



Terre des hommes

Helping children worldwide.



**GOOD PRACTICES TO SUPPORT
YOUTH DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY**



WHO ARE WE?

Terre des hommes Foundation has been active in Romania since 1992 for the purpose of contributing to improvement of child protection system and social assistance reform. Also, we facilitate children's participation in the development of their own community. Terre des hommes Romania is a delegation of Terre des hommes Foundation (Tdh), the most important Swiss organization in child protection sector, established in 1960. Every year, thousands of children and parents are the beneficiaries of projects implemented by Terre des hommes Romania.

Terre des hommes Foundation is an important vector in the implementation of projects in Romania addressing development of cooperation relations and joint programs with national and international institutions regarding intervention of experts on the actual chances in the re-education, social-professional reintegration process and diminishing of recidivism, which would contribute to improvement of intervention quality for rehabilitation of minors and youth.

Terre des hommes believes in an effective, youth and minor friendly legal system,. We develop specific methodologies for professionals who work with children in conflict with the law and child friendly practices focused on mental balance and resilience.

Terre des hommes Foundation considers that the youth/child in conflict with the criminal law represents an active and positive addition to the society, and not a risk. Therefore, PRECISION project is grounded on the concept that all children in conflict with the law should be supported in order to develop their skills and expertise.

PRECISION PROJECT - - Promote Rehabilitation, Empowerment of Children and Support for Youth Offenders



Partners: National Administration of Penitentiaries, Craiova Detention Center, Buzias Educational Center, Brăila-Tichilești Detention Center, Târgu Ocna Educational Center.

Beneficiaries: Buziaș Educational Center, Târgu Ocna Educational Center, Craiova Detention Center, Tichilești Detention Center.

Target group: minors and youth in detention and education system in Romania

Duration: 2.5 years

The project is built on the current needs of re-education process and social-professional reintegration process and offers the minors and youth in educational and detention centres in Romania the right to a chance for the future.

PRECISION is a pilot-project and its end purpose is that, ever since the detention period, all children and youth should develop their knowledge and skills (literacy, professional skills, life skills, self-esteem, motivation, social skills etc.) necessary for a successful rehabilitation in society.

This project represents an initial stage of a longer-term intervention. During the first two years, foundations were laid for an adequate response to youth social reintegration, a mandatory approach from social perspective.

The PRECISION project has a double approach, with effect both on minors and youth and on the experts hired in educational and detention centres:

- 1) case management
- 2) professional education and training

PRECISION PROJECT MAIN GOALS

- Development of a knowledge base and instruments to be used for making informed decisions by politicians and practitioners, and to promote a better understanding of challenges that children and youth have to face in the legal system and after release from detention.



- Development of a model based on individual case management. The model comprises a package of services which should respond to the rehabilitation needs of youth offenders, enhancing the skills of professionals working with children and youth in detention centres.

- Raising personnel's awareness and pleading for the importance of specific needs of children/youth in detention and the relevance of programs (prior to release) aiming at individual factors which result in the increasing of self-esteem, improvement of mental health and change of conduct.

GOOD PRACTICES APPLIED DURING PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Organizing two training courses for 50 participants in Tg. Ocna and Buziaș Educational Centers and Craiova and Tichilești- Brăila, Detention Centers, in collaboration with Young in Prison (YiP), an international NGO with experience in advocacy and programs on creative and sports development for youth in detention, in order to present COPOSO Methodology elaborated by YiP (COntribuind POzitiv la SOcietate – POSitive COntribution to SOciety) and to establish connections with the MGS Methodology (Movement, Games and Sport) elaborated by Terre des hommes Foundation. These methodologies provided the personnel in the detention centers and in the educational centers in Romania with new thinking perspectives and action perspectives for their activities with children and youth in detention, which emphasize the needs, specifics, and potential of youth by means of creative and sports activities, supporting social reintegration of youth, their personal development and empowerment.
- ✓ Adaptation of “Movement, Games and Sport” (MGS) Methodology elaborated and used by Terre des hommes in various programs, to the needs and specifics of children and youth in detention. This methodology allows to achieve psychosocial objectives by means of sport and team games, developing personal and social skills of children and youth in vulnerable circumstances. By means of *Movement, Games and Sport*, the five pillars on which the psychosocial wellbeing is supported are restored and the children/youth become more resilient. On long-term, it facilitates discontinuance (diminishing the rate of or abandoning the delinquent conduct). The MGS Methodology was used subsequently in training programs provided to the personnel in the four Educational / Detention Centers in Romania.



- ✓ Conducting 18 coaching sessions for the personnel in Tg. Ocna and Buziaș Educational Centers and in Craiova and Tichilești Brăila Detention Centers, The courses were attended by social workers, psychologists, teachers, sport monitors, inspectors and sub-inspectors, agents and other categories of personnel from *Detention Safety and Penitentiary Regime Sector and Social Reintegration Sector* (over 40 persons). The coaching sessions aimed to identify correlations between COPOSO method and their own activity with children and youth in detention, with practical examples of implementing COPOSO method principles and of the manner in which such principles may be adapted and integrated in their own work methodologies to ease the exchange of ideas and good practices in activities with youth, with emphasis on friendly work practices.
- ✓ Creating two training courses on MGS Methodology for the personnel of Buziaș and Tg.Ocna. Ocna Educational Centers and Craiova and Brăila- Tichilești Detention Centers. The courses facilitated consolidation of participants' skills (over 30 persons) in order to carry out creative and sport activities with youth and children in detention. The

training program approached, in a creative and balanced manner, several themes in the personal development area (communication, conflict management, leadership, resilience) and specific themes to understanding the MGS Methodology and subsequent performance of MGS activities in the Centers (principles of MGS methodology, the pillars on which the children's wellbeing is based, the features of the games, planning, performing and assessing the MGS activities). The participants understood the benefits of MGS activities for children/youth in the Centers and appreciated the novelty of some themes and the distinct perspective proposed on some themes.

- ✓ *“The necessity of performing the MGS activities (Movement, Games and Sport) in the educational/detention centers is undeniable, as it has benefits both for children and youth and for the personnel working with them. Given this background, the personnel training on their ability to perform properly such activities is essential, and should become part of the continuous personnel training intended for such activities (sport monitors) as well as training of personnel involved in the development of the psychosocial skills of children and youth (teachers, psychologists, social workers). The MGS activities and the other educational or counseling activities performed by the personnel may support each other and may generate actual good practices at the level of detention/educational centers.”* Ema - Elza Şeclăman, Training Officer, Terre des hommes
- ✓ Over 80 children and youth within Tg. Ocna and Buziaş Educational Centers and in Craiova and Brăila-Tichileşti Detention Centers attended MGS-type sport activities organized by the personnel trained within the project. During planning and organization of these activities, Terre des hommes team provided coaching sessions and activity monitoring sessions to the personnel within the Centers (16 sessions of coaching and monitoring), so that the implementation of the MGS Methodology would be made in good conditions and adapted depending on the needs.



- ✓ *“The personnel understood that MGS-type activities represent a new perspective worth to be approached, explored, deepened and built depending on the particularities of children and youth in the educational/detention centers. The children and youth felt and understood that “something new and different” happens in the Center by means of such activities, exchanged points of view and showed interest and willingness to attend more often and in higher numbers the MGS activities.”* Ema - Elza Şeclăman, Training Officer, Terre des hommes
- ✓ *“The performance of the training and coaching activities for the personnel not only resulted in achieving measurable targets, and results expressed as indicators (as mentioned in the project), but also determined changes of personnel mentality within the Educational Centers and the Detention Centers involved in the project, changes of perspective related to sport and leisure activities, motivation to explore new working methods with youth and children (inspired from the two methodologies, COPOSO and MGS) and last*

but not least, even changes concerning cooperation at personnel level. With the performance of the MGS-type activities, the personnel who used to work individually had to team up, to elaborate and facilitate together the MGS-type activities, such collaboration and working method as a team being considered a good practice worth continuing in future. Getting together specialists such as sport monitor, social worker, psychologist, teacher, supervisor, etc, in order to initiate and facilitate MGS-type activities is a premise for success, since such interdisciplinarity may ensure a higher dose of creativity, a careful observation of youth needs and behaviors, an efficient complementarity, and at the same time to determine actual examples of good practices.” Ema - Elza Şeclăman, Training Officer, Terre des hommes

- ✓ The non-governmental organization Young in Prison (YiP) offered Terre des hommes project team an introductory course in mentoring, based on YiP expertise in elaborating and carrying out mentoring programs. The introduction focused on the mission, structure and values of mentoring program and provided counseling related to the manner of elaborating, structuring and implementing a mentoring program. YiP shared its experience and know-how with respect to the manner in which youth who were previously imprisoned – and who as part of the program – will return to the detention centers to work with other youth should be trained and guided. The introduction was offered so that Terre des hommes team should be able to develop and structure its own mentoring program of PRECISION Project in Craiova Detention Center.



- ✓ Elaborating a mentoring program, a training program methodology for mentors and a Training Curriculum comprising recommendations of our partners with expertise in juvenile delinquency sector, YiP, by introducing Terre des hommes specific methods (MGS and COPOSO).

- ✓ The mentoring program involved:

- Building up a team to implement the mentoring activities, comprising a mentor coordinator, 2 employed mentors, youth who were previously imprisoned and a group of volunteer mentors from various social environments.

- training of the mentor team in an introductory program on the work and activities specific to the re-education program for 20 youth in Craiova Detention Center.

The mentoring program is an instrument through which the youth materialized the opportunity to adopt a personal rhythm outside the pressures from their own past (family, re-education system, society, etc.). The program involved support and guidance to mentored youth so that they develop themselves until being freed from the pressures generated by unanswered questions, in order to become self-confident.

32 online and offline mentoring sessions were provided in weekly modules. During the mentoring activities, the objectives included, among others: independent life skills (communication – accepting/creating a dialogue, team work – inclusion), reconfiguration of the personal map (activating personal values, be part of the decision-making process – identifying/creating alternatives/options).

The activities carried out included among others: activities focused on elimination of social destabilization (biases, expectations, opportunities), discovery activities, value identification, personal mission, activities for steering the personal plan (general), identification of possible mistakes, activities to identify the strong points and weaknesses, as well as free discussions on personal subjects and directions, customized depending on the individual.

Methods used: Learning types/methods for adults

- 1) Operational conditioning (B. Skinner), which supports the encouragement of effort-oriented conducts and the effort to achieve self-imposed targets.
- 2) Experiential learning (D. Kolb), which indicates that the adult 'learns by experience'. The experiential learning is facilitated by self-reflections, self-assessment and action.
- 3) Theories complementary to the continuous development process (various), which states that humans are building themselves by learning and follow an upward evolution of the self-consciousness levels and of emotional, cognitive capacity, etc.



- 4) Social learning theory (A. Bandura): "humans learn by observing how others act. Models".

Improvement of psychosocial wellbeing and life skills during detention and social-professional reintegration process for 50 youth.

Testimonies related to the mentoring program:

"For me, the PRECISION program, especially the mentoring pilot program, materialized in the creation of an area specific to each and every youth, where he may exercise, create all elements of a natural social conduct. It is necessary not to forget that the relations we form as humans are complex, and if our intervention on a youth only satisfies a particular element and ignores the rest, the ignored elements will become unsatisfied needs, and the youth will focus only on those needs, and there is the risk that he will thus annul our intervention. This is why, the mentoring activities for youth in the juvenile detention system completes the particular element and during the social re-education process the relapse rate diminishes among youth".

Cicerone Bosuic, mentoring program Coordinator

"I consider myself an ambitious, outgoing and devoted individual, and the mentoring program reminded me of my true self, especially when the present time and the detention period pressured me a lot. During the detention period I had the chance to benefit from the mentoring program provided by Terre des hommes Foundation, and this program had a huge impact on me and made me aware and determined me to focus on my potential and capitalize it as much as I could. After the release, I had the chance to continue the mentoring program and with the help of my mentor I succeeded to clarify a series of personal goals which facilitated my adaptation process in the society. Now I have got only one thing in my mind, respectively I wish to help, in return, those who need support." **Bogdan Giubega, teenager mentored within PRECISION project**

"I've spent behind the bars a great part of my adolescence. I did not receive any counseling from the experts during that time, and this fact did not help me at all to reintegrate in the society after my release. My name is Bora Petrică Costin and for almost one year I have been part of Terre des hommes mentoring team involved in the mentoring activities. Prior to starting the mentoring program with young people in penitentiary, I was subject to a proper training which helped me greatly to intertwine my personal experience with the mentoring role. The opportunity to work with young people in detention, where I once was as well, represented for me the perfect chance to show, along with the mentored youth, that you can build for yourself anywhere, the only difference being the attitude you have and the role you play. Mainly, all things I did during the project were to help imprisoned young people. But in my case, all these helped me find the balance again. I needed such a moment in my life, I needed a whole set of experts to unchain the good person inside me. Thank you, beautiful people!" **Bora Petrică Costin, mentor within the PRECISION project**



✓ Vocational assessment activities

The implementation of vocational counseling program for 50 youth in the penitentiary system, oriented to assess the personal and professional skills, to identify the training and counseling needs in order to improve necessary knowledge and abilities for rehabilitation process. During said program a number of 50 online sessions for vocational training needs assessment were carried out based on structured interviews for 50 youth and 50 individual employment plans were customized for each youth in order to enhance their employment chances.

A map of 20 possible employers (at national level) willing to hire young people who left Educational and Detention Centers was elaborated as a support for youth social reintegration.

✓ Vocational training for youth in educational and detention centers

Subsequent to vocational assessment activities, 61 young people in the four Educational and Detention Centers were included in training programs: a course for *"The development*

of digital skills to use information technology as learning and knowledge instrument” (for 28 youth), and a course having as purpose “Inclusion on the labor market and training for employment” (for 33 youth).

Opening the first FabLab (Fabrication Laboratory) in Romania for imprisoned young people in the Educational Center in Târgu Ocna, Bacău County, for the purpose of providing support to under aged persons and youth deprived of liberty in view of developing skills which would enhance their resilience and optimize rehabilitation and social reintegration.

The purchase of FabLab equipment: 3D printers, 3D scanner, embroidery machine, numerous other accessories and raw materials with which the youth will manufacture objects using their imagination and technical skills with the help of our team.

Training the Educational Center personnel so that they learn the operating principles of 3D printers, 3D graphic development using a software. The initiation of 15 young people from the Technological High school in 3 introductory training sessions concerning the use of digital equipment. During the activities, they manufactured masks and various objects using digital embroidery machines and 3D printers.

Organizing a Launching Conference of the FabLab Program to draw the interest of journalists in view of media coverage in the local and national mass media publications.



Project achievements in figures:

By means of the PRECISION project, investments are made to raise the standards related to better detention conditions (clothes and hygiene-sanitary products, IT and TV equipment, sport materials and equipment) for imprisoned young people, with a total value amounting to 80 000 RON.

Organizing 2 round tables with child protection professionals (social workers, representatives of DGASPC etc.), and juvenile justice professionals (penitentiary police officers, parole officers, representatives of civil society) in order to exchange good practices in the area of juvenile justice and to promote the pilot mentoring program for rehabilitation of under aged individuals and youth in detention.

67 sport activities were organized with youth in Buziaș Educational Center by 2 sport monitors contacted by the Terre des hommes foundation.

At Brăila Tichilești Detention Center, 34 sessions of individual and group psychological counselling were organized by a psychologist contracted by the Foundation.



Brochure elaborated in April 2022 by Terre des hommes Foundation within the PRECISION Project (Promote Rehabilitation, Empowerment of Children and Support for Youth Offenders)



Terre des hommes

Helping children worldwide.