

CHILDAID FUNDING APPLICATION

TITLE: EDUCATE 1,000 ADOLESCENTS IN VITAL PERSONAL HEALTH & SAFETY MATTERS

COUNTRY: MOLDOVA, EASTERN EUROPE

FOCUS: ADOLESCENT HEALTH, PEER EDUCATION,

BUDGET: £3,600

SUMMARY: This project proposal sets out a funding request for the work of ChildAid in Moldova. The project will fund 40 workshops delivered to 60 adolescent participants in 3 rural areas across Moldova. The workshops will focus on sexual health education, whilst also allowing for youth to discuss other local and youth issues. These workshops are delivered by the youth campaign, Y-PEER Moldova, and are delivered by teenage peer educators. In addition, peer educators will lead over 1,000 adolescents in matters of sexuality, education and traffic safety.



The project is 2 tiered:

1) Educate the participants on local youth issues, namely sexual health and rights, traffic safety, discrimination, bullying and violence.

2) Give participants the skills needed to become community leaders and peer educators, through social theatre training and leadership skills. These participants will be able to go into their communities and educate others on the

topics they have learnt, whilst campaigning for youth issues and rights. This will create a self-sufficient programme.

ABOUT CHILDAID: Our mission is to help disadvantaged children in Eastern Europe turn their lives around, through the creation of long-term partnerships with local organisations.

Our support of key projects helps showcase that children can thrive away from institutions and integrate within the local community. **Our vision is that, in the longer term, local and national authorities will be persuaded to adopt this approach themselves.**

Established over 40 years ago, ChildAid is proud and honoured to continue to bring physical, material, and psycho-social support, to the following groups across four distinct sectors:

Families in crisis	Children living with disabilities	Orphans and social orphans*	Children living in conflict zones
<p>ABANDONMENT preventing families breaking down and/or supporting those who have been abandoned</p>			<p>EDUCATION & PLAY giving children a voice and a childhood</p>
<p>HEALTHCARE transforming lives and transforming attitudes to disability through direct action</p>			<p>VULNERABILITY finding resilience in adversity through creating firm foundations for children, young people and families living in precarious conditions</p>

* where living parents may be in rehabilitation care or in prison.

Context and Need: Moldova is Europe's poorest country, situated between Ukraine and Romania in the most easterly part of the continent.

"Despite recent progress, Moldova remains one of the poorest countries in Europe... Moldova's economy remains vulnerable to corruption, political uncertainty, and Russian political and economic pressure." Source: CIA World Fact Book

Like witnessed in many former Soviet states, Moldova's economic instability has driven thousands of people to work abroad. It is estimated that almost 45% of the working Moldovan population have emigrated for work, with much of Moldova's GDP coming from their overseas wages.

As a result, many children are left alone in their homes from a young age whilst their parents work overseas to provide for them. They are often from small rural villages, and have to become self-sufficient in isolated areas without the support needed from elders during adolescence.

This economic situation is combined with an orthodox view to educating teenagers on matters of sexual health. Although over the years ministers have encouraged introducing sexual health education into the compulsory school curriculum, pressure from the Moldovan Orthodox Church has made this implementation very difficult.

As a result, one in 10 pregnant women in Moldova is a teenager. 60% of teen pregnancies end in abortion, which are cheap and legal to access, but often not supported with the correct emotional treatment. Comprehensive knowledge about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is hard to access.

Furthermore, incredibly high youth unemployment leads some adolescences into dangerous positions, such as working in the sex trade, being at risk of human trafficking for sex, or abusive and violent relationships.

All of these factors combined make being a young person in rural Moldova incredibly challenging.

There are positive glimpses of change, but much remains to be achieved ... a challenge given the continued economic and cultural context:

- Compulsory and free sexual health education for young people
- Increased cultural emphasis on the importance of educating young people in youth/health issues
- Empowerment of young people, particularly girls, to reduce the risk of vulnerability to trafficking or the sex industry.

We remain focused on achieving our goals, to help change attitudes, government policy and the funding of programmes that will bring change to the lives of some of the most vulnerable children in Moldova.



Y-Peer Moldova:

The exciting partnership with Y-Peer Moldova is one of ChildAid's newest projects.

Y-Peer is one of the largest networks of community youth education in the country. It was established in 2004 and is a part of the international community of Peer Education Electronic Resources Network (Y-PEER) which operates in over 48 countries across the world. Y-PEER Moldova reaches 10,000 young people (aged 13-24) every year, with around 30 teams functioning in 28 areas. Y-PEER operates through peer education by having teams of young educators spread their informed knowledge on the issues of sexual health throughout their communities.



ChildAid has partnered with one of these teams of youth educators since 2017. The group has brought education to young people across 3 rural community centres in the regions Valcinet, Chiperceni and Zberoaia. Plans are in place to also run a series of workshops in the Ivancea area.

Approach:

The approach is to get alongside young people by using their peers to connect with them. The project has found that peer education is more effective, especially in the rural areas where our partners are based. Many of the children that participate in the workshops are shy and reserved when discussing topics such as sexual health and personal hygiene, as these issues may never have been addressed before.

The peer educators use a range of skills to engage with the participants: theatre, workshops, interactive education through participation in activities and informative resources.

The program will equip young people to identify local issues, and teach them how to form campaigns that they can bring to the local officials. By making positive changes for the whole community, the youth network will become empowered and establish their ability for impact. The long-term goal of this approach is to create a generation of youth leaders, who will progress into adulthood informed, healthy and proactive.

Project:

This funding proposal will specifically support the financial needs of the next series of workshops. This will be the second program our youth partners in Moldova have delivered. It will consist of a scheme of 10 workshops across 4 rural community's centres, which are all also supported by ChildAid's partner, Ora Moldova.

The series will reach a total of 1,000 adolescents (with 45 directed towards peer becoming educators). After the success of the sexual health workshops over the last year, a survey has been conducted to discover what other issues the youth were interested to see featured at the workshops. From here, the team have compiled plans to introduce education on leadership, traffic safety, discrimination and violence.

The aim is for young people to take the information they are taught, and use it to become educators and activists within their communities. There are already examples from our team of the success of this method.

In rural Moldova, traffic safety has become a widespread concern for young people. With poor quality roads and traffic networks, danger on the roads is an issue many have to face on a daily basis. The youth team in our project came together and identified a missing pavement (sidewalk) close to a school. They addressed the problem and it was successfully brought to local authorities who solved the issue.

The project has also developed from informative workshops to bring in an element of self-sustainability. The project aims to create a two teared network, whereby the participants are first educated on the issues. They will then be given the skills needed to carry this information outside of the workshops and to their friends. This element of peer-education amongst a network of young people will increase the awareness of the issues discussed and within time will hopefully result in a more informed and engaged youth.

Change for good: The vision of the Y-PEER Moldova program is to bring lasting change and empowerment to the youth communities in rural areas... one step at a time:



Testimony:

“The Y-Peer program in our village was very beneficial and had a great impact on children at the Centre. Topics discussed here were often not discussed by parents and teachers. Because of this, children may have been shy, but the information received was very well accepted by children who understood how important these things are to their health. We would like this program to continue because, as we have said, children are not very informed about such things, but they are important and necessary. Thanks for working with Y-Peer Moldova.”

Manager of a participating Children’s Day Centre.

Funding request:

The programme is simply funded – a trained co-ordinator (to train, lead, monitor and ensure the deliverables are being met), workshop materials and transport.

The impact is far from simple – 1,000 young people will receive essential personal health & safety coaching which can literally save their lives by building capacities among adolescents to take informed and responsible decisions.

An average cost of £80 per each of the 45 workshops will have the potential of saving lives, preventing future domestic abuse, and avoiding unhealthy sexual relations. Just £3,600 to help change a generation!