



Community Centers Find New Purpose in Romania



Photo: GRASP/Paula Talaba

The newly-renovated community information center in Andrieseni is now open to provide vital services to citizens.

“We see this center as a catalyst for future projects implemented in our community.”

- Dumitru Sturza, Vice-Mayor of Andrieseni

Citizens living in the village of Andrieseni did not have access to efficient services and the Romania local government needed to evaluate how to meet the needs of the community. For example, registering with the police office to receive a new ID or replace an old one required the citizen of Andrieseni to take the 3:46 am train to the village of Lasi - about forty miles away - arriving at 5:08 am. After reaching the appropriate office, the citizen would wait in line with dozens of other people to file the appropriate paperwork. If any of the numerous necessary documents was missing, the entire procedure would have had to be repeated the next day.

This frustrating scenario is now a thing of the past. USAID helped the local government develop better services through the Community Mediation and Security Center (CMSC) program which included the renovation of two community centers and clubs. The community centers in Fintinele, Glavanesti and Andrieseni now provides citizens with the opportunity to meet with trained local volunteers to obtain instructions and required papers for accessing various benefits such as a new ID.

The program also trained local members of the community to become facilitators and volunteers in social and community services, such as conflict mediation, providing information to citizens, and support groups for domestic violence and child abuse. Other activities include holding informal classes for youth, and creating a local volunteer system - all part of the community safety strategy to provide solutions to important community problems.

