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

**Author’s Name:** Irina Mironova, Chief of Party  
Julia Popruzhenko, Project manager  
**Name of USAID office:** USAID Regional Mission representative office in Belarus  
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**Organizational Contact Information:**

<b>ChildFund International Belarus</b>  Irina Mironova Chief of Party ChildFund Belarus 39 Pushkin Ave., office 16 Minsk 220092 Belarus Phone: 375-172-57-77-08 (09) E-mail: <a href="mailto:imironova@belarus.childfund.org">imironova@belarus.childfund.org</a>	<b>USA Headquarters:</b>  Brooke DiPetrillo Grants Team Lead  ChildFund International USA 1200 18th Street NW, Suite 718 Washington, District of Columbia 20036 Phone: 804.756.2700 x2320 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bdipetrillo@childfund.org">bdipetrillo@childfund.org</a>
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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 necessitated removal from their family home. The project targets are 'social orphans,' or, children whose parents are living, but are unable to provide proper care, or children of parents who have been denied parental rights. The project's activities focus on working with families and social service professionals to maintain and reintegrate children within their original family units.

The project has three main objectives:

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

### B. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

This quarter, the project's activities focused on ensuring the sustainability of changes introduced earlier within the project. The project implemented various activities to strengthen partnerships with communities, re-training institutes and universities, and develop networking ties within the university community, support the sustainability of rehabilitation services.

On-going training of a new cadre of child protection specialists is crucial when there is high staff turnover and to support sustainability of introduced changes in the national child protection system. This quarter we observed new developments. In addition to Re-training institutes which provide continuing education and universities, 27 communities practicing family centered approaches in child protection served as informal training hubs in their oblasts. These project communities served as the centers of excellence to spread the innovative programs introduced by ChildFund and provided peer-to-peer support to less experienced communities in their oblasts in a form of consultation and training. These project communities served as the centers of excellence to spread family centered methods which nationally represent an innovative approach for many oblasts and provided peer-to-peer support to less experienced communities in their oblasts.

Chaussy socio-pedagogical center successfully advocated for further dissemination of home visitation services (SafeCare model) in Mogilev oblast. The roundtable on the SafeCare model that was conducted last quarter with peers from other communities resulted in the official requests to the Mogilev oblast re-training institute to conduct a SafeCare training for child protection specialists of 10 districts<sup>1</sup>.

Polotsk socio-pedagogical center successfully advocated for an expansion of Afterschool clubs for children and teens at risk and they were piloted in Polotsk in partnership with ChildFund. Last quarter, Polotsk socio-pedagogic center presented Afterschool clubs for children and teens at risk at the Vitebsk oblast seminar for education authorities. Oblast Department of education was impressed with the outcomes achieved by providing these afterschool clubs. It issued official recommendations to all districts within their oblast to start afterschool clubs for children and families at risk. This quarter, afterschool groups were initiated in 4 districts to start in Sept 1, 2015 (Orsha, Shumilino, Glubokoe, and Senno). Currently, these communities use school summer holiday months to test the approach including pilot groups for children at socio-pedagogic centers.

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<sup>1</sup> Klimovichi, Krichev, Kostjukovich, Gorki, Krasnopolie, Mstislavl, Slavgorod, Dribin, Cherikov, Khotimsk

This quarter, the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program was strengthened by a community public awareness campaign, which aimed to increase demand for parenting education among community members. The campaign was disseminated in 37 communities and proved to be effective as the demand for the Parenting Skills Enhancement program) increased in **94.5 %** of local communities reached by campaign efforts.

Partnership with universities and re-training institutes for project sustainability was also effective. While re-training institutes continued to support in-service training for the practitioners within the child protection system, universities focused on in-service training for new cohorts of young specialists. By the end of this quarter, 6 universities (100% of those that train social pedagogues and social workers in the country) incorporated program The Family-centered approach in Child Protection Services into their curriculum. Five of the universities provided training for their students this quarter. This quarter, the universities also demonstrated progress in using the PRIDE model to: 1) upgrade the traditional university courses with PRIDE content and 2) develop new curriculum based on the PRIDE model that will be approved and ready for use by the beginning of the next academic year 2015-2016.

In total:

- **1,497 parents** and **216 children** accessed community-based prevention and rehabilitation services.
- **194 child protection specialists** representing **115 organizations** participated in capacity building events provided by partner re-training institutes, alumni of TOTs and ChildFund specialists.
- **175 specialists** -- alumni of ChildFund training programs -- were supported with targeted consultations, and methodological and informational materials provided by ChildFund.
- The final conference was organized for project partners and other stakeholders to present the resources developed within the project.

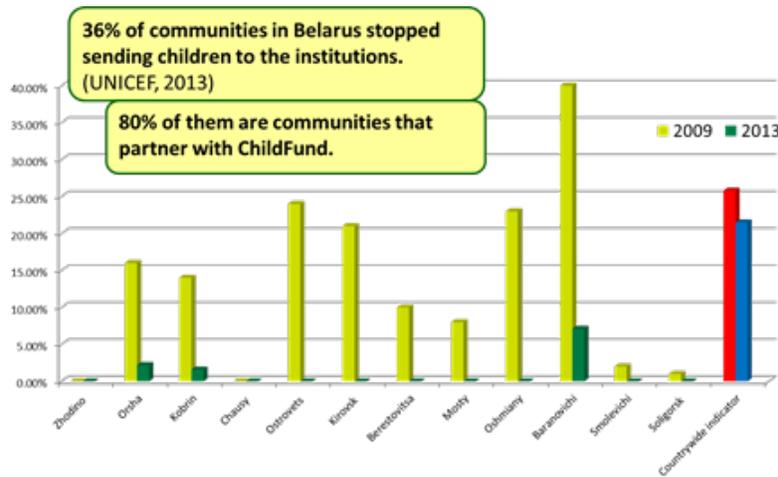
#### **B. CHALLENGES/CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES**

This quarter, the training activities for the most programs decreased. For example, Parenting Skills Enhancement Program served 14.3% less parents than in the previous quarter, PRIDE in-service declined by 13%. The trend of decline can be observed regularly between quarters II and III due to:

- ✓ Program trainers usually consider seasonal agricultural work in rural areas and schedule most of the training activity in October- April (project quarters I and II)
- ✓ The program trainers are mostly teachers and social pedagogues from local schools and socio-pedagogical centers. It can be difficult for them to fit training groups into their schedule in the beginning and end of an academic year (September and May) as their administrative and teaching workload is the heaviest in these months.

#### **D. LESSONS LEARNED**

Improvement in functioning of local child protection systems, including new services targeting the main risk factors of child abuse and neglect helped to prevent family separation. As the result, the need to further develop the resource of new foster families is reduced while the demand for community based family support and services, such as youth clubs increases. In some communities there is a waiting list for foster families and the number of foster parents exceed the number of children seeking foster care.



## 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 improved services were delivered through allocated community resources. Services developed within sub-grants in the previous project year continue to be sustainable and support OVCs and their families. ChildFund specialists provided targeted consultations and interventions in order to support smooth implementation of the previously established services such as Parenting, SafeCare, PRIDE, and reformation of the child protection system through multidisciplinary cooperation.

#### In this quarter:

- **216 children** were covered by community-based prevention and rehabilitation services;
- **577 specialists** participated in step-down trainings by TOT alumni

#### *SafeCare home visitation services for vulnerable children*

*SafeCare is a 24-week program providing biweekly home visits for families with children from ages 0 - 5 that focuses on strengthen parenting around three core domains: (1) health, (2) safety, and (3) parent-child interaction. Home visits focus on training parents to use health reference materials and access appropriate treatment, identify and eliminate safety and health hazards, and increase positive parent-child interactions. The program helps to decrease the risk of 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 SafeCare model continued its implementation using allocated local community resources. In total:

- **24 home visitors** from **22 organizations** continued to provide home visitation service in **5 communities**.
- The project supported **63 children** from risk families and **72 parents** in preventing child maltreatment and risks for delinquency.

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

#### *Further development of SafeCare model in Belarus:*

Implementation of the SafeCare sub-grant project helped to prevent removals of children of up to 3 years old from their families. Based on the achieved results, Chaussy specialists developed a plan for future actions that were presented to the rayon Department for Education authorities and received approval. The plan includes expanding the groups of home

visitors with education specialists and health care specialists to 3 new villages (Kamenka, Volkovichi and Gorbovichi); further development of community volunteers to serve these villages and the creation of self-help groups for at-risk parents that will be led and facilitated by parents who successfully graduated from the SafeCare program. These elements will enrich the original Safe Care model and help to strengthen the links between community based and formal child protection mechanisms.

Geographic expansion

Last quarter, a roundtable discussion of the experience on SafeCare Model development was organized within Chausy. The roundtable meeting involved 45 participants including directors of socio-pedagogic centers of 10 districts of Mogilev oblast. Following the Roundtable resolution, the directors submitted a request to Mogilev oblast re-training institute to conduct a SafeCare training for child protection specialists of their districts in 2015-2016.

**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 53 geographic locations. Community-based public awareness campaigns that helped reinforce the importance of the Parenting Skills Enhancement program. Community-based public awareness campaigns to increase demand for this service was conducted in 37 communities and proved its effectiveness- the demand for the Parenting Skills Enhancement program) increased in 94,5 % of local communities (35 of 37 covered by the campaign).

In total:

- 947 parents (66 groups and individual family consultations) attended the Parenting Skills Enhancement Program this quarter in schools and preschools in 53 geographic locations, 41% of these parents (392 people) attending the course were those under supervision of child protection services or those parenting children with disabilities; 80 organizations.
- 100% of all parenting groups were carried out with local communities' resources.

Outcomes of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program:

- 81% of parents reported they demonstrate an assertive parenting style;
- 73% of parents reported that they know the reasons for a child's misbehavior;
- 85% of parents know and practice non-violent methods of discipline;
- 82% reported they know about the stages of a child's development;
- 80% reported understanding a child's feelings and emotions and practice proper reaction.

<b>Public awareness campaign on promotion of safe parenting</b>	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A series of publications in media to highlight the importance of family environment and emphasize the effectiveness of safe parenting to child healthy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ChildFund participated in the online conference organized by the leading national TV channel. The interview focused on factors that affect child's development, the role of parents and the effective tools they can use to support</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The demand for the Parenting Skills Enhancement program in local communities increased</li> </ul>	<p>healthy development of their children. The conference was scheduled to coincide with the Family Day celebration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Printed materials and posters were distributed to 37 targeted communities. Trainers of the targeted communities were provided with support and consultations on organizing the response to the interested parents.</li> <li>The demand for the Parenting Skills Enhancement program) increased in <b>94.5 %</b> of local communities ( 35 of 37 covered by the campaign *</li> </ul>
<p>*Of 37 communities that were targeted by the media campaign this quarter <b>11 communities</b> recruited and started new parent groups. This demonstrates both strong interest, demand and commitment from parents to strengthen their knowledge and skills to enhance parenting. . In addition, 52 groups in 26 communities were formed and will commence training in September-October 2015.</p>	

### *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 **41** geographic locations in **49 organizations** (please see Annex 1 Project Map) by the alumni of ChildFund using local community resources:

- 101 prospective foster/adoptive parents** participated in the PRIDE pre-service training program in 100% of country oblasts: Brest oblast (Kobrin, Drogichin, Brest, Kamenets, Ivanovski and Brestski rayons), Minsk oblast (Soligorsk, Slutsk, Zhodino, Molodechno, Vileika), Grodno oblast (Novogrudok, Lida, Smorgon), Mogilev oblast (Bobruisk, Mogilev, Krichev, Gorki), Gomel oblast (Gomel, Dobrush), and Vitebsk oblast (Liozno, Senno, Polotsk, Glubokoe, Vitebsk). Of them **99 (98%)** are prospective adoptive parents, 2 – foster parents.
- 41 children were provided with family-type care** by the foster/adoptive parents trained this quarter. 15 of them (36%) were adopted.
- 317 foster/adoptive parents** from communities of 100% of country oblasts (6) mastered their parenting skills through the PRIDE in-service program: Brest oblast (Kobrin, Brest and Brest rayon, Ivatsevichii), Grodno oblast (Grodno, Novogrudok), Minsk oblast (Cherven, Borisov, Minsk), Vitebsk oblast (Sharkovschina, Postavy, Liozno), Mogilev oblast (Kirovsk, Bykhov, Mogilev), and Gomel oblast (Rogachev, Gomel). **100** of foster parents were provided with in-service training by 4 partner Re-training Institutes (Brest oblast, Grodno oblast, Minsk and Gomel oblast).

This quarter, the number of parents served with pre-service and in-service courses of PRIDE model decreased by 57% for pre-service and 13% for in-service in comparison with the previous quarter. For pre-service, there is no need to schedule additional groups of prospective candidates because the number of the existing foster parents exceeds the number of children who need foster care. The trend reflects the advancement in preserving the child's family whenever possible. The introduction and expansion of support services within the community (such as family visits, youth clubs, day care centers, support groups) influences these outcomes as families in situations of crisis can access targeted services that support children at risk, while they as care givers work to re-stabilize or change their situations, without separating from children, when it is unnecessary.

The primary reason for the decline of in-services training is the traditional group schedule: child protection institutions used to conduct most of the training activities for foster parents in fall and autumn seasons when all agricultural activities ends.

Note: the share of prospective adoptive parents in pre-service groups increased from 80% last quarter to 98% this quarter. This data illustrates a shift from foster care to adoption and a more permanent form of family based care for orphans. of community care for orphans. Most of these parents consider adopting a baby 0-3 years of age, which plays an important role in discontinuing the flow of babies and young children into institutions. Adoption is the 'golden standard' for child's placement because it ensures permanence and develops secure attachment.

### ***The Day Care Centers ( Afterschool Clubs): 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 ( Afterschool clubs) 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.*

Three Day Care centers (Afterschool clubs) in Rogachev, Zhodino, and Polotsk that were piloted within the project in 2013, continued its functioning on allocated community resources.

- **41 children** from at risk families received supportive and rehabilitation service at afterschool care centers. The activities for children were accompanied by counseling and education of parents to prevent family separation and ensure children's safety and healthy development within their families. The project created the mechanism of sustainable provision of this service through regular allocation of community resources.

This quarter, the project achieved:

- **41** (29 boys and 12 girls) **children** from families at risk obtained access to new or improved services
- **60** (27 men and 33 women) **parents** and other members of the **33 families** raising children were served
- **80** child protection **specialists** who participated in the Final project conference in June were provided with the Guidelines on establishment of Afterschool club for children at risk – a manual developed by ChildFund
- **85%** of enrolled reporting improvement of social and financial knowledge and life skills, such as cleaning and washing up, repairing clothes and bicycles.

The afterschool groups continued to serve the project goal of preventing unnecessary child's removal from the biological family by establishing afterschool centers in communities in Belarus:

- **25 children** prevented from being institutionalized and remained with their biological families due to improvement of family environment (**60% of** children served)
- **17%** of children and families who were served by the afterschool services were removed from the register of child protection system
- **Zero** (0) cases of new criminal records/ transgression among children attending Day Care center in Rogachev school who demonstrated earlier behavior deviations

### Geographic expansion:

Last quarter, Polotsk socio-pedagogic center presented their experience in developing the service of Afterschool care for children and teens at risk at the Vitebsk oblast seminar for education authorities. 30 participants representing Departments for Education of 20 rayons of Vitebsk oblasts learned about the benefits of the service as well as the

technical issues associated with the group opening (staffing model, food provision). Oblast Department of education was impressed with these services and issued official recommendations to all districts of their oblast to start afterschool clubs for children and families at risk.

This quarter, as a follow up to the meeting the official decisions were issued to open afterschool groups in **4 districts** of the oblast starting Sept 1, 2015. Currently, these communities use school summer holiday months to test the approach: they organized pilot groups for children at socio-pedagogic centers.

*Reformation of Child Protection system includes a shift from uncoordinated work of the different specialists to coordinated work in multidisciplinary teams. Previously specialist often duplicated and overlapped their efforts, used subjective and ungrounded decision-making 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 June 2015, **82 communities** of the country had child protection specialists trained and practicing Family centered approach in their daily work. This figure equals the number of active communities from the previous quarter despite high staff turnover in child protection services.
- **27** communities practicing Family centered approach became the training hubs in their oblasts. **43 trainers** on Family centered approach from these communities conducted trainings and workshops not just for the specialists from their own locations but also participants from neighboring communities. In this quarter, **327** child protection/education **specialists** from **253 organizations** (schools and preschools, social support centers, and hospitals) from 186 localities received training.

**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 provided consultations and support in coordinating and organizing training events in the local communities.

<b>Targeted consultations and Interventions</b>	
<b>Expected results</b>	<b>Actual targets achieved</b>
<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>• 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>20</b> directors of local Socio-pedagogic centers and <b>15</b> trainers from Universities and Re-training institutes were assisted with individual phone and e-mail consultations on applying the methods described by the <i>Guidance on rehabilitation work</i> developed by ChildFund.</li> <li>• <b>13</b> trainers were consulted on organizing trainings for multidisciplinary teams in their local communities during the networking meeting.</li> <li>• <b>10</b> specialists were individually consulted on methodology of PRIDE by phone/e-mail: challenges of training prospective adoptive parents, national statistics on foster parenting, developing relationships between foster and biological families, and open adoption.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10</b> specialists representing <b>10</b> communities were supported with video materials on organizing work with orphans.</li> <li>• <b>15</b> specialists trained by Grodno oblast retraining institute on Parenting Skills Enhancement Program were supplied with electronic materials (program manuals, program evaluation tests, handout materials)</li> <li>• <b>92</b> trainers from <b>86</b> organizations received individual consultations by phone on implementation of Parenting Skills Enhancement Program in local communities: gaining administrative support of local authorities to implement the program; providing support to peer teachers in working with parents; engaging and retaining at risk families into program. Individual supervision and methodological support by ChildFund is critical for young trainers to remain motivated in organizing and conducting their first parenting groups.</li> </ul>
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### *Life Skills for Institutionalized Children*

**Seventy one** 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.

### *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 the PRIDE course was provided by two oblast Retraining institutes (Grodno, Brest ) targeting local specialists. The training course on Family-centered approach in child protection service was provided by two oblast Retraining institutes (Gomel ad Grodno).

By the end of this quarter 6 universities (100% of those that train social pedagogues and social workers in the country) incorporated The Family-centered approach training course in their curriculum. Five provided training for their students this quarter. The partner universities resourcefully used the PRIDE training materials to: upgrade the traditional university courses with PRIDE content and develop new curriculum based on PRIDE model that will be approved and ready for use by the beginning of the next academic year 2015-2016.

#### **In total this quarter:**

- **194** child protection specialists representing **115** organizations participated in capacity building events
- **315** students of 5 universities who major in social work and teacher training completed the courses on Family-centered approach or PRIDE methodology
- **13** national **trainers** trained by ChildFund on Family-centered approach, SafeCare and PRIDE methodology participated in a networking meeting

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

The course on Family-Centered Approach is incorporated into regular retraining curriculum in all partner Retraining Institutes. This quarter, workshops on Family-centered approach program were conducted in 2 partner Re-training Institutes by the alumni of the TOTs conducted by ChildFund in previous project years.

- **25 child protection specialists of 24 organizations** participated in the seminar on the Family-Centered Approach in Grodno Retraining Institute.
- **25 child protection specialists of 19 organizations** participated in the seminar on the Family-Centered Approach in Gomel Retraining Institute

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

In the previous quarter, ChildFund conducted a networking meeting for faculties from partner universities to discuss their experience in applying Family-centered approach and PRIDE programs in their universities and encourage more active use of these programs in their work with students. This quarter they demonstrated the outcomes of the meeting:

- 8 faculties, alumni of the training program on Family-centered approach in child protection services trained **250 students** in 5 universities (Gomel University, Vitebsk University, Mogilev University, Brest University, and Minsk Pedagogic University)
- Elena Bai, the faculty of Brest State University, presented the student textbook developed for the course 'Family-centered approach in child protection'. The book is a unique aid to students and university faculties and supports the need for a structured content, synopsis of course lectures and seminars, recommendations on organizing and conducting seminars, lists of control questions, and literature references.

### *Training Program on PRIDE model*

Training program on PRIDE model was delivered by partner re-training institutes and universities. The most advanced socio-pedagogical centers served as the training hubs for their peers.

In total :

- **129 specialists from 57 organizations** participated in workshops held by Brest and Grodno Re-training institutes and partner socio-pedagogic centers of Grodno and Polotsk,.
- **65 students** were trained at Belarusian State Pedagogic University (Minsk)

ChildFund provided technical support to training in Brest re-training institute by their request. The number of communities in Brest oblast who have specialists trained on the PRIDE model increased to 15 of 18 communities in Brest oblast (83% of the total number).

### *Adaptation of PRIDE Model in the universities*

Elena Altyntseva, ChildFund trainer from Belarusian State Pedagogic University (Minsk) developed two new curriculum based on PRIDE materials. They were "Social work with orphans" (will be used in academic year 2015-2016) and "Social support and supervision for orphans, graduates of state institutions" that she piloted this quarter for **65 students**.

Chichurina Raisa and Galinovskaya Anna, ChildFund trainers from Brest State University, reported using of PRIDE materials to enrich the content of lectures and seminars on the existing discipline 'Social and legal protection of family and childhood'.

Inspired by PRIDE two faculty members Anna Galinovskaya, from Brest State University, and Natalya Krupenchenko from Mogilev State University initiated and supervised three student research papers that outlined the issues in-service support for foster and adoptive families. This topic is novel both to students' and expert communities. This research aims to explore and better understand the challenges and needs faced by foster parents.

### *Parenting Skills Enhancement Program*

This quarter **15 specialists** from **15 districts** of Grodno oblast enhanced their skills at the TOT training organized by Grodno oblast Re-training Institute. ChildFund assisted Re-training institute in assessing the needs of oblast in trainers on Parenting Skills program, planning and conducting targeted recruitment of the training participants.

This training was conducted as the part of the Sustainability plans designed in partnership with Grodno oblast to implement the full model of de-institutionalization. This training helped to supplement the oblast trainer's resource for Parenting Skills program . Now 95% of oblast communities (17 out of 18) have trained specialists to provide the program to parents .

<i>Network meeting development for national trainers June 19, 2015 (not planned)</i>	
<i>Actual targets achieved</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>13 national trainers</b> participated in the meeting on programs Family-centered approach, PRIDE, and SafeCare home visitation. The trainers representing different geographic locations discussed the ongoing development of the effective model of child protection in the communities through the enhancement of trainers' resource and consistent training of multidisciplinary teams. Program experts from ChildFund Headquarters who visited Belarus at that time provided valuable input to the meeting. Carmen Madrinan , ChildFund International Senior Child Protection specialist initiated the discussion of common challenges faced by specialists who are pioneering the use of novel approaches in their communities. Together with the trainers, they examined the best practices of solving the challenges. Also, Carmen urged the trainers to discuss what keeps them strong and motivated experts in their communities; to highlight the short- and long-term benefits to children and families that can be created only by the high quality programs.</li> <li>• All participants emphasized the importance of such experience exchange meetings between national trainers and international experts as they help sustain their motivation and enrich the professional knowledge</li> </ul>	

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

<i>Final conference June 10, 2015</i>	
<i>Expected results</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-day meeting for 60 participants from the Ministry of Education, oblast Departments for Education, local child protection services, representatives of partner universities and re-training institutes</li> <li>• The project outcomes and lessons learned are presented by the project partners and ChildFund</li> <li>• Recommendations for further utilization of the resources discussed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 participants participated in a one-day meeting representing project partner organizations and persons: oblast and rayon Departments for Education, local child protection services, partner universities and re-training institutes. Delegates of international NGOs (UNICEF, Forum Syd), Embassies of USA and Finland to Belarus, and national mass media enhanced opportunities for networking development among all stakeholders.</li> <li>• The meeting served (1) to inform the audience on the project outcomes achieved on the local, oblast and national levels, (2) to present the professional resources created within the project and available to them, (3) to strengthen the networking the project partners.</li> <li>• Methodological materials developed within the project were distributed to every participant both in paper and electronic form.</li> </ul>

Note: Scott Ronald , Charge d'Affaires , Embassy of the United States of America of the United States opened the Conference and expressed his high assessment of ChildFund project .

### ***Success of advocacy efforts aimed at creation of Resource Centers on Child Protection***

Since 2012, ChildFund advocated for resources that would address the specialists' growing demand to receive professional support and advice from a professional, unbiased, non-controlling body. In 2013, ChildFund provided a sub-grant to Minsk city Re-training institute in order to pilot the first in the country Resource Center on child protection in partnership. The Ministry of Education highly appreciated the positive results of the pilot project and in 2013 issued a request to establish such centers in every oblast of the country. Oblast Re-training institutes should serve the administrative basis for such centers. By the end of this quarter, 100% of the Re-training institutes created Resource centers on child protection to insure on-job support to local child protection specialists. The new Resource centers used legal documents (a Statute of the Resources Center) , the methods of creating and managing a database of community specialists, methodological resources, and the approach to annual planning that were developed in Minsk within sub-grant provided by ChildFund.

### ***Dissemination of experience by ChildFund trainers in professional community***

ChildFund trainers on PRIDE actively share their experience of practical use of the model. Nataliya Mikeniya, a ChildFund trainer from Smorgon published an article "Foster family. PRIDE model as the resources for parents" (part II) in the professional journal 'Dialogue'. The article informs wide professional community of child protection and education specialists on the experience and effective methods of providing support to foster parents that are offered within the PRIDE model. ChildFund program specialist supported Natalia' effort.

## **III. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION**

### ***• Coordination with USAID***

Irina Mironova, ChildFund's Chief of Party, and Anastasia Glambotskaya , acting USAID AOR communicated regularly through meetings, e-mails, and phone calls. Jahor Novikau, USAID AOR being on long business trip communicated through e-mail.

On June 15-19, 2015, a team of ChildFund headquarters specialists visited Belarus. Carmen Madrinan, Senior Child Protection Specialist, and Beth Mayberry, Grant Management Officer, worked with local staff to document the models, approaches and theories of change for the Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Persons with Disabilities project components capitalizing on key project outcomes, promising practices and lessons learned. In addition to discussions with ChildFund- Belarus program specialists they visited 4 project communities, and met with the national trainers on child protection programs (Family-centered approach, PRIDE model, SafeCare home visitation).

## **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**

This quarter, the project expenses was \$39 506,28 ( ICR included); 22% of the annual budget. In the period of October 2014- June 30 2015 the spending \$129 618, i.e. 72% of the annual budget.

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