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

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT  
Reporting period: 1 April 2013 – 30 June 2013

Component III “Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities”

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## I. PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

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

From October 2008 – September 2012, ChildFund Belarus implemented the four-year project “Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities” funded by USAID in Belarus under the *Community Services to Vulnerable Groups* cooperative agreement (AID-121-A-00-05-00703). The project component aimed to include Belarusian people with disabilities into mainstream society and to strengthen the capacity of organizations of persons with disabilities.

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

The project has three main objectives:

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

## II. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

This quarter the project was implemented according to its plan and budget.

Parents, the main driving force in of the promotion of inclusive education, were the focus of the project team efforts this quarter. The project team provided capacity building, collaboration, and support to Parent's Associations and informal parents' self-help groups. They took part in new project capacity building events, such as a leadership course for parents of children with disabilities and a training course on organizational development for Parent Associations. Five self-help groups were run by alumni of the TOT on self-help groups conducted in the previous quarter. In order to support further development and transformation of self-help groups into community advocacy groups, ChildFund conducted two working meetings with the leaders of these groups. The further steps were identified by its participants. Their plans considered the needs and priorities of parent-members of self-help groups.

This quarter the trainers' team on inclusive education successfully tested their training program on inclusive education developed over the previous quarter. There was a growing demand for services of the trainers' team on Inclusive Education. This quarter the trainers group organized 6 training events for 124 specialists. Training on inclusive approaches were incorporated into the curricula of 3 higher educational institutions: 2 pedagogical universities in Baranovichi and Minsk, as well as the Grodno oblast re-training institute. This is an evidence of the high quality of the training materials developed by the trainers' team. Incorporation of training programs into university curricula will ensure sustainability of project interventions.

The rights of people with disabilities to inclusive education, equality, and non-discrimination were promoted by alumni of ChildFund's training programs through 4 advocacy efforts (3 sensitization workshops, 1 roundtable). Youth with disabilities, alumni of the Leadership course, continued raising awareness of their peers about inclusion through training "Inclusion or Illusion". Huge progress in promoting inclusion of children with autism was achieved due to successful advocacy efforts of project participants: Minsk Executive Committee issued its official decision about the creation of the Resource Center for children with autism and the creation of a multidisciplinary team to support inclusion of children with autism into mainstream schools. Considering the fact that the official educational system in Belarus does not recognize the existence of children with autism the decision should be considered a great success.

Two of three sub-grant projects selected in the previous quarter were officially registered at the Department of Humanitarian Aid and implementation has now started. The main goal of the sub-grants is to create models of inclusive educational settings at different levels (kindergarden- school- university).

The figures below illustrate the main outputs of project implementation during the period between April 1 and June 30, 2013:

- **Eight (8)** training events for **160** PWD-related specialists and activists of parent community were conducted;
- **Nine (9)** meetings of self-support groups for 47 parents were supported by ChildFund Belarus;
- **Two (2)** working meetings of leaders of self-help groups were conducted by ChildFund Belarus;
- **Three (3)** inclusive events for **91** children with and without disabilities and their family members were supported by ChildFund Belarus;
- **Four (4)** official decisions related to the right to education of children with autism were promoted;
- **Two (2)** sub-grants on inclusive education started implementation.

### III. CHALLENGES/ CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

The project team met some staffing challenges caused by the maternity leave of the specialist on inclusive education and month long experience exchange visit to the United States of the specialist on organizational development (this trip was supported through the USAID Community Connections program). These circumstances required redistribution of roles and responsibilities within the project team for the interim in order to manage the project effectively.

### IV. LESSONS LEARNED

The transformation of parents' self-help groups into advocacy groups requires more targeted assistance to build their capacity. Without such support there is a risk that these groups remain within their therapeutic and information exchange functions. To better support the self-help groups, two meetings were organized to reflect upon the groups' capacity needs and plans. During the meetings, it was determined that an Advocacy training course will be developed and provided to the groups in the near future. More information on the meetings can be found under "Coordination/ experience exchange meetings of the leaders of self-help groups" on page 5 of this report.

### V. SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

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

In order to build the organizational, networking and advocacy capacity of grassroots organizations supporting PWD and their families, ChildFund Belarus prioritized the following:

- The first session of Training course on Organizational Development for parents' associations (started)
- The first session of Training course on Leadership for parents of children with disabilities (started its first session)
- Nine meetings of five community-based self-support groups of 47 parents of children with disabilities received financial support from the project
- **Two (2)** meetings of leaders and active members of self-support groups were conducted by ChildFund;
- **9** partner disabled people's organizations (DPOs) undertook 5 collaborative efforts including book publishing, volunteer activity, lease of barrier-free venue, and promotion of inclusive teaching approaches
- ChildFund Belarus' team provided technical assistance, conducted monitoring visits, and interviewed the partners and event participants in order to monitor and assess the result of local interventions.

**ACTIVITY: Leadership Course on Inclusive Education for parents of children with disabilities. (April 13-14, 2013)**

<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual targets achieved</i>
One three-day session to introduce parents of children with disabilities to the concept of and role of parents as agents of change in society.	<p><b>One (1)</b> two-day session* was conducted for a group of <b>twenty-two (22)</b> parents of children with disabilities; half of them represented <b>thirteen (13)</b> NGOs and self-help groups of parents of children with disabilities, the others were non-associated parents.</p> <p>During the session participants were introduced to the concepts of inclusive education, discussed the role of parents in the development of an inclusive society, competencies of leaders of change, principle of self-development and personal effectiveness, and basics of time management.</p>

Outcomes: According to the analyses of evaluation forms the participants completed, the training met their expectations, (an average score was 4.9 of 5 possible). The participants admitted usefulness of all the information provided during the training. They also mentioned that the training helped to raise their awareness about their personal role in changing processes, and provided them with the tools for further planning and self-development.

Note\*- By the request of the training participants it was decided to have three 2-day sessions instead of two 3-day sessions as it was originally planned. It will help to increase absorption capacity of training participants and respond to their problem of leaving their families and children with disabilities for 3 days with expensive babysitting.

The second and third sessions of the course will take place in the next project FY according to the project time table. In the period between the sessions the participants will use their new knowledge and practice their newly

acquired skills.

ACTIVITY: Training Course for Parents' Associations. (June 14-16, 2013)	
Planned	Actual targets achieved
One three-day session to introduce 20 participants to the concept of holistic organizational development and provide them with self-assessment tools for determining NGO organizational capacity.	<p><b>One (1)</b> three-day session for a group of <b>fourteen (14)*</b> DPO activists was conducted to improve their knowledge and skills in strategic planning with respect to effective functioning of an NGO.</p> <p>Participants representing <b>four (4)</b> local associations of parents of children with disabilities were introduced to the concept of holistic organizational development as a process of improvement of internal and external NGO environment. They learnt methods of organization self-assessment, approaches to define and measure organization's capacity and effectiveness.</p>
<p><u>Outcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>All participants stressed the novelty and importance of the holistic approach to the development of their organizations and change management as the guiding principle of its implementation. The participants were assigned homework to conduct a participatory assessment of the organizational development of their respective NGOs using the tools that they learned at the training session. The results of the assessment will be used for planning organizational changes within the next training sessions.</i></li> <li><i>The added value of the training was a unique networking opportunity for its participants. As the participating organizations differed in their experience, developmental stages, each of them benefited from the joint learning experience.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>*Note: The planned target of 20 participants was not achieved despite a series of efforts ChildFund specialists took to attract applicants. The reason is that many local NGOs/DPO do not connect their immediate survival needs in the harsh Belarusian environment with organizational development issues.</i></p>	

**ON-JOB SUPPORT TO PARENT SELF-HELP GROUPS (FOLLOW -UPS TO THE TRAINING ON METHODOLOGY)**

**Support to the activities of parent's self-help groups**

In November 2012, ChildFund Belarus facilitated a training session on the methodology of self-help groups for parents of children with disabilities. This quarter, 5 self-help groups facilitated by the graduates of the course continued activities in their respective areas that engaged 47 participants (Krichev, Kobrin, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Vitebsk). This quarter there were 9 meetings of the groups. Although the meetings typically take place regularly (once or twice a month) and provide their participants with opportunities to develop new contacts and receive support; explore family relationship issues, methods of conflict resolution, and – one of the most relevant – interdependence, this quarter showed a lower number of meetings since the Habilitation centers start their vacation in June.

The most tangible need of the participants was the information exchange regarding their burning concerns about education, services, therapies, respite care, and other issues directly related to their children. In their feedback, the participants, drawn together by a common background - exclusion and isolation from their families and society as a result of their children with disabilities, emphasized the unique value of self-help groups, which present a rare chance for communication, support, and relaxation/distraction. ChildFund provided technical and financial support to carry out the groups' meetings with USAID funding.

*Coordination/ experience exchange meetings of the leaders of self-help groups (May 28, 2013 and June 28, 2013)*

The first attempts to launch and maintain self-support groups confronted many challenges emphasizing a crucial need and opportunity to reflect upon experience, evaluate progress, and exchange ideas between those who pioneered these groups.

The meeting in May served 5 facilitators who discussed their successes and concerns, shared ideas/activities that could maintain and renew members' interest in the groups.

The second meeting in June gathered 4 facilitators and 8 parents, active participants of the groups, to elicit ideas about the direction of the groups' efforts for the next year. As the next year's success will depend on maintaining a sense of interest and commitment, participants reflected upon the mission and goals they see for their respective groups, and then attempted to draw plans for future activities. The outcomes included in the plans suggest that self-support group participants appreciate their groups as an opportunity to support each other as they cope with the stigmatization of their children and themselves by sharing experiences. Participants of all groups expressed their interest in learning about inclusive education; a member of the National Team of Trainers, Tatyana Odynets, agreed to provide training and consultations upon request.

**NETWORKING AND COOPERATION BETWEEN DPOs**

Participation in ChildFund's project events facilitated and encouraged networking and cooperation between DPOs. This quarter there were 5 efforts:

- Minsk habilitation center for children with disabilities, Belarusian children' hospice and national disability DPO BelAPDI and Marina Bylino, a member of a National Team of Trainers on inclusive education, jointly developed and published a brochure "Creativity Kit" – activity guide for professionals and volunteers working with children with disabilities"
- The long term partnership was deepened between the participants of the DPO Forum 'Partnerships without limitations" conducted by ChildFund in September 2012. As the follow-up of their participation in that Forum the faith-based organization St. Johann Brotherhood developed a youth volunteer program 'Razam' (Together) to address the needs of children with disabilities. DPO 'Children. Autism. Parents' became one of their assistance recipients. This quarter these two organizations together organized an event at a zoo for children with autism; trained volunteers from the Brotherhood adapted a program to the special needs of the audience and provided personal assistance<sup>1</sup> during the event.
- Baranovich State University, an active partner of ChildFund in developing and promoting inclusive education, cooperated with Belarus Society of People with Disabilities. They started with joint three day trainings for the Society members and provided (free of charge) their barrier-free facilities for this training.
- The young DPO 'Children. Autism. Parents' undertook multiple but solo advocacy efforts that did not bring

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<sup>1</sup> Personal assistance was provided to children with autism in regard to their communication and behavioral needs during the lengthy event.

too much success. Through the targeted consultation provided by ChildFund, the DPO joined its efforts with another DPO 'Otkrovenie' in order to get additional support and diversify their access to target audiences. The joint attempt of two DPOs was more successful: together they organized a meeting with UNICEF. The meeting served as an opportunity for the three organizations to discuss the priorities for future coordinated efforts to enforce the Law on personal assistants; then, discussed the need to allocate the ear-marked rehabilitation money directly to families with a child with a disability, rather than to an institution as it is now. This would ensure that the entire amount is received by the family and spent according to the family's best judgment so that the assistance will in fact meet the needs of children with disabilities for specific items and services. At the 'Teaching techniques for inclusive education: professional capacity of education specialists' roundtable, Partner DPOs Belarusian State Pedagogic University, Minsk Re-training Institute, NGO 'Otkrovenie', NGO BelAPDI, and several Habilitation Centers for children with disabilities collaborated on promoting innovative methods and approaches in inclusive education that they learned at ChildFund's training course on inclusive education. The round table was organized under the International project INOVEST supported by the EU's TEMPUS program.

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

In order to support advocacy efforts by PWD grassroots organizations to promote inclusion, the project provided its technical support in the form of targeted consultations, sub-grants, organizational, and financial support. Achievements include:

- 4 advocacy efforts were undertaken
- 4 official decisions were made in favor of children with disabilities
- Two sub-grants to promote inclusive education were registered and implementation commenced (for more information, please see Annex 2).

### ***ADVOCACY EFFORTS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION***

ChildFund Belarus offered financial and technical support for the graduates of its training programs to organize sensitization workshops/round tables aimed at raising awareness of inclusive education among authorities, children, and parents.

- The DPO 'Children. Autism. Parents', an alumnus of ChildFund's leadership and organization development courses, initiated a roundtable meeting with Minsk Executive Committee to discuss opportunities of inclusive education with respect to the needs of children with autism. ChildFund provided its targeted consultation to the DPO.

The results of the meeting were spectacular. The Minsk Executive Committee decided on:

- the creation of multidisciplinary teams of specialists to support inclusion of children with autism into mainstream educational settings
- the creation of the Resource center on Autism in partnership with specialists of Minsk city habilitation center for children with disabilities
- granted a building for a DPO office and future Resource center on Autism
- identified a list of schools in Minsk that guarantee the service of education to children with autism

Considering the fact that the official educational system in Belarus does not recognize the existence of children with autism the decision should be considered a great success.

- Nataliya Byakova, and Nataliya Sushko (17-year-old girls with disabilities), alumnae of the training course “Leadership without Limitations for children with disabilities” raised their peers’ awareness on the importance of inclusion and understanding that people with disabilities can enjoy the same respect, acceptance, and opportunities through their training “Inclusion or Illusion” for peers without disabilities in Minsk schools. The young trainers feel confident to tailor the training to the needs of audiences that can vary in age from 10 to 16 years old. This quarter, the training was conducted in **three (3)** schools in Minsk and educated **91** children about inclusion. ChildFund provided methodological and financial support to the events with USAID funding.

<b>ACTIVITY: Training for grantees on project management (April 19, 2013)</b>
A meeting for three grantee organizations was conducted to educate project teams about the basics of project cycle management and to provide them with practical guidance on implementing sub-grant projects in accordance with ChildFund procedures and regulations.
*Notes: unplanned activity

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

In order to support introduction and development of inclusive education of children and youth with disabilities, the project provided technical support to the national trainer’s group on Inclusion’s training activity.

In total

- 6 training events for 124 participants by the national trainers’ team (NTT) were conducted
- Training on Inclusive approaches were incorporated into curriculum in 3 higher educational institutions (2 universities in Baranovichi and Minsk, and Grodno oblast re-training institute).

***TRAINING BY THE NATIONAL TEAM OF TRAINERS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION***

In Quarter I of FY13 ChildFund created a national team of trainers (NTT) on inclusive education. This quarter, the trainers used opportunities to promote their unique training services:

- Elena Serkulskeya was invited to School #12 in Minsk to conduct a workshop on inclusive education for the school staff. The teachers claimed lack of specific knowledge and skills to include children with disabilities into their classes. Elena held a session for 32 teachers and based the training on the Module for Educators from the Training course on inclusive education developed by the NTT in previous quarters.
- Marina Letoshko, was invited to introduce a group of 18 Gomel health care professionals to the basic concepts of inclusive education. These health care workers have to provide consultations and medical treatment to children with disabilities and their families in their daily work, however, they feel they lack knowledge and skills to effectively assist children with disabilities which in turn affects the quality of assistance which they provide. Additional assistance was needed.

- Marina Bylino, conducted 3 trainings on inclusive education for 22 ECD professionals at the request of the Minsk Re-training Institute.
- Marina Bylino initiated collaboration with education and special care specialists from the institutions for children with disabilities located in rural and remote areas in Belarus (vil. Vasilishki, Grodno region). She held two sessions based on the materials she learnt during the international training on inclusive education by ChildFund. Marina stresses the uniqueness of this opportunity and novelty of information for the staff of Vasilishki institution.
- Irina Kutsepalova organized and conducted trainings in three schools of Zhodino town to educate their principals and primary school staff about the basics of inclusive education. The audience of 54 education specialists and authority figures appreciated practical knowledge of the novel concept that is being prioritized within the state educational agenda. Each meeting provided the participants with ideas and tools they used to draft individual plans of introducing 'inclusive' changes that are within their professional control into their routine work in primary school classroom.
- Irina Kutsepalova pilot tested sensitization sessions for children in one school of Zhodino town to educate its students aged between 8-13 years old about the values of inclusive society and inclusive education. Three meetings engaged a total of 60 children in dynamic activities that helped build children's sensitivity, understanding, and acceptance of their peers with disabilities. The training taught children how to recognize stigma and discrimination and how to prevent it. The trainer stresses the fundamental rule of such training should be the presumed competence of younger children to deal with complex issues of diversity, acceptance, and inclusiveness.
- Marina Letoshko, a member of a National Trainers Team on inclusive education by ChildFund, conducted a series of trainings on the basic concepts of inclusion for students of Belarusian State University of Transportation in Gomel.

***Incorporation of training on inclusive education into curriculum of higher educational institutes:***

- Galina Birich, a participant of the training on inclusive education for authorities by ChildFund and a head of social work department of Grodno Re-training Institute, incorporated the session 'Introduction to inclusive education' into the course given by Re-training institute in Grodno to ECD and primary school professionals.
- Vera Khitryuk, a member of a National Trainers Team on inclusive education by ChildFund who serves as a researcher at Baranovichi State University initiated the integration of a course 'The Basics of Inclusive Education' into study plans for the degrees 'Primary Education (major)', 'Primary Education (minor)' and 'Social work' that are taught by the university.
- Olga Svetlakova, a member of the National Trainers Team who chairs the Department of special education in Belarusian State Pedagogic University, incorporated a module 'Inclusive Education' together with innovative training activity into regular courses taught to the students of 'Primary education' degree.

## ***DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE CENTERS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION***

- Baranovichi State University developed and adopted a Statute on Resource centers that is being prepared to open in Autumn 2013.
- To reinforce the effort taken by Baranovichi State University to establish a Resource center on inclusive education, its master student Tatyana Bil defended her thesis 'Resource center model: Structure and content'.

## **VI. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION**

### **COORDINATION WITH USAID**

Irina Mironova, ChildFund's COP and Jahor Novikau, USAID AOR, communicated regularly through meetings, e-mails, and phone calls.

### ***Cooperation with ChildFund International Headquarters –***

ChildFund Belarus was in regular communication with ChildFund International's Headquarters in Richmond via e-mail and Skype.

## **VII. PROJECT MANAGEMENT & STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Irina Kuksik, Specialist on Inclusive Education, took her maternity leave in May. She is expected to return to the office in October 2013.

Natalia Ryabova, the Organizational Development specialist, improved her capacity through her participation in a month long USAID-funded experience exchange program Community Connection in USA. Her participation was coordinated with USAID's AOR.

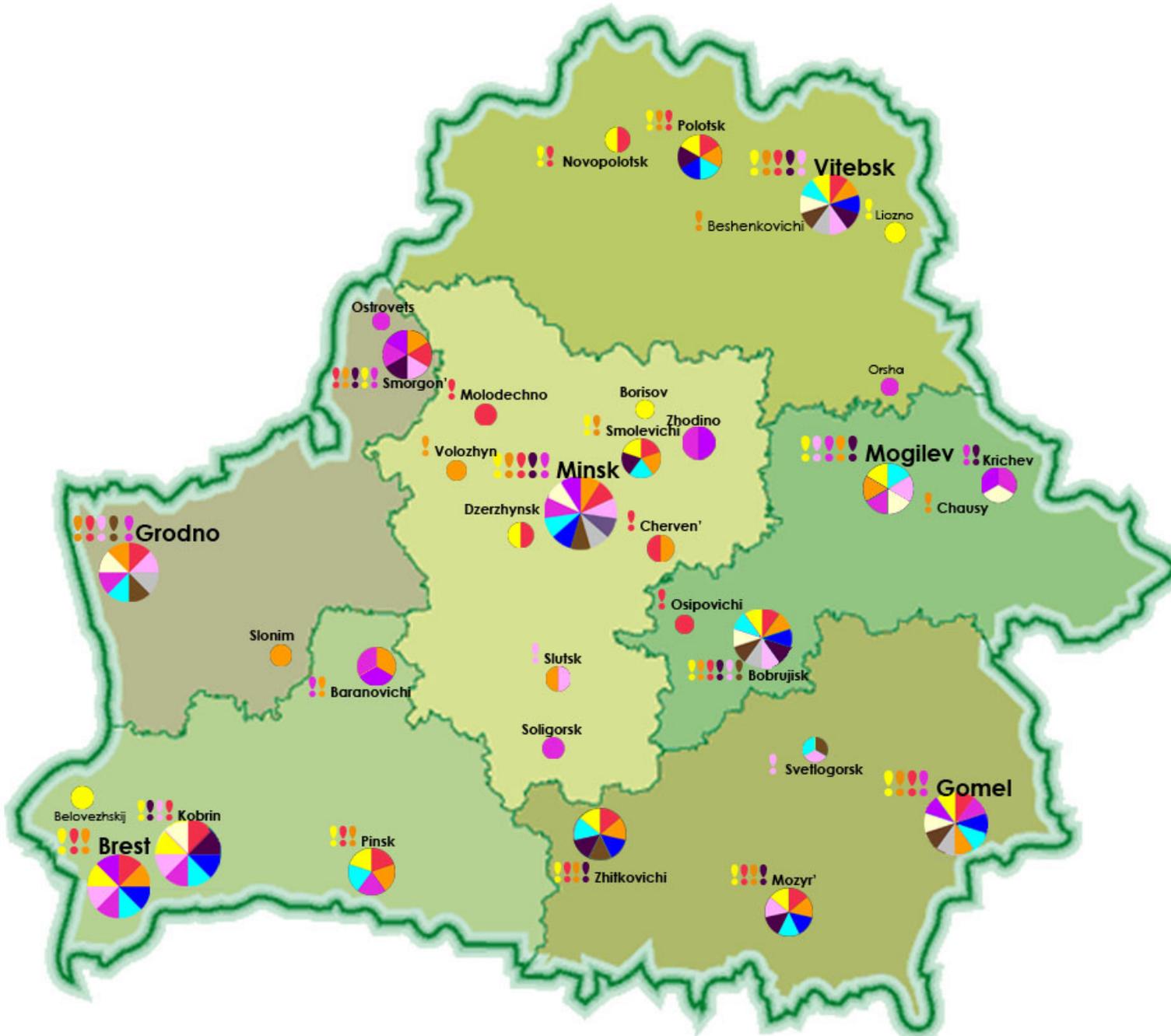
Irina Mironova, Chief of Party, improved her managerial capacity through participation in ChildFund's Regional Annual Leadership meeting in Panama in April 2013. The expenses for her trip were charged to the USAID project and pre-approved by USAID's agreement officer through the last project modification. In May she took part in the Second International Summit on Financial Education for Children and Youth in Istanbul. This trip was supported by Children and Youth Finance International and coordinated with USAID's AOR.

## **VIII. BUDGET**

This quarter, the project expenses were \$72,468.01 including ICR; this represents 26% of the annual budget. The three-quarter spending reached \$202,464.32, i.e. 74% of the annual budget.

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

## Annex 1: PWD Project Map (April 1, 2013 – June 30, 2013)



- I. ● Localities covered by advocacy training
- ! Localities covered by advocacy follow up activities
- II. ● Localities covered by training on proposal writing
- ! Localities that applied for small grants in calls for proposals
- III. ● Localities covered by Leadership without Limitations Training Course (LLTC)
- ! Localities covered by follow ups by LLTC alumni
- IV. ● Localities covered by TOT on Social Interactive Theatre (SIT) Program
- ! Localities having SIT groups
- V. ● Localities covered by TOT on Parenting Skills Enhancement Program
- ! Localities covered by self-help group for parents
- VI. ● Localities covered by Leadership for Youth with Disabilities Training Course
- VII. ● Localities covered by Management of Volunteers Training Course
- VIII. ● ChildFund Belarus' sub-grantees-2009\2012
- IX. ● Localities having councils for disability issues
- X. ● Partner organizations for inclusive education
- XI. ! Localities, covered by replication training on inclusive education
- XII. ● Localities covered by the self-help group methodology training
- XIII. ● Localities covered by TOT on Inclusive Education



## Annex 2. Sub-grants implemented April - June 2013

### Summary

This quarter 3 sub-grant projects that were selected by ChildFund in Quarter II went through the grant registration process with the Department for Humanitarian Aid. Two projects were registered; the third one is expected to receive its approval in the beginning of Quarter IV.

#	Sub-Grantee Name	Project name	Grant amount	Project dates	Status
<b>Inclusive Education</b>					
1	Baranovich State University	Inclusive teacher for inclusive education	\$3,670	June 26, 2013 December 26, 2013	In progress
2	Smorgon Pre-school #6	At home amongst friends	\$2,755	June 28, 2013 December 28, 2013	In progress
3	Mozyr school #10	School for everyone	\$2,746	6 months	Pending for registration

<b>Sub-grantee name:</b> Baranovich State University	<b>Grant amount:</b> \$3,670	<b>Project dates:</b> June 26, 2013 Dec 26, 2013
<b>Project duration:</b> 6 months		
<b>Sub-grantee contact information:</b> Voikova 21, Baranovich, Brest oblast		
<b>Project name:</b>	Inclusive teacher for inclusive education	
<b>Brief description:</b>	The project aims to develop a university curriculum for education-related courses that includes the inclusive education component by adequately enabling university graduates to work within inclusive environment. The establishment of	

an innovative curriculum will be enhanced by the promotion of inclusive values through a media campaign and sensitization initiatives that will engage Baranovich community.		
<b>Planned services and planned number of beneficiaries:</b>	• Develop and conduct a survey to assess the needs seen by education authorities of Baranovich town and area with respect to specialists' professional competence required to introduce inclusive approaches into their respective institutions	100 respondents
	• Two two-day trainings to introduce students to the key competencies that define quality and effectiveness of inclusive education	40 students
	• Two one-day trainings to supply students with knowledge and skills required to plan and carry out a mass media campaign	40 students
	• Success story 'What inclusion in education is' development and publication	1 success story
	• Information leaflet 'School for everyone'	1000 copies
	• Mass media campaign to promote positive attitudes towards inclusion and inform general public about innovations in teacher training curriculum	
	• Development of a study course 'Basics of inclusive education' to be included in the curriculum of 'Primary Education', 'Pre-school Education', and 'Social work' degrees	
	• The final roundtable meeting to share project experience and results with interested stakeholders such as Ministry of Education, heads of secondary and higher education institutions	35 specialists

<b>Sub-grantee name:</b> Smorgon preschool #6	<b>Grant amount:</b> \$2,755	<b>Project dates:</b> June 28, 2013 Dec 28, 2013
<b>Project duration:</b> 6 months		

**Sub-grantee contact information:** Pochtovyj per 11, Smorgon, Grodno oblast

<b>Project name:</b>	At home amongst friends
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**Brief description:** The goal of the project is to promote introduction of inclusive approaches into the preschool education system in Smorgon through increasing the professional competence of local ECD specialists and the early childhood education administration that will represent 100% of state preschool education services providers in Smorgon. The promotion

will be enhanced through several public events within the project.

**Planned services and planned number of beneficiaries:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial conference to introduce preschool education administrators, ECD specialists, and parents to the idea, concept, and activities of the project</li> </ul>	9 preschool directors 20 ECD specialists 9 physical education teachers 9 art teachers 1 psychologist 27 parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on inclusion for Smorgon preschool administrators</li> </ul>	9 preschool directors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on inclusion for ECD specialists and physical education teachers</li> </ul>	9 physical education teachers 20 ECD specialists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on organization of mass inclusive events for art teachers and ECD specialists</li> </ul>	9 art teachers 20 ECD specialists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on organization and management of inclusive theatre studio</li> </ul>	9 art teachers 20 ECD specialists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concert event 'We are different, we are equal'</li> </ul>	27 children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreation event 'My family, sport, and me'</li> </ul>	27 parents 27 children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talent show 'Light up your star'</li> </ul>	27 parents 27 children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start a theatre studio 'Buratino' to engage children with disabilities and those without in the activities.</li> </ul>	15 children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The final conference to share project experiences and results with Smorgon's preschool education authorities, ECD specialists, and parents of children with disabilities</li> </ul>	70 participants

### Annex 3. ChildFund Supports People with Disabilities To Become Leaders

*"Why me?", "Lord, if you heal me, I promise ...", "There's no point in trying".* These were the feelings of Tatiana, a young woman from Bobruysk, when a congenital condition progressed to the point where it effectively ended her career at a woodworking factory eight years ago. *"My life became very dark. When your movement is limited and you're cooped up indoors, depression sets in",* she recalls. *"I tried not to lose heart and looked out for anything I could do to resist".*

Tatiana's resistance campaign started in 2007 with a volunteer club "Charity and Health" that she created to unite people with disabilities and offer her attention and support to those who needed to be heard. In 2008, the NGO "People with disabilities on wheel-chairs" invited Tatiana to the team of "I have the right to work" project. This project was developed through a sub-grant under ChildFund Belarus' "Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities" component of its USAID funded *Community Services to Vulnerable Groups* project. The sub-grant aimed to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. As a participant, Tatiana observed real changes, *"I was impressed how people changed their attitudes through participation in the trainings! 20 people found jobs and one of the trainees became a university student at the age of 42!"* Tatiana's first experience with NGO project activities revealed how much could be done for people with disabilities and, most importantly, what she was capable of doing.



Tatiana at ChildFund office

To learn more about these opportunities, from 2009-2013 she took part in a series of capacity building events provided by ChildFund's USAID funded project including the Leadership course for people with disabilities, Training course on advocacy, social interactive theater (SIT), volunteer management, and organization of self-help groups. In 2010 she completed a training of trainers (TOT) and became a trainer for the Parenting Skills Enhancement program. New knowledge and skills prompted Tatiana to follow-up with innovative activities in her home town. Having learnt how to motivate people to engage in public benefit activity, she conducted a recruitment campaign and series of trainings for community volunteers. Today, these young volunteers regularly assist in organizing and holding community events, and visit people with disabilities at their homes. In 2011 after participating in the training on social interactive theater, Tatiana started an SIT-theater "Mirror" to explore stigma and discrimination toward people with disabilities, and the challenges related to building personal relationships with/between people with disabilities. The theater was highly appreciated by community members and the theatrical group headed by Tatiana has been successfully touring around and outside Bobruisk. In 2013 after completion of ChildFund's training on self-help groups, Tatiana created the self-help club "Soul" for people with disabilities and for parents raising children with disabilities. With every club session, she affirms her belief that the best advisors for people with disabilities are people with disabilities themselves, and that resources needed for success lay within a person and her family.

Although proud of her accomplishments, Tatiana also realized that discussing problems in a peer-group was not enough to bring about social change; she recognized the need for advocacy efforts and initiated the "Start with Yourself" information campaign in Bobruisk to attract public attention to the issue of acceptance of people with disabilities aimed to create a community that respects and provides equal opportunities to all. Later she organized a roundtable on the topic for representatives of local authorities and NGOs.

It came as no surprise that through the years Tatiana has become a celebrity figure in her community, being often interviewed by local media (both press and TV), while strangers in the streets smile and greet her by name. *"Just imagine: Eight years ago, I used to have a panic attack should I leave my apartment and walk to the nearest street corner alone, and now I travel to various events all by myself!"* Tatiana exclaims. *"I never thought that I would develop such social activity! What would have happened to me had I not believed in myself then, after that first successful project? Indeed, sometimes I feel that I have lived not just one but several lives".*