

## Medical Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims



### ACTIVITY REPORT 2013

Chisinau  
Republic of Moldova

## ABOUT MEMORIA

The Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims "Memoria" (RCTV "Memoria") is a private non-profit institution located in Chisinau, Moldova. It was the first, and remains the only center in Moldova for rehabilitation of individuals subjected to torture and inhuman and/or degrading treatment. RCTV "Memoria" was founded on 12 November 1999 and registered at the Ministry of Justice on December 7, 1999. The Center quickly became internationally recognized as a professional team and an active member of:

- ✓ The European Network of Rehabilitation Centers for Survivors of Torture, and
- ✓ The International Network of Centers and Torture Rehabilitation Programs, managed by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT).

As one of the Rehabilitation Centers accredited at the international level, in 2002 RCTV "Memoria" became a member of the General Assembly of IRCT. One team member was elected as an IRCT Council member for the periods of 2003-2005 and 2012-2015.

At the local level RCTV "Memoria" has a representative in the National Council for Participation (NCP), which ensures the participation of civil society in the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and revision of various national policies. RCTV "Memoria" is represented in two working groups of NCP:

- ✓ Social, Educational and Youth Policy
- ✓ Justice and Human Rights

### Objectives:

- 1) Providing medico-social and legal support to torture victims and their families
- 2) Improving the health status and quality of life of assisted persons, their social
- 3) reintegration with re-establishing of their integrity, reputation and self-respect
- 4) Prevention of torture and safeguarding the rights of victims to medical services and compensation
- 5) Improving the staff knowledge about torture victims and creating a model of rehabilitation services for special categories of persons
- 6) Collaboration with other similar centers and persons involved in the rehabilitation of torture survivors

### Vision

A prosper society in which the respecting of the Human Rights would be guaranteed, especially the right to not be tortured, in which every person will benefit from the qualitative services, including the medical services will feel like a useful member of the society and to contribute to the social progress. As a representative of the civil society, RCTV "Memoria" will be an active and important actor in the development and prosperity of society.

### Mission

Rehabilitation through a complex assistance: medical, psychosocial and legal of victims of torture, and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as the promotion of the building of a society without torture.

### Values

- 1) Dedication to target group and providing of qualitative services.
- 2) Professional ethic and morality.
- 3) High individual and group responsibility.
- 4) Transparency of the performed activities.
- 5) Team spirit, a good collaboration and mutual support.

### Beneficiaries

- a. Torture victims among former political prisoners and their families
- b. Torture victims among refugees and asylum seekers and their families
- c. Recent victims of torture and their families from Moldova, including the Transnistria region
- d. Woman – victims of domestic violence

## OUR WORK / REHABILITATION AND ASSISTANCE during 2013

### MEDICAL REHABILITATION

Medical assistance provided by Memoria in 2013 included services from medical consultations and diagnoses, health screening and monitoring, to comprehensive treatment and coordination of referrals to the Medical Territorial Association (AMT) Center for 468 of our beneficiaries. Two doctors, one General Practitioner (GP) and another part time GP/Cardiologist have been involved in a total number of 2653 in-house visits. Medical documentation is maintained on all patients and medications can be dispensed free of charge, based on the health status and available income of the patient.

### PSYCHIATRIC/PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSISTANCE

The activity was focused on developing the individual treatment plans for each beneficiary.

Mental health practitioners at Memoria made extensive use of several forms of psychotherapy spanning the various modalities of cognitive-behavioral therapies, humanistic-experimental therapies and short-term therapies drawing explicitly on specific skills and resources identified in patients. Our psychiatrist performed a total number of 1392 visits, of which 94 were primary visits and 1298 current visits. During those visits, 710 medical consultations and 1112 therapeutic sessions were provided (including 987 of individual sessions, 121 family sessions and 8 group therapy sessions). As a part of therapeutic process beneficiaries were encouraged to develop hobbies and take part in art therapy sessions including participation in music, drawing, sewing, crocheting and others.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL ASISTANCE

The offered services were focused on (1) the identification of essential needs through the use of psychological testing, (2) the psycho-emotional rehabilitation through counseling and therapy sessions and (3) on measuring of traumas effects, using various selected psychological tests. All the efforts were focused on individual rehabilitation programs, in order to help

beneficiaries to overcome the consequences of the suffered traumas by using different methods and tools. In September 2013 we added a new method – Mindfulness to our services. Our psychologist counseled and tested 466 beneficiaries and selected 105 clients who were in need of assistance and therapy. A total number of 1145 visits, including 81 primary and 1064 recurrent visits were supplied.. During these visits, 669 counseling sessions were carried out (including 297 co-therapy sessions) and 765 psychological tests were utilized. Because of the long term perception of psychiatry as a punitive measure, Moldovan people are not accustomed to be assisted by a psychiatrist or psychologist. Memoria's goal is to help them and to change this perception, the psychologist encouraged our beneficiaries to follow individual counseling and psychotherapy, using various approaches.

### **SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

These services included: assessment of clients' individual needs, social counseling and support in the solving of their problems, providing of needed information about the existent available services and opportunities and helping beneficiaries to obtain assistance or compensations from some of the state institutions. The social assistant in 2013 carried out a total of 1620 of visits to 401 clients. We completed 67 social inquiries, 401 questionnaires for evaluation of the beneficiaries' satisfaction degree (including repeated evaluations), and performed 1553 comprehensive conversations. As result of the comprehensive assistance and joint efforts of other team members, various needs and problems of clients have been solved and fulfilled. In order to support our clients, the relevant institutions as: Departments of Social Assistance, Municipal Found for Social Aid, Municipal Employment Office and other institutions have been contacted, as well as the potential donors of the humanitarian aid or suppliers of various services. The cooperation with Governmental Commission for identification of victims from April 2009 was continued in order to help new beneficiaries to receive compensation.

### **LEGAL**

As in the previous years, the legal assistance was focused on: 1) beneficiaries' counseling and the monitoring of the legal status; 2) monitoring and mapping of the evolution within courts of the cases started against the perpetrators; 3) legal support to our organization in connection with other institutions; 4) cooperation with other NGOs and lawyers who supported our beneficiaries. The total number of the monitored beneficiaries reached 173, including: a) 133 victims of torture from April 2009; b) 17 other recent cases; c) 13 cases from the Transnistrian region; d) 5 other cases amongst victims of political repressions.

### **MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION**

RCTV Memoria remains the only institution in Moldova where survivors of torture can receive a comprehensive medical certification, regarding all the aspects of suffered traumas. . Our team made consistent and thorough medical documentation of each case, in accordance with the Istanbul Protocol ensuring that any required extracts (medical reports) were accurate for release to beneficiaries, their legal representatives and appropriate authorities. In 2013, there have been prepared and released 18 Extracts from medical files (Medical Reports) for recent victims, including 5 on cases from April 2009, for Governmental Commission to receive compensation.

## OUR WORK AND COOPERATION / TRAINING AND ADVOCACY

### REPORT PUBLICATION

In April 2013 we launched the Report “CONSOLIDATION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORMS AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER FORMS OF ILL-TREATMENT IN FORMER SOVIET COUNTRIES”, prepared in cooperation with the Ombudsmen office in Moldova, with the methodical and financial support of the UNICEF Representative in Moldova, within the joint EU-UNICEF project.

### EDITING THE BOOK

The book “I want to dream and fly again” with our beneficiaries’ testimonies – 12 victims of recent torture – was written during 2013 both in Romanian and English. It was released in the eve of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary from dramatic events from April 2009.

### STUDY VISITS

We worked towards the increase of cooperation with two Universities and invited students from the Social assistance and Psychology degrees to participate in information tours of RCTV Memoria, entitled “Rehabilitation works and is a right of victims” (November). Another tour has been organized for journalists in December. We plan to organize more of these events in 2014, for various professionals.

In the period November-December, we hosted 3 interns from the State University of Moldova, who were involved in a short research study on “After-effects of political repressions on social and marital status. In order to develop our team, to improve communicational English, other skills and abilities, an intern from the University of San Diego’s Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, Anna Taylor, worked at Memoria in the period June – August. She has been involved in various activities, assisting team members and editing English versions of beneficiaries’ testimonies for the book, as well as other various documents. In this way, it was the first time when an internship became a partnership between Women PeaceMakers Program and Master’s in Peace and Justice Studies, University of San Diego

### VISIBILITY

In order to maintain visibility at the national level and to promote our activity, RCTV "Memoria" has a representative in the National Council for Participation (NCP), which ensures the participation of civil society in the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and revision of various policies and draft Laws. The representative of RCTV "Memoria" is a member of the ‘Social, Educational and Youth Policy’ working group. Also, we have a representative in the National Commission for Population and Development and in the Governmental Commission for identification of victims from April 2009. Our team will continuously increase the visibility of our activity and communication with local and national authorities, in order to keep the issues of torture in their agendas. In 2013 we continued to promote the Istanbul Protocol, especially the Romanian version edited in 2009 by our team member.

### ADVOCACY

Public awareness building remained amongst our priorities during 2013. Our team members were involved in various events, meetings, etc, in order to share information about victims’ problems and needs. We participated in various informative events, Radio and TV talk shows and distributed useful materials and publications.



## OUR WORK CONTEXT

Throughout 2013 the Republic of Moldova accelerated its process of entrance and integration in the European Union (EU) and has undertaken many reforms towards this aim. The remaining human rights black spots in the whole of Moldova should be addressed immediately and properly, according to the new context and the subscription to the EU-Moldova Association Agreement. Nevertheless, torture and impunity still remain serious problems, as is mentioned in various country reports. There is a need for an efficient cooperation between the state institutions themselves, as well as with civil society in the field of documentation of cases and rehabilitation of victims. However, because of this issue's political connotation, very few NGOs are able to deal with this phenomenon, especially regarding the support of victims. This is one of the problems we face as a rehabilitation center.

## RCTV MEMORIA 2013 FINANCIAL SOURCES

<b>ANNUAL INCOME BY DONOR</b>	<b>USD</b>
INTERNATIONAL DONORS:	
<i>OAK Foundation, IRCT Centers Grant Support</i>	12,600
<i>United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victim of Torture (UNVFVT)</i>	30,000
<i>MATRA Program, MFA of Netherlands</i>	8,850
<i>Center for Victims of Torture (CVT), MN, USA</i>	39,100
<i>The BEARR Trust, London</i>	5,400
LOCAL DONORS:	
<i>UNICEF Moldova</i>	17,550
<i>AVE Copiii, Moldova</i>	800
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>114,300</b>