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**“COMMUNITY SERVICES TO VULNERABLE GROUPS”
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QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT
Reporting period: 1 April 2013 – 30 June 2013
Component I “Supporting Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Belarus”

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children component is to reduce the number of children in Belarus being institutionalized in state-administered orphanages and boarding schools by supporting at-home family care and moving children out of institutions. In pursuit of this goal, the project will aim to foster a cultural environment conducive to family-based care, and move children from institutions into less restrictive environments when prior circumstances necessitate removal from their family home. The project targets are 'social orphans,' i.e., children whose parents are living, but are unable to provide proper care, or children of parents who have been denied parental rights. The project's activities focus on working with families and social service professionals to maintain and reintegrate children within their original family units.

The project has three main objectives:

- Improve access to and further develop an integrated system of community-based prevention and services for families with institutionalized and at-risk children;
- Improve the quality of training and education available to social service providers;
- Provide technical assistance to social service providers through policy development, methodology consultations, and advocacy efforts.

B. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

This quarter, the project continued countrywide dissemination of a successful model of de-institutionalization that was piloted in 2005-2008. The main elements of this model are: an effective child protection system, improvement of parents' skills and competencies, and development of alternative family-type placement for orphans (PRIDE model). The project activities were implemented according to the Annual Implementation Plan and allocated budget. This quarter **169** geographic locations were covered by project interventions in comparison with 166 in the previous quarter (for more information, please see Annex 1 the Project Map).

This quarter the new/improved services were delivered through allocated community resources. Sub-grant projects completed in the previous project year demonstrated sustainability and continued providing services to vulnerable children and families. ChildFund specialists provided targeted consultations and interventions in order to support sustainability of the previously established services such as Parenting, SafeCare, PRIDE, and reformation of the child protection system through multidisciplinary cooperation. These supportive interventions included networking and experience exchange through the information bulletin on PRIDE, individual consultations on fidelity of methodologies, and creation of Resource Libraries on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program in community-based organizations.

Sustainability of project interventions was strengthened by improvement of quality of education and training available for child protection specialists. This quarter the national cadre of trainers was enriched with the first group of university faculty who completed the Training of Trainers (TOT) on a Family Centered Approach in Child Protection Services. Thus, by the end of this quarter, 100% of all universities and re-training institutes in the country had at least one faculty trained on the Family centered approach. Despite the relatively short period of time after completion of the TOT and the end of the academic year the alumni of this group have already started replicating the training program at two universities (Gomel State University and Minsk State Pedagogic University) and Gomel oblast Re-training Institute. About 100 students were introduced to the values and principles of the family centered approach. At the same time the faculty admitted lack of knowledge and skills in the area of alternative family care and asked ChildFund to conduct a similar training course on the PRIDE methodology.

Sustainability of the Parenting Skills Enhancement program was strengthened by a new group of 18 national master trainers who were prepared within the Forum of Trainers on Parenting. It is expected that master trainers will ensure reproduction of a new generation of trainers on Parenting that is especially important in the current situation in which there is a high level of staff turnover within child protection services.

In total the number of trained specialists who participated in capacity building events reached **448** child protection specialists from **320** organizations including faculty at 6 universities and 5 re-training Institutes. Among them only 77 people (**17%**) were trained by ChildFund while the other **83%** were trained by alumni of ChildFund's training programs with resources provided through the state educational system and allocated community resources. This is evidence of the communities' buy-in of ChildFund's project interventions and methodologies.

The first Child Protection Resource Center in the country was created at Minsk City Re-training institute under the project's sub-grants mechanism. The Resource Center will support those who have completed innovative training programs and are trying to incorporate new knowledge and skills into the practice of local child protection systems with informational and methodological resources, and individual consultations.

ChildFund, the members of its Task Group on child protection, and UNICEF continued our advocacy campaign targeting the Ministry of Education with the goal of incorporating Child Protection quality standards into the national child protection system. As a result, at the roundtable meeting on quality standards that was conducted this quarter, the Ministry of Education assured participants that the standards for child protection services will be adopted at the national level.

ChildFund Belarus continued advocating for PRIDE countrywide expansion as a national program for training foster/adoptive parents. For this purpose, a roundtable discussion on alternative family care was organized with participation from Ministry of Education authorities, child protection specialists implementing the PRIDE model for foster families, foster parents, USAID, and journalists from the most popular print and e-media. As a result of this event, the journalists published a series of articles promoting family care for orphans and noted the PRIDE model as an effective means to transform child protection systems toward de-institutionalization.

In total this quarter:

- **1536** parents and **403** children accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services.
- **857** child protection specialists and local authorities from **612** organizations participated in capacity building events provided by partner re-training institutes, alumni of TOTs, and ChildFund specialists.
- **130** specialists, alumni of ChildFund training programs, were supported with targeted consultations, as well as methodological and information materials provided by ChildFund.
- The sub-grant project on establishing a Child Protection Resource Center in Minsk City Re-Training Institute started implementation.
- A group of 20 faculty from 6 universities (100%) and 3 re-training institutes completed a Training program on a Family-centered Approach in Child Protection Services (including TOT); this quarter two institutions started replicating the program for students.
- A Forum for Trainers on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program (*10-13 of June, 2013*) was organized
- Eighteen (18) new master trainers on Parenting were prepared to ensure sustainability of trainer's resources for local communities.

C. CHALLENGES/CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

- A recent country report by the World Bank group suggested improving efficiency of state expenses on education with respect to the quantity of schools in general and education professionals in particular. In practice, it spurred a massive restructuring campaign within all levels of education, with staff dismissals and elimination of the posts of the front-line social workers that were vacant due to the high level of staff turnover.

As a result, the temporary increase in the workload for staff in child protection agencies due to staff turnover has become permanent without any additional financial compensation. This may cause additional stress and actually increase staff turnover in the child protection system. The restructuring plans were neither articulated nor announced to the professional community and general public. The situation of uncertainty increased anxiety and confusion among the specialists at different levels. ChildFund's long-term partners (Re-training Institutes, Departments of Education, etc.) expected significant changes and admitted their hesitation to draw activity plans or sign partnership agreements for the coming academic year. Due to this uncertainty, caused by the re-organization, Grodno Re-Training Institute postponed submission of a project proposal to a sub-grant contest for the creation of the Child Protection Resource Center until the fall season. In response to this increased burden on government staff and probability of more turnover, ChildFund staff and child protection specialists from partner universities met to discuss how to address this issue. As a next step, a survey will be conducted to document the reasons for staff turnover within the child protection system. The results from this survey can be used to advocate for an improved government strategy to prevent the loss of more qualified staff.

ChildFund decided to shift the TOT on Family Group Conferences to September 2013 when the restructure in the education and child protection systems will be more or less clear in order to prevent waste of resources (i.e. using funds to train specialists who might leave the system after the summer). Success of the training course on a Family-Centered Approach to Child Protection for faculty of universities encouraged the participants to learn the other innovative methodologies promoted through ChildFund's project. The university faculty admitted to lack of knowledge and skills in the area of alternative family care and requested that ChildFund conduct a training course on the PRIDE methodology. These expenses have not been budgeted. There is a need to raise additional funds in order to meet this request. Incorporation of the PRIDE model into the university curriculum will strengthen project sustainability and its long-term impact on the child protection system and child wellbeing in Belarus.

- 20% (82 out of 419) of the trainers on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program trained from 2010-2013 have left the child protection system. To help restore the training resource on the program in local communities ChildFund trained 18 Master-trainers on the Parenting Skills Enhancement program within its Trainers' Forum. It is planned that these Master Trainers will conduct TOTs for local child protection specialists in their local communities and at the oblast level.

II. ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE 1: *Improve access to and further develop an integrated system of community-based prevention and rehabilitation services for families with institutionalized and at-risk children.*

This quarter the new/improved services were delivered through allocated community resources and with ChildFund's support. Sub-grant projects completed in the previous project year demonstrated sustainability and continued providing services to vulnerable children and families. ChildFund specialists provided targeted consultations and interventions in order to support sustainability of the previously established services such as Parenting, SafeCare, PRIDE, and reformation of the child protection system through multidisciplinary cooperation. These supportive interventions included networking and experience exchange through the information bulletin on PRIDE, individual consultations on fidelity of methodologies, and supporting creation of Resource Libraries on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program in community-based organizations.

This quarter:

- **1536 parents** accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services.
- **403 children** were supported by community-based prevention and rehabilitation services.

- **130 child protection specialists** were supported with consultations, as well as methodological and information materials provided by ChildFund.
- The information bulletin on PRIDE was issued and disseminated among partner communities.
- The Forum for Trainers on Parenting Skills Enhancement Program (*10-13 of June, 2013*) was organized
- **18** Master-trainers from local communities were trained on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program through the Trainers' Forum.
- **50 new Home Visitors** from 36 child protection organizations were trained to provide SafeCare program for families and children.
- **341 community specialists** from 256 local schools, shelters, hospitals, and kindergartens were trained on the Family-Centered Approach in local communities.

SafeCare home visitation services for vulnerable children

SafeCare is a 24-week program providing biweekly home visits for families with children from birth to age 5 that focuses on altering parental behavior in three core domains: (1) health, (2) safety, and (3) parent-child interaction. Home visits focus on training parents to use health reference materials and access appropriate treatment, identify and eliminate safety and health hazards, and increase positive parent-child interactions. The program helps to decrease the risk of different types of child maltreatment.

SafeCare home visitation program is focused on families at risk for child abuse and neglect, such as first-time parents, single mothers and adolescent parents raising children 0-5 years old.

- This quarter 15 child protection specialists from education and health care agencies trained in the previous year by SafeCare experts from Georgia State University provided home visitation services for **35 parents with 36 young children (0-5 years old)** from at-risk families in 7 pilot communities (Minsk, Borisov, Grodno, Chausy, Rogachev, Soligorsk, and Zhodino).
- 100% of the home visitation services were provided using local communities' resources.

As a result, according to an assessment held by child protection services,

- **75 % (26 people)** of served parents demonstrated improvement of their parenting skills.

Dissemination of SafeCare:

This quarter the alumni TOT on SafeCare Home Visitation Program replicated the training program for child protection specialists in Soligorsk, Chausy and Rogachev communities. ChildFund Belarus covered the expenses for training materials and meals for training sessions. As a result,

- **50 new Home Visitors** from 36 child protection organizations were trained to provide SafeCare program for families and children.

Parenting Skills Enhancement Program

The Parenting Skills Enhancement Program is 8-10 week program that consists of three training programs according to the age group of children (for 0-5, 5-13, 13-18 years old). Small groups of parents (10-12 people) take part in weekly training sessions about emotional, physical, psychological and sexual violence and its effects on the development of children and adolescents; reasons for a child's misbehavior and methods and skills for non-violent disciplining of children, as well as stress management and self-regulation. The participants are encouraged to foster assertive parenting styles that respect the rights of children and parents. The program helps to prevent child abuse and neglect by addressing the risk factors of child maltreatment such as parental knowledge and expectations of child development, parental attitudes and skills regarding discipline, and using non-violent methods of interaction between parent and child.

This quarter, the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program was implemented in 54 geographic locations (**62** local communities in previous quarter¹) in **Mogilev, Minsk, Vitebsk, Brest, Grodno oblasts** and in the city of **Minsk** (for more details, please see Annex 1 Project Map) using allocated local community resources. The program was implemented by the alumni of Parenting TOTs conducted by ChildFund specialists and by master-trainers trained within sub-grant projects implemented in the previous project years. The sub-grants on the Parenting Program implemented in Year 7 proved their sustainability and continued Parenting groups this quarter. This quarter, 4 community organizations (1 gymnasium, 1 kindergarten, 2 social centers) that signed official partnership agreements with ChildFund for the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program were provided with training manuals and materials for the creation of Parenting Resource Libraries. These libraries will help communities to ensure sustainability of the parenting education services.

As a result:

- **1072 parents (91 groups)** attended the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program this quarter in schools and preschools in 54 geographic locations, **27% of these parents (294 people)** attending the course were those under supervision of child protection services or those parenting children with disabilities;
- **87% (79)** of all parenting program groups were carried out with local communities' resources. 12 groups were conducted with the support of Parenting Resource Libraries.
- **79 groups (87%)** were completed by the end of this quarter while 12 groups (13%) will continue trainings next quarter.

Outcomes of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program:

- 80% of parents demonstrate an assertive parenting style;
- 71% of parents reported that they know the reasons for a child's misbehavior;
- 84% of parents know and practice non-violent methods of discipline;
- 82% reported they know about the stages of a child's development;
- 78% reported understanding a child's feelings and emotions and practice proper reactions.

**For more information please see Annex 3 for a Success Story*

Forum for Trainers on a Parenting Skills Enhancement Program (10th-13th of June, 2013)	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three-day Trainer's Forum for 25 trainers implementing a Parenting Skills Enhancement Program will be conducted to exchange experiences, to practice interactive methods of group work, and to discuss sustainability of the program implementation on the national and local level. • 25 trainers exchange experiences, strengthen their capacity, discuss sustainability of the program implementation on the national and local level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-day Trainer's Forum for 18 trainers from 17 organizations implementing a Parenting Skills Enhancement Program was conducted to increase their trainer's capacity, exchange experiences, to practice interactive methods of group work, and to discuss sustainability of the program implementation on the national and local level**. • 100% of trainees reported improvement of knowledge and skills on methods of planning and design of training curriculum development, training needs assessment techniques, and follow-up support to transferring knowledge into practice through coaching

¹ the decrease in the number of communities from last quarter until now is due to staff turnover in educational institutions and the beginning of the vacation season in the educational system.

	<p>methodology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pool of trainers was enriched with 18 Master Trainers on Parenting Skills Enhancement Program from 12 local communities.
<p><i>Outcome:</i> Within the Forum the participants developed their draft action plans for the dissemination of the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program among child protection organizations in local communities and discussed ways of maintaining sustainability of the program in child protection organizations.</p> <p><i>**The number of participants is 20% less than planned because the participants were selected among those who had practical experience and were capable and enthusiastic to work as a master trainer on the program. The number of the participants meeting these criteria was only 22 people, but 4 of them could not come to the training although they were invited.</i></p>	

Family-type Care Development for Orphans (PRIDE model)

The PRIDE model is a key resource for the development and support of family-type community care and resource families (adoptive and foster parents). PRIDE helps foster and adoptive parents to develop five essential competencies including: protecting and nurturing children; meeting children’s developmental needs and addressing developmental delays; supporting relationships between children and their biological families; connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime, and working as a member of a professional team.

This quarter the PRIDE training program was implemented in **32** geographic locations against 37 communities in previous quarter² (Please, see Annex 1 Project Map) using local community resources.

- **66 prospective foster/adoptive parents** participated in the PRIDE pre-service training program in Brest oblast (Baranovichy, Ivatsevichi, Kamenets), Grodno oblast (Lida), Minsk oblast (Zhodino, Slutsk) and Minsk, Mogilev oblast (Bobruisk).
- **16 children were provided with family-type care** by the foster/adoptive parents trained this quarter. Seven of them (44%) have been adopted and **9** children (56%) were placed into foster care.
- **308 foster/adoptive parents** from Brest oblast (Kobrin, Baranovichy district, Luninets, Beryoza, Brest, Brest district, Ivatsevichi, Ivanovo, Drogichin), Grodno oblast (Grodno district, Berestovitsa, Ostrovets, Slonim, Oshmyany, Zelva, Smorgon), Minsk oblast (Minsk district, Luban’, Kletsk, Vileika), Rogachev (Gomel oblast), Mogilev oblast (Chausy, Kirovsk, Kostyukovich, Kichev) and Minsk mastered their parenting skills through the PRIDE in-service program.

Reformation of the local child protection system

Reformation of Child Protection system includes a shift from uncoordinated work of the different specialists who often duplicate and overlap their efforts, use of subjective and ungrounded decisions about removal of a child from a family and family re-unification, lack of knowledge, skills and services for rehabilitation of risky families, and considering institutionalization as the best option for orphaned children to the creation of well-coordinated, multidisciplinary teams trained on a family-centered approach, practicing evidence-based decision making based on professional investigation of child abuse and neglect, planning and implementing rehabilitation services according to the individual needs of each family and providing family-type care for children whose parents were unable to demonstrate visible progress in rehabilitation and unable to provide a safe family environment.

² Again, the decrease in the number of communities from last quarter until now is due to staff turnover in educational institutions and the beginning of the vacation season in the educational system.

Thirty eight (38) communities (40 local communities in previous quarter) from all over Belarus were in different stages of reformation of their child protection systems this quarter. The local child protection specialists trained as trainers in partner re-training institutes (Brest oblast, Minsk oblast, Vitebsk oblast and Minsk city Re-training Institutes) in the previous project years served as agents of change who disseminated new knowledge and skills on a Family-centered Approach in Child Protection Services to multidisciplinary teams of specialists in their respective communities. Trainings and workshops for child protection specialists were conducted in **Mogilev oblast** (Mogilev, Chausy, Kirovsk, Osipovichi, Krugloe, Krichev, Khotimsk, Kostyukovich), **Grodno oblast** (Grodno, Ostrovets, Beresovitsa, Smorgon, and Zelva), **Brest oblast** (Brest region, Zhabinka, Malorita, Lyakhovich, Luninets, Gantsevichy, Pruzhany, Pinsk, Baranovichy, Ivatsevichy, Kobrin), **Vitebsk oblast** (Polotsk, Glubokoe, Novopolotsk, Liozno, Senno, Orsha), and **Minsk oblast** (Dzerzhinsk, Borisov, Molodechno, Smolevichy, Soligorsk, Zhodino, Kletsk) and **Minsk**.

This quarter the TOT alumni provided step-down trainings using local community resources to:

- **341** community specialists **from 256** local schools, shelters, hospitals, and preschools using local community resources.

Strategic planning workshop for child protection reforms in Minsk oblast

One of the main problems in reformation of the child protection system is lack of vision and strategic planning skills in authorities responsible for the child protection system. They are not familiar with results-oriented approaches and hardly formulate goals and objectives. For their planning purposes they use lists of activities without analyses and formulation of goals, objectives, and expected results. To assist authorities in the planning of the child protection reform and implementation of the de-institutionalization model ChildFund Belarus conducted a strategic planning workshop (*29th-30th of April, 2013*) with child protection inspectors, heads of Committees on Juvenile Delinquents, and directors of social-pedagogic centers from **7** local communities of the Minsk oblast, Education Department of Minsk oblast Executive Committee, and Minsk oblast Re-training Institute. The local child protection specialists identified needs, barriers, and resources of child protection systems in their respective communities and those existing on the regional (oblast) level, discussed perspectives and opportunities for reformation of local child protection systems and set priorities for child protection development for 2013. **80%** of participants intend to develop three-year strategic plans on de-institutionalization in their communities. The OVC project team will provide consultations and informational support to the participants.

Sub-grant on Creation of Child Protection Resource Centers*

This quarter, the Minsk City Re-training Institute that was awarded with a sub-grant for \$3,500 received its official registration from the Humanitarian Aid Department. The sub-grantee started implementation of project activities according to the sub-grant project plan. The project team developed the list of equipment necessary for proper functioning of a Child Protection Resource Center. The Project Expert Group organized 2 working meetings to develop the concept for the database of specialists trained on ChildFund's innovative programs. At the inaugural roundtable, 29 child protection specialists from Minsk child protection organizations discussed best practices in child protection, analyzed needs and barriers to incorporation of innovative programs into child protection practice.

**For more information please see Annex 2 Sub-grants implemented in April 2013-June 2013*

Promoting sustainability of project services through networking and experience exchange

To support sustainability of community-based services developed under the OVC component for children and parents and increase motivation of local trainers, ChildFund publishes an informational newsletter on the PRIDE program. The bulletins give trainers an opportunity to exchange professional experiences and successes, report on new programs and training events, and disseminate information about project outcomes.

Information Newsletters on PRIDE, SafeCare, Family-Centered Approach and Parenting Skills Enhancement

<i>Program</i>	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information newsletters on PRIDE, Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, SafeCare will be published and disseminated on a semi-annual basis. At least 6 issues of information bulletins on PRIDE, the Parenting Program and SafeCare will be published and disseminated among alumni of ChildFund training programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This quarter <i>a new issue of the information newsletter on PRIDE</i> was published and disseminated to 74 trainers on the PRIDE program working in local communities and partner Re-training Institutes. *
<p><u>Note:</u> *In total, for Quarters 1-3 ChildFund disseminated 2 issues of the PRIDE newsletter, 1 information newsletter on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program and 1 information newsletter on the SafeCare Home Visitation Program. The PRIDE newsletters are available on ChildFund's web-site: www.cfi-belarus.org. An information newsletter on Child Protection and a new issue of the newsletter on the SafeCare Home Visitation program will be published next quarter.</p>	

<i>Targeted consultations and Interventions</i>	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular communication and needs assessment, site visits, a series of individual need-based targeted consultations on a Family-Centered Approach, PRIDE, the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, SafeCare Home Visitation Model and Family-Group Conference methodology will be provided by ChildFund project staff. Communication strategy with partner communities developed, coordinated and implemented. Information about current needs and anticipated problems collected and analyzed in a timely manner, corrective actions and support provided to ensure smooth implementation of the project activities. 	<p>This quarter OVC project staff continued providing individual consultations on ChildFund programs at the request of partners from communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 PRIDE trainers from 8 local communities received 16 consultations on the PRIDE methodology. This assistance was provided both via phone and e-mail. ChildFund's specialist on alternative family care visited two social pedagogic centers (Frunzensky District of Minsk and Moskovsky District of Minsk) where the PRIDE pre-service program is implemented. During the monitoring visits ChildFund's specialist discussed with local child protection specialists the needs and barriers to the incorporation of the PRIDE model into practice of social pedagogic centers, discussed perspectives of further partnership, and motivated PRIDE trainers to implement the comprehensive PRIDE program course. Recourse Libraries in 4 organizations in 4 local communities were supported with Manuals on Parenting Skills Enhancement Program. ChildFund specialist on Parenting Programs visited Kontakt Children's Creativity Center and Vetrax Creativity Center to monitor implementation of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program and discuss the perspectives of further of implementation of the program.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49 trainers from 47 organizations received individual consultations on implementation of the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program in local communities. • 7 specialists on SafeCare home visitation from 5 communities were assisted with 10 consultations on the SafeCare Home Visitation methodology (training fundamentals, fidelity assessment, conducting structured assessment of different modules, reviewing parents' performance, motivating parents).
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Life Skills for Institutionalized Children

Ninety two (92) institutionalized children continued mastering life skills through life skills education classes in Zhodino, Orsha, Chausy, Volozhin, Divin and Kobrin using equipment purchased for these purposes. They also continued mastering sewing and carpentry skills, mended old clothes, sewed new ones, and practiced cooking using domestic equipment.

Innovative prevention and rehabilitation services provided as follow-up to sub-grant projects

This quarter, the sub-grant projects completed in previous project years proved their sustainability. The sub-grantees continue providing services created under the sub-grants on a regular basis. This was possible due to the administrative and financial support of local authorities.

- *Aflatoun program of financial and social literacy for children*

The Aflatoun program of financial and social literacy for children from 6 to 17 years of age continued to be implemented in Kobrin and Grodno communities.

This quarter, **134** children (including children from at-risk families) in Kobrin school #3 and **8** children at Grodno special school for children with impaired hearing continued trainings on the program within school extra-curricula plans.

- *Other innovative prevention and rehabilitation services*

Family Support Center in Grodno preschool #100

A family support center established in a remote city area of Grodno continued provision of day care service for **30** preschool children (2-6 y.o.)

The Resource Center on Inclusive Education and Sensory Room services for children with impaired vision in Smorgon preschool #6

The Resource Center that was established under a sub-grant project in 2012 provided **55** parents and **10** specialists with comprehensive individual consultations and 8 group consultations on addressing and responding to the needs of children with visual impairments. The visitors were provided with thematic information designed to promote an inclusive model for preschool education. The Sensory Room provides habilitation opportunities (including activities in a sensory room) for preschool children with visual impairments from Smorgon and neighboring rural areas: regular visits are scheduled for children's groups, making it **72** children this quarter.

Day Care Centers: a Community-based Response to Child Maltreatment

Among risky families there are a large proportion of families experiencing periodic deterioration of their capacity to provide adequate care and support to their children. These situations are usually caused by environmental stress factors (loss of jobs, domestic violence, conflicts, health problems, etc.) coupled with parents' inability to control their addiction to alcohol. A child's removal from the family is still considered by many social service workers and child protection specialists as the best option to protect him/her from abuse and neglect. The Day Care Service aims to prevent unnecessary removal of children from the biological family. Day Care Centers help to keep family integrity through building a family-support model that is less traumatic for both children and parents. On the other hand, it will reduce the impact of psychological trauma for children's development providing safety and stability for kids. In addition, the created model will maintain custody and parent's responsibility for their kids. Day Care Centers will provide individual and group therapeutic interventions for children suffering from psychological trauma, programs addressing needs of abused and neglected children, creation of safe environment for daily activity of children, assisting them in education and help to develop children's life skills in 3 targeted communities (Smorgon, Rogachev, Polotsk)., Parents will be covered with counseling and support services to improve their parental skills, and maintain family integrity.

Note: The development of Day Care Centers is project match of the OVC/USAID component supported through a financial contribution received from one of ChildFund's major sponsors (private) from the USA.

This quarter Smorgon (Grodno oblast) and Rogachev (Gomel oblast) received registration from the Department of Humanitarian Aid and started implementation of projects aimed to create Day care centers. *Smorgon community* started purchasing equipment necessary for day care center functioning.

The Day Care Center established in Rogachev community started providing services for **15** children at risk for: regular care and support enhancing their development, individual and group therapeutic interventions, assistance in education and life skills trainings.

This quarter *Polotsk community (Vitebsk oblast)* was selected as the next pilot project site for establishing a day care center using a cost share mechanism. A Sub-grant agreement with a local education department was signed and **\$2,500** was transferred to their bank account and the process of registration in the Department of Humanitarian Aid has been initiated.

Objective 2. Improve the quality of training and education available to social service providers.

The goal of improving the quality of training and education available for social service providers was achieved through partnership with the network of re-training institutes and cooperation with Universities that train students of pedagogic and social work departments. This quarter a group of university faculty and selected re-training institutes completed the training course on a Family centered approach in child protection services and developed plans for its incorporation into their curriculum in the next academic year. By the end of this quarter 100% of all universities and re-training institutes in the country had at least one faculty trained on a Family centered approach. They have already started replicating the program at Gomel oblast Re-training Institute, Gomel State University and Minsk State Pedagogic University. As a result a new target group (students of social work and social pedagogy) emerged this quarter.

Input/Outputs:

- A Training course on a Family centered approach in child protection services for a group of 20 faculty from 6 universities and two (2) retraining institutes was completed
- An international training on Working with Traumatized children was conducted by Georgette Constantinou, a trainer contracted through the Institute for Human Services (USA) for 16 child protection specialists from Day Care Centers and re-training institutes

- A TOT on the Aflatoun methodology (social and financial competencies for children) was conducted for 15 specialists from 10 organizations and Day care centers
- A TOT for a group of **26** child protection specialists from Grodno oblast who were previously trained on a Family-Centered Approach program, was conducted by the request of and in partnership with faculty from Grodno oblast re-training institute
- **100%** of the participants of capacity building events organized by ChildFund reported improvement of their expertise in service provision to vulnerable children and families.

Outcomes:

As a result of project interventions the alumni of ChildFund’s training programs replicated innovative programs for students and child protection practitioners. In total, due to the efforts of the project team and its alumni:

- **448** child protection specialists representing **320** organizations including faculty from 6 universities and 5 re-training Institutes participated in capacity building events. Among them only 77 people (**17%**) were trained by ChildFund while the other **83%** were trained by alumni of its training programs through resources provided through the state educational system and community resources. This is evidence that communities are buying-in to ChildFund’s project interventions and methodologies.
- **100** students from the pedagogic and social work departments of 2 universities participated in trainings on a Family-Centered Approach.

Training Program on a Family-Centered Approach in Child Protection Services

Activity: Training program on a Family-centered Approach in Child Protection Services for the faculty of re-training institutes and universities <i>(15th -17th of April, 20th – 22nd of May, 2013)</i>	
Expected results	Actual targets achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 three-day training sessions for at least 15 faculties from Minsk, Brest, Mogilev and Vitebsk will be trained as the trainers for replication of the program at the oblast level. • 80% of the trainees learn about methods of organizing trainings for adults; types and particulars of active methods of learning; interactive teaching; and working with difficult trainees • 75% of trainers will replicate the program on a Family-centered Approach to Child Protection at the oblast level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twenty (20) participants: faculty from 6 Universities from Minsk, Brest, Mogilev, Grodno, Gomel and Vitebsk, and of Gomel oblast, Mogilev Oblast and Minsk Oblast Re-training Institutes, child protection specialists from local communities were trained on a Family-centered Approach to Child Protection (this quarter, 1 three-day training session and Training of Trainers was held)*. • 100% of the trainees improved their knowledge and skills on child abuse and neglect identification, case-planning, family engagement, family assessment, social investigation and rehabilitation, methods of organizing trainings for adults; types and particulars of active methods of learning; interactive teaching; and working with difficult trainees. • 65% of trainers (13 out of 20) plan to incorporate a Family-centered Approach to Child Protection programs into the regular curriculum for the 2013-2014 academic year. • 25% of trainers (5 out of 20) started providing trainings on the program for child protection specialists, university lecturers, and students this quarter. The replication of the training will continue next quarter at the

	start of the university academic year in September.
<p><i>Note:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In total, 5 three-day training sessions for 20 participants representing 6 Universities from Minsk, Brest, Mogilev, Grodno, Gomel and Vitebsk, and of Gomel oblast, Mogilev Oblast and Minsk Oblast Re-training Institutes, child protection specialists from local communities were conducted in Quarters 2-3. 	

- TOT for a group of **26** child protection specialists from Grodno oblast who were previously trained on Family-Centered Approach program, was conducted by the request and in partnership with faculties of Grodno oblast re-training institute (27th-29th of May, 2013). ChildFund covered the expenses for training materials, meals and trainer's fee. The trainees obtained knowledge and skills on the training topics, learned about the process of group work, adult learning techniques, interactive methods of teaching, and implementation of an M&E system.
- This quarter trainings and workshops on *Family-Centered Approach* program were conducted in 4 partner Re-training Institutes by the alumni of the TOTs conducted by ChildFund in previous project years. The higher education institutions from Gomel oblast joined the project. Two universities, Minsk State Pedagogic University and Gomel State University piloted the program for the students. All the trainings were conducted using internal resources from the educational entities. ChildFund provided its consultation to this activity.
 - **Grodno oblast Re-Training Institute:** 33 child protection specialists of 31 organizations trained
 - **Mogilev oblast Re-training Institute:** 25 child protection specialists of 15 organizations trained
 - **Minsk oblast Re-training Institute :** 137 child protection specialists of 96 organizations trained
 - **Minsk City Re-training Institute :** 18 child protection specialists of 18 organizations trained
 - **Gomel oblast Re-training Institute :** 109 child protection specialists of 84 organizations trained
 - **Minsk State Pedagogic University :** 75 students of Social Pedagogic Technology faculty trained
 - **Gomel State University;** 25 graduate students and 9 lecturers trained.

PRIDE model

This quarter, alumni of TOTs on the PRIDE Model that were trained by ChildFund in partnership with Brest oblast Re-training Institute in previous project years, provided training sessions and individual consultations on the selected topics from the PRIDE In-Service program. The trainees were child protection specialists involved in family care development in local communities. The trainings and consultations were organized using local communities' resources:

- **Brest oblast Re-Training Institute :** 21 child protection specialists of 21 organizations participated in the training on Working as a Professional Team Member;
- **Brest district social pedagogic center:** 19 child protection specialists of 16 organizations received individual consultations on Teamwork Toward Permanency and Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture, and Meet Developmental Needs of Foster Children

International Training on Working with Traumatized Children (15th-17th of April, 2013)

Note: The training was leveraged through a financial contribution received from one of ChildFund's major private donors as match to the USAID funded OVC component.

To strengthen the capacity of daycare center specialists, ChildFund organized an international training on Psycho-emotional Trauma in cooperation with the Institute for Human Services (USA).

- **16 child protection specialists** (day care center staff and faculty from re-training institutions) from 14 organizations were trained on supporting children who have experienced psychological trauma. The participants of the training obtained new knowledge and skills to identify the effects of trauma in a child and provide group and individual therapeutic interventions based on games, drawing, storytelling, and questioning. It is expected that the trained specialists will educate parents on trauma issues and build a partnership with them in order to maximize the effect of therapeutic interventions.

Training of Trainers on Aflatoun program of social and financial education for children and youth (17th-19th of June, 2013)

- **15 child protection specialists** of 10 organizations from target communities obtained specific knowledge and skills on the Aflatoun methodology that the trainers will apply while providing trainings for pre-teens and teens in day care centers.

The Aflatoun program is tailored to children's needs and covers a wide array of topics that help children to acquire basic life skills, develop their inner resources and social competencies, individual capacity to be integrated into the community, and to adapt and remain strong in the face of negative circumstances.

OBJECTIVE 3: Provide technical assistance to social service providers through policy development, methodology consultations, and advocacy efforts.

Advocacy for development of national legislation in child protection

This quarter the Ministry of Education continued working on the amendments to the Instruction #47 that regulates all aspects of multidisciplinary cooperation in the child protection system. At the request of the Ministry of Education, ChildFund's Task Group provided its suggestions, consultations, and feedback to the draft document. As a result, a draft version of the Instruction was prepared. The legal document included ChildFund's suggestions on investigation of child abuse and neglect and structured decision making based on the results of formal assessments.

On 11th of April 2013 the Ministry of Education held a working group meeting with representatives of UNICEF, ChildFund Task Group, the Academy of Post-Diploma Education, and child protection practitioners to discuss the perspectives of incorporation of Quality Standards on Investigation and Rehabilitation into the practice of the national child protection system. The participants of the meeting agreed that the incorporation of Quality Standards on Investigation and Rehabilitation will ensure better protection of rights of children and parents and lead to a reduced risk of ungrounded removal of children. As a result, the Ministry of Education assured the participants that the Quality Standards will be adopted as Methodological Recommendations for child protection services at the national level.

Cooperation with UNICEF within Domestic Violence Prevention and Rehabilitation Project

This quarter UNICEF issued a service-provision contract to ChildFund Belarus to develop a training curriculum and provide a series of trainings on Domestic violence in child protection services. ChildFund Belarus' Task Group on Child Protection started working on the elaboration of the training curriculum and training handouts. This activity will complement the training

program on a Family centered approach in child protection services. At the working meeting held on 13-14th of June 2013, the Task group discussed the plan of the training curriculum and defined the contents of the training handouts.

Promoting Family-type Care Development

ChildFund Belarus continued advocating for PRIDE countrywide expansion as a national program for training foster/adoptive parents. To achieve this, an essay contest "PRIDE Story" was announced among trainers of the PRIDE program. 24 essays referencing professional experience and achievements, and success stories of foster families were submitted to participate in the contest. The panel of the Contest which included representatives of national Mass Media, faculty of partner Re-Training institutes and the OVC project team selected 8 winners in three nominations: 1-How PRIDE changed the life of foster children, 2-PRIDE and foster parents, and 3-How PRIDE influenced my professional awareness. The information about the results of the Contest will be disseminated through national and local media.

A roundtable discussion on alternative family care was a part of the award ceremony. Among its participants were authorities from the Ministry of Education, child protection specialists implementing the PRIDE model for foster families, foster parents, USAID, and journalists from the most popular print and e-media. As a result of this event, journalists published a series of articles promoting family care for orphans, and the PRIDE model as an effective method to transform the child protection system toward de-institutionalization.

Promoting incorporation of the Aflatoun program of social and financial education for children and youth at the national level

In partnership with the Ministry of Education ChildFund continued promotion of the Aflatoun program at the national level. During the working meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education (10th of April 2013) an action plan of dissemination of the Aflatoun non-formal curriculum at the national level was agreed. At the request of the Ministry of Education ChildFund Belarus conducted a motivating workshop on the Aflatoun program for 16 specialists from Children's Creativity Centers from 11 local communities. This was the next step toward incorporation of the Aflatoun non-formal curriculum into practice of the network of the non-formal education institutions. According to the action plan the specialist of the National Institute of Education started adaptation of the Aflatoun non-formal curriculum to the requirements of the Belarus educational system and the country's cultural context.

III. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

• Coordination with USAID

Irina Mironova, ChildFund's Chief of Party, and Jahor Novikau, USAID's AOR communicated regularly through meetings, e-mails, and phone calls.

• Cooperation with ChildFund International Headquarters

ChildFund Belarus was in regular communication with ChildFund International's Headquarters in Richmond via e-mail and Skype.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

ChildFund Belarus has held weekly project review meetings in Minsk to strengthen project management, performance, and integration leading to enhanced cooperation and communication between project staff.

100% of the project team completed on-line training *Ethical Behavior toward Children Training* (<http://lingoslearning.org>).

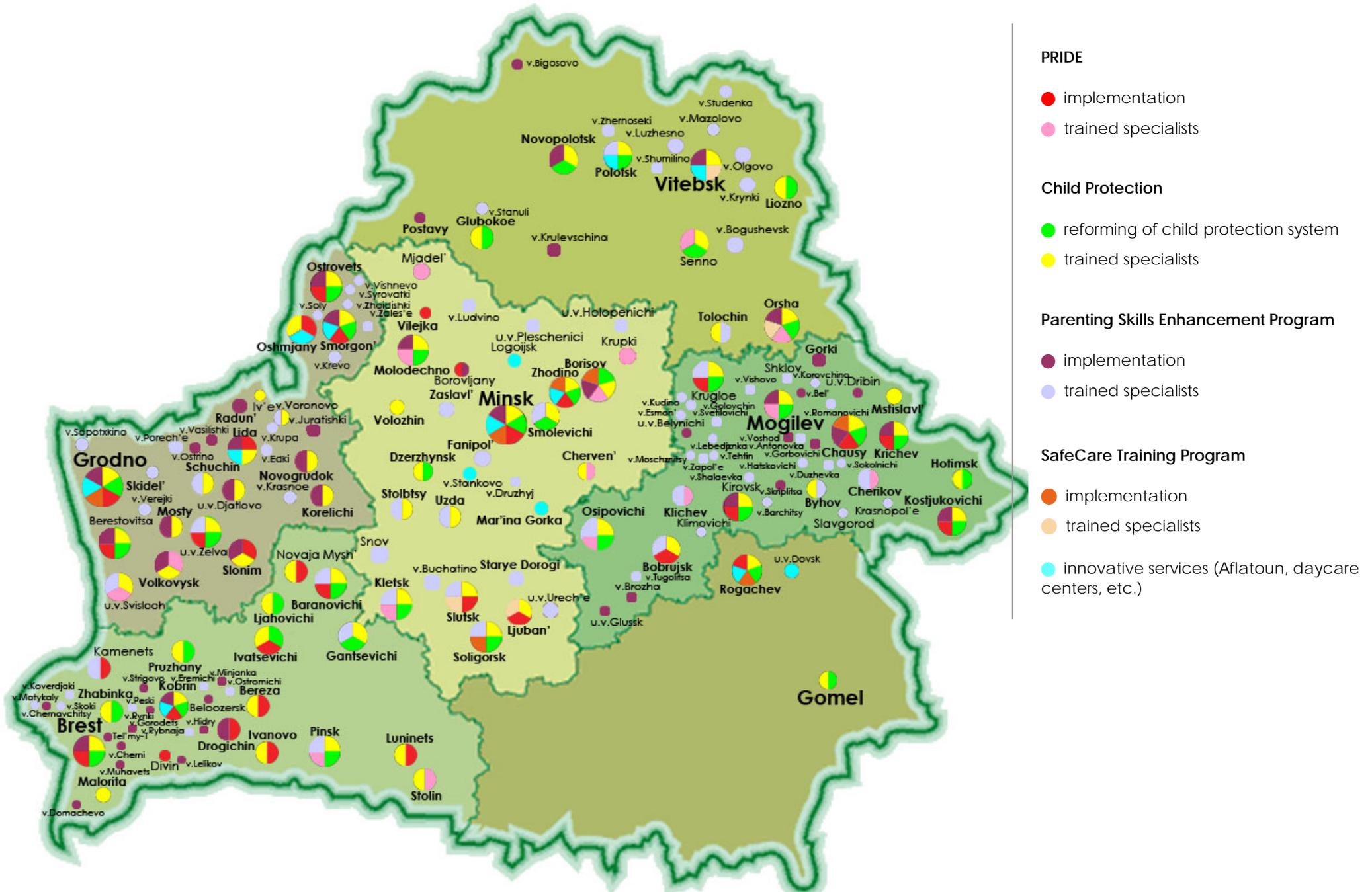
Irina Mironova, Chief of Party, improved her managerial capacity through participation in ChildFund's Regional Annual Leadership meeting in Panama in April 2013. The expenses for her trip were charged to the USAID project and pre-approved by USAID via the last project modification. In May, she took part in the Second International Summit on Financial Education for Children and Youth in Istanbul. This trip was supported by Children and Youth Finance International and coordinated with USAID's AOR.

V. BUDGET

Project expenses for the period between April-June 2013 totaled **\$98,966.56** (26% of the annual budget) including ICR.

The SF-425 report will be submitted under separate cover by ChildFund's Headquarters.

Annex 1: Geographic expansion of OVC project component (April-June 2013)





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Annex 2. Sub-grants implemented (April 2013–June 2013)

#	Sub-Grantee Name	Project name	Grant amount	Status
I. Creation of Resource Centers on Child Protection:				
1	Minsk City Re-Training Institute	CITY_DOM	\$3,500	In progress May 8, 2013 November 8, 2013

I. Creation of Resource Centers on Child Protection:

Sub-grantee name: Mogilev City Social-Pedagogic Center Project duration: 8 months	Grant amount: \$3,500	Project dates: May 8, 2013 November 8, 2013
Sub-grantee contact information: 1 st Mendeleev lane, 50 office 2, Minsk, Belarus		
Project name:	CITY_DOM	

Brief description:

The goal of the project is to create a system of professional supervision and support for child protection specialists that have been trained on and are working with PRIDE, the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, and the Family-Centered Approach Program through creation of a Resource Center on Child Protection at Minsk City Re-Training Institute. The resource center will develop its capacity to monitor and assess the needs of specialists working in Minsk area for supervision, to timely provide on-the-job trainings, and serve as an information exchange center for the child protection professional community.

Planned services and planned number of beneficiaries:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| • Working meetings of the Project Expert Group (on development of the concept for the database of child protection specialists trained on innovative programs in Minsk) | 13 |
| • Counseling service for child protection specialists on their concerns and problems they face in implementation of innovative methodologies | 50 |
| • Initial roundtable for child protection specialists | 29 |
| • Workshops on burn out prevention for child protection specialists | 29 |
| • Workshop on implementation of PRIDE program | 25 |
| • Workshop on implementation of Family-Centered Approach program | 25 |
| • Publication of methodological guidelines on incorporation of innovative methodologies into child protection practice | 150 copies |
| • Project Expert Group will develop the document that regulates functioning of Resource Center CITY_DOM | |

Established services and number of beneficiaries:

	Number of participants:	Total	In the reported period
• 2 working meetings of the Project Expert Group on development of the concept for the database of child protection specialists trained on innovative programs in Minsk		13 specialists (1 male/12 females)	13 specialists (1 male/12 females)
• Counseling service was provided for child protection specialists on concerns and problems they face applying innovative methodologies into practice		15 specialists (15 females)	15 specialists (15 females)
• At the Inaugural Roundtable the child protection specialists were introduced to best practices related to incorporation of innovative		29 specialists (1 male/28	29 specialists (1 male/28

methods, discussed, analyzed their needs, barriers and ways of applying innovative programs in child protection practice

females)

females)

Comments on the project activity:

- The Project Expert group of child protection specialists was formed. The Project Expert Group developed a concept for the database of specialists trained on ChildFund's innovative programs. The project team defined the list of equipment necessary for the effective functioning of the Child Protection Resource Center.

Annex 3 Successful parenting – responsible parenting

There is universal agreement that optimal support for children comes from a caring and protective family. Families are the first line of protection and care for children and the best environment for providing the conditions for healthy development and supporting social interaction. Therefore, preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families is critically important. This can be prevented in some cases by enabling parents to improve their parental skills and ability to address the developmental needs of their children.

Anna is a single mother of two boys, Zhenya (6 years old) and Vanya (12 years old) from Minsk. A few years ago, this family's life was very different. When Anna's second marriage broke up, she started abusing alcohol. She lost her job, often left her children alone, without any supervision, sitting hungry for the whole day while she spent time with her drinking companions. The house was a mess, but Anna did not worry about it. She did not care about the needs of the boys, was not able to support them in difficult situations nor she could maintain discipline. Anna often lost her temper and shouted at her sons. The boys' deteriorating relationship with their mother negatively affected their well-being. Vanya displayed growing disinterest, sadness and withdrawal from contacts with his peers and poor grades in school. Zhenya was diagnosed with developmental delays in the cognitive sphere and was lagging behind his peers in preschool.



Vanya and Zhenya

In 2012 this family attracted the attention of the local child protection system and the children were removed from the home and placed in a shelter. Anna was referred to the Parenting Skills Enhancement program at Soviet district socio-pedagogical center. This training program became a part of the family support services provided by the socio-pedagogical center to parents at risk for family separation. Specialists of this center became certified trainers in this program due to their participation in a training of trainers (TOT) workshop conducted by ChildFund under its USAID funded *Community Services to Vulnerable Groups* project. As a result of her participation in the Parenting Skills Enhancement training program, Anna was equipped with methods to handle her own stress and has applied non-violent methods to discipline her children. She realized how important it is for a parent to listen to a child and how much it means for a child to grow in a safe and caring family. The program helped Anna to understand the negative consequences of child abuse and neglect. Before the training, Anna did not even consider that by leaving children hungry and without supervision for a long time she abused them. She also discussed the effects of parents' alcohol abuse on children at the trainings. "I did not even think that drinking alcohol may have negative consequences on my children", Anna said shyly, holding back tears.

Today, it's hard to believe that just a year ago this family had serious problems. Anna pulled herself up, quit drinking, found a job, and set her apartment in order (she even made repairs on it). The neighbors no longer saw Anna drunk. Zhenya and Vanya were returned to their mother from the shelter and the relationships between mother and sons significantly improved. Anna succeeded in restoring her sons' attachment to her. Anna tries to spend more time with her children. With her younger son, Zhenya, she plays, draws, and teaches him to read to prepare the boy for first grade. The older son, Vanya, has improved communication with his classmates, made new friends, and improved his grades at school. He has found a new hobby: he dances and sings rap. Anna supports Vanya in his new interests and hobbies. Now Anna's family has a new tradition of gathering at the dinner table and sharing the news and achievements of the day.

"I realized that to be a good parent, you need to make a significant effort," Anna said. "It is not enough just to love your children; you need to develop your parenting skills in order to ensure their well-being and bright future".