



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

LA STRADA MOLDOVA

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**LA
STRADA**
Moldova

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Dear reader,

We are a non-governmental human rights organization. We work tirelessly to support women and children so that they can live a life without violence. For 19 years, we have been working with the Government and CSOs, justice system stakeholders, health and social protection specialists, media and academia to advance and defend the rights of women and children, survivors of trafficking in human beings, domestic violence and sexual violence, child online sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Currently, the activity of the International Center La Strada Moldova is based around two programmes. The Issues Affecting Women Programme operates in two areas: trafficking in persons, especially women, and violence against women and domestic violence. The Issues Affecting Children Programme is focused on fighting child online sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Over time, we have developed and adapted strategies and methods of working with our beneficiaries and we have adjusted the dialogue with our partners. We faced several challenges over the years, but 2020 was a turning point for La Strada Moldova. On the one hand, we had to complete the strategic plan, learn our lessons and lay the foundations for a new development cycle. On the other hand, we had to quickly adapt to a new working regime, while maintaining our core activities, so that the depth and duration of the support our beneficiaries receive remained consistent with our usual standard. We had to prioritize our goals and plans in the unprecedented situation caused by COVID-19, despite all challenges.

Thus, this annual report will show you how we managed, or tried to manage, these challenges.

AREA 1: TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

The goal we continued to pursue this year was **to reduce the vulnerability of the people at risk of continuous threats of human trafficking**. This is why our work encompassed actions in 2 particular directions. Firstly, we tried to do our best by providing continuous expert support to the Department of Permanent Secretariat of the State Chancellery. Secondly, we continued to provide individual counselling and information support via the Anti-trafficking Hot Line and the online platform for migrants www.migratiesigura.md. Just to summarize the most relevant achievements in our anti-trafficking area:

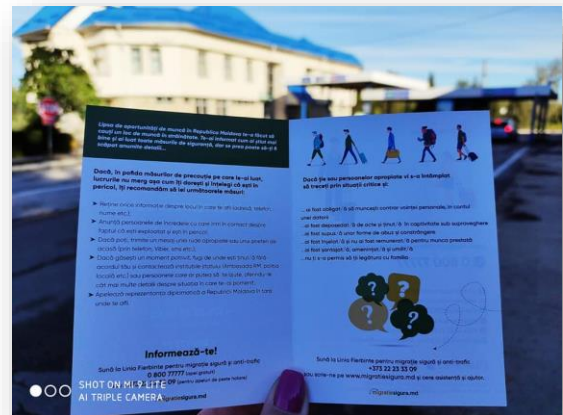
- ❖ La Strada has elaborated **the analytical report "New trends in the evolution of the phenomenon of human trafficking in the Republic of Moldova in the context of external factors of influence"**. More than 50 different information sources on AT problematic were analyzed in the course of the study. The new trends of THB and existing gaps in the national AT response were identified. An innovative aspect of this research is comparative analysis of:
 - global trends in the evolution of the THB phenomenon with trends within the country;
 - recommendations of international expertise for global and national AT policies with recommendations made for the RM in the framework of external monitoring (J/TiP and GRETA).

The conclusions and recommendations of the research were systematized and summarized in a table convenient for use/ development of political documents.

- ❖ We provided inputs on the draft National Report 2018-2019 on the implementation of the National Human Rights Plan of Action (2018 – 2022).
- ❖ We participated in the elaboration of the „National Peer Review Note to the draft report Assessment of the capacity of the DPS of the State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova to coordinate AT policies and of the feasibility of the introduction of a National Rapporteur on Combating THB in Moldova”.
- ❖ We gave inputs on the new draft NAP in AT area for 2021-2022.
- ❖ LS offered specific recommendations for the new EU Strategy towards the Eradication of THB formulated upon invitation of the EU delegation in Moldova.
- ❖ A concept introducing a single referral mechanism for protection and assistance of all types of victims was developed with the support of LS - the **National Referral Mechanism for Protection and Assistance of Victims of Crime (NRMV)**. Also, our expert provided support to the MHLSP in the analysis of received comments. She conducted the analysis with the goal of bringing closer the different points of views of AT actors, and adjusting the draft political document. It is expected that the draft NRMV Program 2021-2025 will be officially approved in the first half of 2021.
- ❖ We carried out an awareness campaign that aimed to encourage the citizens of the RM to seek help if their rights were violated or if they were in a situation where there are indicators of trafficking or labour exploitation abroad. The messages conveyed in the **TV ad** were broadcasted on 6 TV stations with national coverage and reached an approximate audience of

100 K. Other 2 general information videos informing the viewer about key legal and procedural aspects of safe migration registered over 35 K views.

- ❖ We adapted the informational portal migratiesigura.md to the new needs of migrants. We created a new column **Migration during the pandemic**. During the lockdown period, we posted articles and news regarding travel restrictions and new rules about the migration of Moldovan citizens on a weekly basis. The informational platform migratiesigura.md had 22666 visitors, 21505 of which are unique visitors (12.5% increase compared to 2019). The number of online consultations (236) increased by 49% compared to 2019.
- ❖ **The Anti-Trafficking and Safe Migration Hot Line** has received and counselled 6187 calls. Of these, 5629 calls related to safe migration issues (from which 4481 calls related to the Israel Project ⁽¹⁾ and 49 calls related to presumed trafficking cases. These cases referred to 124 persons-presumed victims of labour exploitation and/or sexual exploitation in the following countries: Poland, Portugal, Russia, France, Italy, Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Pakistan, Egypt, Moldova, as well as trafficking for criminal activities (drug mule).



¹ *Bilateral Agreement between the Government of the State of Israel and the Government of the Republic of Moldova regarding the Temporary Employment of Workers from the Republic of Moldova in Specific Sectors in the State of Israel*



Some key figures that make a difference in our anti-trafficking efforts:

- 6187 calls received by the Hot Line counsellors
- 21505 unique visitors of migratiesigura.md
- Over 100 K people saw the new video ad that aims to encourage citizens to seek help in situations of trafficking or labour exploitation abroad
- 124 presumed victims of labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and trafficking have been identified by the Hot Line counsellors
- 28 new articles based on FAQs on migratiesigura.md
- 100 posters and over 23 K leaflets on risk indicators of exploitation and trafficking, key safety rules and support resources have been distributed in border crossing points upon exiting the country.

„The Republic of Moldova is not ready for new challenges and trends of the human trafficking phenomena. Moreover, the regression of the national anti-trafficking system is evident; the capacity of the prosecution bodies to investigate trafficking cases is significantly decreasing”

Ana REVENCO, Executive Director, La Strada Moldova

AREA 2: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In times of crisis such as the COVID-19 outbreak, **women and girls are at a higher risk of intimate partner and domestic violence** due to increased tensions in the household because of lockdown.



La Strada was the first national actor to come public with **information about** the situation of women suffering from domestic violence in lockdown realities. We kept the unwavering attention of the media on the issue of DV by delivering **regular information** on the activity of the Trust line during the pandemic period and on the most pressing problems and challenges our Trust line beneficiaries had faced due to lockdown restrictions. In the meantime, along with our colleagues from the National Coalition „Life without violence“, we drafted recommendations for specialists with competences in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence.

Community-based actions aimed at informing women and girls in remote areas that even during the time of outbreak, **the Trust Line for Women and Girls continues to stay fully functional and they can call at any time**, to ask for help and assistance in regular and emergency situations.

The anxiety associated with COVID-19 has caused a flaring up in domestic violence episodes in the families where the phenomenon was already present. During the first weeks, since the pandemic state was declared, the number of calls continued to drop, **but as the lockdown period grew longer, the proportion of calls increased by over 30%. Thus, in the second half of**

2020 we registered a 24% increase in the number of calls compared to the first half. The highest numbers of calls were registered in July and December, on Mondays, mostly between 10:00 and 12:00. The number of calls coming from urban areas, including Chisinau, was 18% higher than those from rural areas.

During the first months of the lockdown, the number of calls from community members (relatives, friends, neighbors) visibly decreased, and the number of reports from local public authorities has also drastically declined, but in the second half of the year these numbers have somewhat balanced. Beneficiaries have told us that, in an attempt to solve their problems, before contacting the Trustline, they asked for help from the competent authorities in the field. Most of the victims' dissatisfactions during the lockdown regarded law enforcement agencies.

The pandemic has magnified the psychological violence manifested by the aggressors. There have been women who complained about swearing and psychological pressure that would be constant, 23 hours a day, which they said was harder to endure than the beatings. The feeling of guilt has magnified as well, because the women felt that they could not even protect their children, who did not go to school or kindergarten because of the pandemic.

„Their silence is deafening now... And the higher the level of psychological tension in these families, the crueler the cases of domestic violence and sexual abuses committed during the lockdown”.

Daniela MISAIL-NICHITIN, Director of the Women's Program

From the of 2040 total calls received and counselled by the Trust-Line during 2020, **105 calls relate to sexual violence, reflecting 48 new cases.** Of these 105 calls, 35 (33%) were made by the victims. In all other cases, the victims' relatives called the Trust-Line to report a case and seek guidance and called law enforcement representatives to request professional service on particular cases (psychological and/or legal support for victims).

All of the survivors of sexual violence are women and girls. About 40% are underage. The youngest sexual abuse survivor was only 10 years old, and the oldest was 82. **The victims personally knew the abusers** in all but 3 cases. The sexual assault is usually committed by someone in their

trusted circle: a boyfriend, former husband/boyfriend, father/stepfather, guardian, brother-in-law, friend, acquaintance.

The new generation matters

During the school year 2019-2020, the **Course "Harmonious Family Relationships"** was implemented in 8 lyceums/settlements from Moldova, in 24 classes reaching approx. 600 young people. 15 teachers voluntarily decided to introduce this optional course in their schools. In order to support the implementation of the course, La Strada has equipped the classes with 800 student's books. Both students and teachers highly appreciated the content of the course, considering it to be a life skill and an opportunity for development. Although it is an optional course, teachers report an almost full attendance among students. To date, the community consists of 65 teachers from over 25 districts of the country.



We join efforts for the cause of women who suffer from violence

On the **10th Anniversary of the Trust-Line**, La Strada has signed a thematic cooperation agreement with the National Emergency Service 112. The launch event served as an occasion to both present the major findings and recommendations of the Journal but also to announce the new cycle of the Trust-Line activity in partnership with the 112 service as an innovation in the region. Our cooperation includes referring calls related to DV and SV cases between the two phone services, joint trainings and capacity building events, experience exchange among counsellors and operators and strengthening the analytical component for better understanding of the phenomena and ways of intervention. The agreement was preceded by a press conference. The agreement established between

our organizations was warmly welcomed by the public opinion, **7 media channels** attended the **event**. Over 5.7 K people watched the press conference **live**.

Another goal we constantly pursue is to **raise awareness and train the law enforcement and judiciary system stakeholders** to adequately address SV against women. In this regard, we organized specialized trainings in partnership with the National Institute of Justice. In partnership with the NIJ, three training seminars have been organized for 72 judges and prosecutors from regional and Chisinau courts and appeal courts as well as regional and Chisinau prosecutors' offices. The post-training evaluation indicated that 90% of participants found the content of the training excellent and very useful. The practical cases discussions and video materials used during the training have been highly appreciated by the participants. In the lockdown period, the modules have been redesigned and delivered online.

As a result of specialized trainings for law enforcement agencies on the particularities of addressing sexual crimes, the police and prosecutors have referred 25 cases of sexual assault and domestic violence (18 adults and 10 minors) to the Safeguarding Team for Women and Girls, requesting specialized legal and/or psychological services. Thus, the team psychologist has prepared 21 psychological evaluation reports and the lawyer was assigned to 5 criminal cases. It should be noted that many cases of sexual assault are reported or referred after holidays, family reunions and celebrations. Law enforcement representatives refer the victims to the Safeguarding Team because they wish to provide some comfort to the victims during criminal court proceedings and to strengthen the cooperation with the victim.

Sharing practice, knowledge and information amongst colleagues from the National Coalition

As a Board member of the National Coalition **Live without domestic violence**, La Strada has put time and effort into helping finalize the next NC Strategic Plan 2020/2024. The process after the first General Assembly meeting and several working groups has been created to work on the main pillars of the strategy: prevention, advocacy, standards and services, capacity building of the members. The strategy of the NC 2020-2024 has been approved during the General Assembly meeting organized during November 18-19, 2020.

International media speaks about a considerable increase in cases of violence against women. One by one, countries will announce their doom statistics. Our mass media wants to see Moldovan statistics. It is obvious that we won't be luckier than the other countries in this regard, regardless of how much we would like to be. But we will issue a statement in which we will say that, paradoxically, the call curve has not changed so far. **We also explain the reasons**, of course. In the meantime, we participated together with our colleagues from the Coalition in the drafting of **recommendations** for

the specialists with competences in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence.

In February 2020, a La Strada representative participated in the CSOs delegation to the **75th session of CEDAW**, presenting the alternative Moldova country report on violence against women and trafficking of human beings in Moldova. The La Strada representative has been actively involved in all stages of the advocacy agenda, preparation of the **alternative report** on domestic and sexual violence and the **alternative report** on THB, drafting fact sheet, briefing with CEDAW Committee members, follow-up issues for the Moldovan Government and the final presentation of the Moldovan government response to the list of issues. Above info as well as **info from CSO** for the session and the **final observations** of the Committee will be used by La Strada as a monitoring and advocacy tool throughout the next 4 years. This effort is exclusively a collective exercise of key partners from the National Coalition and the Secretariat.

During August-September 2020, La Strada representatives took part in the working group for preparing the Alternative report on the **intermediary evaluation of the National Strategy on prevention and combating domestic violence and violence against women for 2018-2023**. The evaluation team included the Women's Law Center, La Strada representatives and the Coordinator of the National Coalition "Life without violence". Key findings and recommendations **have been presented** to the Inter-ministerial Council on prevention and combating gender-based violence for discussions with representatives of Central Public Authorities, CSOs and representatives of international organizations. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection will consider recommendations when drafting the second National Action Plan for 2021-2023.

Our expert took part in several meetings of the **national working group on Femicide** consisting of representatives of central public authorities, law enforcement and judiciary agencies and leading field related CSO including WLC and other partners from the National Coalition. The meetings lead to the development of the internal regulation of the Commission for the Monitoring and Analysis of Femicide Cases and serious injury to the bodily integrity of victims of domestic violence and of the data collection forms. Preliminary debates concluded with the creation of the Commission under the MIA.

Denim Day Moldova 2020

This year La Strada Moldova team chose to mark **Denim Day** differently from the way it was done in previous years. Recognizing additional pressure of law enforcement agencies in exercising their duties because of lockdown, which also brought increased risk and later increased incidents of sexual violence, La Strada decided to mark the Denim Day by praising honorable professionals from the legal system.

The Frontline Heroes Album launched the Denim Day Moldova 2020 campaign (in the middle of

the total lockdown) - a thematic album of cartoons representing 10 police officers and prosecutors who have kept their courage, perseverance and empathy in restoring the rights of rape victims always, in any circumstance. Because of the measures of safety during the COVID-19 quarantine, the campaign was carried out exclusively online. National Coalition members have joined the campaign. Representatives from the **diplomatic corps**, **law enforcement representatives** supported the campaign. The **press-release** was aired by 5 media channels, raising awareness about solidarity and empathy with victims of sexual violence while the fb activity registered 4 K impressions and over 560 interactions.



Keeping in mind the Istanbul Convention

By the second month of the lockdown, La Strada announced a 35% increase in the number of calls received by the Trust-

line for Women and Girls. This figure is an important indicator for our colleagues from The National Coalition, and it serves as another bold argument of a new **advocacy action** in support of the **ratification of the Istanbul Convention** by the national authorities. The **press release** that followed in June on the situation during the period of lockdown caused an increase in the media coverage and once more raised the issue of the Istanbul Convention and the need for better protection leverages. In July, we **talked about** the bill voted by the Parliament that aims to strengthen the protection of women victims of violence.

Following the high media interest in the phenomenon of domestic violence during lockdown, in August, we **published** the main conclusion of a quick evaluation developed in partnership with UN Women Moldova. Thus, in an online **press-club** we discussed the needs of women affected by domestic violence, gender-based violence and the systemic response to cases of domestic violence in the context of the Covid-19 crisis. This effort was part of a joint effort with key partners from the National Coalition and the Secretariat.

La Strada representatives attended all 4 meetings of the **National Coordination Council** on prevention and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence organized in 2020. In 2 out of 4 meetings, La Strada experts made presentations about (i) Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 crisis on domestic violence and gender violence (meeting from 31 July 2020) and (ii) a Public presentation of the analysis of Trust line 10 years activities.

After several rounds of national consultations, the **draft Law on sexual violence** has been approved by the Government and published in the **Official Gazette** Nr. 381 from December 02.2020, Government Decision Nr. 851 from November 30, 2020. The draft law introduces important changes into the national legal framework in line with the international standards and recommendations regarding legal approach to this issue. This is a great success for the La Strada team and its partners especially because of the strong opposition from academia, executive level professionals from the Ministry of Justice, “old school” lawyers who have quite a voice in the legal community. The consultations have proved once again that both the society and professional groups including decision makers have deeply rooted stereotypes and prejudices about sexual violence. To date, the draft Law is in Parliament under examination in specialized commissions.

The findings of the „**Peculiarities of Sexual Violence in the Republic of Moldova**” Report prepared by La Strada at the end of 2019 served the purpose of the team’s and community efforts throughout 2020”.

Some key figures to highlight our efforts in tackling gender-based violence:

- **Over 25 media headlines** covering the issue of intimate partner/domestic violence were broadcasted with the direct contribution of La Strada specialists
- **7K postcards** “Your child suffers as much as you do” and **10K brochures** were printed and distributed in 200 pharmacies, social assistance offices and police units all over the country.
- **The National Trust line for Women and Girls** received and counselled **2040 calls from all the regions of Moldova and abroad.**
- **An increase of more than 700% in the number of followers** of the **Trust Line FB page** (almost 7300 followers on December 31st, 2020)
- Trustline counsellors made 187 emergency interventions leading to the resolve of 87 cases of domestic violence and 15 interventions to manage 8 cases of sexual violence representing imminent danger to the life or to physical/psychological integrity of the victims.
- On the **10th Anniversary of the Trust-Line**, we issued an **Analytical Report “10 Years of Trust and Help”** reflecting on the evolution of the attitude and perceptions of our society (individual and community), as well as on the system response to domestic violence and intimate partner violence by thorough analysis of calls.

- The psychologist from the Safeguarding Team for Women and Girls prepared **21 psychological evaluation reports**. The lawyer provided professional **legal assistance to 131 women**, including 68 women who benefited from specialized counselling and 63 -from professional legal services in court (21 criminal cases, 43 civil cases). The criminal cases represent **14 cases of sexual assault, 6 cases of domestic violence and one murder**. Civil cases reflect legal representation in divorce procedures, child custody and alimony.



AREA 3: CHILD ONLINE SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Over the last years, there has been a substantial increase in Internet usage by younger children. Statistical data shows that on average, 44% of children aged 12-15 active on social networks are actually under the age of 10.

Online engagement of children definitely has its benefits, but we should also be aware of the high exposure to risks associated with internet usage. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, data from different international organizations show an increase in the number of cases of child sexual abuse in the lockdown period. So, throughout 2020, we put extensive efforts into promoting and strengthening the capacity of siguronline.md to reach out to children and encourage them use the info and seek help on this platform.

As soon as our specialists noticed changes in the online behavior of children in the first months of the lockdown, it was decided to approach children aged 12-14 years via a [video spot](#) raising the issue of online child sexual abuse. The message caught on very well, the video resulted in 274 online counselling requests and 7 cases of online child sexual abuse reported on siguronline.md. Thus, it was decided to run a specially tailored SMM campaign "When online relationships get complicated – ask Gabi!". The campaign reached over 67k adolescents primarily "hanging on" Instagram. A series of [online awareness seminars](#) about siguronline.md were carried out in partnership with Neovita Health Clinic for Youth, these have reached over 50 adolescents volunteers of the Clinic from various educational institutions of the country.

[Siguronline.md](https://siguronline.md) specialists prepared 7 thematic articles and a special [test](#) that is also available on siguronline.md. These cover such aspects as online [communication](#) and [relationships, distribution of personal photos and videos](#), and [getting help](#) if the risk is eminent and other subjects.

The number of single visitors to siguronline.md has doubled compared to 2019 (from about 48k to almost 105k). The section dedicated to children continues to be the most popular. Children visit especially the „Information and advice“ column followed by 'Cyber Café'. Articles about online risks and online relationships are of particular interest to young internet users. In fact, these articles reflect the central theme of the SID 2020 Campaign. It should be noted that 14% of the portal accesses are direct which points to the fact that young users trust siguronline.md, because practically all direct accesses are linked to the section dedicated to children. This is also an indication that the awareness and education activities carried out by teachers through the Program "Intersection. Safe Online Zone" have an impact. Visitors who entered through organic searches spend more time on siguronline.md as compared to previous periods (increased by 42%).

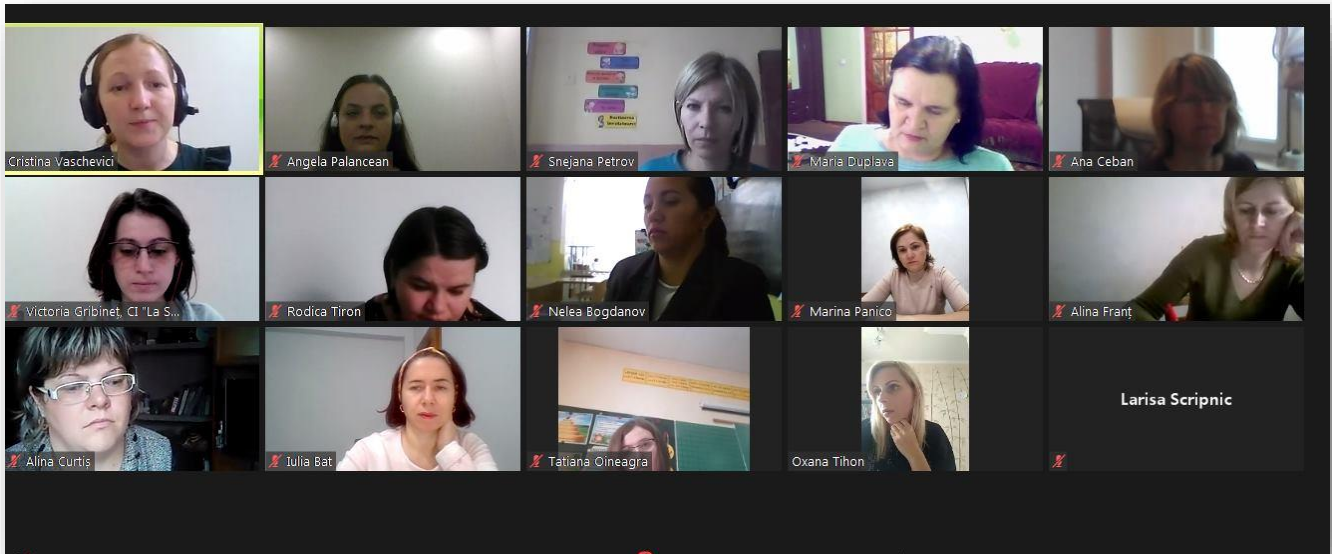
In 2020, the Siguronline Team registered 2863 requests for online counselling, 5 times more compared to 2019. Of these, 84% are from children. The majority of requests are of a preventive nature – basic info about staying safe online, things to consider when building an online reputation, account safety etc. There was a significant increase of interest in the safety of online relationships (increased by 4 times). Also, more children (55 reports comparing to 32 in 2019) requested help in specific cases of online sexual abuse. This is seen as an increase in the amount of trust children have about siguronline.md, but also better understanding about the risk and their right for assistance.

Partnering with teachers, creating a strong & motivated „INTERSECTION” zone

Since its launch in 2018, the „Intersection. Online Safe Zone” Programme for teachers grew from a one-time initiative into a national-scale project. At present, over 1.3k teachers are part of the dedicated [Intersection - online community of teachers for Online Safe Zone](#), offering regular information about resources and upcoming events, but also sharing positive work practices.

The traditional Programme has several components including: INTERSECTION teachers’ summer school, annual national Teachers’ Conference, [Teachers’ Contest](#) and Experience Exchange Spring [Workshop on the best SID practices](#). All activities are interconnected and aim to encourage and motivate teachers to stay within the Program and integrate their knowledge into his/her school. Due to the pandemic the interest towards online safety has increased. To address the teachers’ needs, the La Strada team has developed over 20 new articles and guidelines. In this period, the informative and didactic resources for teachers available on Siguronline.md have been viewed over 28,5k times, which is a 4-times increase compared to 2019. The Programme provided 40 hours of training to 303 teachers of primary and gymnasium classes from schools from all over the country.

Continuous info support was provided during regular peer-to-peer informative seminars and short master classes, events lasting half a day. These activities also enable the team to [study the teachers’ knowledge and attitudes](#) to this topic and their openness to address it. The feedback we collect is considered when developing materials and content for courses targeted to this professional category.



Despite the pandemic, lockdown and restriction rules, the **INTERSECTION Program** was as busy as ever during 2020 - introducing new activities, diversifying format of events and embracing new members. Because of the pandemic, the structure of the Program was adjusted to serve the needs of schools. Thus, in May, we organized thematic Zoom meetings with over 100 INTERSECTION community teachers. These were about how online safety should be approached differently with children in primary education compared to those in gymnasium classes, and a different way to discuss online safety through constructive dialogue between family and the school. Webinars organized with ARTICO were attended by over 2600 teachers and school staff. **The participants received advice and recommendations about the successful implementation of their activities.**

Despite all difficulties, over 200 teachers carried out offline and online seminars reaching over 7320 children of primary and gymnasium classes from various educational institutions of the country. The outcomes of these seminars were observed through the increased number of visits to and reports to siguronline.md - children mentioning that they have learned about the platform in school.

Partnering with parents in online safety education

The key goal of all **efforts targeting parents** is to cultivate positive attitudes towards online safety and take the fear away by introducing them to various ways they could guide their children. During 2020, due to the pandemic, the traditional face-to-face activities with parents – joint meetings in INTERSECTION schools and Coffee talks – were reduced. Thus, only 9 informative seminars were conducted in schools for 168 parents. On the occasion of SID 2020, one **„Week-end Coffee Talk”** event was organized with the participation of 15 parents interested in finding out more about child online safety.

During the months of lockdown, 3 webinars for parents were organized with the participation of 200 users - "Online school - How the parent can help children organize their activities efficiently and safely", "The world after the pandemic, how we protect our children online", "Cyberbullying. How to ensure online interactions with a positive psychological impact". These events have been viewed over 8k times and received more than 70 comments.

After the lockdown months, upon request from users and analysis of FAQ, La Strada, in partnership with Moldcell, organized another 4 webinars on "School and family - partners in online safety education", "How to establish a trustful relationship with the child", "Teenagers - between online safety and gathering likes" and "It's all about online safety" focusing on the differences between online safety and online security, the changes from the last 7 years, about communication with parents, priorities and obstacles. The recordings of seminars got almost 14k views and 200 comments. The siguronline [column for parents](#) was enriched with 15 new materials - articles, guidelines, step-by-step instructions and Quizzes. Overall, the parents' involvement is similar to the previous year, there was an insignificant increase in the number of visitors and views. Yet, the quality of the time spent has increased.

As for online counselling for parents – in general, the dynamics of requests from adults is increasing - 287 reports were registered in 2020, 132 of which refer to a situation involving a child, this is a 4-times increase compared to 2019. Like in previous years, most counselling requests refer to general information about child online safety, resources available online, parental control applications and how to block inappropriate content for children.

Safer Internet Day Campaign/ SID 2020

The [Safer Internet Day 2020 campaign](#) focused on dangerous relationships online.

Traditionally, the key messages targeted young internet users. Thus, we launched a series of videos in which peers discuss their experiences. These aimed to develop the adolescents' critical thinking about the topic. A wide SMM campaign focused on two particular videos ([online risks](#) and [Online relationships](#)) and allowed us to reach over 16k young internet users. Both videos registered 271k impressions and over 31k interactions.

In the second phase of campaign, we presented the [latest trends registered on Siguronline Helpline](#) in 2019 related to online sexual abuse.

The campaign also engaged [educators](#) and teachers from the INTERSECTION community. Our specialists also conducted awareness seminars for over 270 school psychologists, frontline police officers and teachers. A Child Safeguarding Team [Infographic](#) was developed and published. 10 media channels covered the SID campaign messages with 9 media headlines raising awareness about child safety online, particularly referring to online child sexual abuse and the activity of La Strada Moldova.

The Fb activity covering child safety online registered over 17K impressions. 2 interviews and one live TV show delivered by siguronline experts reached 14K views on the Facebook Page only.



Because every single pupil in Moldova deserves to study in a safe online school

In the first semester of 2020, La Strada finalized the baseline analysis reflecting the national practices and bottlenecks in ensuring child protection online in the educational system.

The **final Report** provided recommendations for adjusting the **Safer Internet School Model** for Moldovan institutions – a comprehensive approach towards online safety in schools. The initial concept was tailored based on best international practices and recommendations.

Thus, for the last year, we actually entered a particularly important phase for promoting the safety of children in the online environment on the national level. On June 25th, 2020 a first discussion session took place with the participation of a group of specialists from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MECC), an institution that has been supporting our main initiatives for online safety education over several years. An agreement was reached to integrate measures on SIS Model development and piloting into the Ministry's Action Plan for 2021.

The SIS Model is based on 4 pillars: policies and leadership; education and capacity building;


operational procedures of intervention in case of online abuses; technical conditions and infrastructure. The widely consulted and tested SIS concept and the key findings of the analysis have been presented in a **high level meeting** to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Education in June 2020. The Safe Online School model envisages that every school in Moldova will be transformed into a safe learning environment for every pupil. Children are equipped with the necessary skills to be able to identify online risks in time and stop situations of abuse; Parents know how to support children in the digital world, not by limiting their use of technologies, but developing their critical thinking; Psychologists and teachers know how to identify the signs of online child abuse, can identify potentially risky situations and are able to act friendly, helping the child to overcome the situation of abuse; And the schools, provide a safe infrastructure where children can be browsing online without being exposed to inappropriate content. Shortly after the agreement with MECC, La Strada developed Methodological **guidelines** regarding the online safety and online security of children during the remote educational process for primary, gymnasium and lyceum institutions in the school year 2020 – 2021.


Once the Methodological guidelines were approved, we launched the training sessions for teachers. **4 webinars** taking place over two days each were organized for 1400 school management staff from all pre-university institutions in the country. The interactions with the management staff during the webinars allowed us to find out the vulnerable aspects in the school system that impede an

CUM ARATĂ ABUZUL SEXUAL ONLINE?

VICTOR
13 ani

*“El a fost primul om care nu a rîs cî-mi plac rolele.
Nimeni pînă acum nu se interesa real de mine.
Glumeam cî el este fratele meu mai mare iar eu sînt Ursulicî.
Niciodata nu m-am gîndit cî o sa-mi facî asta”.*





efficient intervention in case of a child online abuse. These bottlenecks will be further discussed with the Ministry and solutions will be proposed.

On a larger scale, as part of **advocacy efforts**, the **Policy Analysis on Safety of Children Online** Report was presented during a high-level **online round table** organized in partnership with the State Chancellery in Moldova. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection expressed commitment to integrate the issue of COSESA and Child Safety into the next country policy document on children's rights (Strategy or Programme). The Study was conducted in partnership with Soros and got the attention of **ITU**.

In the context of the European Day to Fight Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, IC La Strada Moldova and the General Inspectorate of Police have signed a long-term collaboration agreement that aims to coordinate and support joint efforts in preventing several categories of crime, including sexual abuse of children online. The event was followed by a press conference which once again raised the issue of child safety online. The topic issued 16 headlines reflected by 11 media channels.

„We live in a society with no empathy and no awareness of the dangers that a child may face online. We are a society that criticizes and blames the child because he or she has become harassed, assaulted on the Internet. As adults, we cannot afford to fail in preventing these risks through an appropriate education”.

Elena BOTEZATU, Director of Children's Program of La Strada Moldova



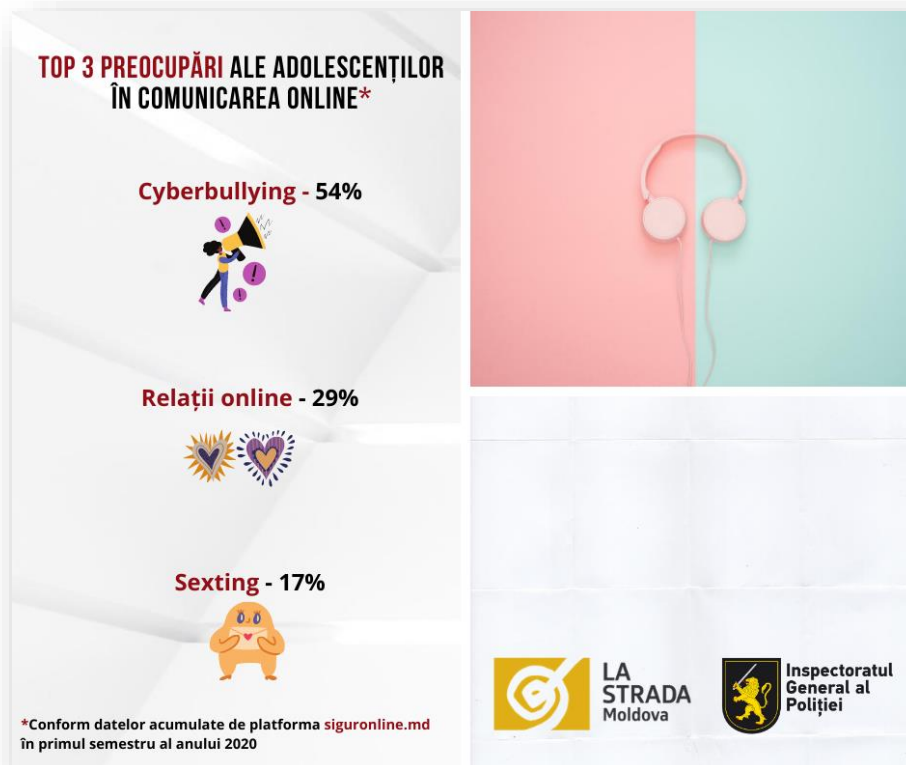
Promptly identifying and correctly approaching every case of child online sexual abuse

Throughout this year, we kept our efforts to **strengthen capacities of the legal system** to adequately address cases of online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Due to the partnership with the National Institute of Justice, 75 specialized prosecutors and judges, legal advisors and counsellors benefited by 1-day online awareness seminars on "Peculiarities of criminal prosecution and trial of cases of abuse and sexual exploitation of children committed in the digital environment". The agenda was covered by a team of 5 trainers bringing real cases for discussions.

The Guideline of international and national legal provisions in the field of combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children using information and communication technologies was developed and approved by the Decision of the General Prosecutor. This is the first type of professional material covering this topic in the GP Office.

La Strada organized activities that aimed to promote the **Online Safe Reporting Mechanism** to both professionals and children. Over 270 professionals including school psychologists, special education teachers and front-line police participated in off-line and **online debriefings**. The trainers introduced the participants to the basics of online child abuse - typology of online abuses, key indicators for early interventions and risk management at early stages of investigation aiming at securing the best interest of the child. These events lead to an online informational campaign regarding online sexual abuse of children organized in partnership with the General Inspectorate of Police. The campaign was initiated as result of high number of cases of online sexual abuse registered in the first semester of 2020. Thus, **10 infographics** promoting the siguronline.md reporting mechanism were developed and widely distributed on social networks on the official pages of La Strada and Police Inspectorates from the entire country.



During 2020, the **Child Safeguarding Team** provided assistance in 81 cases (52 are new and 29 are ongoing cases, registered in previous years). Another 10 cases have been closed due to various reasons: refusal of the beneficiary or refusal to further cooperate with police, closure of legal

proceedings, issuance of irrevocable court decision; closure of legal proceedings due to lack of offense elements.

The current workload of the Child Safeguarding Team represents 71 cases. Most requests for assistance came from police and prosecutors as well as from SRM. The cases include rapes, perverse actions, online sexual abuse and exploitation (child pornography, grooming, sexual harassment) and child sex trafficking. Most of the new beneficiaries are girls. The youngest beneficiary is 4 years old. Most beneficiaries are 10-13 years old, which demonstrates a decrease in the age of children who become prey to online sexual abusers.

Some key figures to make a difference in our efforts to protect children from online sexual abuse and exploitation:

- The Child Safeguarding Team provided **support for 81 children**, victims of various forms of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation
- Our specialists participated in **26 hearings and made 71 interventions** in order to provide psychological assistance during criminal and court proceedings
- **11 psychological reports** have been made at the request of law enforcement and/or other frontline specialists
- **40 teachers and over 1000 pupils from 36 schools** were involved in the contest „Together for a better Internet” within the Safer Internet Day Campaign 2020
- **over 2000 school management representatives** from all pre-university institutions in the country participated at webinars and discussed The Safe Online School Model
- **over 120 teachers** participated in online trainings
- **3 webinars for more than 200 parents** were organized
- **75 specialized prosecutors and judges, legal advisors and counsellors** participated in the 1-day online seminar “Peculiarities of criminal prosecution and trial of cases of abuse and sexual exploitation of children committed in the digital environment”
- **270 professionals** including school psychologists, special education teachers, and front-line police participated in off-line and online debriefings which introduced the participants to the basics of online child abuse
- **a Public Policies Research** „How can the state response be improved in order to prevent and combat the online sexual abuse of children?” was elaborated.

Dear friends, colleagues, partners,

We shared with you today everything we have gathered in the last year. It's exclusively along with you that our team get to offer some help to women, girls and children suffering from violence and abuse along this burdensome 2020 year.

Your support is critical to our success and the Executive Board would like **to thank everyone** who plays a role in our work – from the generous donors who contribute with gifts of time and money, to skilled and devoted team players from La Strada Family.

We are determined to continue to do our best for women and children who need our support.

