Preventing Family Separation/Supporting the Tracing, Reunification and Reintegration of Separated Children into their Families and Communities

March 6th 2015

CCF Moldova & Hope and Homes for Children UK
MOLDOVA – general data

• Ranks 113 out of 187 countries on the UN’s Human Development Index
• Rural children poverty rate 3.4 x higher than in urban areas
• Young children (3-6 yrs) higher poverty rate (26.7%) than for children overall (24.2%).
• Economic migration of caregivers results in child separation (kin, unrelated people or in institutions)
• Soviet reliance on residential care
• Despite significant progress Moldova made in the reform of residential care system, 2 groups of children “benefited least” from the reform
Specific Context: Closure of Institution for Babies & Young children

- Started – 2010
- Main work strategies

**Service development** – Social Crèches, Social Assistance service for children and Families; Emergency placement centre; Day Care for Disabled Children

**Prevention** – 527 children

**Providing solutions for children in Institution for babies** 239 children

**Capacity building** – 176 professionals involved in child protection received training, mentorship and advisory services
# The most common causes for child separation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Causes of separation / Risk factors</th>
<th># and % of children from Institution for Babies (IB) (n=120 children)</th>
<th># and % of children from the prevention program (n = 369)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poverty / limited resources</td>
<td>97 children (81%)</td>
<td>357 children (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parents’ unemployment</td>
<td>91 children (76%)</td>
<td>267 children (72%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The lack of relatives’ network or support</td>
<td>17 children (14%)</td>
<td>244 children (66%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessments and investigations of all risk factors

- **Living conditions** – is the housing safe, appropriate, with basic furniture, is it in private property or rented
- **Family and social relationships** – social network, relationships with the community, support from the relatives
- **Employment and household economy**
- **Behavior** – how the conflicts are solved, problem solving skills, relationship within the family, parenting skills
- **Physical and mental health** – the access to medical services and medication, if needed
- **Education** – level of education which would allow employment; parents’ level of education also influences their support to children’ schooling

**NOTE: OUR EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT IN MOST CASES THE CAUSES AND RISKS FACTORS ARE ASSOCIATED, THEREFORE A COMPLEX APPROACH IS NEEDED**
### Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Date at the beginning</th>
<th>Date at the end</th>
<th>Protective Factor</th>
<th>Date at the beginning</th>
<th>Date at the end</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nobody in the family is employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>At least one person in the family is employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The adult family members do not provide for living independently (through agriculture and other private arrangements)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The family does not have a permanent monthly income</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The family has a permanent monthly income</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. There is no financial support by the social institutions/not obtained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is an occasional financial support by the social institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The family does not receive material support from their relatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The family receives material support from their relatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL RISK FACTORS**

**TOTAL PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

Have all of the child’s needs in the field of HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY been satisfied:  

- [ ] YES  
- [ ] NO
Intervention

This unique and holistic program is tailored to the individual needs of each child and family and it is built on the following core values: partnership, respect, inclusion, sustainability, and the best interest of the child.
Intervention plan with economic empowerment interventions for families may include:

- Legal support in obtaining all documents allowing employment and access to social benefits;
- Temporary housings arrangements or rent pay;
- Temporary food/hygiene supplies;
- Advocating with employers to provide the job to a mother with a young child;
- Advocating with vocational schools to include young mothers in their programs;
- Providing grants for small equipment;
- Offering Social Crèche services – Day Care for children 4 months – 2 and a half years old;
- Social & psychological counseling to support job retention.
Some results: Prevention program is efficient – about 91% success rate

Children in the prevention program, by years

- 2010 year: 108 children
- 2011 year: 145 children
- 2012 year: 131 children
- 2013 year: 90 children
- 2014 year: 53 children (7 children entered in IB)

Children in the prevention program: blue
Children entered in IB: purple
Some results: due to prevention and reintegration, the # of children in IB decreases

Number of children of the 1st of January of each year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nr.of children</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An important conclusion: for some children specialized services may be needed

Use of prevention services

- Social Assistance service for child and Family: 60
- Emergency placement centre (12 places): 18
- Day care service for disable children (10 places): 18
- Social Creches (24 places): 77
- Mother and Baby Unit (5 places): 64
Key lessons

• Trust building measures between families and professionals are important before suggesting an ES intervention
• Assessment of woman’s/ family’s strengths is crucial, in order to base the intervention on skills/interest/resources
• Understanding of the market for small business and on the job requirements for professional orientation of clients
• Family support is paramount for women to retain jobs or to succeed in small business
• In most cases business is of a very small scale and with the objective to support the family and not profit-making – in some cases this is a transitional activity allowing the mother to both care for the child at home while earning income
• ECD services should be available and accessible for families, especially single parents to earn income
Thank you!

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