

# Annual Report 2010

**acsis**

**Association for a United  
Community and Social  
Intervention**

# Association for a United Community and Social Intervention - ACSIS Annual Report 2010

**ASSOCIATION FOR A UNITED COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL INTERVENTION - ACSIS** was founded as a private, non-governmental, non-profit, legal person in 2004 and it is licensed to function as a social services supplier.

**OUR MISSION** is to keep children in their families, by offering psychological and social support to parents and future parents that are in a difficult situation.

We are doing this by supporting parents:

- to overcome major obstacles in the pre- and postnatal periods – material, financial difficulties and the lack of useful information in what concerns the child's needs and the importance of the first years of life.

- to develop their confidence in their own strength and to achieve aims, such as completing an education, finding a job, avoiding an unwanted pregnancy.



**OUR VISION is a world where:**

- every child benefits from care that is appropriate to their needs
- every parent or future parent has proper knowledge about child care, about the importance of different psychological factors in the development and education of children
- every parent in a difficult situation benefits from professional support in raising and caring for their children

**VALUES WE BELIEVE IN:**

**Responsibility:** We help parents make responsible choices for the future of their children.

**Continuous education:** We support parents in offering the necessary education to their children.

**Uniqueness:** Each parent is unique, just as each child is unique. Each problem has its specific solution and approach.

**Solidarity:** Every bit of help matters! We encourage the involvement of the community in solving the situation of children in difficulty.

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## Social services offered:

- ☞ social counselling
- ☞ emotional support
- ☞ psychological counselling
- ☞ vocational counselling
- ☞ information, education
- ☞ family and community integration/reintegration
- ☞ socializing and free time spending
- ☞ financial/material support.



## Identity:

AC SIS Association has 6-year experience in services offered to this category and found an increasing need for interventions to solve problems of single mothers and their children.

We believe that the biological family is the best place where a child can grow, can develop in harmony and evolve in a stable relationship with at least one parent.

We believe that each parent is unique and every child is unique. This is why we grant individualized assistance to parents in social difficulty, integrated and customized assistance to the many needs they face and which places them at risk of abandoning their children.

*Single-parent families are a vulnerable social category, and the economic crisis amplifies children abandonment due to the lack of financial, educational and emotional resources of the single parents. The number of single-parent families doubled in 2008 compared to the data in 2002, and 90% of the single-parent families consist of mother and child. (Good practice guide for equal chances, BNS, 2009)*



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Official statistics and our data show that the factors describing the risk of maternal abandonment is found both at the level of the family and of the child. Considering this, we developed the following **strategy for intervention** that addresses risk factors:

	<b>Risk factors</b>	<b>AC SIS services addressing risk factors</b>	
<b>Family</b>	Type of family <i>(single parent, single mother)</i>	Conciliation for family re-uniting	
	Age <i>(very young parents/youth)</i>	Information for contraception	
	Education <i>(very low/low)</i>	Advice and assistance for continuing education, individual counselling to develop learning skills	
	Income <i>(very low/low)</i>	Assistance in accessing the labour market, tailoring skills training and networking at work, employment in social enterprise	
	Children growing information <i>(insufficient)</i>	Educational groups and psychosocial individual counselling to strengthen parenting skills, child development assessment	
	Housing <i>(difficulty finding and keeping a proper space for housing)</i>	Social counselling to find and keep a proper home	
	Social Inclusion <i>(rejection, even by the family, due to prejudices regarding young, single and poor mothers)</i>	Actions to combat prejudices related to single mothers, counselling for family re-union, social services for mother and child, information actions in the community regarding the mother-child difficulty	
	Historical <i>(history of abandonment / neglect / abuse of children in the extended family)</i>	Psycho-social counselling to help mothers to overcome possible negative models of the extended family	
	<b>Child</b>	Specific Needs <i>(diapers, powder milk, hygiene products, etc.).</i>	Material/ financial support
		Health <i>(health problems)</i>	Collection of relevant information on child's health and initiate actions to address any problems in cooperation with the family doctor
Special needs <i>(retardation, handicap etc.)</i>		Evaluation of child's development, initiation of actions to address any delays, the child's integration in appropriate schools to their specific needs	
Birth order <i>(younger brothers are more likely to be abandoned)</i>		Psycho-social counselling in order to develop proper attachment	
Subjective Reasons		Psychological counselling to overcome these bottlenecks and develop proper attachment	

We found that only a holistic way of intervention on risk factors in the entire family can produce a significant impact, can strengthen families, can assist them in taking responsibility for their own children, in building a future together.

For this purpose we have diversified our services during year 2010 offered in our projects for a simultaneous and complex approach of the many facets of reality faced by single mothers and their children in difficult conditions.



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## CURRENT PROJECTS:

**LET'S OVERCOME THE CRISIS BY LEARNING, WORKING, PLAYING! – Integrated services to prevent the separation or abandonment of the children in disadvantaged single parent families**

**Purpose:** improved quality of life of the mother and child in the single parent family, professionally, socially and psychologically in order to prevent the separation of the child from his family or the abandonment thereof.

**Targeted group:** single-parent families consisting of single mothers with one or more children, socially disadvantaged.

### Objectives:

1. Supporting children at risk in disadvantaged single-parent families;
2. Social inclusion of young single mothers through training / development of the skills needed to access the labour market and training / development of professional skills;
3. Raising public awareness on social issues faced by single parent families made up of mother-child/children in order to increase and improve social services interventions in the public and private sector.



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## Activities:

- development of parenting skills through counselling and group activities
- mapping family resources and counselling the extended family
- support for children enrolling in education and care programs
- vocational assessment and guidance
- training of necessary skills to access offers on the labour market and job keeping, support for hiring
- activities of occupational therapy
- training, support in registration, attendance and payment of training courses
- recreational activities with children while mothers receive various services
- assisting mothers to access public health services
- information, advertising and public opinion awareness activities regarding single mothers issue and results dissemination

**"I am working in human resources in a corporation and have found at ACSIS the opportunity to use my knowledge about job market and the skills of working with people in the project conducted for the benefit of disadvantaged mothers. I had my first meeting with the beneficiaries of ACSIS project and I was happy to learn that the group of mothers I spoke to, found the presentation that I made interesting, practical and useful. ACSIS Association is the most pleasant environment to do voluntary work; collaborating with the Association, I feel I can make a small difference in the lives of those in need."**

*Magdalena Isan, volunteer*



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**"When I arrived at the ACSIS Association I was in a desperate situation, we had been banished by my daughter's father from the house where we were a family. I went through many hardships, but here I got help promptly, heartily and respectfully. I got over those moments with the help of the association. Then I felt that we exist, that I am a human being, that I and my daughter count, that we exist and that we were not forgotten.**

**The most beautiful moment was when my daughter wrote a letter to Santa Claus that I gave to the ladies from the association... I cannot describe the joy she had when she received exactly what she wanted: a microscope – that she uses for her daily studies, the books that she wanted, sweets, and the idea that she is loved, that she feels like in a family.**

**We are grateful for all the care and support received from the association."**

*Florina, beneficiary*



**"I have been volunteering at ACSIS Association for three months, and spending my time with the beneficiaries is very enjoyable, primarily because I play with the children while their mothers were a group activity and cannot supervise them. Secondly I hear mothers' sad stories and their way of thinking about life. Thirdly I saw the assessment of the mothers in order to determine whether they meet the requirements to enter this program.**

**I liked very much when I attended the Christmas celebration organized for the children as I saw them extremely happy while playing and receiving gifts from Santa Claus. Eventually, we were all kids once, right?**

**And everyone should have a harmonious and happy childhood! Including ACSIS project children!"**

*Călin Maria-Aurelia, volunteer*



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## CREATION WORKSHOP FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES AT SOCIAL RISK PROJECT

**Purpose:** development of social enterprise within which single mothers in social difficulty/child separation risk and low level of professional skills to obtain manual working skills or sewing skills, to build their responsibility towards work and get employed using adequate social support.

**Targeted group:** single-parent families at high social risk - children and their mothers who bring up their children by themselves, without the level of education which could provide them access on the labour market so that they may be financially autonomous.

### Objectives:

1. To support mothers in social and economic difficulty in taking over work-related responsibilities and acquiring working skills transferable on labour market for employment in a profitable environment.
2. To provide an adequate training and working framework for the single parent role and for the potential of developing skills by single mothers in social difficulty.
3. To create jobs for single mothers at risk of separation from their own child.

### Activities:

- training for beneficiaries in manufacturing textile toys, made by a sewing instructor
- hiring two mothers in the social enterprise
- manufacturing textile toys like puppet toys
- interactive theatre shows in schools and kindergartens in order to promote and sell textile toys
- individualized psycho-social assistance for single mothers at risk of abandoning their children
- promoting and selling activities: events, exhibitions, online promotion



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**“The ladies at ACSIS noticed I liked tailoring, had faith in me and paid a tailoring course for me. After I finished the course, they did everything possible so that I may be hired by the association workshop. I love what I do in the workshop, I'm glad that I can take my girls with me when they are on holidays and I have nobody to watch them.”***Dana, former beneficiary, currently employed in the association, a mother of two girls aged 4 and 6*





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## PILOT PROJECT PREVENTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN TRAFFIC

**Purpose:** increase awareness of the target population about the risks associated with human trafficking and decrease vulnerability of risk groups towards this phenomenon.

**Targeted group:** young women and children, with high social risk, vulnerable to human trafficking.

### Objectives:

1. Informing and educating young women at social risk on the danger of human trafficking.
2. Providing access to information and assistance to secure jobs in the country or abroad.
3. Transfer of know-how from partners in Belgium in order to integrate activities to prevent human trafficking in the services offered by ACSIS.

### Activities:

- prepare "Stop women and children trafficking" and "Prevention of women and children trafficking" guides for information on human trafficking, the recruitment methods used by traffickers, protection against this phenomenon
- workshops with beneficiaries, with the purpose of presenting the reality of women and children trafficking, the risks and consequences of this phenomenon, women and children's rights, legal employment opportunities in the country and abroad
- social counselling and direct support for young women and children at risk
- support in professional integration,
- assistance in obtaining and keeping a job

*"I was very impressed by the movie about the girl who suffered from human trafficking that I saw with one of the mothers' groups. All that she went through just for having trusted her friend... I learned that we have to be careful when choosing our friends and not trust just anybody who promises us a job abroad."*

M., beneficiary



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## “SOCIAL RIGHTS FOR MOTHER AND CHILD” PROJECT

**Purpose:** Mothers' counselling, right after birth, on their associated social rights.

**Targeted group:** Mothers and their newly-born hospitalized for birth in Bucur Hospital and Prof. Dr. Panait Sarbu Hospital

### Objectives:

1. Informing mothers after birth hospitalized in Prof. Dr. Panait Sarbu Hospital and Bucur Hospital, on social rights related to mother and child;
2. Social counselling of the project beneficiaries on the administrative steps required to obtain social rights and how to access specific resources in the community (social network services);
3. Preventing child's separation from parents by reference of mothers at social risk to specialized services tailored to their needs.

### Activities:

- preparing and distributing an information leaflet which shows all social rights associated to mother and child (allowance for newly-born children, family allowance, etc.) and the steps needed to obtain them.
- orientation of mothers at risk (single mothers, under-aged mothers, mothers without papers, etc.) to specialized services tailored to their specific needs in order to prevent abandonment and other difficulties that may arise in the mother-child couple.
- social counselling and assistance in efforts to obtain the due rights and social benefits, in accessing the existing social services network.



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## “Get a toy, discover a story!” CAMPAIGN

The campaign runs from 26th of November 2010 to 30th of March 2011 and aims at increasing awareness of the public and raising funds to support single mothers with young children, in social difficulty, beneficiaries of the Association. The message of the campaign "Get a toy, discover a story!" promotes the toys made in the Creation Workshop of the Association. Each toy hides a life story, the story of a mother bringing up her children by her own, a story of survival, courage and love.

The campaign started with a sales exhibition in the winter edition of BABY EXPO saloon, which took place between 26th -28th of November at the Polyvalent Hall in Bucharest. 8 posters were made and 3,000 flyers distributed with the message of the campaign.

In the first month of the campaign, the amount collected was 1,646 Euro. The funds obtained will be used to support the beneficiary mothers and to develop the social enterprise.

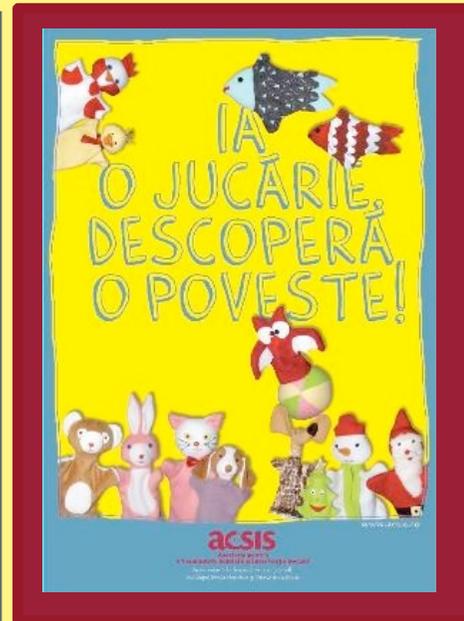
## MILUPA “A chance for all children” CAMPAIGN

The campaign was initiated by MILUPA Romania and aimed at offering a chance to balanced nutrition to the children coming from families in need. Thus, mothers and children beneficiaries of ACSIS received products consisting of powdered milk, baby cereals from MILUPA for a period of six months.

Claudia, one of ACSIS beneficiaries says:

*"Although he is only 9 months, everyone believes he is at least one year and a half, because he is very tall. He began growing very smoothly after I gave him Milupa milk received from the association, first Milumil 2, then Milumil 3. First we lived in a shelter for families and back then the little boy was not eating very healthy, but now I do not have any problem and I noticed that he really likes the taste of the milk.*

*We, here at the association we are kept informed how to take care of our children, including what food is suitable for them. Moreover, we are happy as well because our children are fed healthily, we even participate in a puppet-making workshop for children."*



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## OUTCOMES:

In 2010, **1,835** beneficiaries (**714** mothers and **1,121** children) accessed the social services supplied by ACSIS, as follows:

- **102** mothers and **187** children benefited from individualized social assistance, for a limited period of time (average: 6 months), in order to keep the children in the family.
- **187** children remained with their mothers and benefit from an age-appropriate care for their needs
- **102** mothers have improved parenting skills, have acquired healthy behaviours of child care
- **612** mothers with **934** children were informed and counselled about the social rights associated with mother-child couple, the necessary legal steps thereto, existing social services
- **250** psychological counselling sessions aiming at: creating and strengthening the mother-child attachment relationship, strengthening parenting skills, support in improving parent-child disruptions, increasing self-esteem, self confidence, improve emotional condition
- **780** social counselling sessions on: steps in achieving social rights, find a suitable social environment for the child (nursery / kindergarten), mediating family relationships, develop social skills



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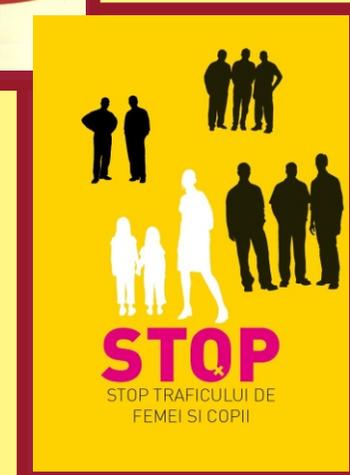
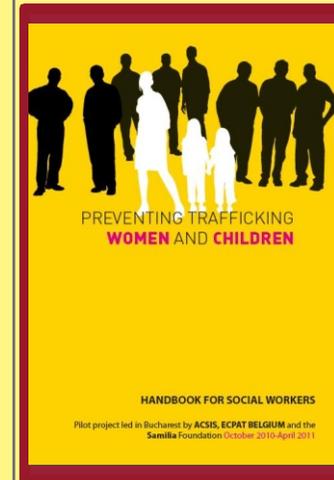
## OUTCOMES:

- **23** group meetings were held addressing issues such as: child growth and care, child physical and mental development, management of family financial resources, ability to access the labour market, prevent human trafficking
- in-kind donations were obtained and distributed to mothers and children (diapers, food, hygiene products, clothes) worth **11,400** Euro
- for **44** teenage mothers it was achieved proper integration of the teenage mother and her child / children back in their families of origin or other support groups
- **15** teenage mothers received support in continuing / resumption of school
- **20** mothers received vocational assessment and professional guidance
- **3** mothers received payment of a qualification course and obtained the certificate of qualification in a profession
- **21** mothers got a job and are making a living out of their own resources
- **2** mothers have a job in the social enterprise
- **40** mothers were trained in textile toys manufacturing
- **1,847** products of the creative workshop were sold and the revenue is **3,578** Euro
- for **24** mothers and **38** children the assistance continues in 2011
- **503** school and preschool children benefited from interactive theatre shows made by puppeteer (when there were used toys made within the social enterprise)

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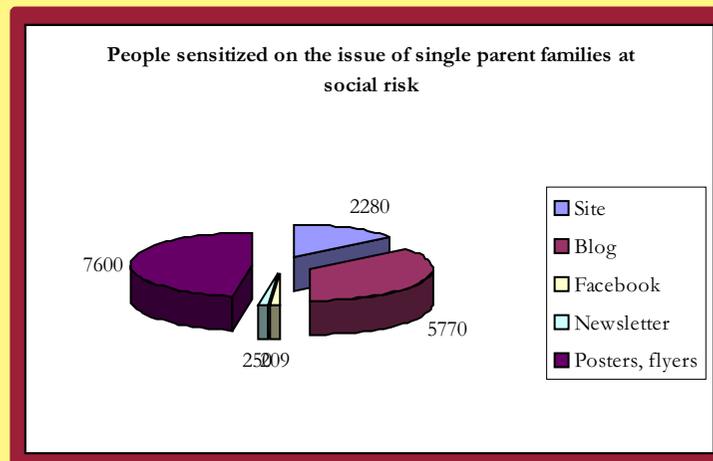
## Information materials developed:

- **Parents' guide** – booklet with basic information on raising and caring for children, their physical and psychological development, responsibilities of parents towards children, the challenges of parenthood.
- **Stop Women and Children Trafficking** – information brochure on the risks, consequences and ways in which beneficiaries can defend themselves against human trafficking.
- **Prevention of Women and Children Trafficking** - booklet for social assistants, educators who work with people vulnerable to human trafficking phenomenon.
- **9,600 leaflets** in order to sensitize public opinion on: the status of single mothers at increased social risk; in order to inform about the direction of 2% of income tax by individuals, information on social rights related to mother and child



## 16,109 people have been sensitized on the issue of single parent families at social risk:

- ☒ site: 2280 visitors ( 68.48% new visitors)
- ☒ blog: 5770 views
- ☒ Facebook: 209 visitors
- ☒ Newsletter: 250 persons
- ☒ Posters, flyers: 7600 persons



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**We thank all those who sustained ACSIS:**

Medor Association – Switzerland

Main partner BRD - Groupe Société Générale



ECPAT Belgium



France Embassy in Romania



NESsT Venture Fund



Samilia Foundation



Soros Foundation Romania



United Way Romania Foundation

