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**QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT**  
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Component I “Supporting Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Belarus”

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Development Objective: Democracy, human rights and development

## 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 ChildFund was focused on ensuring sustainability of the project achievements in countrywide dissemination of de-institutionalization model that was developed in pilot communities. The main elements of the model are: 1) an effective child protection system, 2) development of alternative family-type care for orphans and 3) support services to families at-risk.

Reformation of the child protection system was supported through the implementation of our Family-centered approach. By the end of December 2013, 168 communities from all over Belarus had specialists trained on the Family-centered approach and were using its methods and tools in their everyday work with families. Among these communities, 41 (60%) have begun child protection system reforms and had multidisciplinary teams trained by alumni of ChildFund training program. This quarter, two new communities (Malorita and Kamenetsk, Brest oblast) started receiving training by multidisciplinary teams.

Furthermore, a new type of service for abused and neglected children and their families was successfully piloted using ChildFund donor and USAID match funds. This complex package of services effectively decreases the risk of child abuse and neglect and prevents institutionalization of children between 10-15 years old. 50% of children attending these centers were removed from the register of the child protection system due to an improved family environment. The positive results of these services were presented and highly appreciated by the Ministry of Education and oblast level authorities from all over Belarus at the final project conference.

Additionally, Vitebsk oblast made significant progress in the development of family-type care. This quarter, in partnership with Vitebsk oblast re-training institute, a group of child protection specialists from 21 communities responsible for family-type care completed PRIDE program training. Thus, by the end of this quarter, 100% of communities in Vitebsk oblast, including Vitebsk city, oblast adoption center, Oblast re-training institute and Vitebsk University have specialists trained on PRIDE methodology. Most of them (76%) have already started using it in their everyday work.

Communities continued providing prevention and rehabilitations services that were created in the past (e.g., home visitation, parenting education, PRIDE, and training for multidisciplinary teams) using allocated community resources. Considering the difficult economic situation, this fact proves again the effectiveness of the project interventions. To increase motivation of trainers/specialists implementing new services in the communities and insure information exchange among partner communities, ChildFund published a regular informational newsletter. This quarter there were

two newsletters on the PRIDE program and Parenting Skills Enhancement program. The newsletters provide trainers an opportunity to exchange professional experiences and successes, report on new programs and training events, and disseminate information about project outcomes. *(For more information, please see information under Objective 1).*

Significant progress was achieved in improving the quality of training and education available for social service providers through partnership with the network of re-training institutes as well as cooperation with Universities, which train students of pedagogic and social work departments. The group of university faculty who were trained on the Family Centered Approach in the previous project year achieved remarkable results: they developed and approved new training courses on the Family centered approach in child protection services, which were approved by the university authorities for implementation this academic year. ChildFund will monitor its implementation. Thus 100% of all universities in Belarus have officially incorporated into their curriculum the Family centered approach in child protection services. This is a major step toward the sustainability of changes brought to the child protection system in Belarus.

Another element of sustainability is the innovative in-job support services for child protection specialists that were piloted by the country's first Resource Center on Child Protection in Minsk. This Center was created within the sub-grant provided by ChildFund to Minsk City Re-training institute. Through the series of supervision workshops, development of a data base, and established counseling services, the Resource center developed its capacity to monitor and assess the needs of specialists working in Minsk area for supervision, to provide timely on-the-job trainings, and serve as an information exchange center for the child protection professional community. The Ministry of Education highly appreciated the result of the sub-grant and issued a decree on the creation of Resource Centers on Child Protection in each oblast of Belarus. This policy development comes as a result of multiple advocacy efforts taken by ChildFund over the course of cooperation with the Ministry. The decree creates a favorable environment for establishment of centers of on-the-job coaching and supervision for child protection practitioners, which are essential for sustainable implementation of innovative child protection programs and services. This opens new opportunities for partnership with oblast level re-training institutes and the further improvement of quality education available for child protection specialists.

At the request of UNICEF, ChildFund Belarus developed a new training course on domestic violence in child protection services that was piloted in four communities in Brest oblast and received high assessment from the participants. This training course will complement the existing training program on the Family centered approach in child protection services, which lacked this component. The expense for this work was covered by UNICEF.

The figures below illustrate the main outputs of project implementation during the period between October 1 and December 31, 2013:

- 1415 parents and 121 children accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services.
- 1299 child protection specialists and local authorities from 792 organizations participated in capacity building events provided by partner re-training institutes, alumni of TOTs and ChildFund specialists.
- 114 specialists -- alumni of ChildFund training programs -- were supported with targeted consultations, and methodological and informational materials provided by ChildFund.
- The sub-grant project on establishing the Resource Center on Child protection in Minsk City Re-Training Institute was completed and began functioning independently.
- 168 geographic locations were covered by project interventions.
- Training program on volunteer management (Oct 21-22, 2013) for child protection specialists as part of Family Group Conferences program was completed.
- Training program on the Family Type Care Development for orphans (PRIDE methodology) for Vitebsk oblast was completed in partnership with Vitebsk oblast Re-training Institute (Oct 1-3 and Nov 4-6, 2013).
- 100% of all universities in the country incorporated into their university curriculum the 76hour 'Family Centered Approach' course.

### C. CHALLENGES/CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

- The restructuring reform carried out in the previous quarter, in practice translated into dismissals and pay cuts combined with an overload in the education sector. The tension in the education sector and staff turnover increased significantly, directly impacting the sustainability of the changes introduced and supported by ChildFund-Belarus' work. Staff turnover severely affects the education sector and threatens sustainability of the introduced changes. Out of 160 trained specialists on the Family Centered Approach in 2010, 50% left the education sector. To withstand the challenge, emphasis should be placed on the capacity building of Re-training Institutes, Universities and Resource centers as the sources of sustainable reproduction of new educated cadre for child protection system.
- Gomel Oblast Re-training Institute expressed interest in receiving trainings by ChildFund. Considering that over the course of project (Year 1-8), Gomel oblast rejected invitations to cooperate, this inquiry is a major shift of Gomel oblast's attitude towards acquiring new knowledge on child protection and introducing change within the oblast system. ChildFund will look for opportunities to support this willingness of Gomel to improve its child protection system.
- The working meeting of re-training institutes was postponed. ChildFund specialists assessed the Institutes' progress to date, their current needs and capacity with respect to sustainable provision of child protection programs to community specialists. The assessment revealed the Institutes' lack of preparedness with regard to the unified curriculum development. To tackle the Institutes' current needs and prepare them for the working meeting, other activities were planned for the subsequent quarters:
  - Gomel Oblast Re-training Institute: trainings on Family Centered Approach and PRIDE pre-service programs;
  - Brest Oblast Re-training Institute: technical and financial support to PRIDE pre-service program;
  - 1 TOT for trainers of Mogilev, Vitebsk, Brest and Minsk Oblast Re-training Institutes (to enable trainers on the Family Centered Approach, PRIDE and Parenting Skills Enhancement Program to train new cohorts of trainers at their respective communities).
 USAID AOTR was informed about this change.

#### D. LESSONS LEARNED

- The training for a group of university faculty on the Family-Centered Approach proved to be very effective in promoting the innovative programs and ensuring sustainability of its implementation in the regions. It would be promising to train them on all the methodologies (PRIDE, Parenting, SafeCare, etc.) that are the foundation for ChildFund's de-institutionalization model.
- While the majority of specialists trained on the Family-Centered Approach to Child Protection apply their knowledge at work, the measurable effect of deinstitutionalization in a community is generated when the whole multidisciplinary team, together with local authorities, underwent training.
- To enhance the learning effect of the seminars and add flexibility to the schedule, a helpful practice was introduced by several Re-training Institutes: training sessions are conducted by a team of trainers that include trainers from Re-training institutes ('academics') and trainers from local Socio-pedagogic centers ('practitioners'). This quarter Vitebsk Re-training Institute collaborated with Polotsk socio-pedagogic center to conduct one of training programs.

## 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 the support of sub-grant and follow-up activities supported in the previous project year. 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 an information newsletter on PRIDE and Parenting Skills Enhancement Program as well as individual consultations on fidelity of methodologies.

In this quarter so far:

- **1415 parents** accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services;
- **121 children** were covered by community-based prevention and rehabilitation services;
- **114 child protection specialists** were supported with consultations, methodological and information materials provided by ChildFund;
- **Two information newsletters** on PRIDE and Parenting Skills Enhancement Program were issued and disseminated among partner 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 risk of the 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 provided home visitation services for **28 parents with 28 young children** (0-5 years old) from at-risk families in **9 communities** (Vitebsk, Orsha, Minsk, Chausy, Zhodino, Borisov, Rogachev, Soligorsk, and Grodno). Home visitors trained the parents on how to plan and implement activities with their children, respond appropriately to child behaviors, improve home safety, and address health issues.

Despite financial and human resource constraints experienced by the social service and education sectors, specialists in the communities actively looked for opportunities to implement and disseminate the program to the benefit of the communities' most vulnerable groups:

- Specialists of Soligorsk Socio-pedagogic Center reached out to smaller villages and provided training to local psychologists. They also arranged for regular contact and post-training support to the visitors in these remote areas.
- Specialists of Chausy Socio-pedagogic Center cooperated with Chausy Central Hospital to provide Home visitation service to families of traumatized children and to pregnant women with social risk.
- The leader of Vitebsk based NGO 'Positive movement' recruited volunteers that will be trained on the Home visitation program to provide the service to families with HIV-positive status or substance dependent parents.

### ***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:

- **795 parents** (66 groups) attended the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program this quarter in schools and preschools in 41 geographic locations, **36% of these parents (285 people)** attending the course were those under supervision of child protection services or those parenting children with disabilities.
- **100%** of all parenting groups were carried out with local communities' resources.
- **26 groups (39%)** were completed by the end of this quarter while 40 groups (61%) will continue trainings next quarter.

### Outcomes of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program:

- 80% of parents reported they demonstrate an assertive parenting style;
- 82% of parents reported that they know the reasons for a child's misbehavior;
- 76% of parents know and practice non-violent methods of discipline;
- 77% reported they know about the stages of a child's development;
- 83% reported understanding a child's feelings and emotions and practice proper reaction.

### *Family-type Care Development for Orphans (PRIDE model)*

The PRIDE model is the resource for the development and support of family-type community care and resource for 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 **44** geographic locations in **49** organizations (please see Annex 1 Project Map) by the alumni of ChildFund using local community resources:

- **132 prospective foster/adoptive parents** participated in the PRIDE pre-service training program in Brest oblast (Kobrin, Luninets, Baranovichi, Ivanovo), Minsk oblast (Zhodino, Slutsk; Moskovski, Leninski, Frunzenski, Pervomaiski and Sovetski rayons of Minsk city), Grodno oblast (Svisloch, Berestovitsa), and Vitebsk oblast (Liozno, Senno, Ushachi).
- **14 children were provided with family-type care** by the foster/adoptive parents trained this quarter. Five of them (38%) were adopted and seven children (50%) were placed into foster care.
- **460 foster/adoptive parents** from communities of four oblasts mastered their parenting skills through the PRIDE in-service program: Brest oblast (Kobrin, Luninets, Baranovichi, Ivanovo, Drogichin, Ivatsevichi), Grodno oblast (Slonim, Smorgon, Volkovysk, Svisloch, Vileika), Minsk oblast (Minsk Moskovsky rayon, Minsk district), Vitebsk oblast (Shumilino, Polotsk, Gorodok, , Novopolotsk, Chashniki, Lepel, Verkhnedvinsk, Tolochin, Liozno, Glubokoe, Senno, Braslav, Postavy), and Mogilev oblast (Kruglyany, Krichev).
- **Three Re-training Institutes** (Grodno, Brest and Minsk) provided courses for prospective foster/adoptive parents.

### *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 a perception that institutionalization is 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.*

By the end of December 2013, **68** communities from all over Belarus had specialists trained on the Family-centered approach and using its methods and tools in their everyday work with families. Among these communities, **41 (60%)** were undergoing child protection system reforms and have already had multidisciplinary teams that were trained by alumni of ChildFund training program.

This quarter two new communities (Malorita and Kamenetsk, Brest oblast) started training for multidisciplinary teams. In **nineteen (19) communities**, local child protection specialists that were trained as trainers in partner Re-training institutes continued training for their peers from the educational system in their respective communities, including:

- **Brest oblast** (Kamenetsk, Baranovichi, Brest, Kobrin, Malorita),
- **Vitebsk oblast** (Polotsk, Vitebsk),
- **Gomel oblast** (Rogachev, Gomel), Grodnon oblast (Grodno),
- **Mogilev oblast** (Mogilev, Chausy, Khotimsk), and

- **Minsk oblast** (Kletsk, Derzhinsk, Uzda, Zhodino, Minsk rayon, Minsk city).

In total, this quarter the TOT alumni provided step-down trainings using local community resources for **995** community specialists from **618** organizations (schools and preschools, social support centers, hospitals and enterprises) of **406** localities.

### *Promoting sustainability of the project services through networking and experience exchange*

To increase motivation of local trainers and insure information exchange among partner communities, ChildFund published a regular informational newsletter on the PRIDE program. The newsletters provide an opportunity for trainers to exchange professional experiences and successes, report on new programs and training events, and disseminate information about project outcomes.

<i>Information Newsletters on PRIDE, SafeCare, Family-Centered Approach and Parenting Skills Enhancement Program</i>	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information newsletters on PRIDE, Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, SafeCare will be published and disseminated on a semi-annual basis.</li> <li>• 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 during a project year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This quarter <i>a new issue of the newsletter on PRIDE</i> was published and disseminated to <b>86</b> trainers on the PRIDE program working in local communities and partner Re-training Institutes.</li> <li>• An issue on the Parents Skills Enhancement Program presented the updates on the program's implementation to <b>342</b> trainers from <b>129</b> communities that use the program in their work.</li> </ul> <p>* The newsletter on PRIDE and Parents Skills Enhancement Program are available on ChildFund's web-site: <a href="http://www.cfi-belarus.org">www.cfi-belarus.org</a></p>

<i>Targeted consultations and Interventions</i>	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular communication and needs assessment, site visits, a series of individual need-based targeted consultations on the Family-Centered Approach, PRIDE, the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, SafeCare Home Visitation Model and the Family-Group Conference methodology will be provided by ChildFund project staff.</li> <li>• Communication strategy with partner communities developed, coordinated and implemented.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• <b>11</b> PRIDE trainers from <b>11</b> local communities received <b>16</b> consultations on PRIDE methodology. This assistance was provided via phone and e-mail. ChildFund specialist on alternative family care visited Divin orphanage where the PRIDE pre-service program and Life Skills for Teenagers programs are implemented. During the monitoring visit a ChildFund specialist attended a Life skills session, discussed with specialists how they guide children's career choices. During the discussion, specialists also emphasized that children's behavior and priorities vividly illustrate concepts of PRIDE, and it is important for teachers at orphanages be aware of these special needs of children and know how to handle them.</li> <li>• <b>20</b> university faculty were assisted with consultations on design and development curriculum for the course 'Family Centered Approach in Child Protection services'.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>18</b> specialists received consultations on methods of volunteer recruitment and organization of family rehabilitation work with the help of volunteer resources.</li> <li>• <b>57</b> trainers from <b>39</b> organizations received individual consultations on implementation of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program in local communities.</li> <li>• <b>8</b> specialists on SafeCare home visitation from 6 communities were assisted with <b>8</b> consultations on SafeCare Home Visitation methodology (training fundamentals, fidelity assessment, conducting structured assessment of different modules, reviewing parent's performance, motivating parents).</li> </ul>
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<b>Training on Volunteer Management, 21-22 Oct 2013</b>	
Expected results	Actual targets achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 20 specialists will be trained by Family Group Conferences on Volunteer Management</li> <li>• 80% of the participants will report improvement of specific knowledge and skills related to training topics</li> <li>• 75% of the participants will organize the activities of volunteers implementing Family Group Conferences methodology in local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>20</b> specialists from <b>18</b> communities participated in the training "Family Group Conferences. Volunteer Management" (session two).</li> <li>• 100% of specialists report application of knowledge and skills they acquired at session 1: use the method of family councils, conduct information sessions for specialists of their community on Family Group Conferences.</li> <li>• 70% of the participants devised plans to recruit volunteers, among them the most active already started researching the target groups in <b>11 communities</b>: Grodno, Polotsk, Chausy, Baranovich, Rogachev, Soligorsk, Kobrin, Kletsk, Borisov, Molodechno, and Oshmiany.</li> </ul>

### **Life Skills for Institutionalized Children**

Seventy nine (79) 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, repaired old clothes, created new ones, and practiced cooking.

### **Sub-grant on Creation of Resource Center on Child Protection**

In November 2013, Minsk City Re-training Institute completed their sub-grant project co-financed by ChildFund. The project 'Resource Center on Child Protection' aimed 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. Through the series of supervision workshops, development of a database and established counseling services, the Resource center developed its capacity to monitor and assess the needs of specialists working in Minsk area for supervision, to provide timely on-the-job trainings, and serve as an information exchange center for the child protection professional community.

In November and December 2013, this Resource Center on Child Protection, the first in the country, continued providing its resources to child protection specialists of Minsk city:

- Supervision service for foster/adoptive parents (PRIDE in-service) are held once a month for **30** participants;
- Task group meetings to discuss and develop a set of methodological guidelines -- 'Challenges in innovative programs implementation' -- are held once a month (group of **8** practitioners);

- Training session for 30 specialists on 'Parents Skills Enhancement Program' (organized with the support by ChildFund);
- Training session on 'Family Centered Approach' for 50 child protection specialists.

*For more information, please see Annex 2 Sub-grant report*

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

*Among families at-risk, 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. At the same time, the center reduces the impact of psychological trauma for children's development by providing safety and stability for children aged 10 – 15 years. In addition, the created model will maintain custody and parent's responsibility for their kids. The development of Day Care Centers is a 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 the Day Care Centers project was finished. At the final stage, the Task Group of practitioners developed guidelines for creating and running a day care center in a community. The guidelines were published and distributed through the network of the project partners including Belarus Ministry Education, Belarusian universities and oblast Re-training Institutes, and the network of 135 socio-pedagogical centers with the intention to support sustainability of the service development and implementation at the national level.

Three pilot project sites in Polotsk (Vitebsk oblast), Smorgon (Grodno oblast), and Rogachev (Gomel oblast), serving 38 at-risk children finished their projects and reported the following results:

- 14 children were prevented from being institutionalized
- 50% of children who were served by the Day Care service were removed from the register of the child protection system
- 0 cases of new criminal records/transgression among children attending the Day Care center in Rogachev school

Sustainability of the innovative services is insured through:

- Two Oblast Re-training Institutes in Grodno and Minsk incorporated new training courses on psychological trauma of abused and neglected children
- Community resources were allocated for all three pilot centers to sustain the service provision in 2014
- Ministry of Education expressed its interest in dissemination of this innovative service all over Belarus

Day Care centers in Smorgon and Rogachev started to provide the Program for children from alcoholic families, which helped them to withstand crisis situations and built their self-confidence and prepared them to participate in matters affecting them. The program contributed to the formation of safe, nurturing relationships in their own future families.

In December 2013, 48 child protection specialists participated in the final conference of the project. Participants represented the Ministry of Education, Education departments of 3 oblast- and 19 district-level Executive Committees as well as experts from socio-pedagogic centers and NGOs. At the conference, the project activities and results were presented; participants assessed project accomplishments and discussed the prospects of replicating successful projects in other regions of the country. Participants agreed that in many cases the service of day care is a sound alternative to the unnecessary removal of children from families/shelter placement. All participants adopted a Resolution to be sent to the Ministry of Education with a request to amend regulatory documents in a way that will allow and encourage creation of day care centers.

### ***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:

- 422 child protection specialists representing 312 organizations participated in capacity building events

<b>Training TOT on Family Type Care Development for orphans (PRIDE methodology), Vitebsk Oct 1-3 and Nov 4-6, 2013</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Actual targets achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training sessions on PRIDE pre-service (2 three-day sessions) will be conducted in partnership with Vitebsk oblast Re-training Institute for 20 specialists involved in family type care development.</li> <li>• 80% of specialists report improvements of specific knowledge and skills related to the training topics.</li> <li>• 75% of participants will improve the system of training for prospective foster/adoptive families in their communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27 specialists representing 21 communities and Vitebsk city participated in the two three-day sessions on PRIDE pre-service*. The number exceeds the planned target by 35% due to the interest and enthusiasm of the Re-training Institute and Vitebsk University, as they realize the importance and are willing to educate the maximum number of specialists in the community and university.</li> <li>• 77% of the trained specialists applied new knowledge and skills in their work with prospective and current foster parents; specialists working at children's shelters partially incorporated the course content into their work with university students and the Re-training Institute.</li> </ul>

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

This quarter trainings and workshops on Family-Centered Approach program were conducted in 3 partner Re-training Institutes by the alumni of the TOTs conducted by ChildFund in previous project years.

- **196 child protection specialists of 201 organizations** participated in the training program on the Family-Centered Approach at Vitebsk oblast Re-Training Institute.
- **29 child protection specialists of 28 organizations** participated in a training on the Family-Centered Approach conducted at Mogilev oblast Re-training Institute.
- **62 child protection specialists of 60 organizations** participated in trainings on the Family-Centered Approach at Minsk City Re-training Institute.

### **Sustainability of Family-Centered Approach through Universities**

This quarter the alumni of the training on the Family Centered Approach for academic staff of all country Universities (100%) held in the previous Year continued promoting implementation of the program as an integral part of university courses and achieved remarkable results: Brest and Mogilev State Universities developed and received approval of a curriculum for a 76 hour long course -- 'Family Centered Approach in Child Protection'. Trainers announced that this coherent program of innovative content is available for introduction by other Universities and Re-training Institutes. This quarter so far:

- Grodno State University included modules of the Family Centered Approach into the courses 'Techniques of socio-pedagogic activities' and 'Family work'. A 72 hour course 'Family Centered Approach in Child Protection' is designed and undergoing approval, and is expected to open in Feb 2014. University students participated in the research on practical application of the Family Centered approach.
- Minsk State Pedagogic University developed curriculum for the 'Family Centered Approach in Child Protection'. The 76 hour course is undergoing approval and will open in Feb 2014.
- Mogilev State University developed and approved curriculum for the 'Family Centered Approach in Child Protection' that is integrated into the university study plan as a part of programs for 'Social pedagogy', 'Social work', and 'Psychology'.

- Gomel State University received approvals for modules on the Family Centered Approach to be 8-12 hour long parts of five university courses.
- Brest State University will open the developed and approved course in Feb 2014.

### ***PRIDE model***

This quarter alumni of TOTs on the PRIDE Model that were trained by ChildFund in partnership with Vitebsk oblast Re-training Institute in Year 8 provided training sessions and individual consultations to local child protection specialists involved in family-type care development. A total of **99 specialists** participated in trainings in Vitebsk Re-training Institute and Vitebsk socio-pedagogic center, in Rossony and Miory communities of Vitebsk oblast, and also in Divin orphanage.

### ***Follow-up Activity on SafeCare Home Visitation Program for child protection specialists***

Following the replication sessions conducted in Year 8 by TOT SafeCare Home Visitation Program alumni, **25 specialists** from **3 communities** continued to provide home visitation service using SafeCare model. However, due to the extremely limited human and financial resources, this number amounts to 50% of the specialists that attended the replication sessions.

In Zhodino, Education Department of City Executive Committee initiated a home visitation seminar for **9 local specialists** and invited alumni of TOT on SafeCare Home Visitation Program to conduct it. Such expression of official interest and support indicates favorable environment for program dissemination.

## **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 the process of detection of child abuse and neglect and removal of a child from a family. At the request of the Ministry of Education, ChildFund participated in the revision and editing of this key policy document:

- The legal document comprises ChildFund's propositions on Social investigation standards and Rehabilitation standards.
- The following documents developed by ChildFund are included as supplements: Criteria of child abuse and neglect, Evaluation forms, a 'Family Rehabilitation Plan' form. These too will serve the unified framework for child protection specialists to make structured decisions based on the results of formal assessments.

Continuous efforts by ChildFund to promote the notion of on-the-job/post-training support and coaching to specialists resulted in the official support of Resource Centers on Child Protection (*Decree by the Ministry of Education # 803, art. 2.7; Nov 4, 2013*). The Decree encourages institutions responsible for education of social services providers to organize centers of post-training support for local specialists.

### ***Cooperation with UNICEF within Domestic Violence Prevention and Rehabilitation Project***

At the request of UNICEF, ChildFund Belarus developed a new training course on domestic violence in child protection services. This quarter it was piloted in four communities in Brest oblast and received high assessment from the participants. This training course will complement the existing training program on the Family centered approach in child protection services that lacked this component. The expense for this work was covered by UNICEF.

- ChildFund specialists contributed to the development of the 'Domestic Violence Protocol for Interdisciplinary Cooperation': the previously developed ChildFund standards -- 'Social investigation in domestic violence cases' -- were included into the Protocol

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

At the Aflatoun Belarus National Roundtable Meeting organized by ChildFund in September 2013, the National Task Group was initiated to facilitate the strategic promotion of Aflatoun throughout the national education system. The Task Group includes experts and decision makers from Ministry of Education, Education Department of Minsk Oblast Executive Committee, National Bank, National Institute of Education, NGOs 'Otkrovenie' and SOS-Kinderdorf, Kobrin school, Smorgon socio-pedagogic center, Grodno and Minsk Re-training Institutes, and the Belarusian State Economic University. This quarter, the Task group of **9 specialists** representing **9 organizations** held **three (3)** working meetings. The group researched the options for disseminating the Aflatoun program in Belarus, defined objectives and developed a plan of coherent implementation of the Aflatoun program into education institutions of every kind by 2015 (schools, youth community centers, vocational training institutes), which will reach out to children between the ages of 6 and 18 regardless their learning needs. According to the action plan, every member of the Task Group took responsibility for organizing the first TOT training in January 2014. Besides the realistic plan for effective dissemination, the meetings developed stronger ties and understanding between the actors, encouraged new ideas to supplement the effort (e.g. publication in a widely read professional magazine), and enhanced their commitment and motivation.

### III. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

#### • *Coordination with USAID*

Irina Mironova, ChildFund's Chief of Party, and Jahor Novikau, USAID 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

This quarter Inna Chirko, the Project manager, started her 3-year maternity leave. Julia Poporuzhenko was promoted to this position and approved by USAID AOTR.

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.

### V. BUDGET

Project expenses for the period between April-June 2013 totaled **\$ 67,184.39** (24% of the annual budget) including ICR.

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

Annex 1: Geographic expansion of OVC project component (by December 31, 2013)



**PRIDE**

- implementation
- trained specialists

**Child Protection**

- reforming of child protection system
- trained specialists

**Parenting Skills Enhancement Program**

- implementation
- trained specialists

**SafeCare Training Program**

- implementation
- trained specialists

- innovative services (Aflatoun, daycare centers and etc)



**USAID**  
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**Annex 2. Sub-grants implemented in October – December 2013**

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

**I. Creation of Resource Centers on Child Protection:**

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

<b>Brief description:</b>	<p>The goal of the project is to create Resource center on Child protection for professional supervision and on-job support to child protection specialists that have been trained on and are working with PRIDE, the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, and the Family-Centered Approach 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 provide timely on-the-job trainings, and serve as an information exchange center for the child protection professional community.</p>		
<b>Planned services and planned number of beneficiaries:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working meetings of the Project Expert Group (on development of database of child protection specialists trained on innovative programs in Minsk) 13</li> <li>• Counseling service for child protection specialists on their concerns and problems they face in implementation of innovative methodologies 50</li> <li>• Initial roundtable for child protection specialists 29</li> <li>• Workshops on burn out prevention for child protection specialists 29</li> <li>• Workshop on implementation of PRIDE program 25</li> <li>• Workshop on implementation of Family-Centered Approach program 25</li> <li>• Working meetings Project Working Group to develop methodological guidelines on incorporation of innovative methodologies into child protection practice 8</li> </ul>		
<b>Established services and number of beneficiaries:</b>		<b>Number of participants:</b>	<b>Total</b>          <b>In the reported period</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 working meetings of the Project Task Group on development of database of child protection specialists trained on innovative programs in Minsk</li> <li>• Counseling service was provided for child protection specialists on concerns and problems they face applying innovative methodologies into practice</li> <li>• At the Initial Roundtable the child protection specialists were introduced to best practices related to incorporation of innovative methods, discussed, analyzed their needs, barriers and ways of applying innovative programs in child protection practice</li> </ul>	13 specialists (1 male/12 females) 46 specialists (44 females/ 2 males) 29 specialists (1 male/28 females)	  31 specialists (29 females/ 2 males)  
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops on burn out prevention for child protection specialists</li> <li>• Workshop on implementation of Family-Centered Approach program</li> </ul>	26 specialists (24 females/2 males) 26 specialists (all females)	26 specialists (24 females/2 males) 26 (all females)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop on implementation of PRIDE program</li> </ul>	38 persons: 8 specialists (all females), 30 foster parents (28 females/2 males)	8 specialists (all females), 30 foster parents (28 females/2 males)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Working Group meetings to develop the principles of adapting implementation of innovative services to a specific context</li> </ul>	12 specialists (11 females/1 male)	12 specialists (11 females/1 male)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training program «Parents Skills Enhancement Program» for child protection specialists of Minsk city</li> </ul>	30 specialists (28 females/2 males)	30 specialists (28 females/2 males)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Working Group meetings to develop the document that regulates functioning of Resource Center CITY_DOM</li> </ul>	8 specialists (all females)	8 specialists (all females)

The pilot Resource center for child protective services was created in Minsk to connect child welfare and related professionals to comprehensive information and resources to help protect children and strengthen families. The Resource center is prepared to sustainable functioning as:

- The database to support and maintain peer network is developed
- Child welfare specialists of Minsk are informed on where to seek free on-site training and technical assistance
- The process of information storage and dissemination is organized and well-managed
- The schedule of regular workshops for specialists to build, manage and supervise child welfare services and ensure an effective workforce.

The project's added value is the funding scheme implemented: the costs of the project activities were shared between ChildFund And Minsk Retraining Institute. Such mode of cooperation encourages an equal partnership and ensures sustainability of the established services.

### Annex 3 Day Care Centers: Comprehensive Service for Children in Difficult Life Situations

More and more children in Belarus today are at risk of family breakdown, divorce, parental substance abuse and violence. The ability of such families to withstand crisis situations is low, which inevitably affects physical, emotional, social and intellectual well-being of children. Very often, children raised in such families experience psychological trauma; delays in many areas of development, including cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development; all of which lead to behavioral, emotional or social, and learning problems. The situation could be improved by providing care and support services to such children and their families that would ensure children's safety and healthy development within the family.

15-year old Maxim, who lives in Rogachev, a small town in the Chernobyl zone, is a teenager with a cruel fate. When he was a baby, his mother was given an 8-year prison sentence for murder. There was no one left to take care of Maxim and his elder sister, so the kids were placed in foster families. Unfortunately, as time has shown, after the end of her prison term, Maxim's mother wasn't concerned about her children. Maxim's mother left for permanent residence in Russia, and, although she told her children that she would take them to her new home over time, Maxim's mother didn't keep her promise.

Maxim's foster family, where he lives now, is already his fourth: being constantly engaged in reckless behaviors and repeated violations of the law, the boy was placed with one foster family after another. Each foster parent despaired over failed attempts to communicate, the endless fights, and the open defiance; making matters worse, there were no services to help them cope with the crises. For stealing, Maxim was given a criminal record with juvenile affairs. The last of the offences ended in court. An attorney for the State insisted on placing the boy into a correctional institution. However, modern research has shown that such penalties often do more harm than good, causing depression, thoughts of suicide, acting-out behaviors and recidivism among troubled youth. The services that are most likely to solve the problem are community-based "diversion" programs and services aimed at keeping offending youth out of the court system, particularly those who have committed nonviolent crimes.

Fortunately, one of the few pilot projects in Belarus that organized and provided such unique community-based services was located in the community of Rogchev, having been established in March 2013. The Rogachev initiative was part of ChildFund Belarus' "Day Care Centers: A Community-Based Response to Child Maltreatment" project that shared support with USAID funded "Community Services to Vulnerable Groups" project. Rogachev's Day Care Center operates in high school № 4 where Maxim studies and provides psychological and socio-educational support and assistance to adolescents in difficult life situations and their families; additionally, it helps to arrange pastime activities for teenagers and teaches them about family relationships as well as the skills of social and domestic orientation – the skills that help reduce re-offense rates. Specialists at the Center treat adolescents between the ages of 12 and 15 by utilizing comprehensive and professional therapeutic care. Through these programs, specialists are able to help their students develop strong self-esteem, trust, honesty and good communication and conflict resolution skills. During their time spent at the Day Care Center, students also learn the value of everyday things such as chores and showing respect for others. The combination of both home and school environment skills at the center encourages consistently good daily habits as well as provides structure and support for each student.

Specialists at the Center who counseled Maxim before his conviction have succeeded in defending the boy's rights in court. As a result, he was condemned to a conditional punishment – house arrest – with the obligatory visits to the Day Care Center. Additionally, Maxim has individual consultations with a school psychologist, social educator and educational psychologist. He takes an active part in trainings on personal growth and self-development, including activities on social and financial literacy. Maxim was particularly encouraged by participation in the bicycle section: teens master riding a bike skillfully, learn to repair bikes and gain practical work experience. After Maxim picked up the basics of bicycle maintenance, he enthusiastically devotes much of his time to more complex operations. Maxim doesn't just learn to use a wrench and fix brakes – he also learns to be responsible and show up to commitments on time.



Maxim (pictured left) during the training  
on computer skills at Day Care Center

Attendance of the Day Care Center led to positive results for Maxim: today he is a more confident, self-disciplined, even-tempered teen, who feels safe in his environments. During 9 months of consultations and trainings with the Center's specialists, he has committed no further offenses. "We'll continue supporting Maxim until the results achieved become stable", Irina Vilova, the leader of the Day Care Center project, says.