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Final Report of Belarus Cooperative Agreement between Christian Children's Fund (CCF) and World Learning Inc. (WLI)

**ENHANCING TREATMENT AND HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEMS IN BELARUS
(September 1993 - December 1995)**

The final report of the Belarus Cooperative Agreement Program is in two parts, which complement each other. The first part has been prepared by Christian Children's Fund, and the second by an independent evaluator.

Part I: CCF's Assessment: A Final Overview

The CCF part of the report is divided into four sections:

- A. Accomplishments
- B. Activities
- C. Significance of Activities
- D. Problems, Lessons and Recommendations.

A. Accomplishments

1. Empowerment of Belarussian Children's Fund (BCF)

Through this agreement program BCF has become a leader among Belarus child-oriented NGOs. Its enabling role in society (and within the NGO community) has been strengthened through its partnership with CCF.

BCF has moved from a status of ambiguity of role to one of relative clarity of vision, which is manifested in a balanced mix of services. It has achieved the right combination of programming : advocacy for the rights of children, and direct health and social services to Chernobyl-affected children.

Effective fund raising has increased in quality and quantity, and is no longer restricted to the leadership of the organization.

There is a relatively democratic atmosphere in the personnel management. Staff members are respected, regardless of their background or status.

A partnership based on the sharing of resources has replaced a donor/receiver pattern of exchange with the West. This has resulted in more trust in "the foreign outside world", and the BCF staff now better understand the culture and practices of international NGOs.

The BCF staff have acquired professional attitudes and skills in serving children in difficult circumstances. Children are served not on the basis of charity, but on the basis of rights. The staff recognize that delivery of child welfare services should be based on value-oriented policies and planned strategies.

BCF has acquired a relatively modern style of administration. The offices have been equipped with computers (and other modern facilities) and the staff have learned the basics of the new communication technology. The telephone system has an international link, the e-mail is functioning, and the filing has improved. The office is modern and comfortable for visitors and staff, with no excesses of expenditure.

Limitations in accomplishments are easy to identify. The older members of staff, on the whole, have benefitted less from the new ideas and experiences than younger members. The staff need much more training in computer technology, and in management and planning.

The financial management side of the empowerment was hard to achieve in depth. The old system of finance, the discouraging tax system, and the insecurity of the economy, have limited progress in financial administration and in bringing the organization to a level of total self-sufficiency. The low salaries of staff remain a concern.

2. Direct Service

a) Diagnostic equipment to a national cancer hospital

The ultrasound equipment procured for the Anti-Chernobyl Center (ACC) is being used effectively to enhance the quality of diagnosis for thousands of child and adult radiation patients. The unit was bought at half price, and the staff of the hospital have been trained at no extra cost. BCF has been credited as a "local donor" for its enabling efforts at ACC.

b) Recuperation program

One thousand three hundred and thirty six children were offered "recuperation" treatment. An additional number of children were partially covered by CCF/WLI funds, bringing the total covered under this Agreement to two thousand children. Much energy went into demonstrating the impact of this fresh air/balanced diet and medical assistance program for children from a radiation environment. The study showed positive results, but the limitations of the scientific design made the inference of effectiveness of the treatment tentative. The study was the first of its kind, and is a contribution to the records of scientific (clinical and quantitative) assessment of "recuperation".

c) Material assistance

Material assistance, which was significant in the first year of the program, was largely in the form of medicines and seeds for planting. This form of assistance was appreciated, but CCF had a minimum role in its programming and distribution. However, on some occasions there were complaints about the quality of the medicines.

The CCF Geneva office has not been active in this form of activity during the second year, as the program shifted increasingly towards empowerment and advocacy.

3. Enabling Local NGOs

There is evidence that a cluster of (child and health-oriented) NGOs in Belarus have been strengthened by the programs extended to BCF. They have acquired training material. Some of the organizations have become connected with international sources of funding and exchange. They have learned about advocacy and fundraising and achieved some results. And they are continuing the process of growing in a political and social environment which is not very friendly to charity agencies.

4. Advocacy

Over the last two years, BCF has been able to challenge the government on children's rights issues, through numerous articles in newspapers and reports on children.

BCF has helped organize a Committee for Advocacy on the Law on Charities and NGOs. It has contributed to the UNICEF situation report, and criticized the government's report to the UN Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The staff of BCF have educated the public about the plight of orphans and children in prison. They have helped organize a Children's Parliament, which is critical of government policy. BCF and CCF have been able to address together significant public issues (such as "The Role of NGOs in Society" and "The Medical Consequences of Chernobyl"), and have received serious government and public attention. BCF and CCF have worked closely on advocacy, but BCF has always been in the front line of the struggle in challenging the authorities and the public.

B. Activities

1. Institutional Development Training

This activity was closely associated with the empowerment of BCF. Six workshops were administered over the period of the Agreement, the topics of which covered time planning, personnel, office procedures, fund raising, project planning, democratic management, finance, volunteers, and Board development. All workshops were run by external consultants who had experience in the former Soviet Union region.

2. Ongoing Work with BCF

The CCF Minsk offices were located within the premises of BCF. Ongoing direct contact between the three local CCF staff and the BCF staff provided a natural process of development. The CCF Geneva staff introduced, on a daily basis, ideas about programs, organization, advocacy, conflict resolution and other issues. The CCF Minsk staff cooperated and reflected with BCF staff in dealing with these new issues.

3. Launching of Public Conferences

Two major international conferences were held, each involving over seventy participants. The first was on "The Role of NGOs in the Human Rights of Children", and the second on "The Medical Consequences of Chernobyl". BCF and CCF Minsk were major actors in the planning of these events. Local participants were active in the first conference, and in the second they were a leading factor in the initiative.

4. Production of Training Material and Documentation

For the above two conferences, and for each of the six workshops, special documents were prepared in English and Russian. These training documents, in addition to the recuperation research documents, will be used in the future in Belarus and elsewhere.

5. Coordination with Local NGOs

CCF Minsk staff met periodically with a small group of NGOs to discuss issues of common concern. The dialogue and sharing of material, as well as practical assistance, have been an ongoing informal activity. Some of the local NGOs have learned to make contacts abroad through this forum.

6. Applied Research

A local scientific study on recuperation was commissioned and guided by the program Agreement. An international health expert was recruited to interpret the data collected, and to advise on future research. This international expert also reviewed all the local literature on the subject and compiled a report with recommendations for future work. These two papers are publishable and will be shared with the World Health Organization and other agencies concerned with Chernobyl.

7. Advocacy

Advocacy was part of every major initiative, especially the training and conference work. The BCF newspaper ensured that advocacy was ongoing, and the press office has records of hundreds of articles and T.V activities.

8. Exchange Visits

International experts have visited the program in connection with training, consultation, initiation of new services, installation of hospital equipment, surgery demonstration, and planning visits to and from Belarus. In December 1995, for example, a number of surgeons visited Virginia Commonwealth University Medical College in Richmond USA, to learn about critical surgery for children. Earlier, a medical team from Richmond had visited Minsk.

9. CCF Geneva Visits

CCF Geneva staff visited Belarus every three months or so. Several members of staff have visited BCF and one of the program staff was assigned to this project. The Geneva visits to Minsk were events of exchange about partnership and program development. They also served as occasions for mutual empowerment between CCF and BCF.

10. Provision of Material

The record shows that a wealth of material has been channelled to Belarus through this Agreement. Much of it has been CCF matching. In January 1996, for example, a container of books on women's health arrived in Minsk, to be used in the new Women's Health Center with which CCF Minsk is about to start work in cooperation with BCF and the UNDP.

C. Significance of Activities

1. Institutional Development at BCF

The development of BCF over the past two years has been observable, but the period of intervention has been too short. The staff have changed but they stayed loyal to the institution. Without this program the hemorrhage of human resources at BCF would probably have become serious. The agency is still in need of technical support, but it can function on its own. The salaries of the staff are still too low to maintain young people who have to support families. The training programs started should continue and CCF will not abandon BCF in the coming two to three years. Sustainability is still an issue, but there has been good progress.

2. Ongoing Work with BCF

The CCF Minsk staff will change their focus from serving BCF to serving the larger NGO community. They will, with other staff, run the newly-formed Women's Health Center. BCF will be seriously involved in the running of the Center's program, and will be active in screening NGO applications for seed grants for small projects. BCF's newly acquired skills will be put to use in CCF's future program in Belarus.

3. Public Conferences

The two conferences mentioned above have left an impact and an impressive written record for future use. The medical symposium was not sufficiently creative in organization, since arrangements were made within a very short time, and did not provide a sufficient variety of international consultants to dialogue with the excellent group of local experts who participated in this event. The written local contributions are compiled in a valuable document, together with the record of the proceedings.

4. Production of Training and Research Material

Belarus is among the most isolated countries of the former Soviet region today. There is a thirst for knowledge among the practitioners and students of the helping professions and among the personnel of the NGOs. Material produced during this program will be very much needed for training, academic education and practice, and schools of social work and medicine, in particular, will be eager to use such material.

5. Coordination with NGOs

This was a secondary activity which was not given sufficient attention. The work done with NGOs was valuable and not restricted to the periodic encounters. NGOs were active in the empowerment workshops and the public conferences.

6. Advocacy

Advocacy was BCF's strongest point and the results were significant. However, the political environment of the country does not reward social action. There is frustration among the public and NGOs, which face a stagnating political leadership and a deteriorating economy. But advocacy must continue, even in such a bleak political climate. The NGOs are among the few sources of leadership which are calling for system change with courage. They deserve all the support they can get from the international community.

7. Exchange Visits and Provision of Material

The program had not envisaged such a wealth of external human resources. By cooperating with other NGOs and other institutions, particularly the Virginia Commonwealth University Medical College, Johnson & Johnson, and the Soros Foundation, our resources multiplied and our technical work was enriched. CCF has been able to initiate programs for the future, beyond the Agreement. Sustainability has been on our mind constantly.

8. CCF Staff Visits

CCF staff visits cemented the partnership and contributed to the implementation. Some of our team visits turned into useful exchanges with BCF and other NGO representatives. One senior staff member of BCF said, on a number of occasions, "your visit to Belarus was a seminar, since I learned a lot in a few days by talking with you".

D. Problems, Lessons and Recommendations

The independent evaluation report (Part 2) presents some fine technical recommendations which are largely related to BCF empowerment. On the whole, CCF accepts these recommendations. In this Part 1, CCF discusses additional problems and offers recommendations which are perhaps of a relatively wider scope and of a more organizational nature.

1. Two-year Agreement

The process of social change in a given organization is slower than had been conceived in the Agreement. It takes half a year to "get going" in implementation (establish a local office, negotiate a revised strategic plan, recruit staff and consultants) and, before one knows it, time pressure becomes serious for "delivery of the product". Developmental projects need sufficient time to make changes in attitudes, experience and social systems.

Recommendation:

Consideration of three-ear grants, with possible renewal for significant empowerment projects, such as this one.

2. Original Planning Too Distant

The original grant was conceived and prepared at CCF headquarters in the USA, without sufficient exchange and consultation with BCF and CCF/Geneva. When CCF/Geneva assumed implementation, it revised the work plan in cooperation with BCF in the field. Significant programmatic revisions were made, but there were some structural items which could not be changed in the Agreement. For example, we could not reduce the "recuperation" budget to introduce seed money for NGO projects. Supporting small projects was a strongly felt need locally. CCF/Geneva and BCF felt that the recuperation expenses were too high and that the local NGOs would have benefitted from a capacity building program built around a seed grant feature.

Recommendation:

Ensure that the grant holder has done his/her homework in depth, with local consultation, when planning the grant proposal.

3. One to One Partnership

The CCF/ BCF partnership has been rewarding and has taken a normal course, moving along the trust scale in a favorable direction. We are proud to report a good story of empowerment through a healthy experience of partnership with a single organization.

The program has also helped other NGOs in Belarus. Nevertheless, we have wondered whether it would have made better sense to have operated with a multiple partnership design. Could we have chosen four or five emerging NGOs and given them more equitable attention? A multiple partner empowerment design would probably generate creative competition among the partners. It would minimize the risk (and the fear) of losing a single partner, and it would create an NGO advocacy group.

Recommendation:

It is worth encouraging grant agreements which structure partnerships between one (or more) external NGO(s) and several local NGOs, in order to create consortia structures of promising empowerment potential.

4. The Political and Economic Climate

It is known that Belarus has had a very slow transition. The socio-economic climate seriously affects the "freedom of movement" of NGOs. Our Agreement has been slowed down by politics and a disappointing economy. Taxes, border formalities, bank transactions, office registration, communication, visas, salaries, and availability of international resources, are among the many areas which have affected our program implementation. Much patience, flexibility and positive thinking are required to cope with the situation.

Recommendation:

The involvement of local government at the start of the Agreement, and even before the signing of the Agreement, is important. At the receiving end, the government officials concerned must pledge support for the grant and its implementors. The local US Embassies should be better informed and involved in AID related programs.

5. Experience in the Country

CCF had some limited experience in Belarus before this Agreement. However, the programs then were episodic and material assistance (of the emergency type) was dominant. The AID/WLI program was the first significant developmental initiative for CCF in this country. We had to learn fast how to circumvent societal barriers and to understand legal complexities and cultural realities. For example, it was quite difficult to establish our local office in Minsk. Nevertheless, we managed and our local contacts and problem solving skills have developed smoothly. We have cooperated and coordinated with the few other international NGOs operating in the country.

Recommendation:

For NGOs operating an Agreement for the first time, local WLI, AID and US Embassies should give close support in implementation, particularly at the start.

6. Absence of Professional Local Coordinator

It was difficult to satisfy an item in the Agreement which required the presence of a full time expatriate coordinator in Belarus to support and regulate the work locally. The search for such a person was not easy, and the salary was in sharp contrast to local salaries. Initially, CCF Geneva found a US citizen residing in Belarus and working for an American Mission. He worked for half a year, on a half time basis and with reduced salary, but had to leave the post when his Mission asked him to concentrate on his church work. He was dedicated and helpful, and facilitated the transition of his Assistant (a talented Belarussian lady) to the post of Coordinator. The new Coordinator was extremely successful in assuming this role. She also helped her associates to blossom and work very well at the CCF office in Minsk. However, it would be unfair to assume that a person whose professional training was in languages could become a program expert in empowerment. In this sense, the program has missed some elements of local ongoing professional support.

Recommendation:

The search for long term assignment experts should be fast, efficient and carried out very early on in the process of the Agreement. Help in the recruitment process from WLI and AID could be more "aggressive".

7. Language

Training material was translated from English into Russian in order to make it accessible to the staff of NGOs. The philosophy of adapting to the indigenous local culture in empowerment work is sound and it should never be violated. However, there is also much benefit to be gained in introducing a foreign language within the "empowerment package of skills". Learning a foreign language often widens educational and cultural horizons and enhances job opportunities. Knowledge of English in Belarus would facilitate the acquisition of new information which is not available in Russian. Much social science literature, for example, is written in English or other foreign languages.

Recommendation

Teaching foreign languages could be encouraged as an integral part of the empowerment and institutional development process. If language is offered, it should be adapted to include social science and organizational material to increase its relevance. Much attitude change (e.g. concepts of time, family patterns, leadership) could be integrated with creative foreign language training.

CCF Geneva, 24 January 1996
Ghassan Rubeiz

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FINAL REPORT OF BELARUS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN
CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND (CCF)/BELARUSSIAN CHILDREN'S FUND AND
WORLD LEARNING INC. (WL)

ENHANCING TREATMENT AND HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEMS IN BELARUS
(September 1993 - December 1995)

Part 2 : INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

- I. Introduction
- List of Abbreviations and Key Personnel at CCF/BCF
 - Summary of Evaluation
- II. Nature of the Partnership
- III. Achievements in Relation to Goals, Objectives, Indicators, Outputs, and Sustainability by Goals of Project (in relation to the DIP)
- The Empowerment of the Belarusian Children's Fund
 - The Enabling of NGOs Serving Children
 - Assistance to Children and Key Facilities
 - Advocacy and Promotion of Children's Rights
- This section will take into account modifications that have been made in each area, as well as review changes in the environment since implementation and since the midterm evaluation.
- IV. Other Institutional Development Issues
- Salary Supplements to BCF
 - Sustainability and the Future
- V. Overall Strengths and Weaknesses of Project
- Staff Development, both CCF and BCF
 - The NGO Community in Belarus
- VI. The Future of NGOs in Belarus
- VII. Involvement of World Learning
- VIII. Conclusion

**Final Evaluation for
Christian Children's Fund and Belarusian Children's Fund**

I. Introduction

For the sake of brevity, I will once again abbreviate Christian Children's Fund and Belarusian Children's Fund to "CCF" and "BCF" respectively.

World Learning will be referred to as "WL," the Anti-Chernobyl Center as "ACC" and I will refer to the Sakharov Institute as "The Institute." Other abbreviations will be introduced throughout the text of the report as necessary.

People interviewed for this evaluation:

Christian Children's Fund, Minsk:

- Nina Belick, program coordinator
- Igor Mironov, technical assistant, office manager, courier, repairs,
- Irina Mironova, technical assistant, computer instructor seminar planner

Belarusian Children's Fund

- Irina Chernyakova, specialist
- Vladimir Chichov, warehouse manager
- Vladimir Lipsky, president
- Lydia Litvinovich, head doctor
- Lyubov Lukashkova, specialist
- Marina Mishyuk, secretary
- Alexander Trukhan, vice president
- Boris Yarotsky, specialist
- Maria Zakharova, bookkeeper

World Learning

- Jeff Jacobs, program officer, Moscow
- Scott Charlesworth, field director, Moscow

Others, Minsk

- Vladislav Gorbunov, The Hemophilia Association
- Tatyana Kravchenko, president, Association of Parents with Many Children
- Alexander Milyutin, director, Dept. of Radiobiology, Sakharov Institute
- Valery Rzhetsky, head doctor, Anti-Chernobyl Center
- Nataliya Sekach, doctor, Anti-Chernobyl Center

Summary of Evaluation:

My work with Christian Children's Fund (CCF) and Belarusian Children's Fund (BCF) began in December 1994 when I wrote a mid-term review of the partnership's project funded by WL. At that time, I found the project to be moderately successful when considered within the context of the partnership's original proposal and Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP), and also when compared with other NGOs' development projects I had observed. I was most disturbed by the lack of medical evidence that recuperation had a positive effect on children's health. Further, as had been noted on several occasions by WL, the level of work to "empower" BCF seemed to be lagging.

Roughly a year later, I found that the mood of the partnership had changed dramatically, for the better. Though tension evidently still arises between CCF and BCF, most of it seems to have dissipated and what remains is episodic and negligible. I found many of my recommendations from the midterm evaluation had been followed and that, in some cases, there had been marked success because of that activity. Progress had been made in many areas, but most markedly in empowerment of BCF.

Structure of Report:

This final report will be structured much the same as the midterm evaluation: I will refer to the four principal outcomes under the project and attempt to determine the partnership's level of achievement.

Though I will not answer them directly in the report, I did ask myself the following questions as I wrote the report:

1. Did the project meet its goals?
 - Specific outcomes and outputs supported by data or concrete results
 - Anecdotal evidence of success

2. What areas were not successful? Why?
 - Lessons already learned
 - Do any failures render the project ineffective?

3. The future of the partnership and BCF
 - Sustainability with or without CCF
 - The Environment for NGOs in Belarus

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4. Suggestions and recommendations for the future

- Maximizing the impact of BCF's work
- Coordinating with Other NGOs

Caveats:

Though when I wrote this report I necessarily depended heavily on information given to me by all the individuals I interviewed, I must take responsibility for any corrupted data, misquotes, misunderstandings, and linguistic difficulties. It is my hope that CCF and BCF will again be able to read the report with an open mind since there are times when I do make some criticisms of certain aspects of the project. My criticisms should be interpreted as my attempt to bring forth relevant project data to the project's funders: World Learning Inc and the U.S. Agency for International Development. My first responsibility is to ensure that these organizations receive my unbiased assessment of the project's achievements and value.

Further, I would posit that the criticisms contained in this report can be read in a constructive light, allowing CCF and BCF to enjoy the advantage of a more objective opinion of their work, perhaps leading to dialogue.

Thanks:

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues from several places. World Learning, once again, was extremely forthcoming in describing the project to me and in providing me with reports. It was much appreciated as I prepared for my trip. CCF and BCF's logistical assistance and warm welcome were also of no small importance as I undertook this work for the second time. Once again they have succeeded in providing an appropriate level of hospitality and support to an outside reviewer.

II. Nature of the Partnership

This partnership has grown a great deal within the last year. Last year I noted that Mr. Trukhan told me that he believed that CCF didn't know the Belarusian environment well enough. I had the impression that CCF's inherent lack of experience in Belarus had caused some difficulties. This year, though, Mr. Trukhan told me that he has always been pleased with his personal relationship with CCF and that he believes that strides have been made at CCF to understand adequately the Belarusian environment. This was apparent to me as well.

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The first year of the grant period proved to be a good opportunity to work out details between CCF and BCF, compromise when opinions varied, and bring the project to the point where the second year could be as productive as possible, compensating for a slightly slow start in some areas.

Another positive indicator during the final evaluation was that Mr. Lipsky did not discuss again his dissatisfaction with the way that CCF put together its original proposal to World Learning: he outlined for me in detail during our 1994 meeting the way that CCF did not include BCF in the proposal process, which necessitated writing a DIP to correct the misconceptions of CCF's proposal. Again, it was obvious to me that BCF's leadership had been able to get beyond these factors and work on their program.

Although I would now describe this relationship as a genuine partnership, it is still not quite an equal partnership. CCF and BCF staff continue to observe vast discrepancies in salaries: the differences between foreign and indigenous NGOs have not disappeared. Thus, a sense of "us and them" still exists to some extent, although I at no point observed hostility.

More important, though there is constant conferring between the organizations, CCF still plays the role of a foreign NGO helping a Belarusian NGO. Though this is typical in partnership work and is not in itself a negative aspect of the partnership, I would be pleased to see BCF take more initiative in planning seminars, including logistics, inviting local facilitators to work with visiting trainers, and determining subject matter. CCF staff members implied that they believe BCF would certainly be able to conduct a seminar on its own but that the level of the seminar might not be as high as it would be if CCF did the logistical work. Working more as a mixed team might be very useful in the future.

Finally, it is still my impression that much of the relationship between CCF and BCF is not quite equal because many people still react to the fact that CCF is associated with money and power, since BCF has so few financial resources of its own. This was particularly evident in the match situation under the World Learning grant: CCF provided nearly all the match funds, with BCF contributing only office space and use of office equipment -- which was purchased under the grant for BCF. Many members of the BCF staff expressed the wish to me that CCF could continue to provide funds to BCF, supporting salary supplements and programs. CCF, it should be added, has frequently gone "beyond the call of duty," giving funds for BCF's charitable work when asked for assistance.

When I asked Mr. Trukhan about BCF's contribution to the partnership, he told me unequivocally that the project would have been "dead" without BCF, which provides a mechanism through which

CCF can implement the program. As he said, CCF could have simply donated equipment to a facility and it would have been used, but constant assistance from BCF has ensured that the equipment is put to good use and that quality public relations work is carried out.

One very positive change in the last year is that there is much less noticeable conflict between CCF and BCF this year than last. Though I did notice a few tense moments that arose during interviews with candidates for director of a new women's health center, my overall observation is that the atmosphere in the office has improved markedly since last year. This is, I believe, in part because BCF has been pleased with the level of support from CCF, especially with seminars. Further, I hope that the seminars in personnel management may have had a positive effect on the way that both organizations handle conflict!

It is the hope of all CCF and BCF staff that cooperation between the two organizations will continue, particularly for CCF to continue to support salary supplements and recuperation. At the time of my visit, the future of the partnership was uncertain and neither CCF nor BCF could tell me what they expected. New proposals, it seems, are being developed within CCF/Geneva, but in Minsk there was no real sense of what to expect.

Recommendation:

My observation is that it would be helpful for a CCF/Geneva staff person to visit Minsk in the near future to discuss plans for the future. Though Ms. Belik told me that the most recent CCF/Geneva visit did address many of these subjects, it was apparent to me that a more specific and direct discussion of the future would be very advantageous to the relationship in the post-grant period. Such a visit could help to eliminate unnecessary speculation about CCF's future cooperation with BCF. Mr. Lipsky also mentioned that he would be very interested in discussing specific results of the World Learning grant -- as well as future joint programs -- with a CCF/Geneva representative.

III. Achievements

A. Empowerment of BCF

Although this outcome seemed the most difficult to gauge last year, it has become more accessible and my assessment is that there has been a good deal of improvement since December 1994. Mr. Trukhan noted to me that the most valuable aspect of working with CCF has been professional development of staff: this was a very big change from last year when he was most interested in the

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recuperation program. Mr. Lipsky commented on all the CCF/BCF programs, singling out the fact that CCF was willing and able to do recuperation work in Belarus, rather than abroad, which has an empowerment aspect of its own.

Trukhan indicated to me that he realizes that professional development and professionalism must underly all efforts to raise funds in support of humanitarian aid, so I believe that BCF is on its way to at least beginning to develop a new culture of work. It is also worth noting that Ms. Belick told me she believes that the seminars have been instrumental in helping BCF to reorient itself as it begins to focus more on NGO development and less on humanitarian aid. This, as I commented last year, is crucial at this time, when humanitarian aid to the NIS is likely to drop.

Professional development came this year both in the form of official seminars and as simple day-to-day operations within the two organizations. Mr. Trukhan and several other BCF staff members noted to me that simple interactions with CCF have taught them a lot. CCF should be commended for its efforts to provide professional, meaningful training to BCF and the local NGOs that work with it. CCF's responsiveness to the needs of BCF, as well as to the recommendations that I and World Learning made, is very encouraging. Though concrete results of "empowerment" activities are hard to determine, there are some general conclusions that can be drawn. Here is a summary of the various activities (including seminars) and their results.

1. Renovation of Office, Installation of Office Equipment, Computer Training

Renovation: The renovation of the BCF/CCF office is the most immediately noticeable result of the WL grant. The office has been painted and now has a more professional, western atmosphere, which staff members praised as much more convenient. Rearranging staff among the rooms has also had a positive effect: visitors now enter the office through the front door, where they are greeted by Ms. Mishyuk, BCF's secretary. This controls the flow of visitors, allowing professional staff to focus on their work rather than directing guests. Again, it helps to lend the office a professional environment.

Installation of Office Equipment : During my visit last year, a telephone system was being installed and each telephone call was the source of a bit of chaos. In contrast, this year, the staff does not have to run from room to room each time there is a call. Many staff members have noted that the telephone system was a very good investment for modernizing the office.

Less apparent but perhaps more important is the presence of a copy machine and computers. Each room now has a computer and several have printers. There is one laser printer and two dot matrix printers. All computers are installed, with many people using Windows and Microsoft Word. All software is officially licensed. It should be noted that Ms. Zakharova does not have adequate computer equipment: she would probably do well to computerize her accounting, but her 286 computer and a lack of appropriate software mean that she still creates her financial statements manually. This problem is complex and requires a fair amount of analysis.

Though there have been minor problems with the copier, some due to using low-quality paper, the machine now works well and CCF purchases top-quality Finnish paper for copying. Access to the copier is somewhat limited (and controlled by Mr. Mironov and Ms. Mishyuk) but that does not seem to be a problem.

Finally, CCF/Minsk continues to use e-mail for much of its communications, including with CCF/Geneva. Everybody on the CCF/Minsk staff knows how to use e-mail. Though BCF does not receive or send much e-mail, CCF does pass on messages as necessary.

Recommendation: It may be worthwhile to look into providing a more powerful computer for Ms. Zakharova, as well as researching further software packages that would enable her to produce financial reports by computer.

Computer Training :

Many BCF employees have been attending Ms. Mironova's computer lessons, both individually and in groups. Though many people have difficulty with regular attendance because of their heavy workload, many have been able to learn the basics of working with computers and can now type elementary documents on their own. Some, though, feel that they are "too old" to learn to use computers and that these should be reserved for the young.

Though the fact remains that BCF does not have enough computers to go around, it might be helpful to all if certain documents -- particularly grant proposals and press relations materials -- were developed on computers so that they could easily be rewritten for new uses. That said, I hasten to add that Ms. Mishyuk has been typing documents on a computer and that they look very professional. CCF also uses only a computer for developing and printing documents.

Recommendation: Wherever possible, continue the computer lessons to ensure that as many BCF employees as possible develop their computer skills and create important documents on computers. New BCF documents of "strategic importance," such as grant proposals

and press releases should be developed on computers rather than on a typewriter.

2. English Lessons

Though I am generally not an advocate of teaching English using USAID grant monies, I must grudgingly admit that the positive effects of teaching English at BCF have helped to improve the overall CCF/BCF project.

Roughly half the staff attends regular English lessons given at the office during work time. Though there is an obvious loss of productive work time, the lessons have helped to show that CCF and BCF are supporting the professional and intellectual development of staff. Ms. Mishyk and Mr. Mironov both remarked that they are now able to maintain elementary conversations on the telephone in English and that they feel more comfortable with the language. This valuable benefit has been recognized by all staff members who participate.

My only negative comment about the situation with English lessons is that BCF should develop a telephone coverage schedule or system so that the telephone does not ring incessantly while Ms. Mishyk is in her English class.

3. Other Notes on Institutional Development of BCF

Filing procedures and accessibility of BCF documents was mentioned last year by Dr. Rubeiz as an indicator of institutional development. I was pleased this year to see that CCF recently purchased filing cabinets for each office. Staff now need to develop filing systems and file their documents; it is my hope that this will begin soon.

Using vertical file cabinets should make documents a bit more accessible than they are now, lying on shelves. In all fairness, though, I should add that each BCF staff member that I have asked for documents have been able to produce documents within minutes. They currently file in small binders, placing documents in chronological order.

It does not appear that an administrative manual has been developed, nor does BCF write general budgets for its overall activity. As the organization continues to develop, it would be advisable for BCF leadership to begin to budget its expenses. While understanding the difficulties of budgeting in an inflationary environment, a transparent approach to expenditures will help the organization build trust with foundations and potential donors. Writing budgets in dollars rather than Belarusian rubles should make it easier to write and follow budgets.

Another bright spot, however, is that the Presidium, BCF's governing body, seems to continue to work well. My discussion with Mr. Rzhetsky revealed that the Presidium remains closely involved in BCF's work and makes informed decisions that guide BCF's work. Mr. Yarotsky, for example, highlighted this when he described BCF's work with juvenile offenders: the program was undertaken only after Presidium approval. Though I have the impression that the Presidium is working quite well, I am pleased that CCF will hold a seminar on board development at the end of the month.

Finally, BCF continues to have weekly planning meetings that provide a forum for developing initiatives into action.

Recommendation: Though it seems as though BCF has made excellent progress in institutional development in the past year, developing budgets -- and correspondingly -- more financial transparency could help BCF to become more fiscally responsible. This is particularly important when one considers the audits of BCF that were made in the last year. (See below.)

4. CCF Presence

CCF Staff: The DIP includes a line which indicates that a "translator and administrative assistant" were to be added to the the CCF staff, paid out of the grant, and available to work on CCF's projects as a priority. Hiring the CCF staff has been one of the most universally successful aspects of the project. These staff members were in place at the time of my midterm evaluation, though the translator left CCF nearly a year ago to work at the Belarusian Embassy in Germany. Though this was a bit of a loss to CCF's efficiency, the corps of competent translators that Ms. Belick has gathered over the years ensures that translations of seminar and other materials continue to be made in a timely and professional manner, without Ms. Belick doing them herself.

Igor and Irina Mironov continue to provide support to CCF and BCF. Mr. Mironov currently provides computer support, writes financial reports that are submitted to CCF, and serves as office manager. He is scrupulous in comparing prices for office supplies and equipment. As a result of his English lessons under the grant, Mr. Mironov is now writing financial reports both in English and in Russian. I am still pleased with his progress.

Ms. Mironova, too, has been continuing to provide support to the office. She is CCF's seminar organizer and continues to give computer lessons she developed herself; everybody that I talked to was impressed with her skills and her flexibility. She, too, is studying English and has made a good deal of progress.

The CCF staff has settled into its responsibilities very well in the past year. Most BCF staff members cited its presence as one of the most valuable aspects of the project. They have commented that simply observing the way that CCF/Minsk works --efficiently, cooperatively, and professionally -- has helped to improve the work culture within BCF.

Finally, Ms. Belick has obviously grown into her role as CCF's coordinator in Belarus. (See below, "Ms. Belick's Role Within the Partnership") Though the questions with her position never depended so much on her actions as on the perceptions of others, I have been pleased that her authority is recognized by BCF as well as organizations like ACC and the Sakharov Institute. Ms. Belick has maintained friendly personal and work relationships with her staff, demonstrating an ability to balance personal and professional needs.

CCF Status: CCF has been able to register as a foreign organization and has opened ruble and hard currency bank accounts. The cost of certain operations is a bit high, though not prohibitive, at \$20.

Trip to Kiev: Ms. Belick and Ms. Mironova made a trip to Kiev last year to help establish contacts with other NGOs. They met for several days with a number of NGOs, including Children of Chernobyl. Though no concrete new projects of activities have come about since the visit, the exchange of information (including Ms. Horning's materials on writing grant proposals) is encouraging. The only unfortunate element is that nobody from BCF was able to make the trip.

5. Seminars

Seminar activity has been one of the largest pieces of activity funded by the World Learning grant. It has also been one of the most successful. I have been pleased that more representatives of oblast BCF offices are now attending seminars. Ms. Belick attributed much of the success of the seminars to the fact that western trainers lead them and that they have developed interesting and fun programs. Though I agree that using western trainers is a distinct advantage, it would also be positive to develop a cadre of Belarusian facilitators. (See recommendation below.) It should be noted that CCF and BCF have both attended other NGOs' training events, complementing work under the WL grant.

"Personnel and Time Management/Finance and Office Systems"
March 13-15, 1995, led by Myrna Liengme and Ghassan Rubeiz of CCF/Geneva

Materials : A review of these materials showed that the subject matter covered by this seminar was very practical and

that CCF was very willing to provide "full disclosure" of its own personnel practices. As an aside, I think that this kind of openness is key to maintaining a partnership since it can help to build trust. Seminar materials methodically covered the subject matter and provided realistic suggestions for attendees.

Attendees: According to attendance lists, most members of the BCF staff attended the semina. Five employees from oblast BCF offices attended, as did six local NGO leaders. The seminar group was of an appropriate size for this kind of event.

Results: Though it is difficult to say how many practical results can come from this type of seminar, several BCF staff members noted to me that they had been able to pick up some good management tips at the seminar. A few examples:

- Mr. Lipsky now scrupulously keeps a date book, in which he grades his own performance.
- The telephone skills of the CCF and BCF staffs has improved dramatically since I last visited Minsk.
- Finally, it was noted several times by BCF staff, notably Ms. Lukashkova, that they are more able to prioritize their work and plan their time.

Evaluation: Not surprisingly, scores for this seminar were a bit lower than for some of the others, particularly in the categories of utility of the material and the overall program. In retrospect, though, many of the people that I interviewed voluntarily mentioned this seminar, indicating that they had truly enjoyed it and are using its methods. Many commented that the activities were very helpful.

"Medical Consequences of Chernobyl Disaster", 25-27 April 1995, with attendance of Ghassan Rubeiz (CCF/Geneva) and a large group of Belarusian and American specialists. This symposium was planned in conjunction with ACC.

Materials: This workshop inspired the production of a booklet containing many of the papers presented at the event; it is the only handout material from the syposium. It is nicely laid out and printed and provides the general or medical reader with a good introduction to the effects of the Chernobyl accident. I was pleased that the conference did provide some practical medical information and data for health professionals, though I was a bit disappointed at the large quantity of rather general pieces in the booklet.

Most speakers were from various parts of Belarus, including the contaminated regions; a few other speakers were from Russia, Ukraine, the United States, and CCF/Geneva. Most interestingly,

Dr. Chernyakova noted that the foreign and local doctors had different points of view, with foreign doctors focusing more on the theory of treating radiation-induced ailments, and Belarusian doctors concentrating on practical advice they had gained in the contaminated zones.

Attendees: An all-inclusive list of people associated with the workshop names over 80 people, of whom roughly 38 people provide some sort of services to those who suffer as a result of the Chernobyl accident. They were in constant attendance for three days. That number includes BCF, CCF, and ACC staff, officials from the Ministry of Health, foreign guests (including an American Embassy representative), three Russian and Ukrainian delegates, and pediatricians from contaminated areas. Representation was certainly wide, and attendance was excellent among these key groups. According to Ms. Belick and Dr. Chernyakova, pediatricians from outside Minsk were particularly grateful for the chance to meet with colleagues. Apparently very little current information reaches them.

Results: Results are difficult to gauge, but the workshop provided an excellent opportunity for BCF to demonstrate its authority in the health field by inviting many of Belarus's leading experts on the Chernobyl accident, as well as experts from Ukraine and Russia. This is in itself a large achievement. The fact that such a large group of doctors was able to meet and discuss general conclusions and potential treatments for three days is also significant. Mr. Gorbunov noted to me that most of the information presented was not new to him but that it was useful to gather the group of specialists together. The event also resulted in a final communique, which stressed the need for strengthening international cooperation to research the effects of the Chernobyl accident.

Finally, several people remarked that Dr. Ayres' discussion of myocardial infarction seemed a bit misplaced, which seems to me a valid criticism, considering the overall theme of the event.

Evaluation : Evaluations for this seminar were also a bit lower than I might have expected, with many aspects of the seminar receiving a 4.3 rating. There were few written comments, but several participants did note that they would have liked to have seen one or the other expert at the seminar or to have seen more participation from the Ministry of Health. Ms. Lukashkova told me that doctors from Grodno commented to her that they were grateful for the opportunity to receive current information on children's health and treatment. Mr. Gorbunov commented that the event was particularly timely because so many different organizations work in some way with Chernobyl accident-related projects and the actual results of the accident have been somewhat different from predictions in 1986.

"Grant Proposal Writing, Project Planning, Fund Raising"
June 19-22, 1995, led by Mariann Horning, a consultant from Wisconsin.

Materials: These materials are among the best I have seen for a seminar of this type. They are well-written, complete and concise. I was pleased to see that Ms. Horning used Belarusian examples in her materials. Though some of the NGO leaders with whom I have worked prefer not to give a sample proposal since people tend to copy it, Ms. Horning did so; I am sure it will be of use to attendees. A list of foundations that work in Belarus was also distributed.

I should add that Ms. Horning's seminar was among the highest-rated of the series. Ms. Belick singled her out for praise based on her interesting methodology, which included a lot of teamwork and giving prizes to participants. Ms. Belick said that CCF/Geneva has been very effective in choosing trainers for seminars.

Attendees : The group included BCF staff as well as personnel from the local NGOs with which CCF/BCF work.

Results : This seminar is the easiest to analyze since a successful grant proposal wins money. The first results at BCF were achieved when Mr. Yarotsky, a program officer, wrote a proposal and received a grant from the Soros Foundation, in support of BCF's "Green Vitamin" program. Though Mr. Yarotsky had no previous experience writing grant proposals, a quick review of his work showed that he was able to put together a concise yet detailed description of what he wanted. Mr. Yarotsky praised highly this and other seminars and agreed that he and his programs had benefitted from the seminar.

Several others have made good use of the seminar, including Ms. Lukashkova of BCF and some of the local NGO leaders who were in attendance, notably the Association for Protection of Fathers' Rights and the Association of Parents of Disabled Children (ARDI). Ms. Lukashkova told me that the Soros Foundation has committed itself to providing funds for a seminar she will hold in the spring.

The Fathers' Association was able to purchase office equipment and ARDI has been able to open an office. Others, including The Hemophilia Association, have told me that the seminar inspired them to do more fund raising work; Ms. Lukashkova was also inspired to ask Coca-Cola for sponsorship monies for the stipend program. Dr. Chernyakova and Mr. Gorbunov both noted that they do not enjoy fund raising but that the seminar has helped them to have more self-confidence when they ask for donations.

Evaluation: Evaluations for this seminar were excellent, with Ms. Horning scoring perfect 5s in knowledge about proposal writing and knowledge about fund raising.

"Empowering Staff Management" 2-4 October 1995 led by Thomas McClure, Support Center International

Materials : This seminar focused on developing participatory management styles. Exercises for this seminar showed that trainers worked with attendees on developing a more western management style. Subjects covered ranged from "stakeholder analysis" to conflict management. Based on the trainers' notes, I was pleased with their approach to the subject, particularly since they developed their materials keeping in mind the local environment as well as differing learning styles.

Attendees : The list of attendees for this seminar included BCF staff and NGO leaders.

Results : Like the seminar on time management, results of this seminar will take a long time to develop. Several BCF staffers told me that they had enjoyed the seminar and found the subject matter to be very useful. NGO representatives told me that, as a result of CCF' seminars, they have been able to develop better relationships with their colleagues by asking them for their opinions. They believe that western experience is very useful to their work and that they must develop more modern work styles if they are to be competitive. Mr. Gorbunov told me that he has already put to use the conflict management techniques he learned.

Evaluation: Remarks about this seminar were overwhelmingly positive, with the average grade being 4.5 on a scale of 5. High marks were given to the trainers for their presentations, as well as for work in small groups. Both of these categories indicate that attendees were able to "buy in" to the concepts which were presented. Similarly, Mr. Trukhan noted to me that, though many of the areas covered may not have been new, the novel approach to working with personnel made the seminar extremely worthwhile for him.

Paradoxically, lowest marks were given on the "exchange of experience" category but my experience has shown that high grades in this area simply indicate that attendees have been given a chance to discuss problems within their own organizations.

"Basic Concepts of Financial Management for Nongovernmental Organizations", November 7-9 , 1995, led by Jack Reynolds, CPA

Materials : An outline from this seminar demonstrated that

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subject matter was well-chosen and broadly-based, though grounded solely in western accounting procedures, without inclusion of Belarusian legislation. (Mr. Reynolds did acknowledge in his outline that Belarus legal requirements and standard western accounting procedures do conflict.) The seminar covered various areas, including budgeting and planning and record keeping. The troublesome issues of sustainability and internal controls were also touched.

Attendees: As is customary, the seminar included BCF staff and employees from the NGOs that work with CCF/BCF on a regular basis. Though not all BCF staff attended, many non-financial personnel went and were pleased to have been exposed to an introduction to western accounting practices.

Results: Since this seminar covered only western accounting procedures, it is difficult to say exactly what effect it will have participants. Ms. Kravchenko told me that her accountant had learned new methods at the seminar, though BCF's accountant. Ms. Zakharova, told me that she found a United Way seminar led by local experts on taxes to be more useful because it focused on Belarusian regulations. Ms. Lukashkova of BCF told me that the seminar has been of use to her in writing budgets for grant proposals and that it will be of further utility when she begins to write financial reports for Coca-Cola and the Soros Foundation. Ms. Kravchenko had similar remarks on the value of the seminar. Ms. Belick remarked that much of the content was of little relevance to local NGOs but that it should be very helpful to those wishing to apply for grants from foreign foundations.

Evaluation: Evaluations were once again quite high (lowest average mark was 4.29) largely based on the professional approach of the trainer. Lowest marks were given to the materials presented at the seminar. Participants made few comments other than that they would like to attend more such seminars, "particularly if they were held in the US".

"Board Development", January 29-31, 1996, to be led by Tom McClure of Support Center International.

This final event under the WL grant will once again bring together staff from BCF and the NGOs that work with it. Mr. McClure will be the sole trainer, and I suggested that CCF work with him to bring together a group of local NGO leaders who have had some level of success bringing together and working with a board. Mr. McClure is working on materials, which are already in the process of being translated.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

It appears to me that the seminar series has been of very wide utility to BCF and to the NGOs it works with. I was pleased to

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see such open attitudes toward the training, as well as a willingness to apply new knowledge. I think that this piece of the project will have very long-term and wide-ranging results.

In general, the entire empowerment aspect of the program has been very successful and has remained faithful to the spirit of the DIP. This is a very positive development, particularly in light of last year's concerns.

I do have a couple of minor comments:

- It may be helpful to include BCF staff more during the planning stages of seminars, to determine the most useful subject matter. It may also be a good idea to work with a BCF staff person to develop his or her seminar planning skills so that seminars could continue to be on the same high level even if CCF were not to work with BCF on planning.

- More importantly, I think that it is important that seminars include more Belarusian (or Russian or Ukrainian) facilitators. I was very disappointed that the seminars were led solely by western trainers. Not only does this limit the range of a seminar, but it virtually eliminates indigenous approaches, except during discussions and small group work. My experience has shown that it is often successful to invite a western trainer and ask him or her to work with local NGO leaders, to train them to be facilitators for small group sessions. Not only does this broaden the amount of experience that is presented, it helps eliminate criticism that the seminar is too western in content and approach. Most importantly, it helps to develop a local cadre of trainer who can continue to work with their colleagues after the western specialists go home.

B. Development of Capacity of Local NGOs

Though this subject is covered in some detail in section A above, since local NGOs are crucial invitees at seminars, it is worth mentioning some general trends among these organizations. First, the "Commission" of NGOs continues to meet regularly and discuss issues of general importance. Most recently, it has addressed issues of prisons for juvenile offenders. CCF also continues to distribute materials from the November 1994 seminar on the rights of children. Unfortunately, I was unable to meet with several of the key NGO leaders who work with BCF, but I was able to learn a great deal from CCF and BCF staff about those organizations' activity. At the end of this report I have summarized my thoughts on the future of Belarusian NGOs.

BCF as a Positive Example. It is important to note that BCF continues to play a key role in developing these independent organizations. The relationship is, obviously, two-way: the other NGOs are able to give BCF more weight in advocacy work. Dr. Litvinovich mentioned to me again this year that BCF encouraged many of these organizations to become registered. Mr. Gorbunov emphasized that he has gained a lot from his work with CCF and BCF: from organizational assistance to invitations to seminars, he has been able to raise the professional level of his organization.

Here are a few success stories of these NGOs:

The Hemophilia Association. Mr. Gorbunov has been one of CCF/BCF's most consistent seminar goers during the past year: he has attended each seminar. He told me he has been pleased to get a western perspective on so many subjects -- he says that "inner changes" are most meaningful -- and seems to have used a great deal of what he learned, especially in conflict management and fund raising. He believes that the CCF seminars were key to his gaining financial freedom; each of his organization's staff members now receives a small salary. One of Gorbunov's key initiatives has been to educate parents of hemophiliacs so that they can medicate their children without calling an ambulance; such a house call costs around \$100. With the help of substantial donations (the first around \$100,000, a second in roughly the same amount may be forthcoming) from President Lukashenko, Gorbunov is presently able to provide medications and training, saving them hundreds of thousands of dollars. Gorbunov has also rallied the support of the Soros Foundation, Red Cross, and several local banks.

Association of Parents with Many Children. Dr. Litvinovich told me that Ms. Kravchenko was her first visitor when she joined BCF. Since that day, when Ms. Kravchenko came in looking for assistance for her large family, a new NGO was established. Ms. Kravchenko admitted that it is difficult to run an NGO, but she has been able to expand activity and recruit members to work with her, including an accountant. She continues to work actively with CCF/BCF and readily acknowledges that they have been crucial to her organization's success. Ms. Kravchenko has been able to garner donations from a number of local businesses and banks, including Belarus Bank.

Association for Protection of Fathers' Rights. I met Mr. Bakulin, founder of this organization, nearly a year and a half ago at a seminar on writing grant proposals. Unfortunately, since he is a pilot and was traveling, I was not able to meet with him during this visit. Since our first meeting, Mr. Bakulin has been able to develop his organization to the point that he has already received grants from the Eurasia Foundation (for office equipment) and the Soros Foundation (to cover travel expenses).

His organization now has regular operations and was able to institute a special holiday for fathers last year.

Association of Parents with Disabled Children (ARDI). This organization, too, has advanced considerably since last year, when it was run rather informally. With BCF's help, ARDI has been able to put together an exhibit of disabled children's artwork. ARDI also held a conference on "Myth and Reality," which focused on social adaptation of disabled children. That event was funded by Save the Children. ARDI has actively planned concerts for its clients; President Lukashenko spoke at one. Further, ARDI won a grant and now is able to operate an office.

Other organizations that cooperate with CCF/BCF have been less active than these. There have been some minor changes in the list of organizations that BCF has chosen for close work, but the overall number of groups remains the same.

Conclusion : Though it is difficult to say what long-term successes there will be among the group of NGOs that CCF/BCF works with, it is apparent that progress has been made. Activities followed closely the DIP, including access to computers and providing information on grant opportunities. It is my hope that CCF and BCF will continue to provide this type of support to these organizations so that they will be able to continue to develop.

C. Assistance to Children and Facilities

1. Medical Recuperation at Sluch

I will address first the study conducted by the Sakharov Institute, then discuss the administrative issues -- including choosing groups of children -- associated with the recuperation program.

Report from 1994. At the time of my mid-term evaluation of the CCF/BCF project, it was my opinion that the partners should demonstrate that the medical recuperation piece of the program had been effective in providing medical relief to children who suffered as a result of the Chernobyl accident. CCF/BCF undertook to do this and hired the Sakharov International Radioecological Institute ("the Institute") to perform medical tests on 106 children who took part in the recuperation program at Sluch.

Please note: I will not quote at length either that report or a subsequent report by Lynda Harrison, since it is assumed that either of those reports will be available to any reader of this document. Dr. Harrison was hired by CCF to analyze the data prepared by the Sakharov Institute.

The 1995 Sakharov Institute Study. CCF researched several facilities and gave the Sakharov Institute a contract to perform research on the medical results of recuperation. To carry out the research, a pediatrician, an endocrinologist, and an immunologist from the Institute met with the children at the beginning and at the end of their stay at Sluch and then detailed their findings in a report to the CCF/BCF partnership. Reagents for the immunological tests were flown in by CCF/Geneva since they were unavailable in Belarus. The Institute performed a number of tests on the children, including blood tests and physical exams. (Please see the Institute's "Evaluation of Effectivity of Recuperation for Children from the Areas Contaminated with Chernobyl Radionuclides in the Republic of Belarus" for a detailed, technical account of the tests.) A number of the Institute's leading specialists worked on the report, which is rather too technical for this reviewer (who is not a health professional) to fully comprehend.

A very pleasant side benefit of the Institute's report is that each child was given a detailed diagnosis of his/her health status. Further, Dr. Milyutin has offered the Institute's help, free of charge, in interpreting the diagnoses. According to Dr. Chernyakova, for many of the children, even those who are chronically ill, this was the first comprehensive physical exam that they received.

Results of the Study. The working group reached the conclusion that the recuperation program at Sluch had had a positive effect on the children whom they studied. Drs. Litvinovich and Chernyakova of BCF had expected this conclusion and were not surprised by the data. Dr. Harrison paraphrases these results in her report (see section titled "Results of Tests Examining Function of T and B Cells and Levels of Immunoglobins") as well, stating that:

"The findings related to five of these tests [on immunoglobins] indicate that there was a significant increase in the proliferation of both T and B cells in response to stimulation over the course of the recuperation program. These findings are highly significant, suggesting that the recuperation program had positive effects in enhancing the capacity of the immune system to respond to antigen stimulation."

Tests on other indicators, including hemoglobins, also showed some medical improvement in the children.

Though many of the children in this group did not come from contaminated areas of Belarus, and the most widespread health problems were dental caries and irregular tooth formation, there were indications of marked improvements in the children's immune systems. Most interestingly, Dr. Milyutin told me that he had

been a "skeptic" when the studies began because he simply didn't believe that recuperation could show such dramatic results in such a short time. Milyutin has worked extensively with children from contaminated areas as well as with the so-called "liquidators" of the accident.

Lack of Control or Comparison Groups in the Study. When I asked Dr. Milyutin about Dr. Harrison's assertion (please see "Implications of the Findings and Recommendations for Future Research" in "Findings from a Study Conducted by the Sakharov Radioecological Institute for the Christian Children's Fund") that the Institute's report was flawed due to the lack of a control group, Dr. Milyutin told me that an ideal study would have included several comparison groups, not just one control group. He also noted that the project was necessarily limited by a lack of both funds and reagents. This is unfortunate, since it would, as he notes, be very useful to analyze the efficacy of providing children with, say, only healthy food or only a change in scenery. I, like Milyutin, had questioned the statistical validity of examining a group of 106 children with such differing medical problems and treatments, many of whom do not even live in the contaminated regions of Belarus.

A Lay Person's Conclusion about the Medical Study. Though I have no qualifications as a scientist to back my conclusions, I do agree with many of Dr. Harrison's criticisms of the Institute's findings: it seems to me that at this point there is only circumstantial evidence that supports recuperation's positive medical effects on children. I also agree with Dr. Harrison that it would be useful to study further the health of children who participate in subsequent recuperation treatment. As Dr. Harrison suggests, it would be useful to research the effect of various combinations of factors, such as diet, moving to live in a "clean" region, exercise, and physical therapy.

There is, of course, is a political issue related to the recuperation question. As Ms. Belick noted to me, there is a substantial contingent of Belarusians who provide support for recuperation treatment in Belarus. They may push hard to keep recuperation treatment, even if it is not medically viable. The Institute's work appears to indicate that the treatment does have a positive effect, so it would be useful for future funders, as well as care providers, to understand the true value of the procedures. Ms. Belick also noted that there is a psychological issue attached to recuperation programs: people simply want it to be effective.

I would also concur with Dr. Harrison that it would be helpful to understand the medical value of treatments such as franklinization and electric sleep. That these procedures are unknown to a health professional such as Dr. Harrison causes me to wonder even more about the medical viability of these

procedures. Dr. Milyutin stated to me that it is his presumption that these "physical therapy" procedures stimulate some of the body's physiological functions, giving the body a chance to make better reactions to negative stimuli.

Finally, Ms. Belick noted to me that one of the reasons that the study on recuperation was done by a Belarusian institution was that Dr. Rubeiz felt that a local study would be most appropriate, largely for budgetary reasons. Although the study may not have been performed on an international level due to the lack of comparison groups, it does provide some rough conclusions that may be useful. Most unfortunate in this situation is that CCF missed the chance to do a truly comprehensive and conclusive study of recuperation: it would have been a unique contribution to a very contentious debate.

CCF/BCF's Administration of the Recuperation Program. The CCF/BCF program's second year witnessed a number of complications with the recuperation program. High inflation has meant that grant dollars do not go as far as they used to, meaning that the partnership can not pay for as many children to go to Sluch as during the first year. Since costs nearly quadrupled, only 336 of the intended 1000 children were able to travel to Sluch during the second year of the grant period. Nevertheless, 1,336 children over all were able to attend the program, at least partially funded by CCF/BCF. The partnership continues to give priority to organizations involved in NGO development activity under the grant.

As I noted in my mid-term evaluation, not all of the children sent to Sluch for recuperation come from contaminated areas of Belarus. To the contrary, for example, half the group examined by the Institute study came from the Minsk oblast. Only about a third of the children (29.2 percent) came from the Mogilev and Gomel oblasts, which are two of the most contaminated parts of the country.

It should be noted that these data can be misleading: many of the children from the Minsk oblast may have as many health problems as children from regions traditionally thought to be contaminated. There are several categories of people suffering from the effects of the Chernobyl accident, and, according to Dr. Litvinovich, many of the participants from the Minsk area were either evacuated from the zone near the accident or born to a mother who lived in or near a contaminated zone. Unfortunately BCF does not keep comprehensive listings of the children's categories or home cities. Though the information is available, it has not been compiled.

I was told this year that there are several reasons that not all children attending the Sluch program came from the most contaminated areas. First, as stated above, there are categories

of children who live in Minsk who may be just as medically needy as children from Mogilev or Gomel. (Indeed they showed a higher rate of thyroid pathologies than children from Mogilev and Gomel.) Second, many of the children from the most contaminated areas prefer to go on European recuperation trips. Finally, since BCF is an organization dedicated to working with orphans, it has a moral obligation to allow orphans and other underprivileged groups to participate in the program. A corollary to the last reason is the frequently-heard assertion that all children of Belarus are sick in one way or other because of poor environmental, health care, and dietary conditions. Though I find all of these reasons compelling, I remain mildly concerned -- from an administrative point of view -- by the program's departure from the spirit of its original proposal, which expressed the intent of assisting children who were directly affected by the Chernobyl accident.

Additional Benefits of the Sluch Program. I would be remiss if I did not mention that many of the people I interviewed told me that they were pleased that CCF/BCF chose to use the Sluch facility for its recuperation program. Many stated that it supports the local economy and that children will get more health benefits by remaining in the Belarusian climate rather than traveling to warmer Italy; the fact that some children return sick from Italy was attributed to the change in temperature. Though the differences in actual health benefits are debatable, I am certainly pleased that CCF/BCF has been able both to economize and to support the local economy through the Sluch sanatorium. Finally, Dr. Chernyakova noted that the fact that Sluch is a sanatorium rather than a camp ensures that the treatment is of maximum value.

2. Anti-Chernobyl Center

Dr. Rzhetsky and his BCF Involvement. Work with the ACC has improved markedly over the last year. In contrast with my experience last year, Dr. Rzhetsky was well-prepared for our meeting and provided me with data regarding the equipment provided to ACC under the grant. I was impressed this time with his command of the situation as well as his very solid grasp of BCF's work; he is a member of the BCF presidium and obviously takes a great deal of interest in the Fund's activity. It was particularly heartening to hear him praise the level of experience at BCF, highlighting the partnership with CCF. Dr. Rzhetsky is also particularly pleased with the work BCF is doing with foster homes and would like to see a conference about foster homes.

Medications Given to ACC. Dr. Rzhetsky said that ACC have received a lot through their work with CCF. In addition to the ultrasound machine, he mentioned in particular medicine that comes as humanitarian aid. He said that it is scrupulously

distributed by Mr. Chichov. Generally ACC asks for medications and then passes a portion on to local clinics.

Medical Examinations ACC continues to examine children throughout Belarus; they also examine children referred through BCF. They continue to examine thousands of children per year. Rzhetsky estimated that roughly 14-15,000 children receive care annually.

Ultrasound Equipment Most of the Acuson ultrasound equipment arrived in Minsk last year during my visit. Though there were initially some problems with its video recorder, the remainder of the accessories for the machine have arrived and six ACC staff members have been trained in its operation. Acuson has provided a good deal of training at no charge to ACC; training has taken place in Minsk, Moscow, and England. Dr. Ayres and other American doctors have also visited to provide training. Acuson continues to provide technical support, including literature, and will fix the machinery if necessary. Dr. Sevach is the primary operator of the machine, but has continued to train other employees. Dr. Sevach reported that she has been able to broaden her medical knowledge because of the machine.

The ultrasound equipment provided to ACC has obviously met with a lot of use in the past year. Dr. Rzhetsky told me that 1750 separate exams have been done; since several procedures may be performed on the same machine, the number of children that have been served is much lower. The exams are done for children from all over Belarus. When I asked, Dr. Sevach told me that it is likely that many children's lives have been saved because of early diagnosis. It was noted that this is particularly critical with malignant tumors. ACC staff commented several times that Acuson is a leader in ultrasound equipment and that their machine is able to give more information than machines at other Minsk facilities. The only slightly negative aspect is that ACC must purchase supplies (gel and video tapes) for the machine, as well as additional transducers, meaning that it does incur expenses. Dr. Sevach said that if the machine is properly cared for, it should last for many years.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

In spite of inflationary conditions, the level of assistance given under the Sluch and ACC programs has remained very high and within the spirit of the DIP. ACC has, in particular, been able to benefit from the project. I am satisfied that that the equipment given to ACC is being used properly and appropriately.

The situation with the Sluch sanatorium is more complicated. Though I think that it has had utility for hundreds of children, I am still disappointed by several factors:

- that CCF was unable to undertake more conclusive research on the medical effects of recuperation and,
- that BCF's administration of recuperation was not more careful.

In particular, it would be helpful to have compiled data telling what categories children were from, rather than simply their geographical regions.

Recommendation: Even if CCF is not to undertake further research on the question of recuperation, efforts to support such research, as outlined in the communique from the medical seminar, should continue. Further, if it is to conduct programs similar to recuperation in the future, BCF should consider developing a data base that contains information on children's health categories.

D. Advocacy of Children's Rights and the NGO Community

This area is one of BCF's strongest points, though it is very hard to define as it pervades all of BCF's work. Mr. Lipsky takes pride in BCF's work advocating for children's rights; his abilities in this area were praised universally. He speaks in public or gives interviews several times a week, meaning that BCF is consistently able to spread its message among the broader public. Further, BCF's press center is successful in placing dozens of stories in the press each year, further guaranteeing that questions of children's rights issues reach as many people as possible.

According to Ms. Belick, Mr. Lipsky believes that advocating for children's rights should be BCF's top priority. This message was clear to me as well during my discussion with him.

1. Publications

BCF continues to publish its own newspaper, "Children and We," which publishes a variety of genres, including poetry and articles about advocacy for children's rights. A recent issue printed a full-page interview with Mr. Lipsky, including a short excerpt from his new book. Mr. Lipsky also gave me an article that he wrote for a recent issue of "Republic." Titled "Children -- Invalids of Chernobyl," it describes his thoughts about a new BCF program. (See below.)

BCF continues to produce a high volume of articles for the local press, some of which are written in Belarusian by Mr. Lipsky. BCF's press center has excellent contacts with the local media, ensuring that stories about events are brought to the public. Unfortunately, the press center manager was sick during my visit, so I was unable to interview her, though I did see articles

that she had placed in local newspapers. BCF also prepared two articles for World Learning newsletters. According to CCF reports, hundreds of items have appeared in the media about BCF's work.

2. Advocating for a Law on Charity

BCF and many of the NGOs that work with it have been lobbying the Belarusian government to implement a comprehensive and fair law on charity. Letters are sent frequently to President Lukashenko, asking him and the Parliament to consider the opinion of NGOs on these matters.

3. Monitoring Children's Rights & Committee on Observing the Implementation of the Law on the Rights of the Child.

As mentioned above, BCF has been successful in gathering a group of NGO leaders to address the problems in prisons for juvenile offenders. The group has visited detention facilities for children and has been working with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the deputy attorney general to ensure that the children's rights are being respected. This is particularly important because, as Dr. Rzhetsky told me, some of the children in the facility are there largely because of their parents' inattention. Mr. Yarotsky indicated to me that this "commission" may register as an independent NGO with the mission of monitoring Belarusian legislation on children's rights.

Mr. Yarotsky, the secretary of the commission, explained to me that the commission has been monitoring compliance with the legislation, including whether parents and schools are meeting their responsibilities.

In other activity, Mr. Yarotsky told me that the BCF Presidium has been looking into various issues related to orphans: since many leave orphanages without a place to live or work, BCF is looking for ways that the government and private business can help provide necessary support. BCF has addressed these issues with the Ministry of Education and President Lukashenko. Mr. Yarotsky, himself formerly the director of an orphanage, considers these initiatives to be the most important part of his work.

4. Miscellaneous Government Relations

Efforts were made during the year to strengthen communication between CCF and the US Embassy. CCF participated in meetings to promote US aid to Belarusian NGOs. BCF and CCF both met with the new ambassador to Belarus, for whom they outlined their joint program.

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Conclusion and Recommendations

Since advocacy is one of BCF's strongest areas, I have no recommendations on this subject. I was please to see that BCF is working so well in developing local NGOs and that they have been so successful with the commission. Lobbying efforts, even if not successful, appear to be comprehensive and well-managed. successful, appear to be comprehensive and well-managed.

IV. Other Institutional Development Issues

1. Salary Supplements

Supplementing salaries of BCF employees has continued. Thanks to World Learning's flexibility on the issue, CCF has been able to develop a new way of providing these monies. (Ms. Belick believes that CCF is paying the supplements out of its match.) Trukhan noted to me that he hopes that CCF will be able to continue to provide supplements in the post-grant period.

I agree that some form of salary support is necessary, though there must come a time when CCF will not continue to pay the supplements: even with Belarus's present economic difficulties, BCF should develop ways that it can pay its employees' salaries by itself. A lack of sustainability in this area could seriously put in jeopardy much of CCF/BCF's joint work. Ms. Belick told me that she believes that though there may still be some resentment within BCF that CCF salaries are higher, the supplements have been a major factor in stimulating BCF staff during this difficult time.

Recommendation: It may be helpful for CCF and BCF to discuss the supplement issue again. Since I believe that BCF must begin to find ways to support higher salaries on its own, CCF's looking into other grant opportunities or BCF's developing more comprehensive fund raising activity should be addressed.

2. Opportunities for Sustainability

CCF and BCF have both been working to guarantee the future of BCF's work. As mentioned above, several BCF staff members have been writing grant proposals and soliciting corporations for support. Several of these attempts have been positive, which is a good indicator that BCF would be able to function independently if necessary. Even with the World Learning grant finished, I felt absolutely no sense of urgency from either Mr. Lipsky or Mr. Trukhan, though Mr. Trukhan did say that he would like to be able to continue providing salary supplements with CCF's help. Further, Ms. Belick told me that it is CCF's priority to help win grants for BCF but then to remain in the background.

Other developments include:

- **Grant from Soros Foundation for Women's Health Center:** A CCF proposal has secured a \$50,000 grant (with \$70,000 match from CCF) to establish a women's health center. The 1.5 year project should help to establish and support the center, which will focus on preventive health and birth control. CCF is also looking into working with the UN on womens' health issues.

- **Rule of Law Work:** CCF has worked on a couple of proposals for rule of law projects. One, submitted to ARD/Checci's Rule of Law project, was turned down, though the foundation visited CCF/BCF and nearly promised to fund the project, which focused on advocating for children's rights. CCF is working on another proposal for a rule of law project.

- **Johnson & Johnson/Medical College of Virginia:** Largely through the efforts of Dr. Stephen Ayres of the Medical College of Virginia, BCF has begun an 18-month program with Johnson & Johnson (J & J) to help heart patients -- both children with congenital heart defects and adults in need of angioplasty -- get operations. This program involves a number of partners: J & J is providing materials, the Republic Scientific Research Institution of Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery is providing patients and doctors, and the Medical College of Virginia is bringing surgeons to Belarus to train local doctors. J & J hopes that the Ministry of Health will purchase J & J products at the end of the project. According to a letter on the program, J & J is providing sutures, infection control products, intra-venous catheters, monitoring systems, mechanical staplers, and thoracostomy products. Richard Silberbauer, J & J's representative in Russia, estimates that the costs to J & J of the program will be around \$100,000 for 1995 and 1996.

Dr. Litvinovich is pleased with the program, especially since she recognizes the need to refer heart patients to people who can provide them with necessary assistance.

- **Potential Fundable Program:** Dr. Litvinovich told me that she would like to set up a program that would provide psychological support for children with thyroid cancer. She wrote a proposal to United Way International (UWI) but did not receive funding, she believes, since she did not research thoroughly enough UWI's area of work. I told her that she might be more likely to receive funds for a project that did not pay for so many expendable items -- food, facility rental, etc. -- but focused on teaching skills to specialists.

Finally, though it is unlikely that CCF would simply abandon its work in Belarus leaving BCF to work independently, that possibility is a factor that must be used to gauge the chance that BCF would be able to "fend for themselves sufficiently," as Jeff Jacobs stated in a trip report in 1994.

Although I am not sure to what extent BCF would be able to do that on many different fronts, as I detailed above, I saw great improvement in the empowerment area, meaning that BCF would now be much more capable of sustaining its current level of activity even without CCF. BCF should not, of course, become "dizzy with success:" the situation for NGOs will inevitably continue to change and the organization and its leadership will need to keep a close eye on BCF's mission and on possibilities.

Finally, though in many respects BCF is still struggling to provide too many things to too many people, I did have the distinct impression that the organization has solidified to the extent that employees now have a more unified vision of the organization's mission, which should be useful in looking for continued funding.

Recommendation: I noted last year that I thought it would be advantageous for BCF to begin to coordinate all grant proposal writing and solicitation of donations through one fund raiser. Though this has not been done, several staff members have written proposals and won grants from foundations and businesses. I continue to believe that it would be important for BCF to appoint one staff person as a fund raiser, who would develop professional materials for approaching potential funders.

V. Overall Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project

1. Staff Development

Though I have discussed this subject in considerable detail in the context of the empowerment of BCF, there are a couple of things to add.

Nina Belick's Role Within the Partnership : Ms. Belick was, again, universally praised by CCF and BCF staff as being tactful, professional, and capable. I was pleased to see that she has grown professionally during the last year: it was my impression that she has been able to incorporate successfully into her everyday work the knowledge and methods she has gained at seminars and through her work with CCF/Geneva. Her job description has been expanded and her trip to Switzerland enabled her to see firsthand the CCF/Geneva operation. The fact that she was the only CCF/BCF staff member to make the trip should have enhanced her authority within the partnership. On another level, Nina was asked by the Eurasia Foundation to review grant proposals for the region, indicating that she is regarded as a leader in the local NGO community. Finally, her reports to WL have been very good.

Notably, this year nobody from BCF reminded me that Ms. Belick first came to BCF as a volunteer interpreter. Staff members instead praised her professional skills, including her willingness and ability to help BCF. Many said that she frequently goes out of her way to help in difficult situations and one staff member went so far as to express admiration for Ms. Belick's ability to deal with difficult situations without losing her temper.

Many BCF staff members told me they hope that Ms. Belick will continue to work with the CCF/BCF partnership. She is certainly a major asset to the partnership. Though she may soon be at a point where she feels the need to expand her opportunities for professional growth, I do hope that she will be able to retain the opportunity to work within the organizations' joint projects. Her standing within the Belarus NGO community is sure to remain high and her job skills, including very proficient English, are excellent.

BCF Leadership & Vision of the Future: Ms. Belick emphasized to me the value of Mr. Lipsky's involvement with BCF. She and many BCF staff members stressed his abilities to understand the mission of BCF and to articulate its needs. When I asked Mr. Lipsky how he sees the future of BCF, he told me that the fall presidium meeting will be the most important event of 1996 since the role of the leadership of BCF will be discussed. Electing officers is also on the agenda. Mr. Lipsky emphasized that the situation for children in Belarus remains troubling but he indicated that that fact demonstrates that BCF's work is still very necessary.

Mr. Trukhan's management skills were also praised. Though he may have a tendency to become emotional at times, staff members said that his day-to-day management of BCF is very competent and that he respects the opinions of his colleagues.

In spite of this high praise for Messrs Lipsky and Trukhan, there are times when they could support more effectively institutional development within BCF. It was noted in the quarterly report covering April 1-June 30, 1995, that Ms. Horning "felt she could have done better if all the BCF staff had participated fully in this last [fund raising] workshop." When I asked Ms. Belick what this meant, she said that Messrs. Lipsky and Trukhan were not present at the entire seminar. Although I understand their need to attend to BCF's everyday work, their full attendance would have demonstrated to BCF staff their full support of training, as well as the importance of the subject matter.

The Advisory Committee : I was disappointed that the Advisory Committee, made up of CCF and BCF, did not resume its meetings after the mid-term evaluation. Though I understand fully the reasons that it was eliminated, I think that the institution

itself and the goal -- to look at progress under the grant -- were very valid and important. I also believe that the Advisory Committee could have been a useful tool in further "empowering" BCF by involving them more in evaluating grant activity.

Visit to Geneva : Last year I recommended that CCF/Geneva invite Ms. Belick and Messrs Lipsky and Trukhan to Geneva. Since that time, only Ms. Belick has had the opportunity to visit that office. Mr. Trukhan told me that one of the reasons that his and Mr. Lipsky's visits did not materialize is because there were difficulties getting visas quickly enough for a November visit.

Recommendation: If partnership work is to continue, I would highly recommend that CCF/Geneva invite Messrs. Lipsky and Trukhan to visit the Geneva office to observe operations.

2. Relations with the Belarusian Government

General: Last year's pre-evaluation concerns that BCF was a mouthpiece of the Belarusian government now seem even more unbased in reality. Though BCF continues to have many good contacts with government officials and offices, it was clear to me once again that BCF has preserved its independence from the government. As detailed above, BCF's campaign for tax breaks for nonprofit organizations and requests for assistance from President Lukashenko show that BCF is in clear opposition to many government policies.

Further, Ms. Belick told me that she believes that the government does not take kindly to much of Mr. Lipsky's advocacy work that criticizes government policy.

Mr. Trukhan noted in our conversations that the government tends to see BCF as a competitor rather than a collaborator. This, he feels, is too bad because BCF acts as a buffer for the government, by providing help where the government can not. This sense of a social partnership between government, business, and NGOs has certainly developed within the NGO community, but seems to be slow in reaching the government.

Audits of BCF: BCF was audited several times last year by the Belarusian government. It was Ms. Belick's opinion that the audits were a part of the government's efforts to eliminate corruption, particularly as it relates to humanitarian aid and NGOs that have been operating independently, frequently opposing the government's views. One audit was brought on by the fact that BCF, with the permission of the donor, sold some of the seeds it received for the "Green Vitamin" program. According to Mr. Trukhan, all monies were used to fund the program itself. Though the audits did not show any irregularities, they were time consuming and displayed a generally hostile attitude toward BCF.

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Additionally, the Tax Inspectorate wanted to assess a sizable fine to BCF for placing some of its money in an interest-bearing account, but Mr. Trukhan was able to convince the Inspectorate that all the money was used for charitable work, not for the personal gain of any BCF employees. These problems are very indicative of the general atmosphere for NGOs in Belarus, in the absence of legislation on nonprofit organizations.

VI. The Future of NGOs in Belarus

Though my experience of working with Belarusian NGOs is very limited, I do have a few observations.

- It is obvious to me that the public is open to working with NGOs: Mr. Yarotsky told me that BCF received over 1000 letters from individuals in calendar year 1995; there were also hundreds of telephone calls asking for assistance. This figure does not include letters from other NGOs asking for assistance. Though this quantity of requests is very high and necessitates a lot of effort in answering, it is heartening that the public is so well-informed about BCF and open to working with it.

- The President is willing to help individual NGOs, if asked. This was proven by Mr. Gorbunov, who may be due to receive a total of around \$230,000 to purchase medicines. The monies are the result of personal appeals to President Lukashenko.

- The government of Belarus, though, does not seem willing to establish conditions conducive to NGO development. Many BCF staff members commented to me that the government still has a somewhat hostile attitude toward NGOs and that Belarus does not seem to want to enter into a social partnership with colleagues from the NGO sector. BCF's work in advocating for tax exemptions for nonprofit organizations may have an effect, but probably not for a long time.

- Not many foundations seem to help Belarus, though charitable donations are available. I was very pleased to see the success of local NGO leaders in gathering donations from foundations and businesses. I think that the fund raising seminar was critical in raising self-confidence in their fund raising skills. Most exciting is the fact that many local businesses and individuals are willing to help NGOs.

VII. Involvement of World Learning

It is unfortunate that World Learning (WL) was unable to visit this partnership's seminars to witness progress during the second year of the grant period; monitoring visits by Mr. Charlesworth and Katherine Kalinowski did not coincide with any of CCF's

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training events. The fact that the partnership did not have any significant problems during the second year, though, meant that intensive on-site monitoring of this project was unnecessary. More consistent and informal contact, however, appears to have maintained a very collegial relationship between CCF and WL, and Ms. Belick said on several occasions that she is pleased with that relationship.

Interactions through training events have been helpful: Dr. Litvinovich was able to attend WL seminars and Dr. Rubeiz spoke at a WL conference on sustainability. Electronic mail between WL/Moscow and CCF/Minsk has also enhanced communications. This project has been able to make a lot of headway and I believe that it is a very positive contribution to the PVO project, especially since it is the only project in Belarus.

VIII. Conclusion

The above points indicate to me that, though life may continue to be difficult for NGOs for the next few years, the organizations will continue to develop quickly much the way they did in Russia a few years ago. Certainly a lot will depend on the Belarusian political situation, but I am cautiously optimistic that conditions will improve for NGOs as they continue to demonstrate to their communities that they are professionals who are dedicated to providing social services in partnership with business and government. It seems to me that training and experience have helped to effect very substantial changes in the way that NGOs are managed and that, though some organizations may not survive if forced to adapt their work, the ones that do will be strong and professional.

This improved sense of community among NGOs in Belarus means that BCF will be able to continue to hold a leadership role among its colleagues. Though maintaining that place will require a lot more hard work, BCF is well on its way to establishing itself as an authority in its field. Fundraising will be particularly important, especially as BCF moves away from its dependence on CCF's financing of the WL project. In that light, it will be more important than ever for BCF to focus efforts on professionalism and developing a sense of its mission and then sticking with it.

Finally, when I consider the proposal, the project, and what has been done, I have reached the conclusion that this project has been rather successful. In looking at what has been accomplished and comparing it to other projects I have seen, I would say that this grant has provided relatively good value to both WL and USAID. Though there are some things that might have been done better, most indicators mentioned in the DIP and the original proposal have been reached.

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On a personal level, I was most encouraged by observing the effect of the many training seminars that CCF held during the second year of the grant. Not only was I was pleased to see a high level of interest in writing grant proposals, but I was pleased that BCF staff members were taking a greater interest in date books, filing systems, and how to answer the telephone. The atmosphere at BCF has changed a lot in the last year. The same, it appears, is true for several of the NGOs with which BCF works. Key now of course, will be to ensure that BCF and the other organizations can maintain and build on the improvements that have been made. This, I hope, will be accomplished with the continued help of CCF, which has been a well-matched partner for BCF. CCF continues to enjoy tremendous respect with BCF and its network of NGOs, and it would be very gratifying to see CCF extend its work in Belarus to assist BCF further in developing its sustainability.

Lisa C. Hayden
January 14, 1996
(095) 233-84-54, Moscow, Russia

WORLD LEARNING/NIS FINANCIAL REPORT FORMAT

AGENCY: CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND

GRANT #: NIS-2022-00-21

TOTAL AMOUNT OF GRANT: \$575,000.00

GRANT PERIOD: SEPT 20, 1993 TO DEC 31, 1995

	TOTAL TO DATE		BUDGET		COMMENTS
	FROM: 22.09.93	31.12.95	FOR TOTAL PERIOD OF GRANT (See Grant Agreement)		
	WORLD LEARNING	CCF	WORLD LEARNING	CCF	
1. BALANCE BEGINNING OF PERIOD (line 6 previous Financial Report)		0.00		0.00	
2. TOTAL RECEIPTS		549,287.26		424,954.84	
3. TOTAL AVAILABLE (add lines 1 and 2)		549,287.26		424,954.84	
4. EXPENSES (by line item; see Grant Agreement)					
A. Personnel		58,219.93		90,813.75	
B. Procurement		133,522.90		72,038.00	
C. Travel & Transportation		67,853.27		1,850.98	
D. Communications		10,881.88		15.00	
E. Other Direct Costs		205,068.95		259,230.00	
F. Mid Term Evaluation		2,050.18		0.00	
G. A-133 Audit Costs		7,037.89		1,007.11	
H. Indirect Costs		90,365.00		0.00	
5. TOTAL EXPENSES		575,000.00		424,954.84	
6. EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) END OF PERIOD (subtract line 5 from line 3)				0.00	

IF USING NON U.S. CURRENCY, PLEASE GIVE U.S. DOLLAR EQUIVALENT

ONE DOLLAR =

CHF

The undersigned hereby certifies:

- a. that payment of the sum claimed under the cited subgrant is proper and due and that appropriate refund to World Learning will be made promptly upon request by World Learning in the event of nonperformance in whole or in part under the Subagreement for any breach of the terms of the Subagreement; and,
- b. that information in the financial report is correct and such detail supporting information as World Learning may require will be furnished by the Subrecipient promptly to World Learning on request; and
- c. that all requirements called for by the Subagreement to the date of this certification have been met.

By: Michelle J. Poulton
Michelle J. Poulton

Title: Director

Date: 15.01.96

CP