



# The Faith Community's role in Care Reform

Insights from Moldova

Chisinau, 2022




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Changing The Way We Care<sup>SM</sup> (CTWWC) is implemented by Catholic Relief Services and Maestral International, along with other global, national and local partners working together to change the way we care for children around the world. Our principal global partners are the Better Care Network, Lumos Foundation, and Faith to Action. CTWWC is funded in part by a Global Development Alliance of USAID, the MacArthur Foundation and the GHR Foundation.

Need to know more? Contact Changing the Way We Care at, [info@ctwwc.org](mailto:info@ctwwc.org) or visit [changingthewaywecare.org](http://changingthewaywecare.org).



# Acknowledgements

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

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ACMO	Christian Alliance Moldova Without Orphans
ADRA	Adventist Development & Relief Agency
BOC	Bessarabian Orthodox Church
CTWWC	Changing the Way We Care
FBO	Faith-based Organization
FL	Faith Leader
IRI	International Republican Institute
JCM	Jewish Community of Moldova
KI	Key Informant
MOC	Moldova Orthodox Church
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
P4EC	Partnership for Every Child
USOIRF	US Office of International Religious Freedom





# Glossary of Key Terms

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## At-risk Families

Families and children can find themselves as 'at-risk' when they experience violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and separation from family based care. Common factors which increase risk and vulnerability include domestic violence, poverty, physical and mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse.

## Care Reform

Refers to the changes to the systems and mechanisms that promote and strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for their children, address the care and protection needs of vulnerable or at-risk children to prevent separation from their families, decrease reliance on residential care and promote reintegration of children, and ensure appropriate family-based alternative care options are available.

## Faith-based Organization

Organizations that derive inspiration and guidance for their activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within that faith." They comprise a range of religious, charitable organizations affiliated with one or more faith and spiritual traditions, which may include: Religious congregations (such as churches, mosques, synagogues, or temples); Charities sponsored or hosted by one or more religious congregations; Non-profit organizations founded by a religious community or based upon faith and spiritual traditions; and Coalitions that include organizations described above.

## Faith Leader

Individuals with formal affiliation to a religion or spiritual path who play influential roles within their communities and the broader civil society. Examples include priests, imams, rabbis, clerics, monks, nuns, and lay religious leaders.

## Family Strengthening

Family strengthening refers to programs, strategic approaches and deliberate processes that seek to strengthen the protective factors that, when present, provide children with safe, nurturing care even when the family is under stress.

## Vulnerable Children

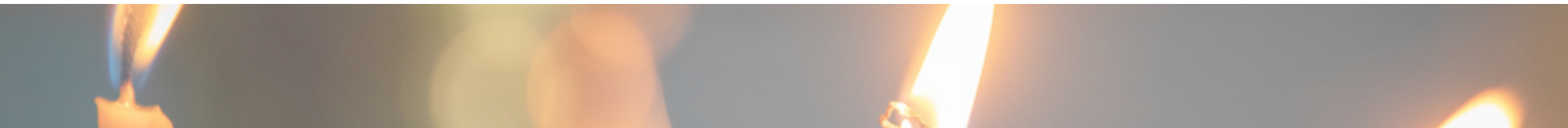
Individuals under age 18 whose safety, well-being, and/or development is at significant risk due to inadequate care, protection or access to essential services.



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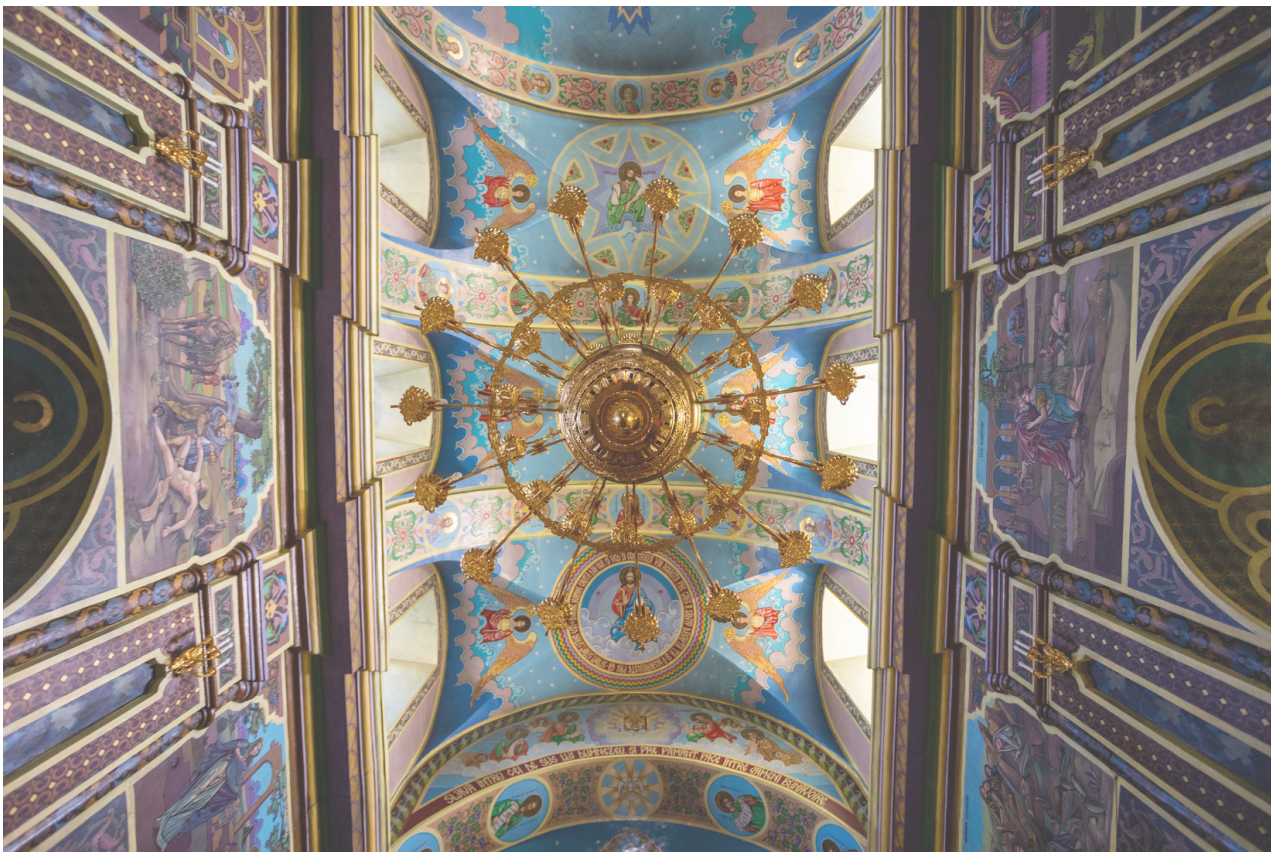
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Frescos in St. Nicholas Cathedral in Bălți, Moldova.





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# Executive Summary

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Faith communities in Moldova play critical roles in forming public opinion and social development of communities. Faith leaders strongly influence social matters, and faith-based structures. They reach deep into communities to provide an array of social services. Moldova has various faith communities, including the Moldova and Bessarabian Orthodox Churches, the Catholic Church, Protestant and Evangelical churches, the Jewish community, and other faiths. These groups have significant potential to participate in and impact care reform, if engaged effectively.

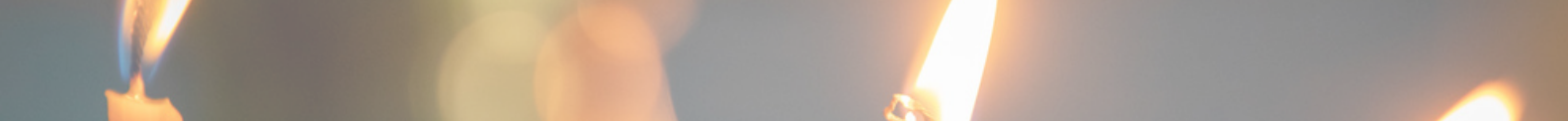
Yet, in Moldova, when it comes to child care and family strengthening, there appear to be two parallel universes of programming: the secular world with government agencies, bilateral donors, and secular nongovernmental organizations, and the faith-based world with mission-driven communities in churches, synagogues, mosques, and faith-based NGOs and foundations.

## **Box 1: Assessment**

In Spring 2021, Changing the Way We Care launched an enquiry into the faith-based community in Moldova and its involvement in the ongoing reform of care for vulnerable children in an effort to better understand the current and potential engagement of faith-based organizations and leaders as influencers and service providers and to identify any obstacles to engaging them in care reform.

CTWWC (also referred to as the Initiative) sought to understand in more depth what existing assets these faith actors might bring to the Initiative and to identify any obstacles to engaging them in care reform as community influencers and as social service providers for children and families.

This analysis represents Changing the Way We Care's first step toward engaging the faith based community in the care reform agenda and setting the direction for working together to support Moldovan children and families.



This research found that minimal interaction occurs between these two spheres of influence. Most interactions happen at the village and raion levels. More often, such engagements involve the provision of humanitarian aid and emergency services.

Historically, secular actors have rarely invited nor engaged with faith based actors. It appears that both communities have biases and attitudes which present barriers to more extensive and regular collaboration.

## Key Findings

### Interfaith Collaboration

All the faith-based organizations participating in the analysis indicated an interest in collaborating in care reform efforts, including family strengthening – within limits. Those limits centered on working with trustworthy partners with a common spiritual base.

”  
***For me, as a Christian,  
it is clear that children  
need to grow-up in  
families, not in  
residential institutions.***

*Key Informant Interviewee*


However, to date, there has been little evidence of interfaith coordination among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities. One faith leader from the Jewish community noted that it had been more than fifteen years since they had collaborated on a project with a Christian or Muslim organization.

The Moldova Orthodox Church (MOC), the most prominent of the FBOs and the most influential with the Government of Moldova (GoM) and general public, collaborates principally with the GoM and local administrations. Most key informants indicated that any cooperation with the MOC occurs in the local community or neighborhood and on an ad-hoc basis.

***“Faith-based organizations understand that children need to be brought-up in loving families in their own communities. Faith-based organizations also realize that, in addition to their immediate need for food and shelter, children need a place in which they can grow emotionally and spiritually - a family in which they belong.”***

- Desmond M Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus





Collaboration within their communities is already occurring with a great majority of the faith-based organizations reporting extensive alliances and strategic partnerships within their faith and confession.

### **Support for Residential Care Institutions**

Fifteen of 25 leaders of the faith-based organizations interviewed opposed the idea of long-term residential care as a viable alternative care option for children separated from their families. Nevertheless, most continue to provide in-kind aid to these institutions including helping with young people exiting out of care.

### **Reach of the Faith-based Organizations Sector**

The geographic scale and reach of faith-based programs and activities is substantial. Their extensive ties to the community allow faith-based organizations to actively engage at the grassroots with local governments, schools, and other civil society organizations.

Faith-based organizations in this analysis listed more than 2700 churches, mosques, synagogues, and centers. The scale of operations is vast, reaching every locality in Moldova. While the Moldova Orthodox Church has the most churches and facilities, other faith-based organizations, when taken as a whole, have nearly the same number of centers, prayer houses, and churches.



**Faith-based organizations are the most prominent members of the civil society sector and are present in every locality in Moldova.**



# Methodology

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## Data Collection

At the beginning of the situational analysis, little was known or published about the faith-based community in Moldova, the scope of the activities that FBOs undertook in alternative care for children and family strengthening, nor their interest and capacity for collaborating with secular actors engaged in child care and protection on child care reform. Given the circumstances and the nature of the information gathered, Changing the Way We Care decided to pursue the situational analysis through an exploratory approach, generating primary data through interviews with key informants from diverse FBOs, including churches and synagogues, mosques, NGOs, and charitable foundations.

Key Informant selection principals were as follows:

- 1.Small numbers studied intensively.
- 2.Participants chosen purposefully.
- 3.Selection of key informants conceptually driven by the theoretical framework initially (and evolving from interview material).

The consultant team began work from a list of sixteen faith-based organization stakeholders, which grew to over forty key informants in the course of the analysis. The approach to faith-based organizations included initial emails requesting an interview followed up as needed with telephone calls. More than half of the stakeholders from the list responded to the invitation to participate in the analysis. The consultant conducted a majority of the interviews. The CTWWC project director conducted the other interviews. At each interview, the consultant team solicited recommendations from the informant on other potential informants.

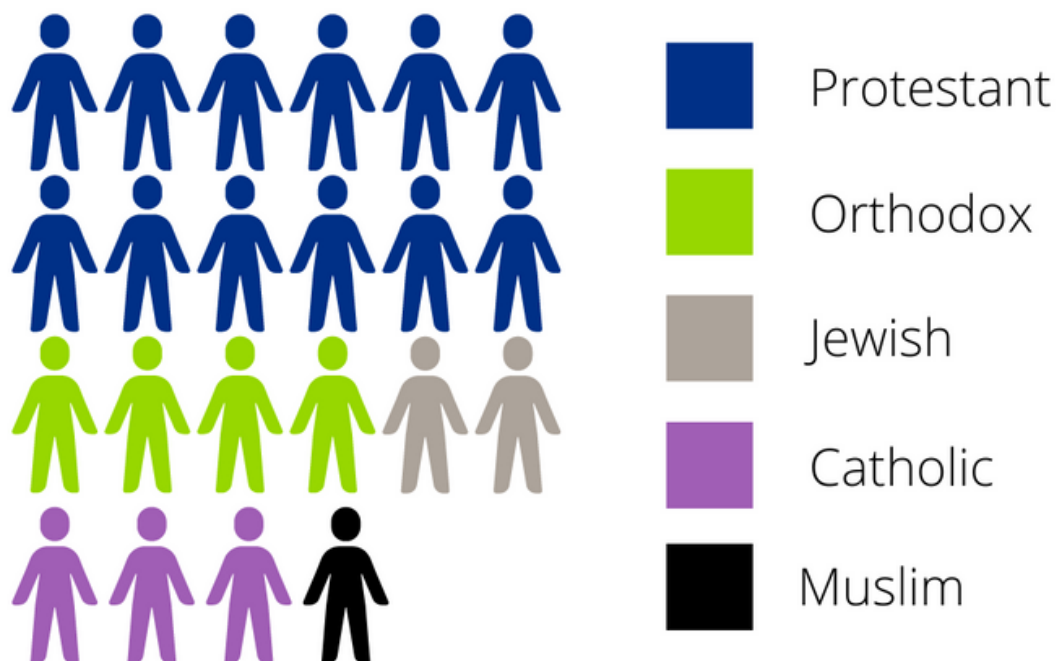
The study relied primarily on semi-structured interviews with key informants from a diverse group of faith-based organizations to gather the preliminary information used in this report. The consultant team heading the analysis made every effort to include FBOs from all faith communities – Christian, Muslim, and Jewish.

Number of Interviews: Twenty-four key informants from nineteen different organizations were interviewed.

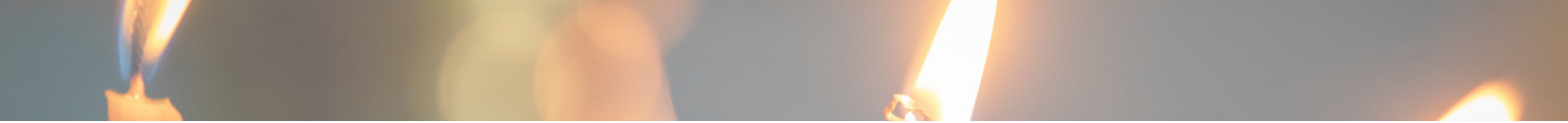
Language and Logistics: Due to safety precautions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were conducted through Zoom. Each interview lasted from one to two hours. The protocol provided a standard list of five topics with questions made available during Russian, English, or Romanian discussions. The team contacted informants ahead of interviews to determine the language in which they wished for the interview. In those cases where the informants were not comfortable with English, a translator was provided. At the beginning of each interview, the lead interviewer from the consultant team informed the key informant about the nature of the project, the purpose of the discussion, and the agenda. At the same time, the team raised and discussed the ethical issues with the informant and afforded the informant time to raise questions.

Notetaking and Recordkeeping: Interviews were not recorded, instead, the consultant team relied on notes recorded during interviews. The consultant team informed key informants at the beginning of each interview that there would be no recording and asked permission to take notes. Further, the consultant team gave assurances to the informant that the information taken down during an interview would remain confidential and no attributions made to them without specific permission.

**Figure 1: Number of Key Informants Interviewed by Faith**








Interview protocol: The team anticipated that at each interview, the informant would be representing one organization, and for the most part, that was true. However, in several notable cases, more than one informant came to the interview and, while both informants represented FBOs, they were from different FBOs. Also, it was common to have interviews with a church representative on one day and have another interview with the director of the church's social service agency on the next. In all cases, the consultant team recorded these as separate interviews. It was not possible to maintain separate records for interview notes.

Secondary Data Sources: The consulting team used two secondary data sources during the assessment: The first was a literature review that included a review of over 47 reports published on the Internet and websites for faith-based organizations and other organizations working with FBOs. This review gathered additional information on FBO engagement in providing care for vulnerable children and at-risk families. It also helped in developing the history and context for the support of vulnerable children in Moldova. The analysis of the program evaluations, final project reports, and assessments of the alternative care efforts were subjected to text analysis to identify the extent and frequency of FBO engagements referenced from a historical perspective.

Halfway through the key informant interviews, the consultant team decided to administer follow-up surveys to key informants after discussions. The purpose was to collect more consistent, concrete data about subjects, e.g., the number of beneficiaries served annually, the number of social centers operated, and donor information not easily solicited during the interviews. About half of the informants completed the surveys.

## **Limitations**

Lent/Easter Holidays and the COVID-19 Pandemic: The most severe constraint experienced was the timing. Interviews and data collection occurred during the peak of the pandemic and over the Orthodox Easter season. As a result, interviews had to be conducted by Zoom. Not all faith-based organizations contacted wanted to talk via Zoom. Many had closed their operations, and interviews needed to be done from home – often not in the ideal environment. Several of the stakeholders chose not to participate. They were either too busy because of the holidays or, more commonly, because they only wanted to interview in person. All this had a chilling effect and may have contributed to the response rate for interview invitations. Out of forty stakeholders, only twenty-four agreed to participate in the interviews.



**Sampling Limitations:** By the qualitative nature of the assessment, the sampling size of key informants was intentionally limited. The analysis did not set out to engage all FBOs in Moldova. At the outset of the process, the team decided that 20 interviews would be sufficient for the analysis if carefully studied to ensure a broad cross-section of the FBO sector. Nevertheless, this report does not purport to have exhausted the field of faith-based organizations and interviewed all faith leaders in Moldova. The findings and conclusions are constrained by that fact – mainly when they come to more quantitative matters, e.g., the number of social centers operated by FBOs.

**Approach:** The approach itself may have been limiting in the sense that the invitations to participate in the analysis consisted of “cold calls”, by email initially and later by phone when possible, where the parties barely knew each other. In some cases, after repeated attempts to contact and invite a faith-based organization and/or faith leader, the consultant team simply received no response at all. It was difficult to assess with any certainty the underlying reason for the lack of response.

## **Box 2: Faith Communities in Moldova**

With over 2500 registered FBOs, Moldova FBOs comprise a diverse group of organizations including charitable foundations, and NGOs. The FBOs, like those in many countries, range from small, grassroots organizations with simple structures and limited staff to global institutions with highly sophisticated bureaucracies, broad networks, and substantial financial and human capacity; many of the more established FBOs work within larger global communities, and some are active in international development.<sup>1</sup>

Some organizations are loosely inspired by faith principles,<sup>2</sup> while others are formally linked to<sup>3</sup> religious institutions. Even among FBOs in the same faith tradition,<sup>4</sup> such diversity seems intrinsic. FBOs and FLs may be connected<sup>5</sup> to traditional religious hierarchies or established divisions with historical<sup>6</sup> roots and contribute to cultural norms. Other faith actors align themselves with governments<sup>7</sup> and engage in developing and proposing national legislation.

In addition to providing spiritual and traditional guidance, FBOs and FLs are part of the social fabric of communities, particularly in the rural towns and villages in Moldova, and some have greater access, scale, and legitimacy in the eyes of the populace<sup>8</sup> than local governments. Key informants from some FBOs and FLs indicated that, in many cases, they were the primary, if not the only, actors offering essential social services to families and children because of the lack of local government resources and childcare fieldworkers.

# Introduction

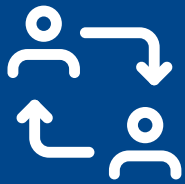
This report documents the results of a situational analysis undertaken in Spring 2021 by Changing the Way We Care<sup>SM</sup>, a global initiative designed to promote safe, nurturing family care for children by strengthening families, reforming national systems of care for children, and development of alternative family-based care.

The primary objectives of the assessment included:



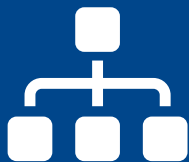
## Position

Understand the various faith communities' position(s) on residential institutions for children, alternative care, and family strengthening and any underlying basis (theological, liturgical, strategic) for those positions.



## Roles

Understand the role that various faith leaders or faith-based groups have, can, and/or want to play in care reform (currently and in the future).



## Structure

Understand the structure(s) of various faith communities (and inter-faith cooperation) and how it might be leveraged to influence public opinion and advance care reform.



## Stakeholder Analysis/ Power Mapping

Understand the role, position, influence, and risks associated with various individuals or powerbrokers within faith communities.



## Social Services

Identify the scope, scale, and target population of social services targeting vulnerable children and families provided by faith communities.



# Background

Moldova is overwhelmingly an Orthodox Christian nation and among the most religious of Europe's countries.<sup>9</sup> Recent surveys indicate that over forty-seven percent of Moldovan adults are highly religious as measured by self-assessments of the importance of religion in their lives, the frequency of prayer, and belief in God.<sup>10</sup> Eighty-six percent of Moldovans surveyed say religion 'is very or somewhat important in their lives. Beyond faith, over sixty-three percent of Moldovans believe that being Orthodox is part of their national identity (see Appendix A).

In the Moldova 2020 International Religious Freedom Report (2021), the US Office of International Religious Freedom (USOIRF) estimated the population in Moldova at 3.4 million (midyear 2020 estimate),<sup>11</sup> with Christians accounting for over 90% of the population. In that report USOIRF found that 81% of the population (2.75 million) nominally belongs to the MOC, which is subordinate to the Russian Orthodox Church. Nine percent of the population (300,000) belongs to the BOC, which falls under the Romanian Orthodox Church. Approximately, seven percent of the population (240,000) did not identify a religious affiliation. Other religious groups that together constitute less than three to five percent of the population include: Seventh-day Adventists, Evangelical Christians, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Muslims, the largest of which account for approximately 15,000 to 30,000 adherents each and include the Baptists, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Union of Pentecostals.

## Box 3: Religious Affiliation in Moldova by Percentage

**81%**

**Moldova  
Orthodox Church**

**9%**

**Bessarabian  
Orthodox Church**

**7%**

**No religious  
affiliation**


**3-5%**

**Other religious  
affiliation**

Source: US Office of International Religious Freedom, 2021

USIORF reports that the Jewish Community of Moldova estimates the Jewish population at approximately 20,000 Jews in the country - although some key informants disputed that figure.<sup>12</sup>





In addition to the other mainstream faiths, USOIRF lists many smaller religious groups including the Baha'is, Molokans, Messianic Jews, Presbyterians, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Church of Jesus Christ), the Salvation Army, the Evangelical Christian Church, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (Unification Church), other Christians, Falun Gong, and the International Society of Krishna Consciousness.<sup>13</sup>

In the Administrative-Territorial Units of the Left Bank of the Dniester (also known as Transnistria), authorities estimate 80 percent of the population belongs to the MOC. Other religious groups in the region include Catholics, Old Rite Russian Orthodoxy, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, evangelical and charismatic Christians, Jews, Lutherans, Muslims, and Jehovah's Witnesses (USOIRF 2021).

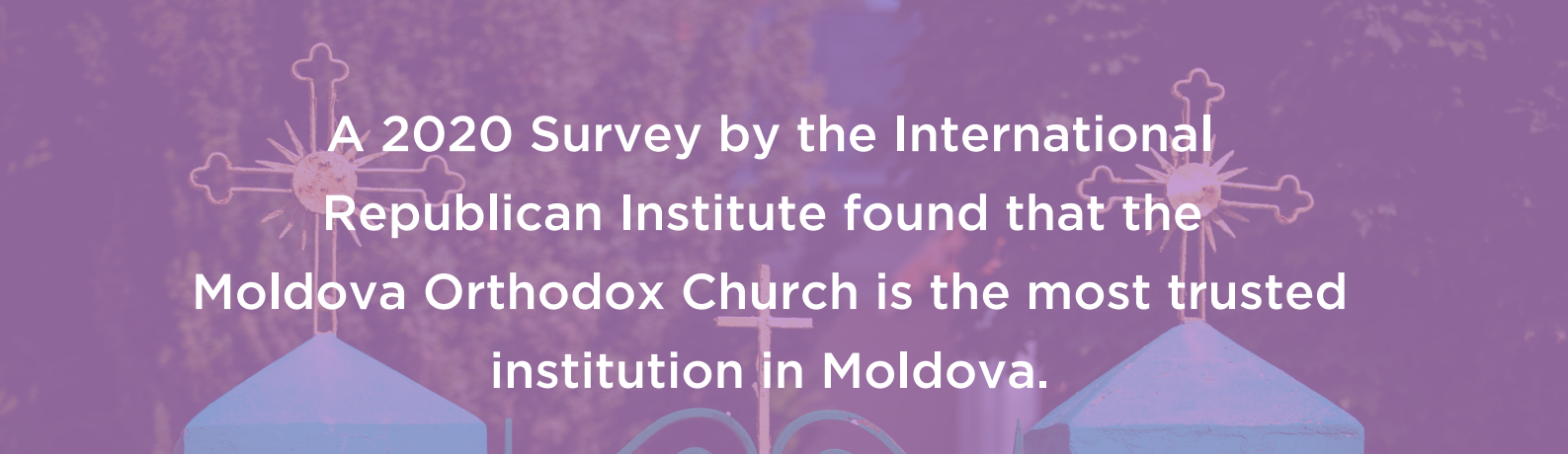
## **Mapping the Faith-Based Communities**

The map of Moldova's faith-based community divides into two parts with two separate discussions -- the Moldova Orthodox Church and everyone else.

### **The Moldova Orthodox Church**

The MOC, the largest faith group in the country, is canonically subordinated to the Russian Orthodox Church. Official data states that almost 97% of people in Moldova are officially Orthodox Christians, and most of them belong to this denomination.

The Moldova Orthodox Church stands alone in terms of historical presence, the scale of operations, and national identity. Operating in over 1,460 localities and 50 monasteries, no other faith-based organizations has the physical presence and such close association with the government. At the local level, the Moldova Orthodox Church, through the village priests often plays the role of what other faith-based organizations may do in the village. The MOC holds great sway with local governments and citizens.



**A 2020 Survey by the International  
Republican Institute found that the  
Moldova Orthodox Church is the most trusted  
institution in Moldova.**

## Other Faith-based Communities<sup>14</sup>

The other faith-based communities include all the remaining faiths in Moldova. For the most part, FBOs align by major religions with little interfaith community engagement.<sup>15</sup>

Each has its mission, organizational structure, funding sources and boards, and populations to which they are accountable. None are engaged to any great extent with the others except where legal demands or the need for resources require it.

***In the Muslim World, except in those places where there is war, there is no need for centers for children because if some are left with no parents, these children are automatically taken into the care of the brother or sister of their parents.***

*Key Informant Interviewee*

***The Jewish law requires one to love your neighbor and help those in need. Also, love your neighbor as love yourself. So, being of the society, we are doing that; we are helping vulnerable kids and families.***

*Key Informant Interviewee*

The Muslim and Jewish communities are organized, but not with a rigid hierarchy. Instead, they each have an umbrella agency representing the community with the Government of Moldova and donors.

The umbrella agency in the Jewish community, the Jewish Community of Moldova (JCM), also has a board with representatives from the district. In contrast, the Catholic community operates with much more formality and with hierarchy and a Bishop at the top.

Within Protestant faith communities, there are no umbrella agencies. More commonly, alliances of like-minded faith-based organizations form around a common need or interest. In some cases, these are historical alliances.<sup>16</sup> Most of the alliances are informal. However, some are more formal like the Christian Alliance Moldova without Orphans (ACMO), a non-governmental organization made up of other Protestant community members.<sup>17</sup>

## Faith-based Engagement on Care Reform Projects in Moldova

Surprisingly, little about the role of faith-based communities appears in the accounts by the government and secular organizations on Moldova's largely successful efforts over the last 20 years to reform alternative care for vulnerable children and strengthen at-risk families.

From the literature review, three faith-based initiatives surfaced from the Children in Moldova Final Report. All three initiatives started in Spring 2016. One of the projects was a collaboration among the Ministry of Education, MOC, and Partnerships for Every Child (P4EC) and called "Together for the Moldovan Family." It entailed training 140 MOC priests and covered child well-being and family strengthening and concrete ways that churches can support children and families. The second focused on facilitating GoM alliances with CSOs, FBOs, and academia. The third identified and trained CSOs and FBOs to prevent unnecessary family separation.

It is noteworthy that the USAID-funded evaluation of alternative care for children in Moldova, *Assessing Alternative Care for Children in Moldova* (Volume 1), no faith-based engagement is cited in the report.<sup>18</sup>



Monument to the Victims of the Chişinău Ghetto, Chişinău, Moldova



# Findings

## Interfaith Collaboration

All the FBOs participating in the analysis indicated an interest in collaborating on reforming the care of children and family strengthening – however, within limits. Those limits centered on working with trustworthy partners with a common spiritual base. Some of the FBOs expressed reservations and disinterest in collaborating with GoM agencies.

***"We wouldn't agree to have donors that are inconsistent with our mission. We have never had secular donors."***

Key Informant Interviewee

Very little evidence was found of interfaith cooperation or collaboration among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities. One FL from the Jewish community noted that it had been more than 15 years since they had collaborated on a project with a Christian or Muslim organization.

***We think the best place to raise children is within the family...We believe in the dignity of people and that people are made in the image of God. Thus, that dignity and vision should be restored.***

Key Informant Interviewee

The Moldova Orthodox Church, the most influential FBO with the Government of Moldova and the general public, collaborates principally with the GoM and local administrations. Most of the key informants indicated that any cooperation between the MOC is at the local level and on an ad-hoc basis.

Almost every key informant of the FBOs reported extensive alliances and strategic partnerships within their faith and confession.



## Support for Residential Care Institutions and Vulnerable Children and Families

Two-thirds of the FBOs interviewed opposed the idea of long-term residential care as a viable alternative care option for children separated from their families. Nevertheless, most continue to provide assistance to institutions including helping with young people leaving care.

### Reach of the Faith-based Sector

The geographic scale and reach of FBO programs and activities and the potential allow these FBOs to engage at the grassroots with local governments, schools, and other civil society organizations. When taken collectively, it is substantial.

The Government of Moldova lists 1682 localities in Moldova, including 66 urban localities (of them 53 are cities/towns, 13 municipalities, and 1616 rural localities – villages and communes). Faith-based organizations in the analysis listed more than 2700 churches, mosques, and synagogues and centers. Faith-based organizations are the most prominent member of the CSO sector and are present in every locality in Moldova.

The scale of faith-based organizations operations through churches, mosques, and synagogues is vast, more than reaching every locality in Moldova. Notably, while the Moldova Orthodox Church has by far the most churches and facilities, other faith-based organizations – when taken as a whole – have nearly the same number of centers, prayer houses, and churches.

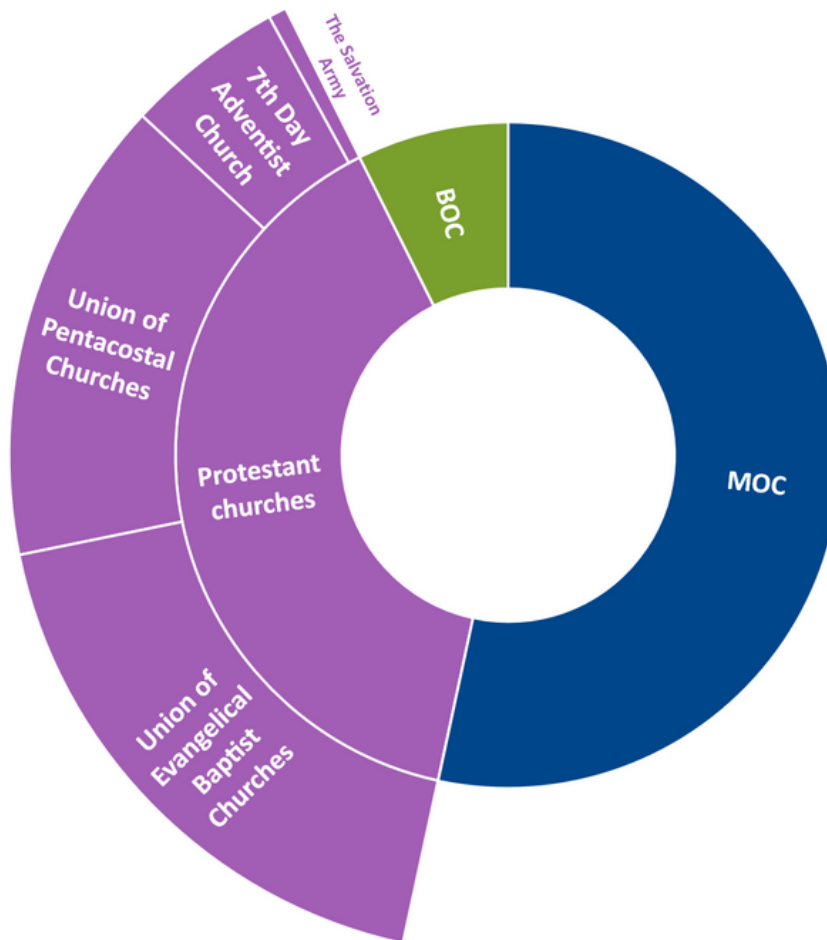
***"We are not looking just to implement projects, but to make these people's lives better."***

Key Informant Interviewee



Curchi Monastery in Curchi, Orhei, Moldova

Figure 2: Churches Operated by FBOs Participating in the Situation Analysis



Beneficiaries of FBO services number in the thousands. FBOs operate as formal and informal service providers. Key informants indicated that they offer extensive services to families of at-risk and vulnerable children in their communities. The follow-up survey supported these numbers.

Figure 3: Total number and rate of Family & Child Beneficiaries of Faith-based Organizations

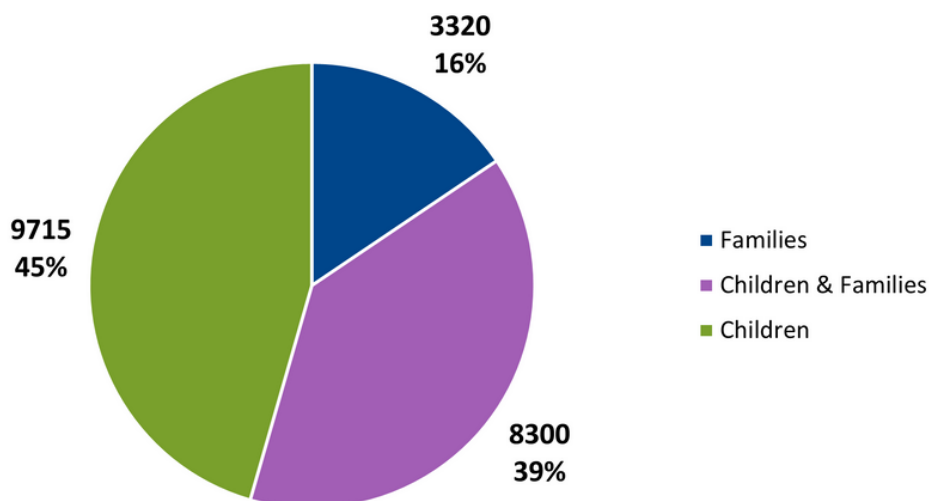
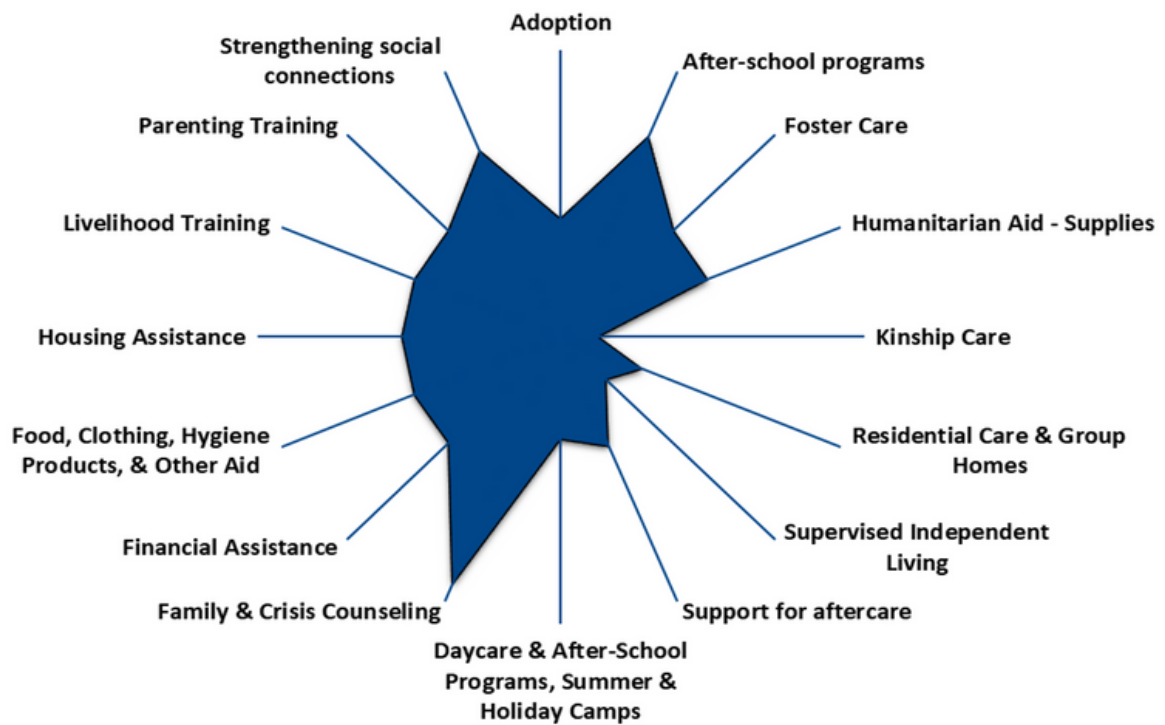
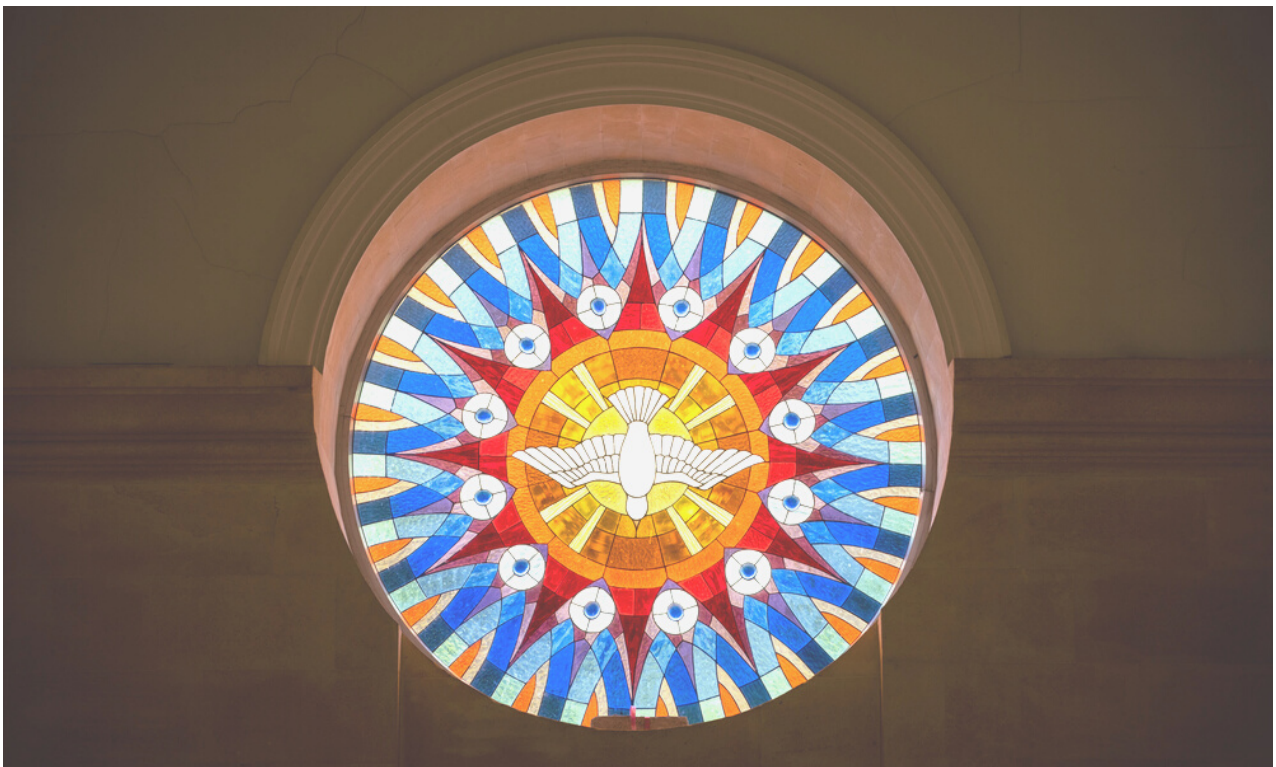


Figure 5: Areas of Family and Child Care provided by Faith-based Organizations



Faith-based Organizations engage extensively in providing services to vulnerable children and at-risk families. Most believe that a child best develops in a family or family-like environment.



White Dove Ceiling stain glass in the Roman Catholic Church in Orhei, Moldova



# Learnings

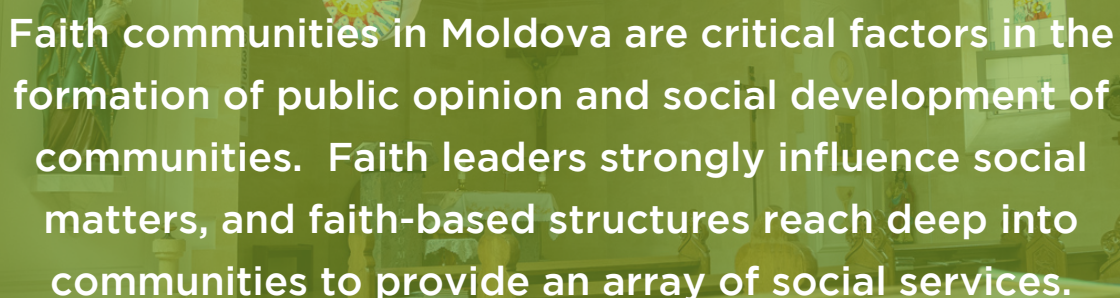
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01. A large majority of the FBOs interviewed believe that family-based care remains the best option for the development of children and support the closure of residential facilities for long-term care of children.

02. Most, if not all, FBOs – regardless of faith – provide concrete, measurable services to support children and families. Taken as a whole, the FBO menu of services reflects a thoughtful and diverse approach to addressing the critical matter of caring for children and families and, through this, laying a foundation for a more functional and healthier society.

03. FBOs actively engage local schools, government administrations, social workers, and child protection workers to provide support and options for vulnerable children and at-risk families. Much of this support – whether in the form of humanitarian aid, foster homes, transitional housing, emergency shelter, kinship care, or other services – essentially goes unreported by government agencies. In contrast, the FBOs report that support (financial and administrative) offered by local and regional governments remains quite limited. Little actual engagement happens when planning for the reintegration of a child or designing community-based interventions.

04. FBOs/FLs can and do influence public opinion in Moldova. Some, like the MOC, have the proven capacity, physical presence, and public trust to influence public opinion on a national level. Others choose not to broadcast their efforts or concerns simply because of views enshrined in their faiths that eschew the pursuit of recognition and promote the belief that rewards for service are found in other arenas. Their efforts to influence the GoM or public are best spent developing models of care that others can replicate.



Faith communities in Moldova are critical factors in the formation of public opinion and social development of communities. Faith leaders strongly influence social matters, and faith-based structures reach deep into communities to provide an array of social services.



05. Some faith actors in the community embrace advocacy work and already engage in it. These FBOs include organizations like ACOMO and churches like the MOC. They take direct action and develop advocacy campaigns around their missions. ACOMO has engaged the last three years in influencing GoM views on childcare, training government officials and child protection staff, and lobbying with governmental officials. They can now list as allies key heads of child protection agencies as their allies. ACOMO already consists of eight Moldovan FBOs and states that it gladly will expand its membership to other Christian organizations that wish to see Moldova as a country without orphans.

06. Faith-based organizations manage to fund their activities, for the most part, relying on resources separate and apart from government funding and grants and awards from large development projects funded by bilateral donors. While not a part of the initial analysis, how FBOs managed this was raised during interviews to learn what international partnerships existed. The team discovered that among the over twenty FBOs interviewed, they had in total over fifty different donors. The donors were diverse and included bilateral donors, international religious foundations, individuals from Moldova's diaspora, overseas church communities, and many others.



Stain glass icon the Roman Catholic Church in Orhei, Moldova

# Appendix A

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## INDEX OF HIGHLY RELIGIOUS ADULTS IN EUROPE BY COUNTRY

Europeans generally are less religious than people in other parts of the world. But within Europe, there are sometimes sizable differences in levels of religious commitment, according to an analysis of recent Pew Research Center surveys in 34 countries.

According to recent studies, Moldova is the 5th most religious out of 34 European countries. Forty-seven percent (47%) of adults in Moldova are “highly religious,” based on an overall index.

The religious profile of Moldova:

- 42% (6th rank) say religion is very important in their lives
- 35% (9th rank) say they attend worship services at least monthly
- 48% (1st rank) say they pray daily
- 55%(8th rank) say they believe in God with absolute certainty

## Ranked Index of the Percentage of “Highly Religious” Adults in Europe by Country

1. Romania 55%	11. Ukraine 31%	20. Norway 17%	30. Belgium 10%
2. Armenia 51%	12. Slovakia 29%	20. Russia 17%	30. Sweden 10%
3. Georgia 50%	13. Belarus 27%	23. Latvia 15%	32. Czech Republic 8%
4. Greece 49%	13. Italy 27%	24. Austria 14%	32. Denmark 8%
<b>5. Moldova 47%</b>	15. Ireland 24%	25. Finland 13%	34. Estonia 7%
6. Bosnia 46%	16. Lithuania 21%	26. France 12%	
7. Croatia 44%	16. Spain 21%	26. Germany 12%	
8. Poland 40%	18. Bulgaria 18%	26. Switzerland 12%	
9. Portugal 37%	18. Netherlands 18%	29. United Kingdom 11%	
10. Serbia 32%	20. Hungary 17%		

Source: Pew Research Center. (2018) “Surveys conducted 2015-2017 in 34 countries.” <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/05/how-do-european-countries-differ-in-religious-commitment/>

# Appendix B

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## CTWWC INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR FBO SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS - 23 April 2021

### A. OPENING

Introductions: My name is . . . I'm a consultant for CTWWC, helping to identify and understand the role faith communities in Moldova play in social support services for vulnerable children and families and in influencing opinions and behaviors related to family care.

Format: We have a few questions to help guide our conversation. If you don't mind, we will take a few notes to keep track, but please let us know if there is anything you would like to say, 'off the record.' We will be writing the results of these interviews into a report to be used internally to plan for future activities, but we will not use any quotes without your permission.

Expectations: We anticipate this conversation to last about an hour. You may stop at any time. Please feel free to ask questions as we go.

Permissions: Do you have any questions for us now? Shall we proceed as we described above?

### B. QUESTIONS & PROBES

**Organization: Can you tell us about how your organization or community is structured and the services you provide to vulnerable children and families?**

- i. Probe on structure: How many offices and where (geographically), what are the roles/responsibilities of the leadership of your faith community? How do their responsibilities differ from social service providers in the community."

ii. Probe on services: what's the target group's profile, how many people are served annually, what's the intake/how do people find out and enroll?

**Care reform: Can you share any previous experience your organization or community has had with:**

- i. Residential institutions for children
- ii. Alternative care (like extended families, foster care, group homes)
- iii. Family strengthening (like parent education, strengthening social connections, economic support)



**Basis:** What are the primary motivations or theological basis for your views and positions on vulnerable children and families and care?

**Influence:** Can you share how your organization or community has played a role in influencing public opinion or behavior?

i. **Probe on assets:** How did you go about it? What mechanisms or channels did you use? What worked well/what were the factors or assets for success?

ii. **Probe on learning:** What could be done differently or better in the future?

iii. **Probe on care reform:** What opportunities are there for doing something similar for strengthening support to vulnerable children and families? Are there certain texts or times of the year specific to your faith community that would be relevant for this?

**Future:** What recommendations do you have for engaging faith communities effectively in influencing opinions on care reform or providing support services?

i. **Probe on how:** If you were trying to mobilize the FB community in Moldova, how would you proceed? Any particular protocols to follow or dynamics to be sensitive to?

ii. **Probe on stakeholders:** Who would you seek as allies? Anyone to watch out for? Any platforms that already exist for working with faith communities on social issues or for interfaith collaboration?

iii. **Probe on future collaboration:** Would you be interested in working further on this?

### **C. Wrap-Up**

Who else should we talk to?

Do you mind if we follow up via email if there are any points of clarification later?

Thank you.

### **D. PowerPoint Slide Questions**

**Can you tell us how your organization or community is structured and the services you provide to vulnerable children and families?**


**Can you share any previous experience your organization or community has had with:**

i. Residential institutions for children

ii. Alternative care (like extended families, foster care, group homes)

iii. Family strengthening (like parent education, strengthening social connections, economic support)





**What are the primary motivations or theological basis for your views and positions on vulnerable children and families and care?**

**Can you share how your organization or community has played a role in influencing public opinion or behavior?**

**What recommendations do you have for engaging faith communities effectively in influencing opinions on care reform or providing support services?**

# Table 1

## FBO/FL STAKEHOLDERS BY RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND LEGAL REGISTRATION STATUS

List of Stakeholders	English Registration	Romanian Legal Form	Faith
Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Agudath Israel Synagogue	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentăcă	Judiasm
Beginning of Life Moldova	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Bethania Christian Charity	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Caritas Moldova	Foundation	Fundația	Christian: Catholic
Center "Petrushka" – Tiraspol	Foundation	Fundația	Christian: Catholic
Children's Emergency Relief International (CERI)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Compassion Crossroads	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Concordia Social Projects	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Catholic
Diaconia	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentăcă	Christian: Orthodox
Divitia Gratiae University (UDG)	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentăcă	Christian: Protestant

<b>List of Stakeholders</b>	<b>English Registration</b>	<b>Romanian Legal Form</b>	<b>Faith</b>
Dorcas Aid International	Foundation	Fundația	Christian: Protestant
Faith and Mercy Charity	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Orthodox
Foundation for the Support of Islamic Culture and Traditions in the RM	Foundation	Fundația	Islam
Hesed Yehuda	Private Institution	Instituția Privată	Judaism
International Center of Training and Professional Development (ICTPD)	Private Institution	Instituția Privată	Judaism
Islamic League of the Republic of Moldova	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Islam
JCC Hesed – Tiraspol	Private Institution	Instituția Privată	Judaism
Jewish Cultural Center KEDEM	Private Institution	Instituția Privată	Judaism
Jewish Community of Moldova (JCM)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Judaism
La Via Moldova (affiliated with Word Made Flesh)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Metropolis of Bessarabia (Bessarabia Orthodox)	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Orthodox
Metropolis of Chișinău and All Moldova (Russian Orthodox)	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Orthodox
Mission Without Borders (MWBM)	Foundation	Fundația	Christian: Protestant
Moldova Christian Aid	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Open Gate International	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant

<b>List of Stakeholders</b>	<b>English Registration</b>	<b>Romanian Legal Form</b>	<b>Faith</b>
Operation Mobilization	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
Partnership for Every Child (P4EC)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Secular
Pentecostal Church Union	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Protestant
Rabbi Shimshon Daniel Isaacson (Chabad Lubavitch Synagogue)	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Judaism
Regina Pacis	Foundation	Fundația	Christian: Catholic
Roman Catholic Diocese of Chișinău	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Catholic
Salvation Army	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Protestant
Seventh-Day Adventists	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: 7th Day Adventist
Strong Foundation	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Moldova (JDC)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Judaism
The Christian Alliance Moldova without Orphans (ACMO)	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant
The Church of Jesus Christ Of Latter-day Saints	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Latter Day Saints





List of Stakeholders	English Registration	Romanian Legal Form	Faith
Union of Christian Evangelical Baptist Churches of Moldova	Religious Cult	Cult religios și parte componentă	Christian: Protestant
Youth for Christ (YFC) Moldova	NGO	Asociația Obștească	Christian: Protestant

# Table 2

## THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

#	Country	Very or Somewhat Important	Not Too/ Not At All Important
1	Georgia	92%	7%
2	Romania	90%	10%
3	Armenia	87%	13%
4	Moldova	86%	13%
5	Bosnia	85%	14%
6	Greece	83%	17%
7	Serbia	81%	18%
8	Poland	77%	20%
9	Croatia	76%	24%
10	Bulgaria	68%	31%
11	Ukraine	67%	30%
12	Belarus	65%	32%
13	Lithuania	59%	40%
14	Russia	57%	38%
15	Hungary	45%	55%
16	Latvia	44%	53%
17	Estonia	31%	68%
18	Czech Republic	22%	76%

# Table 3

## THE NUMBER OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION SERVICE SITES AND BENEFICIARIES

FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION	REGISTRATION	SITES	ESTIMATED BENEFICIARIES SERVED ANNUALLY
Agudath Israel Synagogue	Religious Cult		Nearly 100 children & 250 families
Caritas Moldova	Foundation	4	Approximately 310 children & youth; 130 families
Christian Alliance Moldova without Orphans Moldova	NGO	1	300 Social Workers
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Religious Cult	1	50 Children & Families
Diaconia	Religious Cult & NGO	12	6000 Children & Families
Dorcas Moldova	Foundation	1	460 Children & 160 Families
International Center for Training and Professional Development	Private Institution	1	Approximately 50 Families
Islamic League of the Republic of Moldova	Religious Cult	1	Approximately 80 Families
Metropolis of Chişinău and All Moldova & Faith and Mercy Charity	Religious Cult & NGO	2	150 Children & 1600 Families
Mission without Borders	Foundation	7	4000 Children & 600 Families
Open Gate International	NGO	1	Over 80 Families/Caregivers & 550 Trained Professionals
Operation Mobilization	NGO	12	300 Children & 150 Families
Petrushka Center in Tiraspol	Foundation	1	50 Children & Families
Regina Pacis	Foundation	5	260 Children/Youth & 30 Families
Salvation Army	Religious Cult	16	400 Children/Youth & 90 Families
Seventh-Day Adventists & Adventist Development and Relief Agency International	Religious Cult & NGO	2	Over 35 Children in the Center/ 3500 Children Overall
Union of Christian Evangelical Baptist Churches of Moldova	Religious Cult	60+	200 Children in Foster Care Homes/80000 Children Overall
Union of Pentecostal Churches in Moldova	Religious Cult	20+	Over 1000 Children & Families
Youth for Christ Moldova	NGO	3	Over 1200 Children & Families

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# Endnotes

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1. For example, the Adventist Development & Relief Agency and Dorcas Aid International.
2. Examples from the situational analysis include Youth for Christ, Dorcas Aid International, and ACOMO.
3. Examples from the situational analysis include Caritas and Diaconia.
4. For example, in the situational analysis KIs from within the Roman Catholic community included Regina Pacis (a religious foundation), Caritas Moldova (a faith-based NGO and part of the Caritas International network), the Children's Center "Petrushka," and the Bishop of Chişinău, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Moldova.
5. In this analysis that included, for example, the MOC, BOC, and the Roman Catholic Church.
6. In Moldova this applies particularly to Orthodox Christianity and its two national faiths – the BOC and MOC which stand apart from other faiths.
7. In this analysis, only the MOC was linked closely to government and political leaders and was found to be immensely influential in those arenas.
8. Surveys by the Soros Foundation (2016) and IRI (2018) found that the MOC was the most trusted organization in Moldova – ahead of the local and central governments, the press and other institutional actors.
9. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that as late as 2016 there were over 2600 religious organizations registered with the government. (OHCHR 2016).
10. The index is created by combining four individual measures of religious observance – self-assessment of religion's importance in one's life, religious attendance, frequency of prayer, and belief in God. Respondents are assigned a score of 1 on each of the four measures on which they exhibit a high level of religious observance, a score of 0 on each of the measures on which they exhibit a medium level of religious observance, and a score of -1 on each measure on which they exhibit a low level of religious observance. High religious observance is defined as saying religion is very important in one's life, attending religious services at least once a month, praying at least once a day, and believing in God with absolute certainty. Differences between two countries may not always be statistically significant due to the margins of error that are inherent in this survey data. Source: Pew Research Center.(2018) "Surveys conducted 2015-2017 in 34 countries."
11. This number is disputed by the National Bureau of Statistics report Population with usual residence in the Republic of Moldova by sex and age groups on 1st January 2021 which found the resident population in Moldova – adjusted for migration – to be 22 percent less at 2,643,000.
12. This figure was disputed by several informants who estimate the Jewish population at closer to 8,000 adherents.
13. With the exception of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Salvation Army, none of these smaller religious groups were included in the situation analysis.
14. This report does not address the FBOs identified by USOIF: Baha'is, Molokans, Messianic Jews, Presbyterians, the Evangelical Christian Church, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (Unification Church), other Christians, Falun Gong, and the International Society of Krishna Consciousness.
15. Exceptions are FBOs e.g. Dorcas Aid International, Caritas Moldova, Diaconia and Youth for Christ which collaborate with other FBOs outside of their communities.
16. For example, the Baptists and Pentecostals collaborate and work together.





# Endnotes

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17. ACMO formalized as an alliance of Christian organizations to end orphanages in Moldova. ACMO has eight members, including Dorcas Aid International, the Children's Emergency Relief International, Open Gate International, Bethania Christian Charity, Divitia Gratiae University, and several other FBOs.
18. Cannon (2018) Assessing Alternative Care for Children in Moldova (Volume 1) no FBOs participated in the final assessments.

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