



The Romanian Group for the Defence of Human Rights GRADO

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ACTIVITY REPORT ***2012***

I. INTRODUCTION

GRADO - The Romanian Group for the Defence of Human Rights is a non-profit, non-governmental, apolitical association, a private law Romanian juridical person created in 1994.

GRADO's mission consists in defending, throughout all the legal means, fundamental human rights and liberties and promoting their knowledge and respect.

GRADO's objectives for the time period 2010- 2015 are:

1. To bring its input in the penal system implementation according to the European standards,
2. To promote education in the field of human rights, democracy and civic virtue,
3. To contribute in defending the persons whose rights were not respected,
4. To contribute to the civil society development.

GRADO's programs structure for the time period 2010-2015:

1. LEGAL RESOURCES FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS

- 1.1 Legal assistance
- 1.2 Penal reform

2. SUPERVISION IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS

- 2.1 Monitoring human and civil rights programs
- 2.2 Protection for women's rights programs
- 2.3 Protection of the vulnerable groups programs

3. THE EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION

- 3.1 Education for democracy in schools and high schools programs
- 3.2 Community education programs
- 3.3 Adult's education programs

In the time period 2010-2015, the organization has the following priorities:

- Monitoring human rights with a focus on enforcement of the Law 275/2006 and campaigning for implementation of the law's provisions;
- Monitoring women's rights who were victims of domestic violence;
- Community education programs;

PROJECTS DEVELOPED IN 2012

1. LEGAL RESOURCES FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS

1.1 Legal assistance program

In 2012 GRADO has offered free counseling to inmates and women who were victims of domestic violence and requested to GRADO's support. Most of the problems mentioned by those who asked for assistance referred to the relationship with the public institutions. GRADO's staff answered to all questions and calls addressed by the solicitants.

A case under GRADO's consideration for many years is the one of the inmate Moisii Ionel. He has asked for the organization support in many of the cases pending before Romanian courts. Moisii Ionel has claimed many abuses and violations of the human rights stipulated in the existing law; these abuses have happened during his incarceration in Codlea Penitentiary. After inmate's request, GRADO's representatives visited Codlea Penitentiary with the main purpose to clarify certain issues related by Moisii Ionel through correspondence, but also to study his prison files based on his written consent. The inmate has sent many complaints to the judge delegate for execution of custodial sentences and to different public institutions- to the prosecution, court instances, incriminating the violation of some rights by the prison staff.

After analyzing the information gathered GRADO has completed a report concerning the situation of the inmate Moisii Ionel. The report is published on the website www.grado.org.ro/resources and it available in Romanian and English.

1.2 Penal reform

The Project

“Human rights monitoring in execution of penal sentences”

GRADO in partnership with Penal Justice Reform Foundation, Prison Fellowship Romania, Romanian Magistrates Association and Transcena Association continued in 2012 the activities focused on the implementation of the Law 275/2006 regarding the enforcement of punishments and measures disposed by legal bodies during the penal trial.

Main purpose: Promoting human rights in the execution of penal sentences.

Objectives

- Development of an assessment tool by the Romanian Ministry of Justice and National Administration of Penitentiaries in order to evaluate the serious efforts done for social reinsertion;
- Promoting the need to implement all the provisions of the Law no 275/2006 among lawmakers;
- Informing the society about criminal policies;
- Monitoring public institutions which have responsibilities in the execution of penal sentences.

In 2012 GRADO visited 4 penitentiaries: Arad, Iasi, Jilava and Timisoara. The main objective of the visits was analyzing the possibility of changing the prison regime for inmates. Interviews were carried with 35 members of The Commission for Establishing the Prison Regime and with 106 inmates. Project team studied 100 penitentiary files having the consent of the inmates. The published report includes data collected in 2012 visits and during the 4 similar visits carried in 2010. The report can be downloaded from GRADO's website.

In partnership with the National Administration of Penitentiaries a working group of experts was established in order to develop an assessment tool with criteria for social reintegration efforts and behavior of inmates - criteria stipulated in law to be considered when assessing the possibility to change the prison regime. The group included the following experts: Ph.D Sorina Poledna- University Babes-Bolyai Cluj –Napoca, lecturer Marina Mihaila- University “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iasi, lecturer Ioan Durnescu- University of Bucharest. In

developing the existing indicators used in the prison system were considered. National Administration of Penitentiaries has used in several prisons as a pilot a system of rewards and penalties based on points. This system was used by the expert group as a starting point in developing the criteria. The proposals developed during the project can be found on the website GRADO/Resources category.

The project ended with a one-day seminar in which the results of the project were presented.

2. SUPERVISION IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS

2.1 Monitoring human and civil rights programs

In 2012, GRADO in association with TRANSCENA Association, Penal Justice Reform Foundation and Prison Fellowship Romania has monitored four Romanian penitentiaries during the project “Human rights monitoring in execution of penal sentences”.

During the visits to Jilava, Timisoara, Arad and Iasi, the project representatives have discussed with the inmates and have studied their prison records. The information gathered as a result of monitoring visits is presented in the report done during the project.

The report done at the request of the inmate Moisii Ionel highlighted certain situations where the inmates’ rights were violated. The report is published on the website GRADO/Resources category.

An example of violating the law is refusing the request of an inmate to go to a forensic medical examination. The delegated judge from Codlea penitentiary pointed out that the prison staff is not in a position to appreciate about the opportunity of presenting an inmate to forensic institutions. There was a similar situation at Giurgiu penitentiary, where the staff refused to receive the medical request.

After visiting several prisons and analyzing public data concerning the number of persons being deprived of liberty, it can be noticed a continuous rise in the prison population. In some prisons are accommodated more inmates than the legal capacity of the prison. When visiting Miercurea Ciuc penitentiary GRADO representant noticed that the prison is overcrowded and the number of the inmates is almost double than it is the prison capacity. The safety of detention is endangered and we cannot expect social reintegration activities to be efficient. Overcrowding and bad accommodation conditions are reasons for Romania to be condemned for the frequent human violations at the European Court of Human Rights. Unfortunately we do not have information regarding any strategy developed and approved by the relevant authorities to address this problem.

2.3 Protection of the vulnerable groups programs

The project “**Participation of the Vulnerable Groups in Social Economy**” was finished in 2012. The main objective of the project was to raise the ability to achieve sustainable and inclusive local development in local communities (including vulnerable groups in these communities) across the country.

The project aims to develop the ability, skills, knowledge, self-esteem and social support for 20,000 members of vulnerable groups in order to increase these people’s chances to involve in the social economy and to reintegrate and maintain employment. Also the project took into consideration enhancing capacity, supporting and promoting 50 structures of social economy as an instrument for economical development, job opportunities and welfare at local level.

The vulnerable groups targeted by the project were: Roma people, women victims of domestic violence, young people, inmates or people who were previously incarcerated, drug users.

GRADO was involved in the establishment of 15 structures of social economy, training 17 social economy managers and on counseling 20.000 persons.

The project leader was the National Agency for Roma and partners were the National Administration of Penitentiaries, National Anti-Drug Agency, Romanian Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection (MMFSP), Penal Justice Reform Foundation, Targoviste towards Europe Association, Ramses - Social Development of Roma people, Transcena Organization and GRADO.

Social Reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty

In October 2012 GRADO organized a workshop for two days with 27 representatives of non governmental organizations from Eastern Europe, Asia and USA.

The main purpose of the workshop was to create a space for changing ideas concerning the implemented policies and strategies for inmates’ social reintegration and the way NGO’s can contribute through their advocacy activity to their improvement.

The workshop’s results were: information about successful campaigns on reintegration, initializing an active networking in social reintegration of inmates and the raise of the information level of participants.

3. THE EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION

3.3 Adult's education programs

StradaFM Project was initiated in April 2012 and was launched in September the same year. StradaFM is a online radio broadcast music 24 hours/7 days/week. We aim to broadcast in the future information regarding NGO activity and music.

The site StradaFM – www.radiogrado.ro sau www.stradafm.ro presents written articles regarding NGO activity and it a support for the radio online. The site contains the following categories: News, Articles, Resources. Music program and Other.

The activity of StradaFM is done by volunteers.

III. PARTNERS

GRADO partners in 2012:

National Penitentiaries Administration

Romanian Magistrates Association

Transcena Association

Penal Justice Reform Foundation

Prison Fellowship Romania

Romanian Ministry of Justice

National Agency for Roma

National Anti-Drug Agency

Targoviste towards Europe Association,

Ramses - Social Development of Roma

Romanian Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection (MMFSP)

IV. Funders

European Social Fund through Sectorial Operational Programme for Development of Human Resources

Open Society Institute