: the Romanian Constitution, organic laws, international regulations, organisational norms, etc. It is structured in three main parts: the press jurisdiction database, the legal background on justice, the legislative database regarding the monitored themes.

The team's trainings:

The teams received a two days training sessions on how to monitor and research the chosen topics, how to collect data and how to cooperate and assume responsibilities. The trainings were held by specialists in the legislative and human rights area: a public prosecutor, two lawyers and a journalist, coordinator of the media monitoring program.

The monitoring, research and counseling activities:

The monitoring methodology was created and seven relevant institutions were contacted: the Timis County Court of Law, the First Instance Court of Timisoara, the Timisoara Court of Appeal, the Timis County Police Inspectorate, the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination, the Experimental Probation Centre and the Victims Protection Service and Social Re-integration of the Offenders by the Timiș County Tribunal. In addition to that, 12 written publications, 11 radio stations and 3 TV stations were selected for the monitoring activity.

During the six months monitoring program, 126 women's rights violations cases were monitored in the media and 73 trials were monitored in court. The voluntary teams monitored the way in which the police takes over and handles cases of domestic violence and other cases of abuse against women, but also how does the Court of Timisoara carries on and settles these trials in instance and how does the written and audio-visual media encourages the respect/violation of human rights through articles and news.

The organization of presentation sessions with professionals from media , police and justice institutions:

Two presentation sessions and three work meetings were held for 30 media, police and justice representatives concerning human rights, which come in addition of the results obtained within the monitoring and research process.

Press notifications:

The press was notified of cases that concerned possible violations of human rights during several meetings, visits and round tables organized with media representatives who were interested in improving their approach of subjects regarding women rights in Romania.

The opening of the Centre for Public Information and Legal Counselling:

The Centre was opened in the vicinity of the Timis County Court of Law. Being the first permanent public information and juridical counseling centre in the area, it had a large impact, and more than 3200 persons received legal information and counseling. In addition to that, 99 persons received free of charges legal assistance in court and 64 of these cases were domestic violence cases.

The elaboration of informative materials and work instruments for the Centre:

The Centre was equipped with the necessary technical and informational resources. Voluntary staff and lawyers elaborated part of the promotional and informative materials to be used within the Centre: 2000 flyers, 1000 legislative brochures, 200 posters, 6000 contact cards for the Centre, 10 catalogues with the relevant institutions, 10 000 printed complaint forms.

The informing and legal counseling activities for the target group:

These activities have two main objectives: the citizens' support, mainly women, in protecting their rights in this field (1) and the gain of experience for the Law Faculty students through their cooperation with the specialized lawyers (2).

The public awareness campaign „Be an active citizen: defend your rights!”

The one-day campaign was carried in Timișoara in two occasions and its main objective was to encourage the citizens to act for defending their own rights through filling-in printed complaint forms handed by the team's members at the stands and also to stimulate the cooperation between proximity policemen and citizens in taking over their complaints. 16 policemen were present at the awareness raising campaign and gave their full support in order to ensure a better communication between the police and the citizens of Timișoara from now on. In order to increase the campaign's impact, the action took place in 10 intensely circulated locations in Timișoara. During the campaign, 75 persons benefited from legal counseling on different issues and two penal complaints and a notice to the National Council for Combating Discrimination were filled out. About 2000 persons have received information about the Centre's services and about ways of preventing domestic violence. Due to the media cover of the campaign and to the radio spots, a number of 10 000 citizens were made aware of the services that the centre can provide

them and of the importance of combating domestic violence and other forms of violence against women.

The dissemination of the annual publication:

The annual publication was elaborated by monitoring and research teams at the end of the process. 500 copies were disseminated towards ministries, Government, Parliament, international forums, embassies, press institutions and other NGOs and institutions that militate in favor of the promotion of human rights.

6. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?

The West Foundation for Regional and Euroregional Journalism has participated at the elaboration of the press monitoring strategy and at the creation of the monitoring instruments, it developed the training for the media team volunteers and it guided the written and audio-visual press monitoring. Also, the West Foundation for Regional and Euroregional Journalism has collaborated with specialists in the legal ground in order to coordinate the press and justice monitoring and has produced four radio spots for the promotion of the public awareness campaign.

The Timiș County Police Inspectorate, through the Proximity Police, has supported the project by actively involving in the organization of the two public awareness-raising campaigns; 16 proximity policemen were present at the awareness-raising campaign and offered full support in the making of the documentary film.

The Timiș County Law Court facilitated the volunteers' access in the court rooms and the legislative specialists' access at the archived files. It also supported the making of the documentary film. .

In addition to that, a number of 78 volunteers have contributed at the project's success. The media team, composed of students from the specialisations Journalism and Sciences of Communication were actively involved in the regional press monitoring. The legal team, composed of under and post-graduated students from the Faculty of Law was responsible for the court monitoring cases and for the legal counselling services. The APoWeR volunteers from the voluntary programs "The Blue Line" and "The intervention Team" have participated at the organization of the awareness campaign and at the making of the documentary film and of the opinion pool.

7. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project?

For the trainings held with the volunteers, a specific methodology was created in order to see the training's results, where certain parameters were analyzed. The chosen topics to be evaluated were Institutional knowledge – micro level, Cooperation, Getting and using information, Orientation towards change and Willingness to accept diversity. The chosen evaluation tools were questionnaires, observation grids, quizzes (tests) and document analysis grids.

Graphics were centralized and the results showed that students

participating in the training programme significantly improved their knowledge about legal institutions regarding procedures and competences of legal bodies. The viability of the information acquired was also reflected by the appropriate completeness of the monitoring sheets (level 4). Evaluation results show that students proved a good level of cooperation and the capacity to get and use information. Satisfactory competences were appreciated in relation with the orientation towards change and willingness to accept diversity.

Two surveys were conducted on 800 persons referring to the public awareness level of their own rights, and the results showed that even though 68% of the questioned citizens considered that they are aware of their rights, only 52,2% of this percentage could actually enumerate some rights. The first survey showed that 41,8% of the citizens questioned have a high level of confidence in the police institutions, compared with 57% that have a relatively low level of confidence. During the second campaign, the result changed, since 35,2% admitted to have a high level of confidence in the police institutions and 60,2% have a low level of confidence. In the same time, a percentage of 30,9% had positive opinions concerning the justice system compared with 30,2% that had negative opinions.

The counselling services activities were evaluated through the beneficiaries' feedback and through specific charts filled up by the Centre's responsible staff.

APoWeR has internally evaluated the monitoring and research activity through participative monitoring: the media representatives were asked to evaluate our work. Also, at the end of the monitoring activity, several newspapers approached APoWeR inquiring about the best way to present cases of violence against women in mass-media.

The project's sustainability is measured in the possibility to replicate the monitoring pilot program at a national level. APoWeR has received financial support and is collaborating with the National Agency for Equal Opportunities in order to extend the project at a regional level, with the only difference that the monitoring process will focus on certain case studies that will be monitored at all institutional levels.

In order to measure the performance of the project, APoWeR has used certain quantitative indicators, such as: the number of published monitoring reports, the number of trials monitored in Court, the number of volunteers involved in the project, the number of promotion materials that were disseminated (leaflets, legislative brochures, posters, visit cards of the centre, t-shirts, umbrellas), the number of citizens that were informed through the awareness-raising campaign, the number of policemen involved in the campaign, the number of the presentation CDs, DVDs with the documentary film.

Qualitative indicators were also used, such as the number of persons informed about the Centre's services, the number of persons that received legal support, the number of institutions that received the final monitoring publication, the number of media and justice representatives that were informed about the monitoring results, the number of articles that appeared in the press.

8. Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?

Monitoring and evaluation process have been conducted internally and externally.

Internal monitoring and evaluation have been realized by project team. The instruments used for internal evaluation were: monthly specific activity reports realized by the Centre for Public Information and Legal Counselling, documents that the reports are based on, minutes of the weekly meetings of the project team, the data base of the monitored institutions, and mass-media items. Technical intermediary reports, as well as a final report were submitted to the FDSC (Civil Society Development Foundation).

External evaluation was realized through a new methodology developed by the APoWeR and its partners within the Socrates Grundtvig 1 project ACT! (Active Citizenship Training). The methodology was promoted as an example of good practices. The chosen topics to be evaluated were Institutional knowledge – micro level, Cooperation, Getting and using information, Orientation towards change and Willingness to accept diversity. The chosen evaluation tools were questionnaires, observation grids, quizzes (tests) and document analysis grids.

9. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?

The results achieved through the project:

- The final publication called „*Women’s Rights: between USE and ABUSE! The monitoring of local and regional press and justice*”, presented the results of the monitoring process and research regarding women’s rights representation in the press and the legal system in Timiș County;
- A legislative database regarding the monitored subjects and institutions;
- Four legislative brochures concerning the main forms of women’s rights violation and the legal measures that should be undertaken;
- A catalogue with the public institutions that can support the cases taken over by the APoWeR;
- Materials that promote women rights and the services provided within the project: visit cards of the Centre, leaflets with information on the services provided, posters, complaint forms, umbrellas, t-shirts printed with the campaign’s slogan;
- A documentary film called *Women Rights: between Use and Abuse!*
- The awareness rising of the citizens of Timișoara through a wide public campaign called “*Be an active citizen: Protect your rights!*”, that took place in July and October 2006;
- The campaign’s presentation CD both in English and Romanian version;
- The opening of *the Centre for Public Information and Legal Counselling* in the vicinity of the Timiș County Court of Law;
- The providing of informing, counseling and legal support services to more than 3000 persons;
- Informing the media and justice representatives about the conclusions and the results of the monitoring process;

- 126 cases identified in the press and 73 trials monitored in justice;
- 24 written press articles and appearances at the local radio and television posts;
- Two surveys were conducted on 800 persons referring to the public awareness level of their own rights;
- The *Use-Abuse* website: www.apfr.ro/uz-abuz contains the legislative database, the results of the monitoring programme, methods of replicating the programme, information about the Centre, public campaigns and the final monitoring publication.

10. Are there reports or documents available on the project? In print or on the Web? Please, give references to the most relevant ones.



The final publication called „*Women`s Rights: between USE and ABUSE! The monitoring of local and regional press and justice*”, was published in 500 copies, and it presented the results of the monitoring process and research regarding women`s rights representation in the press and the legal system in Timiș County.

The publication was structured in the following sections: Press and justice monitoring within the „*Women`s Rights in Romania: between USE and ABUSE!*” project; The object, the duration and the objectives of the monitoring process; The description of the themes and the concepts aimed through the monitoring process; The monitoring methodology; The local justice monitoring report; The local and regional press monitoring report; Conclusions and recommendations; Annexes (Presentation of monitoring cases; Centralizing forms; Monitoring charts).

Following the completion of the project, APoWeR decided to conceive a monitoring manual “*The Practical monitoring manual. Case Studies: media and justice monitoring programmes*” as a useful resource for other organisations, Through the editing of this manual, APoWeR wished to encourage them to initiate monitoring programmes and assuming the *watch-dog* role, essential for the proper functioning of a democratic society.



This poster was realized in order to promote the Centre for Public Information and Legal Counselling created by the APoWeR in March 2006. The Centre is found in the vicinity of the Timiș Court of Justice.



A business card presenting the main services offered free of charges by the APoWeR to the Centre's beneficiaries. It was disseminated during the public awareness campaign and in the police stations in Timișoara.



4 radio spots were created and broadcasted by West City Radio, in order to help promote the awareness campaign launched in July 2006.



A flyer containing detailed information for those interested in protecting their own rights was disseminated during the campaign and it is still at the disposal of those who are interested at the Centre for Public Information and Legal Counselling.

The flyer relates in an accessible detailed way the six projects' themes, that represent the most frequent forms of women's rights abuse: domestic violence, sexual abuse harassment and discrimination at the work place, prostitution and women traffic.



Four leaflets containing legislative informations were realized and further on structured in four sections, in accordance with the themes' complexity: domestic violence (1), sexual abuse (2), discrimination and harrassment (3), prostitution and women traffic (4).



The documentary movie „**Women`s rights: between USE and ABUSE!**” (DVD) launches the idea of monitoring the police, the justice system and the media. *Why is it necessary to monitorize these institutions?, How can we realize the monitoring process? and What are monitoring results at the Timiș County level?* are the main questions that the movie answers in an original way.



A CD that presents the campaign „Be an active citizen: protect your rights!”, and that also includes the project`s and the association`s presentation, the results of the opinion pools, the promotional materials that have been disseminated, the articles in the media reflecting this project, photos and film-shootings realised during the campaign. A total number of 100 CDs were realized: 60 in the Romanian version and 40 in the English version.



A project website (www.apfr.ro/uz-abuz) was created and provides detailed information on: legal context, results of the monitoring programme, methods of replicating the programme, the information centre, public campaigns, a questionnaire regarding human rights and the final monitoring publication.

Please, write here a one page description of the project:

The complex project, "Women's rights in Romania: between use and abuse!" is developed by the Association for the Promotion of Women in Romania in the period December 2005 – October 2006 and financed by the European Union through the PHARE 2003 program, the Consolidation of Civil Society in Romania component. This project is addressed to citizens, and especially to women, which have to face issues related to domestic violence, but also related to other forms of violence against women. The project studied the existing dysfunctions in the transmission and the taking over of the cases of women's rights violation between the police, the media, the justice and the beneficiaries. In addition to that, it was also meant to identify ways of action that can help the police, the justice and the media to contribute to the prevention and the fight against domestic violence.

One of the main objectives was to establish and develop a monitoring, research and instruction program meant to cover the activity of the police, the regional media and the system of justice in this field. Regarding the police activity, the project monitored the way in which the police takes over and handles cases of domestic violence and other cases of abuse against women. It also studied the way in which written and audio-visual press encourages either the respect or the violation of human rights, by monitoring articles, news and private advertisements. Concerning the system of justice, the monitoring and research activity studied the solving manner of the legal cases by the local justice. A team of 30 volunteers and professionals in the field supported the entire activity. During the six months monitoring program, numerous cases of human/women's rights violation were encountered and the project team organized several meetings with the police, justice and media representatives in order to try and prevent these situations from happening again.

The second component of the project aimed to establish the first permanent Public Information and Legal Counselling Centre in the area, which was meant to encourage women and girls to follow the legal procedures in cases where their rights have been abused. The Centre had a big impact and it provided legal information and counselling to more than 3200 persons. In addition to that, 99 persons received free of charges legal assistance in court and 64 of these cases were domestic violence cases.

The third component consisted in an ample public awareness campaign, which was organized in the months of July and October in Timișoara in order to raise public awareness and to encourage citizens and representatives of the police to appeal to legal procedures when human rights are abused. In order to increase its impact, the action took place in ten intensely circulated locations in Timișoara, where the APoWeR specialists and volunteers, together with 16 policemen addressed concerned citizens in problems regarding directly their rights. During the campaign, 75 persons have received legal counselling on different themes; about 2000 persons have received information about the Centre's services and about ways of preventing domestic violence. Through this public awareness campaign and through the promotion of the project in mass media, the project encouraged around 10,000 citizens to use the legal means and procedures in order to protect their own rights.

In addition to that, the project also created informational resources, such as monitoring manuals, several publications, and a website. These resources can prove to be very useful at an institutional level, in actions meant to

prevent and combat domestic violence. A publication concerning the conclusions of the research was realized in 500 copies at the end of the project and it was disseminated at the national level. In addition to that, materials for the promotion of the project were elaborated, such as leaflets, cards of the Centre, posters, a legislative brochure, complaint forms, guides on how to fill in legal documents and on the fees, catalogues containing the list of the juridical institutions in Timiș and the list of the contact data of all the lawyers in the Timișoara Bar.