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“COMMUNITY SERVICES TO VULNERABLE GROUPS”
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QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
Reporting period: January 1 – March 31, 2014

Component II “Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities”

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I. PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The number of persons with disabilities in Belarus exceeds 500,000. There are 119,000 children with special needs, including about 30,000 children with disabilities among them. Discrimination and marginalization of adults and young people with disabilities is a typical social phenomenon for Belarus - while adults are often excluded from social and economic life, and decision-making practices, children with disabilities suffer from insufficient access to education and appropriate quality of services as well as social exclusion and a lack of participation opportunities.

From October, 2008 – September, 2012, ChildFund Belarus implemented the four-year project “Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities” funded by USAID in Belarus under the Community Services to Vulnerable Groups cooperative agreement. The project component aimed to include Belarusian people with disabilities into mainstream society and to strengthen capacity of organizations working with persons with disabilities.

In October, 2012, ChildFund-Belarus entered the next three-year project phase. The People with Disabilities Component aims to increase the integration of people with disabilities (PWD) through the development of innovative services and strengthening the capacity of grassroots PWD organizations.

The project has three main objectives:

1. Build the organizational, networking and advocacy capacity of grassroots organizations supporting PWD and their families;
2. Support advocacy efforts by PWD grassroots organizations to promote inclusion;
3. Support the introduction and development of inclusive education for children and young people with disabilities.

II. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

This quarter, the project was implemented according to its plan and budget. The main focus was raising awareness and dissemination of knowledge about inclusive education among key community groups: parents, educational authorities, teachers, parents associations and youth, as well as national authorities.

Inclusion begins in the home. Therefore, **family environment** is essential. Parents are considered as the main driving force for inclusion of children with disabilities in non-formal and formal educational programs and activities. This quarter, ChildFund facilitated the development of parent’s capacity through parent’s self-help groups activity (for more information, please, see Annex 6 success story) and leadership courses for parents with children with disabilities. According to the participants’ feedback on the leadership course, it was extremely useful in developing parent’s leadership competencies and skills both on the personal, family and community levels. The participants had an opportunity to expand their network of support through meeting with the specialists at the Office for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities who were invited by ChildFund to do a presentation about their advocacy services. To ensure practical application of new knowledge and skills, ChildFund offered parent participants of the leadership course the opportunity to apply for small financial support to implement follow-up initiatives and activities. Selected follow-up initiatives and activities will be implemented next quarter.

The ChildFund Trainers' Team on Inclusive Education continued its efforts to improve the **capacity of key community groups**. This quarter, the collection of five practical manuals on Inclusive Education training programs was completed by the Trainers' Team of ChildFund Belarus. The training modules have already been piloted by the National Trainers' Team in Krichev, Mogilev, Baranovichi, Pinsk and Minsk and were highly esteemed by specialists, parents and authorities. The manual will be published and disseminated next quarter. The manual already serves as a universal tool that contributes to the implementation of the inclusive education in the country. Based on these training programs, Baranovichi University developed its own curriculum for inclusive education for education students. This curriculum was recommended for country-wide dissemination by the Ministry of Education.

For youth with disabilities, **vocational and higher education** may be the most important gateway to a full and productive life. There are several barriers to access to further education for students with disabilities, including low and limited expectations of others in relation to their interests, abilities and ambitions that could be referred as "three Bs"--brushes, brooms and buckets--a perception that people with disabilities are only capable of marketing these items. This quarter, we made significant progress towards overcoming this stereotype by piloting joint training on inclusive education for teachers of **16 vocational** schools from all over Belarus. The National Institute of Vocational Training and Professional Education facilitated access to this group of participants. The National Institute of Vocational Training and Professional Education is the only educational entity in the country that provides professional development and post-graduate courses for teachers and specialists from vocational schools and colleges where children and youth with disabilities are more likely to enroll. The expenses for this training were shared with the National Institute. Considering the importance of this target group for accessing children and youth with disabilities, ChildFund Belarus is going to formalize and build a strategic long-term partnership with the National Institute and continue training representatives of vocational schools.

Access to **education authorities** (school principals) was improved through another new partner--State Academy of Post-diploma Education. The Academy is responsible for upgrading the professional knowledge and skills of educational authorities from all over Belarus. This quarter, in partnership with the Academy, we trained principals of 16 schools from all over Belarus. They were sensitized about the problem of exclusion of children with disabilities, and learned and discussed opportunities for inclusive education in their educational institutions. By the end of the training session, the participants expressed their willingness to adopt inclusive education approaches in their schools and to continue to work together and establish a network with the other schools working towards inclusion.

The first trainings with the National Institute of Vocational Training and Professional Education and the State Academy of Post-diploma education can be viewed as a robust platform that serves two important objectives: 1) establishing a long-term partnership with the postgraduate institutions and 2) training specialists from across the country who will locally promote inclusion practices. This kind of partnership is viewed as truly strategic since it will provide access to educational authorities and decision-makers (principals, vice-principals, etc.).

The figures outlined below illustrate the main outputs of the project implementation during the period between January

1 and March 31, 2014:

- **186 specialists** from 63 educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, vocational schools and colleges) were trained by the Trainer's Team on Inclusive Education and sub-grant recipients.
- **31** parents of children with disabilities improved their knowledge and skills through the leadership course for parents and parent's self-help groups.
- The third of three sub-grants awarded in the previous project year has been successfully completed.
- **5** (five) practical manuals on Inclusive Education training programs were completed by the trainer's team of ChildFund Belarus
- **One** project proposal for the creation of the Recourse Center on Inclusive was chosen was awarded
- **9** (nine) advocacy efforts aimed at introduction of inclusive education were implemented.

III. CHALLENGES/ CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

- The rapid growth of the inflation rate negatively impacts ChildFund's project activities. The main problem is unpredictable growth of the office rent. The Government of Belarus (GoB) regulates costs of the office rent by providing the official cost basis for office rent. Each leaseholder should calculate the rent costs that should not be less than the cost basis. During this quarter, the rent cost basis was increased twice—in January by 10% and in April by 18.5%. Considering the significant growth of rent cost basis in April 2013, the total increase of the office rent for ChildFund reached 60% in comparison with the planned amount budgeted in 2012. According to the budget forecast in FY15, we will have at least a 5-month funding gap for the office rent and we will be able to stay in the office until April 2015. This situation requires the attention of the ChildFund Regional Office and International Office because it puts the implementation of the current Cooperative Agreement with USAID that ends in September 2015 at risk.
- The Deputy Minister of Education officially approved Recommendations of the Conference of the Ministry of Education about inclusive trends in educational system. In November 2013, the Conference discussed problems of re-training specialists working in education (schools, universities and vocational schools). The Recommendations stated that 1) the curriculum of the training and re-training courses should be changed and should incorporate issues of inclusive education; and 2) the Chief of Department of Special education should prepare suggestions to the National Register of Professions with consideration of the needs of inclusive education. These recommendations provide solid ground for advocacy for the introduction of the position of a teacher assistant in schools and kindergartens and for the incorporation of the ChildFund training course on inclusive education into the curriculum of universities, Re-training Institutes and the Academy of Post-Diploma Education. The opportunity of building an Advocacy Alliance for Inclusive Education will be explored by ChildFund next quarter.
- The demand for the trainings on inclusive education by the National Trainers; Team is constantly growing and there are request for trainings coming in from across the country. One of the challenges faced this quarter is the availability of the trainers since most of them have their main jobs and it can be difficult for them to take a leave in order to conduct the trainings. Thus, the ChildFund team, after analyzing the situation, came to the conclusion that it may be

necessary to enlarge the National Trainers; Team by training new trainers. This way it will be possible to cover larger areas and to satisfy the requests for the trainings. Also, the enlargement of the trainers' team may make it possible to have local trainers in certain remote areas, making the work more systematic and sustainable. The first step to carry this out will be a meeting of the whole trainers' team next quarter to discuss possible ways of growing, in order to achieve greater effectiveness of the trainings on the inclusive education.

Hence, the shortage of trainers presents both a challenge and an opportunity for the enhancement of ChildFund's activities.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

- Discussion with the teachers from the vocational schools revealed problems of job-placement and job maintenance for youth with disabilities. Even when youth with disabilities are lucky enough to get a job, too often they cannot meet the rigid requirements of employers and they lose their jobs despite the fact that they possess the required professional competencies. There is no assistance for people with disabilities in the workplace. The introduction of assisted workplace for people with disabilities should be one of the future advocacy targets.
- It is essential to promote the idea of inclusion on all levels of the educational system – from the pre-schools to schools, vocational schools and universities. This will ensure the continuity of inclusive policies and smooth a child's transition from one level of education to another.

V. SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE 1: BUILD THE ORGANIZATIONAL, NETWORKING AND ADVOCACY CAPACITY OF GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING PWD AND THEIR FAMILIES

In order to build the organizational, networking and advocacy capacity of grassroots organizations supporting PWD and their in families:

- The third session of the Leadership Course for Parents of Children with Disabilities on Inclusive Education was conducted by ChildFund Belarus with **16** PWD-related activists of parent communities.
 - **15 parents** of children with disabilities took part in self-help groups.
 - **119 specialists from 60 organizations were trained** by ChildFund National Team on Inclusive Education
 - **62 specialists** from 5 organizations , **were trained within sub-grants**,
- *For more detailed information about the number of trained organizations and specialists please see Annex 2,3 PMEPP Report*

ACTIVITY:**Training Program on Inclusive Education (Leadership Course) for Parents of Children with Disabilities, Session #3 (February, 1-2, 2014)**

<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<p>One two-day session “Leadership in the Community” aimed at developing parenting competencies of parents with children with disabilities and creating the kind of family that would promote the inclusion of the children into society.</p>	<p>One two-day session was conducted for a group of 16 parents of children with disabilities, representing three NGOs of parents of children with disabilities.</p> <p>In their feedback, the participants expressed their appreciation of the knowledge and skills received at the previous two sessions – all the participants confirmed that they have changed their style of behavior in the family and they are on the way of getting rid of the codependency phenomenon. During the session, the participants were introduced to the approach of the individually-oriented planning for each child. The work included a practical group-work task of creating “Maps with Objectives” for each child and relating it to their plans of cooperation with the community and promotion of interests of people with disabilities. At the training, the methods of breaking the stereotypes about people with disabilities were discussed. The second part of the training consisted of the advocacy campaigns planning and implementation. A representative of the Office for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Olga Triputen, was invited in order to provide the participants of the training with expertise on advocacy. Olga made a presentation on the kind of assistance people with disabilities can count on as well as the role of organizations in advocating for people with disabilities. The presentation received a very positive response among the participants and many of them expressed their intention to turn to the Office for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for advice.</p>

OUTCOMES:

- Basing on the observation and the feedback of the participants, the objectives of the event were fully achieved. The participants state that they see the knowledge and skills received at the trainings as practical tools applicable to their everyday life. They have changed their communication patterns, as well as their behavior in the family and in the community and, thus, observe positive changes taking place in their life on different levels.
- To ensure practical application of the new knowledge and skills ChildFund offered parent participants in the Leadership Course were given the opportunity to apply for small grants to implement follow-up initiatives and activities. Selected follow-up initiatives and activities will be implemented next quarter.

SELF-SUPPORT GROUPS - FOLLOW -UPS

ChildFund Belarus facilitated a training session for specialists on the methodology of organizing regular self-help groups for parents of children with disabilities in November, 2012. This quarter, **three self-help groups** for **15** parents of children with disabilities continued to regularly meet in Kritchev, Mogilev and Bobruisk. These groups have developed into a regular service provided by local Habilitation Centers and Center for Social Support. Each group of parents met twice a month to gain increased skills, an increased sense of power and a sense of belonging. These regular meetings provide an opportunity for their members to unite, face the challenges together and discuss possible solutions to the problems they face. In their feedback, the self-support group participants state that they receive significant emotional support at the meetings since they have a possibility to discuss their current needs and concerns about inclusion of their children in society as well as exchange information about various issues – from medical and therapeutic issues to relationship and communication issues. All members of the groups are familiar with the challenges of exclusion, so this kind of contact and experience exchange is especially useful for them.

➤ *For more information, please, see Annex 6 Success story.*

ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL TEAM OF TRAINERS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In Quarter 1 of fiscal year 2013, ChildFund created a National Team of Trainers (NTT) on inclusive education. This quarter, the trainers provided the following services in order to promote inclusion:

A national trainer, Tatyana Odynets, conducted two follow-up events in **Mogilev (February 5, 2014)** and **Kritchev (February 6, 2014)**. The target audience of the events was specialists and parents with children with disabilities. In the course of the events, the participants were introduced to the basic ideas and the conceptual framework of inclusive education and they realized the importance of actively engaging the community in educational processes aimed at children with special needs. In total, **28) representatives** of local administration, parents and teachers took part in

these events.

Vera Khitryuk, a national trainer trained by ChildFund Belarus, organized two large-scale training activities aimed at the promotion of inclusion in Baranovichi.

- The first training took place on **January 16, 2014** at Baranovichi State University and involved **25 primary school** teachers who were presented with the advantages that education of children with and without disabilities can give as well as practical tools for the application inclusive education practices at their working places.
- On **March 3, 2014** at Baranovichi State University **19** senior students were presented with the basic conceptual framework of inclusive education and crucial competencies that contribute to promoting inclusive education. In their feedback, they stated that they found the information extremely useful and they are going to apply it in their future work.

It must be noted that both events had very strategic target audiences:—senior students who are going to work with children in the near future and primary school teachers who can already apply the inclusion principles while working with children. A third follow-up activity is planned for next quarter with secondary school administration representatives who are involved into the decision-making process on the local level. Thus, having a strategic target audience is essential since it allows for the promotion of inclusive education on different levels

- Training on inclusive education for teachers from 15 vocational schools from all over Belarus (March 20) by Olga Svetlakova and Vera Hitruk, in partnership with the National Institute of Vocational Training and Professional Education.
- Training program on Inclusive Education in Pinsk (March 25, 2014), in partnership with Pinsk school #3 for 29 participants from 10 Pinsk schools by trainers Marina Bylino and Tatyana Odynets.

CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH SUB-GRANTS

“School – for Everyone” (Mozyr Secondary School #10)

This quarter, Mozyr Secondary school #10, successfully completed its sub-grant project “School – for Everyone”. Students with hearing impairments and teachers were trained to use sound-amplifying equipment purchased within the project. Project specialists organized regular trainings on sign language for school teachers to enhance their capacity for communicating with students with hearing disabilities. The school and the Mozyr Public Library organized a city exhibition of hand-made crafts by children with hearing impairments that demonstrated talents and capacities of children with disabilities to community members. In addition, the school held workshops on partnership and inclusive education for parents. All these efforts resulted in the decision by school administration to set up the first inclusive class in a school where children with and without disabilities will learn together.

To address the needs of families, school teachers and their partners from Mozyr Habilitation Center worked together with parents of children with disabilities to participate in a training “The role of parents of children with disabilities in inclusive education”. The training helped to raise awareness on the issues of inclusive education and specify the role of parents of children with disabilities. The participants established a network of teachers and parents of children with disabilities to facilitate further cooperation.

The total number of trained specialists within this sub-grant was 62 persons.

- For more information, please, see Annex 5 Sub-grant report.

The ChildFund Belarus team provided technical assistance, conducted monitoring visits and interviewed the partners and event participants in order to monitor and assess the results of local interventions.

OBJECTIVE 2: SUPPORT ADVOCACY EFFORTS BY PWD GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION

This quarter,

- **Six (6)** advocacy efforts aimed at introduction of inclusive education were implemented
- **Three (3)** official decisions related to the rights to education of people with disabilities were made.

The details on all the advocacy actions and the official decisions can be found in the Annex3 –Comment to the PMEP Semi-annual Report.

ACTIVITY:	
Task Group Meeting on Inclusive Education for practitioners, policy makers and parents of children with disabilities (February 21,2014)	
<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
A meeting for a group of 15 practitioners, policy makers and parents of children with disabilities aimed at defining the issues of discrimination and exchanging experience on effective methods on the development of tolerance, respect towards differences and awareness of the uniqueness of each person among children.	A one-day session was conducted for a group of eighteen (18) psychologists, special-needs experts from school and pre-school educational institutions, representatives of higher education institutions, experts from rehabilitation centers, and parents of children with disabilities representing twelve (12) organizations. Participants discussed the issues of stigma and discrimination in terms of the inclusion of a child with special needs into school life, talked about the causes of these problems and suggested possible solutions. During the meeting, the participants discussed basic challenges in the field of partnership and cooperation among

	<p>children as well as examples of effective methods that can help to stimulate a productive interaction. The second, practical, part of the meeting consisted of group work where the participants divided into small groups to define the challenges of interaction typical for a certain age group and possible solutions to these challenges. The participants in their feedback stated that it was very useful for them to exchange experiences in a mutual attempt try to find solutions to the problems on the agenda.</p> <p>The next meeting will focus on specific techniques and methods that help children to show respect towards every person, regardless of his/her specific characteristics.</p>
<p>*Notes: After an analysis of the event, ChildFund Belarus came to the conclusion that it would be rational to conduct the next Task Group meeting with the participation of children with and without disabilities in order to hear the experience and opinion about the issues of stigma and discrimination from the primary source – children themselves. This will provide a more complete picture of the issues, covered from different angles – specialists’, parents and children with and without disabilities. This will contribute to more effective work in the area of promoting and showing respect towards diversity and, thus, to a more inclusive society.</p>	

Advocacy efforts by alumni of ChildFund’s training courses:

The DPO ‘Children. Autism. Parents’ is a relatively young organization (functioning since 2012) that is an alumni organization of the training course on Organizational Development. The DPO has been active in undertaking various advocacy actions. This quarter, the DPO continued their activities and organized a number of events. These activities and events included:

- Together with the religious organization St Johann Brotherhood, DPO created a new web-site that facilitates the process of finding volunteers willing to help Belarusian families of children with autism (www.autism.volunteer.by). The primary objective of this web-site is to collect information about families that need assistance and potential volunteers. The web-site successfully connects volunteers and families with children with autism.

Vera Khitryuk, a member of the National Trainers Team,

- published an article in the Baranovichi newspaper “Nash Krai” and “Moi Universitet” covering inclusion issues, and
- made a presentation on inclusive education at the meeting initiated by the Education Faculty at the Vitebsk State University. The participants addressed the issues of the practical implementation of inclusive education and exchanged their experiences in the area. The presentation of Vera Khitryuk was very well received by the audience and stimulated a discussion of barriers to practical application of inclusive approaches in the system

of higher education. Vera also promoted her curriculum on inclusive education that was approved by the Ministry of Education as a part of an obligatory course at Baranovich State University and recommended it for all universities. The curriculum is based on the training program on Inclusive Education developed by ChildFund's Trainers' Team.

Olga Svetlakova, a member of the trainers' group on Inclusive Education, wrote an article "Inclusive Education: Development and assessment criteria" to promote inclusive approaches. The article was published in the international collection of scientific abstracts at the Regional Conference "Social Support to Children and Youth as the Basis for Flourishing Society" (Tashkent, Uzbekistan).

Ensuring Equal Access of Young Persons with Disabilities to Vocational Training

Oleg Miroshikov, a graduate of last year's Leadership for Young People with Disabilities course, and his mother Irina Miroshnikova, a graduate of the Leadership for Parents Course, undertook advocacy actions aimed at young people with disabilities entering the State College of Electronics. As a result of these actions, the young man enrolled in the State College of Electronics where his area of study will be professional photography.

It must be noted that Oleg developed his potential in the field of photography after participating in the Leadership course and has already created his own photo exhibition. It was challenging to enter the College of Electronics' Department of Photography because of the rigid rules about accepting persons with disabilities. According to the rule, an integrated group of students can be created if the number of persons with disabilities reaches 6 persons. At the moment when Oleg applied to the college, there were only two applicants with disabilities. Thus, the advocacy efforts of Irina Miroshnikova, his mother, were focused on changing the existing rules that did not allow her son to become a student. Irina first made an attempt to find more people with disabilities willing to study at the college. However, there were only two applicants – her son and one more girl. Then, Irina organized meetings with the college authorities to persuade them to form a new group with only two people. Irina states that it is thanks to the knowledge and skills acquired at the Leadership course as well as the general support of the ChildFund Belarus that she managed to successfully advocate for her son's rights. Now Oleg is a student of this college and ready to start pursuing his dream – to become a professional photographer.

Promoting inclusion of children with disabilities through sub-grants

There was an exhibition of paintings created by children with hearing impairments that study at Mozyr Secondary School #10 (current sub-grantee) that was displayed at the Public City Library. The paintings, which were created by 27 (twenty seven) children with and without hearing impairments, were displayed for a month – from 23 January to 23 February, 2014, showing Mozyr citizens that children with disabilities have talents and are able to share them with others as much as children without disabilities.

Three official decisions made related to the rights to education of people with disabilities were:

- Oleg Miroshikov was accepted into the State College of Electronics.
- The Minsk Executive Committee allowed Minsk Secondary School # 187 to open a new class where children with and without autism can study together (DPO "Children.Autism.Parents").
- After participating in a Task Group meeting, the administration at Pinsk Secondary School #3 decided to move towards inclusive practices.

OBJECTIVE 3: SUPPORT INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In order to support the introduction and development of inclusive education of children and youth with disabilities, the project staff provided technical support in the form of targeted consultations to the alumni of the TOT (training of trainers) and implemented the following:

- **One** project proposal for the creation of a Recourse Center on Inclusive Education was awarded.
- **Eighteen** educational authorities from **16** organizations were trained in the Training Program on Inclusive Education.
- Members of the National Trainers' Team completed the ***Manual on 5 Training Programs on Inclusive Education***

ACTIVITY:

Development of the Training Manual on Inclusive Education (November 2013-February 2014).

Members of the National Trainers' Team completed the Training Manual Program. ChildFund supported regular working meetings of the trainer's group where the authors defined the conceptual framework of the manual and performed the revision and editing. The manual is divided in modules and structured in a way that meets the needs of the main target groups that promote inclusion. It consists of five sections: 1) Introductory workshop "Basics of Inclusive Education", 2) Inclusive Education for Specialists, 3) Inclusive Education for Administration, 4) Inclusive Education for Children and 5) Role of Parents in Inclusive Education. Education practitioners express their interest in this unique manual that will facilitate developing competencies of the above-mentioned target groups. There have already been requests for the manual from the Academy of Post-diploma Education, the National Institute of Vocational Training and Professional Education, and many other organizations.

Three modules of the above-mentioned manual have already been piloted by the National Trainers' Team and they have received a positive evaluation by the trainers and by the participants of the trainings. The manual already serves as a universal tool that contributes to the implementation of inclusive education in the country. Based on these training programs, Baranovichi University developed its own curriculum for inclusive education for education students. This curriculum was recommended for country-wide dissemination by the Ministry of Education.

ACTIVITY:	
Training Program on Inclusive Education at the State Academy of Postgraduate Studies (27-28 March, 2014).	
<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
A workshop to promote inclusive education among education authorities.	<p>A workshop conducted for a group of 18 education authorities representing 16 organizations. During the trainings, basic principles and indicators of the inclusive education were discussed as well as the issues of segregation, integration and inclusion.</p> <p>The participants were very receptive and perceived the presented information with great interest. In their feedback, the participants stated that the information received at the training was very useful and expressed a desire to have a training held at their educational settings locally, involving more people from their schools in the promotion of inclusive education.</p>

DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE CENTER ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- Last quarter, ChildFund Belarus announced a call for proposals for a Resource Center on inclusive education, informing and encouraging their partner DPO and other Belarusian DPOs to submit project proposals. After all the applications were received and reviewed against the established criteria, one project for the creation of a community-based Resource center on Inclusive education in Smorgon was selected. The \$4,300 USD sub-grant will be implemented in the next quarter in accordance with the agreed work plan and budget with the support, guidance and monitoring of ChildFund Belarus.

VI. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

COORDINATION WITH USAID

Irina Mironova, ChildFund's COP and Jahor Novikau, USAID AOTR, 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 event and location	Participants	Objective	Outcomes
<p>Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF), USAID</p> <p>Monday, 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/P{WD projects , technical approach, project, its achievements and technical 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 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</p>	<p>Participants were interested in how ChildFund is received as an INGO with USAID funding in the country. Participants were impressed with our advocacy initiatives</p>

		<i>guaranteed by government policies.</i>	
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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 did a presentation on the OVC project for International Office program staff. The issues of further support and cooperation between the International Office and the Belarus office were discussed.

Coordination with the other organizations

On January 25, Irina Mironova, Chief of Party and Olga Valkovich, PWD Project Manager, took part in the workshop "Social protection of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Belarus" organized by the National Parliament and UNDP.

VII. PROJECT MANAGEMENT & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

This quarter, due to significant budget shortfalls ChildFund had to decrease the workload of Natalia Ryabova, the Organizational Development Specialist and Natalia Shrub, the Project Assistant. Natalia Ryabova decided to leave the organization in February.

Irina Kuksik, the Inclusive Education Specialist, informed ChildFund that she will be on her maternity leave starting in mid-April. ChildFund Belarus put out a job announcement for the Inclusive Education Specialist position according to the existing procedures. After a candidate is selected against the existing criteria, he/she is expected to start at the beginning of the next quarter.

VIII. BUDGET

This quarter, the project expenses were \$55,625 USD, which was 24% of the annual budget.

The SF-425 report will be submitted under separate cover by ChildFund International.