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**“COMMUNITY SERVICES TO VULNERABLE GROUPS”
USAID Cooperative Agreement Number: AID-121-A-00-05-00703**

**QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT
Reporting period: 1 January – 30 March 2014
Component I “Supporting Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Belarus”**

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Publication or issuance date of report: April 30, 2014

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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 aims 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 the 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 the Family-Centered Approach. By the end of March 2014, **68** 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, **42** (60%) continued child protection system reforms and had multidisciplinary teams trained by alumni of ChildFund's training program.

This quarter, along with reformation of the formal child protection system, the project facilitated the development of **informal child protection mechanisms**. Shrinking community resources and a high level of staff turnover in the formal child protection system drains its resources and requires new approaches to ensure effective functioning of child protection systems. Informal child protection mechanisms were piloted through volunteer activities and participation of NGOs. Specialists from six partner communities, who last received training last quarter on Family Group Conference (FGC) and volunteer management, recruited community volunteers and trained them as the facilitators of Family Group Conference. This FGC methodology helps to mobilize family and community resources to protect their children from abuse and neglect, ensure family integrity and prevent unnecessary removal and institutionalization of children. In addition, this methodology is an outstanding learning pathway for citizens living in a socialized system who are accustomed to the idea that they no longer hold responsibility for the public arena. FGC provides them with a multifaceted method of not only recognizing, but also taking responsibility for their own life and community life.

In partnership with AIDS-service NGO "Positive Movement" seventeen (**17**) NGO specialists from **10** organizations working with families affected by substance abuse and HIV/AIDS from Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Pinsk, Soligorsk, and Lida learned about the values and principles of the Family-Centered Approach,

discussed advantages of multidisciplinary cooperation in planning and providing rehabilitation services and re-assessed the role of NGOs in child protection. The participants developed plans on initiating and strengthening contacts with local child protection services in their regions.

Partner communities continued to provide services for at-risk children and families established with the sub-grants in the previous years. *(For more information, please see Annex 3 Comments to PMEP report).* Significant progress was achieved in the development of home visitation services (SafeCare model) for at-risk families with children under six years old. Despite limited community resources, specialists previously trained on SafeCare by ChildFund improved access to this service by training a new cohort of home visitors in their communities. By March 30, 2014, the number of home visitors in nine targeted communities increased from 15 to 32. This led to a 46% increase in the number of families served, in comparison with the previous quarter (from 28 to 61 families). Our partner NGO Positive Movement, which works with HIV positive persons, received training on Safe Care and family-centered approach and started home visitation for families of HIV positive persons raising small children using Global Fund resources. The outcomes of Safe Care are very promising – about 60 % of families were removed from the register of child protection system because of significant decrease of risk factors for child safety. Furthermore, ChildFund's experience in implementation of the Safe Care model was recognized by UNICEF-Geneva as a unique practice in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) region. It was selected for the UNICEF publication as an example of best practices in the region.

Remarkable progress was achieved in improving the quality of training and education available for social service providers through partnership with re-training institutes and universities, which train students of education and social work departments. The group of university faculty trained by ChildFund in the previous quarter has started teaching courses on family-centered approach to their students. ChildFund provided regular follow-up support on course implementation.

This quarter, Gomel oblast joined the project and started training the specialists from their oblast in the family-centered approach. Thus, the number of geographic locations covered by project intervention were increased from **168** to **235** and **100%** of oblasts in Belarus are now included in the project.

A new generation of the national team of master trainers was trained this quarter in a TOT (training of trainers) workshop. The new master trainers were young professors from five of the six oblast re-training institutes. After the TOT, the master trainers on the Family-Centered Approach, PRIDE and Parenting Skills Enhancement Program will train new cohorts of trainers in their respective communities to ensure sustainability of project interventions.

The figures below illustrate the main outputs of project implementation during the period between January 1 and March 31, 2014:

- **1,232** parents and **226** children accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services.
- **637** child protection specialists and local authorities from **127** organizations participated in capacity building events provided by partner re-training institutes, alumni of TOTs and ChildFund specialists.
- **84** specialists -- alumni of ChildFund training programs -- were supported with targeted follow-up support, and methodological and informational materials provided by ChildFund.
- **235** geographic locations were covered by project interventions.
- Aflatoun training programs on social and financial literacy were organized for specialists from **25** towns from Minsk and Grodno oblasts in partnership with Minsk oblast Department for Education, Minsk and Grodno Re-training Institutes, and the National Bank (March 25-28, 2014).

- Five out of seven country Re-training Institutes incorporated at least two child protection programs (Family-Centered Approach, PRIDE, and Parenting Skills Enhancement Program) into their regular curriculum.

C. CHALLENGES/CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

- Staff turnover continues to severely affect the education sector and threatens sustainability of the introduced changes. The official figures from the Ministry of Education report 70% of staff turnover in Minsk oblast. In order to overcome this challenge, the emphasis of ChildFund's interventions is placed on the capacity building of Re-training Institutes, Universities and Resource centers as the sustainable sources for training the new generation of child protection system employees.
- Re-training Institutes were ordered to reduce the training time per specialist per period: it changed from 72 hours of training to 36 hours. This cut from two weeks to one week of training makes it complicated to provide quality training programs.
- Leadership at the Department of Child Protection of the Ministry of Education completely changed this quarter and the new staff is very conservative. The policy document 'Instruction #47' that regulates the process of detection of child abuse and neglect and removal of a child from the family, which was developed by the Ministry of Education in partnership with ChildFund, was sent back by the authorities for 'further revisions'. This will postpone the standardization of social welfare work in the country for at least another year. ChildFund will shift its advocacy targets to the oblast level authorities in order to ensure adoption of the child protection standards at the oblast level.

D. LESSONS LEARNED

- The pilot training on Volunteer Recruitment and Management by ChildFund and six implementation follow-ups in the communities proved that creating informal mechanisms of child protection services is very promising. This work helped child protection specialists to discover new resources and opportunities that existed in their communities and build new partnerships with non-state actors such as local NGOs, religious organizations and youth. This approach will help serve the dual purposes of- 1) strengthening child protection and 2) facilitating public dialogue on child protection issues between the state and civil society.

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 and 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 follow-up support and interventions in order to support the sustainability of the previously established services, including Parenting, SafeCare, PRIDE, and the reformation of the child protection system through multidisciplinary cooperation. These supportive interventions included networking and experience exchange through an information newsletter on PRIDE as well as individual follow-up support on fidelity of methodologies.

In this quarter so far:

- **1,232 parents** accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services;
- **226 children** were covered by community-based prevention and rehabilitation services;
- **84 child protection specialists** were supported with targeted follow-up support and methodological and information materials provided by ChildFund;
- **One information newsletters** on PRIDE was 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. The 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.

Despite limited community resources, specialists trained on SafeCare made significant progress this quarter. In order to improve access to SafeCare for at-risk families, they trained a new cohort of home visitors in their communities. By March 30, 2014 the number of home visitors in nine targeted communities increased from 15 to 32. This led to a 46% increase in the number of families served, in comparison with the previous quarter (from 28 to 61 families). The outcomes of Safe Care are very promising – about 60 % [BM1] of families were removed from the register of child protection system because of a significant decrease of risk factors for child safety.

ChildFund's experience in the implementation of SafeCare model was recognized by UNICEF-Geneva as a unique practice in CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) region. It was selected for a UNICEF publication on best practices in de-institutionalization in the region. This quarter ChildFund and UNICEF completed materials for this publication.

In total, this quarter:

- **32 home visitors** provided their services in **nine communities** (Vitebsk, Orsha, Minsk, Chausy, Zhodino, Borisov, Rogachev, Soligorsk, and Grodno).
- **61 parents with 66** children under 6 years old received home visitation services.
- A new group of **54 home visitors** was trained in Grodno using allocated community resources. It is expected that they will start serving families next quarter.

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 and 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 children'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 related to 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 **49** geographic locations:

- **636 parents (69 groups)** attended the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program this quarter in schools and preschools in **49** geographic locations. **34% of the parents (216 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.

Outcomes of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program:

- 79% of parents reported that they demonstrate an assertive parenting style;
- 80% of parents reported that they know the reasons for a child's misbehavior;
- 78% of parents reported that they know and practice non-violent methods of discipline;
- 75% reported that they know about the stages of a child's development;
- 84% reported that they understand a child's feelings and emotions and practice proper reaction.

Family-type Care Development for Orphans (PRIDE model)

The PRIDE model is a resource for the development and support of family-type community care and a 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 **32** geographic locations in **38 organizations** (please see Annex 1 Project Map) by the alumni of ChildFund using local community resources:

- **111 prospective foster/adoptive parents** participated in the PRIDE pre-service training program in Brest oblast (Kobrin, Luninets, Baranovichi, Brest, Berestovitsa), Minsk oblast (Zhodino, Slutsk; Leninski, Frunzenski, Pervomaiski and Sovetski rayons of Minsk city), Grodno oblast (Smorgon, Volkovysk, Oshmyany, Berestovitsa), Mogilev oblast (Bobruisk), and Vitebsk oblast (Liozno, Senno, Polotsk).
- **7 children were provided with family-type care** by the foster/adoptive parents trained this quarter. One of the children (14%) was adopted and six children (86%) were placed into foster care.
- **424 foster/adoptive** parents from communities of four oblasts mastered their parenting skills through the PRIDE in-service program: Brest oblast (Kobrin, Luninets, Baranovichi, Ivanovo, Brest district, Ivatsevichi), Grodno oblast (Grodno district, Slonim, Smorgon, Ostrovets, Volkovysk, Svisloch), Minsk oblast (Borovlyany, Lyuban, Slutsk, Cherven, Minsk Moskovsky rayon, Minsk district), Vitebsk oblast (Vitebsk district, Shumilino, Polotsk, Lepel, Tolochin, Liozno, Glubokoe, Senno, Braslav, Postavy), and Mogilev oblast (Bobruisk, Kostukovich, Kruglyany, Krichev, and Chausy).
- One Re-training Institute (Brest) provided courses for foster/adoptive parents.

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

Among at-risk families, there is 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 ages 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 private sponsors from the USA.

Three Day Care centers that were piloted within the project by ChildFund in Rogachev, Smorgon and Polotsk communities in 2013, allocated budgets to continue the functioning of the Day Care centers. **45 children** from at-risk families received supportive and rehabilitation service at Day Care Centers in Rogachev, Smorgon, Polotsk, and Zhodino this quarter. This quarter, Polotsk Regional Education Department developed and adopted a regulatory document on Day Care Centers that makes this service sustainable.

The further development of this service was promoted through a series of articles in the most popular mass media. For more information, please see Annex 4: Implementation of Marketing and Branding Strategy.

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 March 2014,

- **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, **42 (60%)** were undergoing child protection system reforms and have already had multidisciplinary teams that were trained by alumni of ChildFund training program.

TOT alumni provided step-down trainings using local community resources for **887** community specialists from **450** organizations (schools and preschools, social support centers, hospitals and enterprises) in **143** localities.

- Four pilot communities (Kamenets, Kobrin and two districts in Breast, Brest region) that were trained on Domestic Violence in child protection services last quarter enriched their local regulatory basis with a new protocol that regulates multidisciplinary cooperation in child protection in situation of domestic violence and improved detection and utilization of domestic violence services (shelters, counseling and psychosocial support) by battered women. Exposure to domestic violence significantly deteriorates parent's ability to protect and nurture their children and that is why incorporation of this topic into the child protection services agenda improves quality of rehabilitation work with families, and decreases risks of institutionalization of their children.

Promoting sustainability of project services through networking and exchange of experiences

To increase motivation of local trainers and ensure information exchange among partner communities, ChildFund publishes a regular informational newsletter on the PRIDE program. The newsletter provides an opportunity for trainers 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 Program	
Expected results	Actual targets achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information newsletters on PRIDE, Parenting Skills Enhancement Program, and 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 during a project year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This quarter a new issue of the newsletter on PRIDE was published and disseminated to 90 trainers on the PRIDE program working in local communities and partner Re-training Institutes. <p>* The newsletter on PRIDE is available on ChildFund's web-site: www.cfi-belarus.org</p>

Targeted follow-up support and Interventions	
Expected results	Actual targets achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular communication and needs assessment, site visits, a series of individual needs-based targeted follow-up support 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. 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 follow-up support on ChildFund programs at the request of partners from communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 PRIDE trainers from 5 local communities received 9 consultations on PRIDE methodology. This assistance was provided via phone and e-mail. 8 Re-training Institute faculty was assisted with consultations on design and development curriculum for the course 'Family Centered Approach in Child Protection services'. 10 specialists received consultations on methods of volunteer recruitment and organization of family rehabilitation work with the help of volunteer resources. 49 trainers from 32 organizations received individual consultations on implementation of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program in local communities. 12 specialists on SafeCare home visitation from 6 communities were assisted with 8 consultations on SafeCare Home Visitation methodology (training fundamentals, fidelity assessment, conducting structured assessment of different modules, reviewing parent's performance, motivating parents). ChildFund provided methodological and financial support to Brest and Grodno Oblast Re-training Institutes in organizing the courses on Enhancement of Parenting

	<p>Skills program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ChildFund provided 112 sets of training materials on PRIDE courses to ensure sustainability in Ivatsevichi district, Baranovichi, Gomel Re-training Institute.
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Resource Center on Child Protection

- In November 2013, Minsk City Re-training Institute completed their sub-grant project co-financed by ChildFund. Through their work they continued providing professional supervision and on-the-job 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. This quarter, specialists of the Center were invited by Minsk City Department Education to share their innovative work within Minsk City Collegiums and received high assessment of their work.

In January-March 2014, this Resource Center provided:

- Training session for **60** child protection specialists on 'Family-Centered Approach' of Sovetski and Pervomaiski districts of Minsk.

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 education and social work departments.

This quarter:

- **637** child protection specialists representing **127** organizations participated in capacity building events.

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.

- **19 child protection specialists from 12 organizations** participated in the training program on the Family-Centered Approach at Brest oblast Re-Training Institute.
- **60 child protection specialists from 2 organizations** participated in a training on the Family-Centered Approach conducted at Minsk City Re-training Institute.
- **36 child protection specialists of 35 organizations** participated in trainings on the Family-Centered Approach at Grodno Oblasts Re-training Institute.

Training Program on a Parenting Skills Enhancement Program

This quarter, trainings and workshops on Parenting Skills Enhancement Program were implemented in two partner Re-training Institutes by the alumni of the TOTs conducted by ChildFund in previous project years.

- **19 child welfare professionals from 17 organizations** participated in the training program on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program at Grodno oblast Re-Training Institute.

- **23 child welfare professionals from 16 organizations** participated in a training on the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program conducted at Brest oblast Re-training Institute.

In total, **42** specialists from different types of educational institutions (preschools, primary and secondary schools, socio-pedagogic centers) mastered the skills to deliver the innovative service to at-risk families in their communities. The new trainers were strongly motivated and confirmed their intentions to organize parental groups in their respective communities of Grodno and Brest oblasts. ChildFund will continue to provide methodological support to individual trainers.

Sustainability of Family-Centered Approach through Universities

This quarter, the alumni of last year's training on the Family-Centered Approach for academic staff of all country universities (100%) 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 provided the course to 23 students.
- Minsk State Pedagogical University started the course for 87 students.
- Mogilev State University provided the course and seminars to the total of 112 students.
- Gomel State University provided the course to 71 students.
- Brest State University approved the course in February 2014 and opened it for the first cohort of 43 students.
- Vitebsk University enrolled 45 students for the course.

A total of **381 young professionals** were provided with cutting-edge knowledge on the approach in social welfare work that they will feel confident to apply from the very start of the work in the field.

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 **44 specialists** participated in trainings in Vitebsk University, in Globokoe community of Vitebsk oblast, and also in Kostjukovichi community of Mogilev oblast.

The development of informal mechanisms of child protection:

Shrinking community resources and high level of staff turnover in the child protection system required new approaches to ensure effective functioning of the child protection system. In order to fill the gaps and reform the formal child protection system, the project facilitated the development of **informal child protection mechanisms** through volunteer activities and expanding participation of NGOs in child protection.

Family Group Conferences methodology for child protection specialists and volunteers

Following the training on Family group conferences in September-October 2013, **6** communities (Baranovichi, Grodno, Kobrin, Polotsk, Rogachev, and Chausy) applied for support from ChildFund to conduct follow-up activities. Each included a minimum 18 hours of trainings. During the sessions, the alumni of the course managed to:

- Train local specialists on volunteer recruitment methods;
- Recruit volunteers to provide assistance to child welfare specialists;

- Conduct workshops and working meetings with specialists and volunteers;
- Identify types of families that will receive the service of Family group conferences;
- Devise plans of supportive supervision for the trained specialists and volunteers.

The goal of the activities is to complement child protection services staff with volunteers. Students of secondary and higher educational institutions, representatives of local NGOs, parent associations, and the Orthodox Church sisterhoods were engaged as volunteers in different communities. Recruiting volunteers is a new technique for these child protection specialists. Therefore, ChildFund Belarus is planning a meeting to support their initiatives and to ensure the sustainability of the development of the volunteer movement.

Expanding participation of NGOs in child protection

NGO “Positive movement” asked ChildFund to provide a training session on the Family-centered approach in child protection services. This NGO serves people living with HIV and their family members. These families often have serious problems with drug abuse that deteriorate their ability to provide care and support to children. Many of them are under supervision of child protection system but access to services for these people is very limited. This group is one of the most difficult to reach by the official child protection system. They do not trust the state social system and prefer to stay without any assistance rather than to put them at risk of punishment for drug abuse or disclosure of their HIV status. On the other hand, child protection specialists are not prepared to work with people living with HIV, as they have a lot of prejudice and stigma against them.

Within the training session on the Family-Centered Approach:

- The **17** NGO specialists from **10 organizations** working with families affected by substance abuse and HIV/AIDS from Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Pinsk, Soligorsk, and Lida learned about the values and principles of the Family-Centered Approach, discussed advantages of multidisciplinary cooperation in planning and providing rehabilitation services and re-assessed the role of NGOs in child protection. The participants developed plans on initiating and strengthening contacts with socio-pedagogic institutions and other child protection actors in their regions.

Aflatoun program of social and financial education for children and youth at the national level (March 25-28, 2014)

In March, ChildFund Belarus organized training for trainers on the Aflatoun program for child financial and social education. The new cohort of **25 trainers** was trained in partnership with the Aflatoun Secretariat (based in the Netherlands), the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus, the Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education. Specialists from **25 educational institutions** from Minsk and Grodno oblasts took part in the training. These institutions will become pilot sites for the creation of optional courses and clubs on the program. To ensure smooth implementation of the innovative program into informal school curriculum, every education institution had two representatives participating – a trainer and an administrative personnel. This proved an effective measure as, by the end of the training, all participants expressed their confidence in the successful launch of the course in their institutions.

This event is part of the Task Group action plan developed during the previous quarter. By 2015, the Aflatoun program in Belarus will reach out and be available to children of age 6 to 18 regardless of their special needs in different types of education institutions.

TOT for master trainers on child protection programs, 11-12 March 2014 (unplanned activity)
<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 specialists from 5 communities participated in the training of the trainers on child protection programs. Their enhanced capacity will help restore the training resources of five oblast Re-training Institutes that lack the qualified

cadre but have the capacity to conduct regular trainings on ChildFund's innovative programs. Child welfare specialists from Vitebsk, Mogilev, Brest, Grodno oblasts and Minsk city are experienced practitioners of 'Parenting Skills Enhancement Program', PRIDE (training for prospective foster parents and adoptive parents), and the Family-Centered Approach program. The TOT equipped the participants with skills necessary to teach these innovative programs to peer professionals in their respective communities. Twelve master-trainers will serve as a valuable teaching resource for oblast Re-training Institutes that will initiate regular trainings on these programs for child welfare specialists.

- 100% of specialists report their intent to apply knowledge and skills in the following quarter.

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

Promoting the enhancement of Re-training Institutes' capacity

- A team of ChildFund specialists organized **four visits** to partner Re-training Institutes of Minsk, Brest, Grodno and Gomel oblasts. The in-person meetings with vice-rectors served as opportunities to discuss cooperation modes between the two parties in detail and to highlight the benefits to and the prospective needs of Re-training Institutes, as well as suggest ways of addressing them. Two major concerns were addressed: the necessity to apply targeted recruitment techniques for the courses and the continuous professional supervision of the trained specialists who attempt to implement the acquired skills in the field.
- In order to support sustainable provision of training services to specialists in the regions by oblasts' Re-training Institutes, ChildFund facilitated the establishment of Resource libraries in these institutions. The sets of training materials on 'Parenting Skills Enhancement Program' will be regularly used by the groups of practitioners. This significantly decreases the costs of trainings, hence, contributing to their sustainability.

Cooperation with University community

- ChildFund participated in Conference 'Traditions and innovations in social work' held by Brest University in March. ChildFund's specialist shared the experience of introducing innovative methods of preparing foster and adoptive parents in child welfare system (PRIDE program). The participants of the conference found the topic highly relevant with respect to problems they face in their work and PRIDE helps to address: placement of infants into families, choosing a family for a child, supervision of foster and adoptive parents and working with adoption annulment.
- Two university academics that are alumni of ChildFund's PRIDE training initiated two thesis papers to be written by graduate students. The theses study the development of alternative family care in Belarus using principles of PRIDE as a conceptual framework for their research.

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.

Three meetings with USAID, DCOF and Department of States were held in Washington DC:

Name of	Participants	Objective	Outcomes
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event and location			
<p>Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF), USAID</p> <p>January 27, 2014</p>	<p>Martin Hayes, Child Protection Senior Technical Advisor mhayes@usaid.gov</p> <p>John Williamson, Senior Technical Advisor j.williamson@mindspring.com</p> <p>Irina Mironova, ChildFund National Director, Belarus</p> <p>Melissa Kelly, Sr. ECD (Early Childhood Development) Specialist, ChildFund International Office</p>	<p>Update about OVC/PWD projects , technical approach, project achievements and lessons learned</p>	<p>DCOF was interested in the integration of ChildFund-supported modules on child protection and inclusion in university programs throughout the country as well as the collaboration with government re-training institutes for expanding reach of training model packages.</p>
<p>USAID, Washington DC</p> <p>Wednesday, January 29, 2014</p>	<p>Participants: 7 USAID and State Department representing the Eastern Europe Bureau, Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Democracy and Governance, and the Office of the Special Advisor for International Disability Rights, including:</p> <p>Lubov Fajifer, Education and Youth Advisor lfajifer@usaid.gov;</p> <p>Paul Holmes, Sr. Regional Health Advisor (E&E/DGST), PHolmes@usaid.gov;</p> <p>Valerie Chien, Desk Officer for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, (E&E/EA), vchien@usaid.gov;</p> <p>Stephanie Reed ReedSM@state.gov;</p> <p>Allison Colburn, ColburnA@state.gov;</p> <p>Melissa Kelly;</p> <p>Irina Mironova;</p>	<p>Update about OVC/PWD projects and demonstrate its contribution to USAID's overarching goal of achieving democratic changes in Belarus</p>	<p>Participants were impressed with program effectiveness and our approach to engaging the government at all levels. There has been an internal debate within USG on the contribution of social programs towards democracy and governance. These projects provide a clear example of how social programs have increased civic participation, decision making and demand for their human rights.</p>
<p>Department of State</p> <p>Wednesday, January 29, 2014</p>	<p>Participants: 3 from State Dept and 1 from USAID, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Valerie Chien, Desk Officer for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, (E&E/EA), vchien@usaid.gov; o Sean Greenley, Belarus Desk Officer, greenleyss@state.gov; o David K. Meyer, Foreign Affairs Officer meyerdk@state.gov; o Melissa Kelly; o Irina Mironova; 	<p>This meeting was focused on our advocacy and capacity building work at all levels of government, especially capacity building around leadership competencies and knowledge of human rights guaranteed by government policies.</p>	<p>Participants were interested in how ChildFund is received by the national government as an INGO with USAID funding in the country. Participants were impressed with our advocacy initiatives</p>

- **Cooperation with ChildFund International Headquarters**

ChildFund Belarus was in regular communication with ChildFund International's Headquarters in Richmond via e-mail and Skype. In January 2014 Irina Mironova visited ChildFund's International Office and conducted a presentation on the OVC project for International Office program staff. Areas of further support and cooperation between the International Office and the Belarus office were discussed.

- **Coordination/Cooperation with the other organizations**

On March 26, Irina Mironova, ChildFund's CoP, took part in the National Consultations on Monitoring of Human Rights Implementation in Belarus initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UNDP. She initiated discussion about children's right to live in a family and in an environment free from violence and exploitation and how to ensure these rights for children of Belarus.

Advocacy targeted the Ministry of Foreign affairs

On March 4, Irina Mironova and Julia Popruzhenko (ChildFund Belarus National Director and ChildFund Belarus Project Manager) met with authorities from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and informed them about the ChildFund Alliance Advocacy Campaign and the importance of incorporation of child protection issues into the MDGs after 2015. MoFA expressed their interest to the topic and appreciated the high quality of the materials prepared by the ChildFund Alliance. But, they could not confirm the priority area for new MDG that Belarus Government will promote at the UN. ChildFund Belarus reported to the ChildFund Alliance about the results of the meeting.

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.

V. BUDGET

Project expenses for the period between January- March 2014 totaled \$77, 164.38 (27% of the annual budget) including the ICR (indirect cost rate). The total expenses for this project year (October 2013- March 2014) reached \$144,082.86 (51% of the annual budget).

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