

The Moldova Project: Helping Moldova's Most Vulnerable Families Reach Self-Sufficiency

Synopsis

Founded in 2008 around the core beliefs of dignity, safety and the chance of a better future, The Moldova Project (TMP) is a non-governmental organisation dedicated to protecting vulnerable children and supporting at-risk families across the Republic of Moldova. Through their network of mobile teams, local professionals and international volunteers, the project delivers programmes in six rural districts in central Moldova. While children remain at its heart, the project has grown over time to address the root causes of vulnerability through community-level interventions and partnerships with state and international organisations. Key lessons from the project include the importance of family-strengthening services to prevent child abandonment and institutionalisation, improved coordination between schools, healthcare providers and local authorities, and better access to psychological services and trauma-informed care. The project also highlighted the need to strengthen systems addressing domestic violence, including violence against women, girls and children.

Sinteză

Fondat în anul 2008 pe baza principiilor demnității, siguranței și șansei la un viitor mai bun, The Moldova Project (TMP) este o organizație neguvernamentală dedicată protecției copiilor vulnerabili și sprijinirii familiilor aflate în situații de risc din întreaga Republică Moldova. Prin intermediul rețelei sale de echipe mobile, profesioniști locali și voluntari internaționali, proiectul implementează programe în șase raioane rurale din centrul Republicii Moldova. Deși copiii au rămas întotdeauna în centrul activității sale, proiectul s-a dezvoltat în timp pentru a aborda cauzele profunde ale vulnerabilității prin intervenții la nivel comunitar și prin parteneriate cu instituții de stat și organizații internaționale. Printre lecțiile-cheie desprinse din experiența proiectului se numără importanța serviciilor de consolidare a familiei pentru prevenirea abandonului și instituționalizării copiilor, îmbunătățirea coordonării dintre școli, furnizorii de servicii medicale și autoritățile locale, precum și facilitarea accesului la servicii psihologice și la intervenții bazate pe înțelegerea traumei. Proiectul a evidențiat, de asemenea, necesitatea consolidării sistemelor de prevenire și combatere a violenței domestice, inclusiv a violenței împotriva femeilor, fetelor și copiilor.

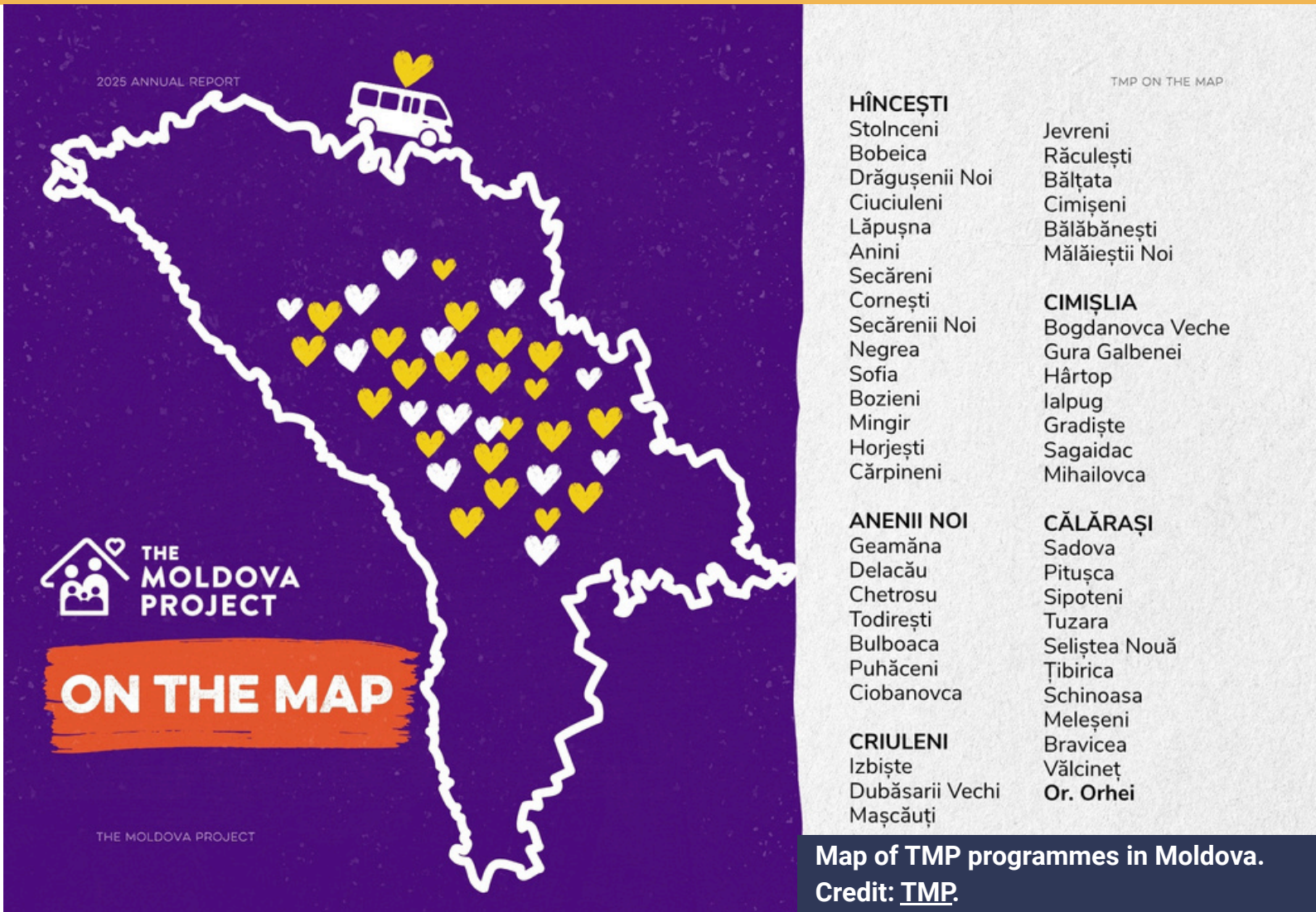
The current 'Evidence Bits' is based on [The Moldova Project](#). Through its 'Evidence Bits' series, IDVRM aims to disseminate and make more accessible both the work of the Institute and its members to inform policy and practice. Views and recommendations expressed in these publications are those of the original authors and not necessarily those of IDVRM.

Background

Demographic Context

Situated between Romania and Ukraine, Moldova is home to about **2.5 million people**, most of them living in rural communities.

Around **1 in 3 children** in Moldova faces some form of poverty or social vulnerability, with many families struggling to access healthcare, psychological support and early childhood development services. **Over 1 million** Moldovans live and work abroad, leaving many children in the care of grandparents or relatives, creating emotional gaps that statistics cannot capture.



Map of TMP programmes in Moldova.
Credit: [TMP](#).

Programmes

Subsistence Support Programme

This programme is designed to provide monthly assistance to vulnerable families, typically reaching around 150 households at a time.

The support is tailored to the needs of each family and may include food staples, hygiene items, cleaning supplies and vouchers.



Building Project

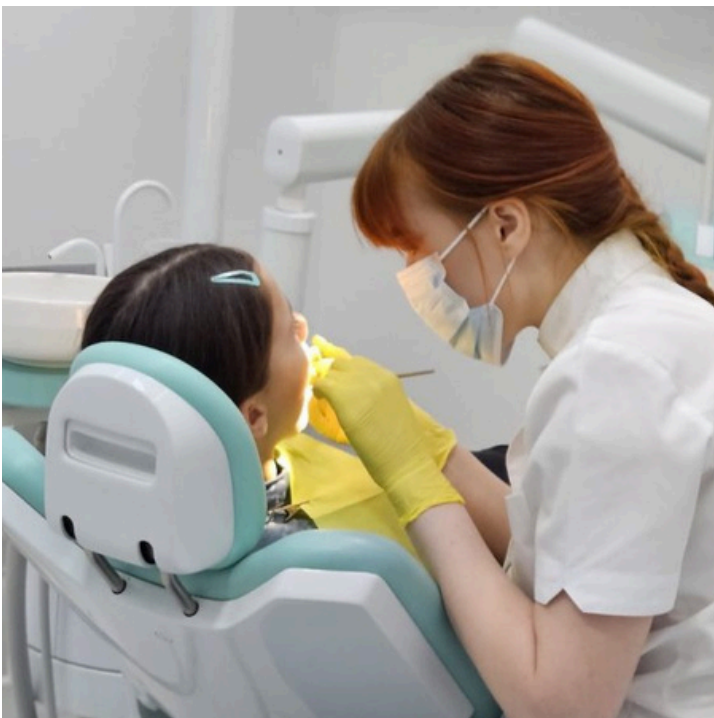
TMP believes that a safe home is more than just a shelter, but “the foundation for health, dignity, and a hopeful future.”

Through the Building Project, TMP repairs homes and in doing so restores families’ sense of stability and security.

Psychological Support Programme

Many of the families supported by TMP carry the invisible burden of trauma, often trapping children in a cycle of emotional distress.

To address this, TMP provides up to 900 free sessions a year including individual and group therapy, mentorship, crisis intervention and referrals to medical services.



Healthcare Programme

TMP's Healthcare Programme addresses both urgent medical needs and long-term health prevention.

Each year, the programme facilitates approximately 200 tailored medical interventions, including surgeries, preventive care, dental and optical treatment and routine medical consultations.

Other programmes include **Educational Support**, the **Non-Formal Education & Playtherapy Programme**, the **Playroom Project**, a **Mobile Library**, **Ukrainian Refugee Support** and **Spring Project**, **Summer Project** and **Winter Project**.

Testimonial

Ion's Story*

"My name is Ion, and all my life I've lived in the countryside. Life hasn't been easy, but for a long time, I lived as best I could, with what I had. In spring and summer, I herded sheep up on the hills, in rain and wind alike. Money was scarce, but I appreciated what we had. At home, my children were always waiting - four little mouths waiting for dad to come back with fresh bread and cheese. I worked for them and I kept going for them.

I don't know when things started to fall apart. My wife drank even when she was younger, but at some point, it became more frequent and heavier. I didn't know what to do or who to ask for help. I got weaker too. I started drinking - morning tea replaced by alcohol, then again at midday, just to get through the day. Time passed and soon I didn't know how to stop. I left the country for a while, hoping to earn some money and change our circumstances. But it didn't work out. After a short time, I learned that when my wife was drunk, she couldn't take care of the children. They were left alone, hungry, uncared for. It was heartbreaking to hear. I came back home after about a month. Unfortunately, I hadn't changed either. I started drinking again. That's when I realised I was risking everything—my children and my family.

With the help of The Moldova Project team and local authorities, I ended up in the hospital. There, I started treatment and was given a real chance to get back on my feet and work again. My wife's situation is harder. Besides alcohol, she has a developmental delay and her treatment will take longer. Now we're both in treatment. It's not easy, and the road is long. The children are safe for now, at a center in Hîncești, until my wife completes her treatment.

Our children are our motivation. We want to rise for them. The support we received from The Moldova Project gave us a real chance. With their help, we're trying to rebuild our family and be parents to our children once again."

The name has been altered to protect personal identity

Lessons from The Moldova Project

Point 1

Strengthen Family Support

- Family-strengthening services are necessary to prevent child abandonment and institutionalisation.
- It is important to improve coordination between schools, healthcare providers and local authorities.

Point 2

Rural Infrastructure

- Improved access to clean water, sanitation, heating, healthcare, transportation and educational infrastructure is vital to support rural areas.
- There is a also need for increased access to social workers, psychologists and mobile outreach teams in rural areas.

Point 3

Education Policy

- It is necessary to support vulnerable children in schools through sufficient supplies, transportation, tutoring and play-based learning.
- Non-formal education opportunities can be expanded in villages.

Point 4

Domestic Violence and Mental Health

- Increase access to psychological services and trauma-informed care.
- Strengthen systems addressing domestic violence, including violence against women and girls as well as children.

Point 5

Refugee and Humanitarian Support

- Expand vocational training and income-generation programmes by creating local economic opporunities.
- Promote long-term self-sufficiency, as opposed to short-term aid dependence.