

## PROJECT PEH021 "EDUC-PLUS Permanent Training and Professionalism for Quality Services Provided to Children in the Protection System"

### UPDATE ON PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS – JULY 2016

Project implementation period: 26.05.2015 – 31.10.2016

*Project purpose: Improving the social integration opportunities of children and youth in the protection system hosted in residential care services by promoting strategies, measures and training programmes aimed at increasing the professionalism of educational staff and good practices of public – private partnership for social inclusion and non-discrimination.*

*Objectives:*

*A) Improving the capacity to provide courses that are adjusted to the educators' needs by continuous training courses and supervision of 20 trainers in 10 GDSACPs and facilitating the access to pedagogical resources and networking both for the aforementioned 20 persons, and for 40 additional trainers in GDSACPs and private structures by creating and developing a Virtual Resource Centre.*

*B) Developing the competences of educational staff working in residential care facilities (220 persons) in order to ensure the social integration of beneficiaries, as a result of the participation to continuous training courses (from the 5th to the 9th project months)*

*C) Improving the public-private partnership for quality in Residential Care Services at county, regional and national level, by organising 2 county seminars in each of the 9 counties and 2 local seminars in Bucharest sector 1 (20 seminars in total) and elaborating by means of a participative approach of a Code of good practices of public-private partnership for the social inclusion and non-discrimination of children in residential care services.*

#### **A2 Elaboration of a training model, pedagogical kits and development of the Virtual Resource Centre "CVR Trainer" for the trainers who train the staff working in the child protection field**

After the selection of local trainers, a consultation process with respect to the selection of the training topics and the training needs analysis at county level were carried out between June and August 2015. This provided the basis for the drafting of the training model for the educational staff and for starting the preparations for the Training of Trainers.

A Virtual Resource Centre "VRC Trainer" was developed in order to support the exchange of information and communication between the trainers in the child protection/ social field. The website provides useful materials in the day to day activity of trainers and is constantly improved thanks to the trainers' active participation. The VRC is available online at the address: <http://www.cvr-trainer.crips.ro>

3 pedagogical films were finalised in December 2015, in relation to the 3 training modules composing the pilot training programme for educational staff working in residential care services. They are called: "At school", "Where have you been?", "Over coffee". They can be viewed online on the VRC website.

### **A3 Training, supervision of local trainers and setting up of a trainers' network**

The local trainers were selected by the beneficiary GDSACPs from their staff, 2 trainers being nominated from each of the counties (20 trainers in total, 18 local trainers on behalf of the beneficiary GDSACPs and 2 trainers on behalf of the partner, GDSACP Sector 1). The first Module of the TOT was organised in the period 19-21 October 2015, in Bucharest, at CRIPS headquarters. The activity provided the opportunity to go in depth the specific topics from the training model of educators that will be piloted in the courses addressing the educational staff. Based on the feedback of the local trainers, the training model was finalised, including the pedagogical kits. The 3 video materials developed for the training model were presented for feedback to the local trainers.

The second TOT module took place during 14-16 March 2016, in Bucharest (on CRIPS headquarters), after the implementation of the 3 training modules and before the final evaluation of trainees. This encounter provided the occasion to make an evaluation of the training courses, highlighting the local impact, the topics that were ranked as the most interesting, the lessons learnt. The exchange of experience between the trainers confirmed the necessity of the training activities provided at local level under the EDUC Plus project and indicated future possibilities for improving the competences of educational staff with the ultimate goal to provide quality services to children hosted in the protection system.

The 20 trainers as well as other trainers in the county were invited to participate to a trainers' network, developed under the project – the EDUC Trainer network. This professional network includes also the volunteers collaborating under the project as practice trainers, and other accredited trainers working in the social field – totalling 99 members in June 2016. The network is supported by the VRC Trainer with pedagogical resources and by the EDUC Trainer Group on Facebook.

### **A4 Training courses for educators**

The pilot training programme for educational staff working in residential care for child protection consisted in 3 modules, of two days each. Each of them was followed by practical activities developed at the workplace of the educational staff (the residential care services). In order to ensure a good practical preparation, 2 practice trainers were trained, in a capacity of project volunteers.

Each module was delivered in 11 local training sessions (of which 2 sessions in Bucharest), attended by a total of 220 educators/ educational staff employed in the residential care services within the beneficiary/ partner GDSACPs. The trainees were previously selected by the beneficiary GDSACPs.

The 3 training modules were carried out as follows:

- Module I „*Developing child's abilities for independent life*” – 11 local sessions in November 2015
  - Practical activities Module I – November - December 2015
- Module II "*Child's participation in the community*” – 11 local sessions in December 2015
  - Practical activities Module II – December 2015 – January 2016
- Module III "*Reducing risk situations in the work with children hosted in residential care services*” – 11 local sessions in January 2016
  - Practical activities Module III – February 2016
- Oral examination – 11 colloquia – March 2016

The training courses provided within the EDUC Plus project were considered to be a real support to the daily professional activity of the educational staff working in residential care facilities, due to the adequate and adapted theoretical support and the practical examples that were offered, as well as by means of the good practice models and exchanges of experience provided within the sessions.

#### **A5 Debates and collection of good practices on the topic of public-private partnership**

In the second half of January 2016 a first series of county seminars (out of two planned) was organised in order to debate the current situation and to identify solutions aimed at improving the public-private partnership to the benefit of protected children. The local seminars were hosted by the beneficiary/ partner GDSACPs and gathered Public Local Authorities representatives, heads of residential care facilities, professionals from social services/ schools/ other institutions, NGOs, other private structures including sponsors, mass-media, voluntaries and children from residential care facilities. The first seminar CS1 also provided the opportunity to identify examples of good practices of public-private partnership and inter-institutional collaboration and to formulate proposals for a future Code of good practices of public-private partnership for the social inclusion and non-discrimination of children from residential care services.

Based on the proposals in the CS 1 and later consultation with the beneficiary GDSACPs, a number of 30 good practices were identified, that will make the subject of a future online brochure.

#### **A6 Communication and project promotion**

The Launching Conference of the project „EDUC-PLUS" Permanent Training and Professionalism for Quality Services Provided to Children in the Protection System" was held on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, in Bucharest, on the premises of GDSACP Sector 1. The participants, specialists within the beneficiary GDSACPs, argued the importance of the continuous training of educators in the child protection services and appreciated the opportunities offered by the EDUC project with respect to improving their professional activity.

The events held within the framework of the project were promoted by means of press releases and posting on the websites of the beneficiary institutions (GDSACPs): the two TOT modules preparing the local trainers, the 3 training modules for the educational staff within the residential services for child protection held at local level within each of the beneficiary GDSACP, the oral examination of the 220 trainees by means of 11 colloquia, the county seminars on public-private partnership held in January 2016, the 11 debate-workshops of the children "We and the Community" (activities developed by June 2016). Promotional materials were elaborated and used during the local training sessions.

The educator's manual "Education for social integration" was disseminated to the beneficiary GDSACPs and also the other 35 DGSACPs, being considered a useful resource for the day to day professional activity of the education staff.

***Additional activities approved by the PLUS funding facility (extension addendum signed on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016)***

#### **A7. Training of educational staff – training module on „empowerment"**

A new training model aiming at empowering the educational staff in order to cope with the challenges of this profession and to ensure an improved relation with the children under their care and quality educational approach is under preparation. The training course will be delivered in the month of September 2016 to the same 220 trainees and in addition to a new

group of 20 trainees from Ialomita county (new GDSACP adding to the beneficiary GDSACPs). For the preparation of the local trainers who will deliver the new module, a training of trainers of two days was organised between 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2016. The course support elaborated for this new module will form the basis for a practical guide on empowerment addressing the educational staff that will be edited and distributed.

#### **A8. Organisation of children's debate-workshops and action research „We and the community”**

The new action research activity is aimed at knowing the opinions of the children from the protection system with regard to the problems, opportunities and solutions related to improving their active integration to school and community. The action research is based on the organisation of children's debate workshops with the topic “We and the community” in all the 10 beneficiary counties and in Bucharest Sector 1. The 11 workshops were held in June 2016, having as participants children in the protection system together with children from the community - school colleagues (total groups of 12-18 participants). The workshops took place as follows:

Alba – 16 June 2016 – 15 children participants  
Arges – 14 June 2016 – 14 children participants  
Arad – 22 June 2016 – 12 children participants  
Bacau – 2 June 2016 – 14 children participants  
Buzau – 17 June 2016 – 18 children participants  
Cluj – 3 June 2016 – 14 children participants  
Ialomita – 9 June 2016 – 14 children participants  
Mehedinti – 16 June 2016 – 13 children participants  
Mures – 22 June 2016 – 13 children participants  
Valcea – 24 June 2016 – 18 children participants  
Sector 1 – Bucharest 2016 – 16 children participants

#### **A9. Inter-county project promotion seminars**

After the implementation of the county seminars and the training module on „empowerment”, 3 seminars will be organised in the cities of Bacau, Targu Mures and Drobeta Turnu Severin in order to disseminate the project experience to other counties in the proximity. These seminars will be attended by 30 persons/ seminar, at least of whom will be invited from other counties. The seminars will have two objectives: 1) valuing project results and presenting 'lessons learned' and good practices: 2) improving collaboration between professionals and finding solutions for further networking between trainers involved in the social field, including by means of the website of the virtual resource centre VRC Trainer created under the project EDUC Plus.