

2023-2025

SAFE SPACE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



Безпечний простір
для жінок і дівчат



Introduction

Safe Space for Women and Girls project

was implemented by **Necuvinte Association** within the **Accommodation Center for Displaced Persons from Ukraine** organized in the **“Edmond Nicolau” Technical College** – Camino E in Bd. Dimitrie Pompeiu no. 3, district 2, Bucharest, in partnership with the **City Hall of District 2** and the **General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection District 2**.

Project implementation periods

The “Safe Space for Women and Girls” project was implemented during the following periods:

- **January 2023 – June 2023**

the project was funded under the **UK Aid project – From the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain**, through the Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia of UNFPA (UNFPA EECARO).

- **July 2023 – December 2023**

the project was funded by Global Fund for Women

- **September 2024 – July 2025**

the project was funded by Global Fund for Women

TOTAL BUDGET: 120.000 USD

The purpose of the Safe Space for Women and Girls



was to provide refugees coming from Ukraine with a safe environment to identify their reproductive health and domestic and gender-based violence and human trafficking service needs.

The Safe Space provided first-line support and counselling, referral of beneficiaries to any other specialist service in accordance with needs identified with the consent of the beneficiary and distribution of basic essentials – dignity kits.

The working principles within the Safe Space for Women and Girls:

- Focusing on the beneficiaries;
- Respecting human rights;
- Involvement of the affected community
- Safety and accessibility
- Avoiding revictimization

The objectives



This space was designed as a primary support and counselling environment



1

Facilitating beneficiaries' access to information and specialized services to reduce the risk of domestic and gender violence, and risks associated to human trafficking.



2

Facilitating beneficiaries' access to relevant information and services offered by other institutions and organizations, according to identified needs;



3

Facilitating beneficiaries' access to sexual and reproductive health information and services;



4

Providing social support and resilience-building activities;



5

Supporting beneficiaries in creating social support networks.



6

Facilitating the social and economic integration and adaptation of beneficiaries in Romania.

The services

offered within the Safe Space by the team of specialists of the Necuvinte Association:

• Psychosocial, medical and socialization services

- Evaluation of the situation and service needs in the field of reproductive health and sexuality;
- Identification of persons affected by domestic and gender violence, including sexual violence in a war situation and human trafficking;
- Domestic and gender-based violence risk assessment and safety planning;
- Emotional support and basic individual psychological counseling;
- Group psychological support;
- Information and social assistance;
- Social and recreational activities;
- Distribution of packages with essential items;
- Information, basic counseling in reproductive and sexual health and rights, and identifying solutions.

• Referral

- Referral to services that do not fall within the coverage area of Necuvinte Association team, according to the needs of the beneficiaries and in accordance with their choices.



Collected data - 2023

Data collected in short interviews with **2770 refugees**(women and men), beneficiaries of services

65%

Of the respondents chose Romania as the first country due to proximity with Ukraine, with "home" and the programmes for refugees.

5%

based on the advice of other Ukrainian refugees

15%

Of the respondents chose Romania, arriving here after having passed through at least one other European country, due to the hospitable attitude of Romanians and the feeling of freedom.

5%

due to medical services provided, especially treatments that cannot be provided in Ukraine, or are more expensive(ex. cancer treatements).

10%

Other reasons, including the fact that Romania is a NATO member country, but also people who refused to answer.

Safe Space in numbers

2023-2025

□ 6940

Direct beneficiaries

of free services, most of them women with children;

□ 195.228

Indirect beneficiaries

of information and awareness campaigns;

□ 3935

Beneficiaries

were informed and actively participated in workshops on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), human trafficking, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including referrals to complementary services.

□ 52

Workshops

on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and SRHR provided.



"I only knew about physical and emotional violence, but I didn't even recognize emotional abuse."

In my community, we never talk about this - it's considered shameful. I was constantly beaten in my marriage by my husband, even when I was pregnant with our child. On the street, it was the same. I was made to feel guilty because our son S. was born with a mental disability - me, not him, even though he had been hitting me throughout the pregnancy. But now I understand that there are multiple forms of violence. I've lived all these years, and only now I know it has a name. I fled also because of the war, but in doing so, I escaped my husband, who cannot leave the country!"

E.L. ODESSA, 35 YEARS OLD



Safe Space in numbers

2023-2025

 **447**

beneficiaries

have developed their language skills;

 **72**

Romanian language lessons

offered free of charge

 **712**

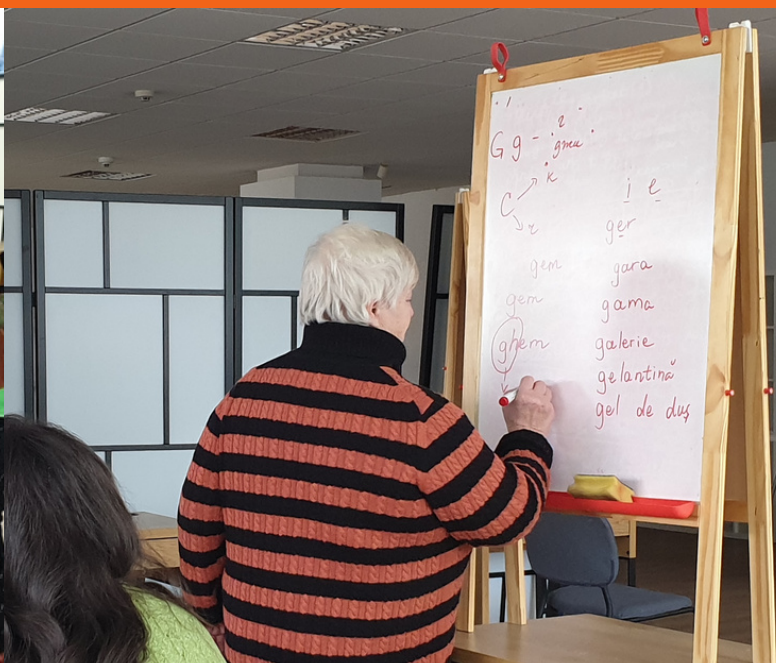
Beneficiaries

adolescents benefited from social and personal development workshops.

 **827**

beneficiaries

received individualized support in identifying needs and accessing services and activities within the Safe Space.



**“When I attend group therapy,
I always look forward to the breathing
exercise, even though I had never
done it before.**

Coming from a village, we are generally used to the idea that if someone goes to a psychologist, they are automatically considered ‘sick.’ But here I saw Anda (the psychologist), and she is not a monster as I had imagined, and she has completely changed my perception of going to a psychologist. At first, I would say that I especially looked forward to the breathing exercise each time, just to ‘fly’ - to detach from everything, from worries, from fears, and simply to fly.”

during a therapy session (self-portrait): “This is how I see myself: I associate myself with nature, with a bird in flight. Around me are fields, nature stretching almost to the horizon, and I am flying above it all. It’s just me and the flight - exactly the flight I imagine when I do the meditation exercise.”

O.M. 45 years, ZAPORIZHYE



Safe Space in numbers

2023-2025

 **447**

refugees(women, men, elderly, disabled people)

were provided with social assistance services.

 **310**

Women and girls

benefited from primary medical consultations in the field of SRHR.

 **502**

refugees

supported through the project were survivors of domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence and/or human trafficking.

 **250**

Dignity kits

containing first-necessity products were distributed



„ I only knew about oral contraceptives and IUDs, but being from a village, the doctors never really sat with us to talk more

- they just prescribed the medicines, sometimes without even telling us what they were for. They kind of considered us stupid and thought there was no point in explaining the diagnosis in a way we could understand. I used to think that if I take contraceptives, I wouldn't be able to get pregnant anymore, but here the doctor, so calm and patient, explained to me so simply how contraception really works. I even requested the injectable contraceptive because I will be going back to Ukraine soon, and even though my relationship with my husband is okay, I don't want an unwanted pregnancy. But this way I do it every six months and I can focus on other things. I really didn't know about this, and honestly, if I had known, I wouldn't have had the money for it."

P.Y. 45 YEARS, ODESSA



Safe Space in numbers

2023-2025

 **56**

pairs of shoes

purchased and distributed to women
and children

 **100**

COVID test

purchased

 **3,000**

Condoms

distributed

 **325**

refugees

received family kits donated by
UNHCR, facilitated by our organization
for the Edmond Nicolau Center.



"At the center, they used to give us hygiene products every week, then it became once every two weeks, then once a month, until eventually we received even fewer products because there were no more donations. We also couldn't get them regularly from Romexpo.

But we are a family of five, and we spend most of our money children. Honestly, my husband and I often don't have enough money for deodorant, a razor blade, or even sanitary pads. This support was truly necessary - it makes me feel more at ease and no longer stressed or ashamed to ask other people here for a little dish soap or laundry detergent, for example

V.R 41 YEARS OLD, KHERSON



Safe Space in numbers

2023-2025

☐ 5000

bilingual GBV and SRHR pocket guides
distributed

☐ 6500

Healthy relationships guides
distributed

☐ 850

Safety Plans
distributed

☐ 190

oral contraceptives, pregnancy tests, emergency contraception pills

purchased, prescribed and provided free of charge to women in need, by the family planning doctor



SAFE SPACE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS
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„I have no one. My parents passed away a long time ago. My only family is my little daughter”

When the war began, I was already going through another struggle. My former partner had beaten me so hard that he broke my arm. I ended up on the operating table, and then, with my one-year-old daughter in my arms, I went to a center for survivors of domestic violence in Ukraine.

I was always ashamed to talk about it. To admit, to others – but especially to myself – that my child’s father is an abuser. I felt that it was all my fault. I was ashamed to be in a center for survivors. I was ashamed to ask for help.

Because I grew up in a society where abuse is rarely discussed and shame is emphasized. Where women who ask for help are judged.

Then the war started! And for my daughter and me, it became too dangerous to remain in that center, and in Ukraine in general. We were evacuated to Romania three years ago! I didn’t know what would come next. I was scared and exhausted.

But here, I met you – you welcomed me without asking “why” or “how did you get here?” You listened to me without judgment. For the first time, I felt that I could ask for help. Even when I was threatened by a Romanian man, I found the courage to speak up. To say what was happening to me. Although it was extremely hard to face the traumas of my past and ask for help – especially in a foreign country, speaking Romanian imperfectly. But I was heard and helped! I am so grateful to you – this has meant so much to me.

Slowly, I began to allow myself to understand that what I experienced was not my fault. That I can have a life where I don’t live in fear every day! For my daughter and me, Romania has become not just a refuge. It is the place where we have begun, step by step, to live without fear.

E. 31 YEARS OLD, ODESSA

International and diplomatic level

- Visit of Her Excellency **Kathleen Kavalec**, U.S. Ambassador to Bucharest
- Presentation of the activities of Asociația Necuvinte and of the “Safe Space for Women and Girls” project to **diplomatic representatives**.
- Promotion of the project within the Women Against Violence Europe network.



This project has shown that empathy and humanity know no borders. Over the past three years, we have spoken the same language — the language that requires no translation: solidarity.

The “Safe Space for Women and Girls” became more than a protected environment; it was a place where fear and suffering were transformed into strength, resilience, healing, and hope.

We sincerely thank all partners, donors, and collaborators who stood by us throughout this journey and whose trust and support made everything we achieved possible!

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