

Centre for Social Action's international work

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Support to the Delivery of Effective and Sustainable Social Assistance Services in Moldova - Contracted by OPM to work as consultant on the DfID/SIDA funded project to offer advice, consultancy and training on the role, training and support needs of newly appointed community social assistants. Jennie Fleming and Hellmuth Weich have been engaged as international experts on the Social Services strand of the 'Support to the Delivery of Effective and Sustainable Social Assistance Services in Moldova', DFID/SIDA funded project aimed at supporting the development of the newly created post of Community Social Assistant. We provided consultancy for the development of job descriptions for the social assistants, ensured service user involvement, and contributed to the development of primary social care legislation adopted by the Government of Moldova in Dec 2008. We developed a participative training strategy and curriculum for training that is being rolled out nationally. CSAs work on participation and community development is a central to the curriculum and materials written by Fleming and Weich for inclusion in manuals produced by the Moldovan Ministry of Social Protection Family and Child. By the end of 2010 almost 1000 social assistants and their supervisors had received training based on the curriculum and manuals. This work has had an impact on the 800 community social assistants and hence an estimated 170 000 beneficiaries of their services.

Young people's research in South Africa

Hellmuth Weich and Jennie Fleming worked with a group of five secondary schools in Bloemfontein, South Africa – connecting our themes of young people and research and our international work. The project is lead by Saretjie Musgrave, who was a teacher at one of the schools, and now works for the University of the Free State (UFS). Along with staff from the University of the Free State, Hellmuth and Jennie provided training and support to the students who were undertaking the research amongst their peers, in their schools and communities to find out more about vulnerable children and how they are supported within their communities.

We have provided key inputs to support the training in research and to develop the teachers and young people's understanding of how to undertake a research project. We have done this from the UK via Skype and other internet based platforms and resources.

The schools' catchment areas have different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and a range of first languages are spoken – Afrikaans, English, Sesotho and IsiXhosa. Over 150 students took part in the project, called **Children who Care**, they spoke with young people, teachers and adults in the community. They undertook the analysis and presentation of the findings.

The project used a range of technologies to support the students learning and facilitate communication between Hellmüth and Jennie in England with the teachers and students. This work won the heat in South Africa and came second in the all Africa final for the Microsoft Innovative Teaching Award competition.

UNICEF Turkmenistan

Centre staff, in partnership with the Social Action Company, were employed by UNICEF Turkmenistan to facilitate workshops for 60 professionals involved in child protection work at the end of 2005. Two of these covered basic social work skills and communication skills. The workshops were experiential and used participative and interactive methods. (2005)

EveryChild Moldova

Centre staff in association with the Social Action Company ran two series of training events in Moldova in November 2004 and March 2005. This took place under the auspices of Every Child as part of the TACIS Capacity Building in Social Policy Reform Project financed by the European Commission. The main aim of the programme was to strengthen the capacity of the government of Moldova to implement coherent social policy reform in the childcare field and decrease reliance on institutional care. (2004/5)

ECT/CSA Collaboration

A collaboration to build the capacity of Every Child Trust (ECT) (now known as Every Child) overseas programme teams to carry out innovative community programming which aimed to increase the skills base of staff both in London and overseas. Key objectives of the work were to: Increase the capacity of ECT staff to facilitate community and partner participation in the programme management cycle - planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation
Development of a technical assistance framework outlining values, principles and an overall training approach which is practical and locally appropriate
Building the capacity of a core team of trainers to deliver and support long-term growth and development.

The work took place in the UK and also in country with follow up sessions in Georgia, Kosovo, Ukraine, Russia (2001 - 2002)

Micro-Credit Evaluation in South Kyrgyzstan

European Children's Trust commissioned contract to evaluate the micro-credit scheme currently running in Kyrgyzstan, which is a three sided agreement comprising ECT, Ak Maral the Kyrgyz organisation and Mercy Corp International. Involved a two day training seminar on participative evaluation with local workers and a three day field trip to Noorkat, providing support and consultancy to two participants who interviewed local women with and without loans, their husbands, some children, credit officers, the Minister for Social Protection, social workers and village leaders as part of the evaluation.

(May 2001)

Russia

Dept for International Development - Restorative Justice Project –

The Centre for Social Action, in partnership with the Community and Criminal Justice Division at De Montfort and the Centre for Legal and Judicial Reform in Moscow, was funded by the Department for International Development (DfID) to support local Russian practitioners to run three pilot restorative justice projects to divert young people away from prison. The pilot projects were based in Moscow, Tyumen (Western Siberia) and Dzerzhinsk in the Nizhny Novogorod area (to the east of Moscow) and successfully introduced restorative justice practice into the law enforcement systems in these areas. (2002-05)

Department for International Development - Disability and Empowerment Project Samara Russia

This was initially a three-year DfID funded Disability and Empowerment Project to provide disability equality training in Samara, Russia, particularly in the cities of Samara and Togliatti to assist disabled people in project sites to develop essential skills to improve their levels of choice and independence in their everyday lives and influence socio-political structures. The project ended prematurely due to policy changes within the DfID, but two visits were arranged during which local disability groups were trained and facilitated to carry out their own training needs analysis including access surveying, disability equality training and working on equal opportunities issues . (2002-04)

Ekaterinburg Projects

The Centre for Social Action worked in a consortium with the European Children's Trust and the Children's Society to transform childcare in the city and region of Ekaterinburg and the Sverdlovsk Oblast in Russia. This was a three-year programme funded by the Department for International Development Fund (DfID). It promoted an inter-departmental approach, bringing together all agencies involved with the care of vulnerable children, to improve standards and develop more community-based family focused childcare services. (2001-2003)

Russian Far East

This was a one-week visit to Magadan and Vladivostok to work on the joint ECT/MercyCorps project in the Russian Far East. The Centre was employed to model social action work in six different settings so that permanent staff there could understand what this approach looked and felt like in practice. To this end the Centre planned and facilitated two round tables for politicians and professionals involved with child care in and around Vladivostok; two team building sessions for staff involved in Mercy Corps projects, one in an internat committed to fostering in Magadan, another a family support centre in Issurisk; a round table for a steering committee in Magadan; and a youth work session with around sixty young people living in an internat near Issurisk. (2001)

Ukraine and Belarus

British Council Ukraine HIV This was a two-year project funded by DFID and led by the British Council. Its aim was to examine and change approaches to work around HIV/AIDS in Ukraine by focussing on five oblasts in the country and carrying out research, training and pilot projects in a number of sites. The Centre is taking the lead on using social action methods in relation to training, peer support, advocacy and user-led research. (2002 - 2003)

UNICEF and Dept for International Development - De-Institutionalisation of Childcare Programme

UNICEF established a three-year partnership with the Centre for Social Action to develop a range of de-institutionalisation of childcare programmes in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. This programme built on the work already begun in Ukraine where Centre staff had worked alongside the Institute for Social Research, Kyiv to develop projects around transforming children's homes, setting up a system of foster care, work with disabled children and their families, family support work and preparation for independent living. In **Belarus** the focus for the 1999 programme was on transforming children's homes, setting up a system of foster care and preparation for independent living for young people in care. In Russia, the focus for the 1999 programme was on youth participation, peer to peer work and working with street children. (1999-2001)

United States of America

National Writing Project

The Centre for Social Action has forged a partnership with the National Writing Project based at the University of California, Berkeley, USA. NWP is a professional development agency offering teachers in primary and secondary schools in 50 states, support and consultancy with the development of literacy programmes for young people. There have been reciprocal visits between staff from both organisations over the last three years and since the summer 2000 trainers from the Centre for Social Action have run a series of training courses for teachers in six locations in the US. This working arrangement continued in 2002 with planned training and consultancy visits at conferences in Savannah, Lake Tahoe and Atlanta. Centre trainers have supported teachers in meetings and workshops to write up their social action practice which resulted in a book being published on social action practice in schools in the USA 'Writing for a Change – Boosting Literacy and Learning through Social Action' Josey Bass in the Autumn of 2006.

South America

CSA links with the Universidad de los Lagos and the Universidad de la Frontera, Chile

Thilo Boeck has been working in Chile with the Universidad de los Lagos and the Universidad de la Frontera. He was invited three times during 2010 and 2012 and gave diverse talks to social work students, seminars to practitioners, academic staff and students and collaborated in developing research proposals. The work with the two Universities continues around Social Action, social capital and resilience. In Chile there is a need to find practical models to enhance social capital in some of the most isolated rural areas. He explored with local practitioners and academics participatory models of project development to find local solution with the local communities. With the academic team he explored participatory mixed methods research which has lead to the development of a module within the social work programme on participatory research and evaluation.

Peru - EveryChild

Two Centre trainers went to Lima to facilitate a one week's training course in social action methods with Every Child staff and active members of the communities where EveryChild was working. The training covered the social action process and principles and discussions as to their relevance to work in Peru as well as the development of action plans for further development.

Africa

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second in the all Africa final for the Microsoft Innovative Teaching Award competition.

Department for International Development (DfID) - Capacity building in Mozambique

The Centre was commissioned by POWER - the International Limb Project - (Posthetic and Orthotic Worldwide Education and Relief) to provide 5 -day capacity building disability equality training courses in three areas of Mozambique - Nampula, Beira and Maputo - for officials and members of disability organisations representing all the different impairments. Each participant developed action plans for themselves and their organisations to strengthen their collective ability to meet the needs of disabled people in Mozambique. These were followed up by two three-day consultancies in each region. The project, funded by the DfID, aimed to build capacity within local disabled organisations to enable them eventually to take over the POWER programme in Mozambique. (2003-4)

EU, Somaliland

The Centre won funding from the European Union Task Force for Co-operation on Justice and Home Affairs for the Somaliland Development and Voluntary Returning Home Project. The project's main aim was to build bridges between the UK based Somaliland communities and those back in Africa, so that people living in the UK could make informed decisions about whether returning home was right for them. Exploratory visits to Somaliland were arranged for representatives of the different Somali communities in Britain to enable them to assess the economic and security issues in the country and report back to their compatriots.(1999)

Early International Work (pre 1999)

Russia

Charity Aid Foundation Ethics Training Programme in Russia

The Centre was commissioned to run four training courses on ethics for Non Governmental Organisations in Russia. This included discussing the role of this sector in promoting social equity, revealing current discriminatory practices and developing and discussing ways of implementing a Code of Conduct for Russian NGOs. The first sessions were held in Moscow, St Petersburg, Nizhny, Novgorod and Samara during February and March 1997. A six month period then followed during which the organisations implemented action plans in their agency. The follow-up sessions took place in September/October 1997.

Training Course on Working with Refugees and Migrants in Moscow

The Centre received funding from Charity Know-How, Charities Aid Foundation and other charitable funds to run a training course for non-

governmental organisations in Moscow on working with refugees and migrants. (1996)

Charities Aid Foundation, Moscow

The Centre was commissioned to run a 2-day training course on Prejudice Reduction for heads of voluntary organisations in Moscow. (1996)

Telephone of Trust, Moscow

CSA ran a 7-day, 3 part training course for workers and volunteers on telephone helplines in the Moscow region. (1995-1996)

Charities Aid Foundation

CSA ran a 7-day, 3 part training course in Moscow on the organisation and management of NGOs. (1995-1996)

Nan Foundation, Moscow

Three trainers from CSA ran a 7-day, 3 part training session in Moscow for NGOs working with homeless children, refugees and people who abuse substances. (1995-1996)

Social Work Training Courses, Moscow

The Centre ran two 8 day, 3 part training courses for social workers from governmental and non-governmental organisations in the Moscow region. The courses were funded by Charity Know-How Fund. (1993-1995)

Ukraine

British Council, Ukraine - Peer Education and Healthy Lifestyles Training

Two Social Action practitioners/trainers from Bradford ran a training programme on peer education/healthy lifestyles with Ukrainian youth work practitioners. The course arose from contacts made at the 1997 Social Action Summer School attended by Ukrainian workers from the Kyiv State Social Services for Youth and the NGO SPOK. The training course also covered detached and outreach methods of work with young people. (1998)

Donetsk

The Centre was commissioned by the Hamlet Trust to contribute to the community development element of a major agricultural reform project designed to enable farmers in Ukraine improve their practice. The Hamlet Trust was working in Donetsk in eastern Ukraine establishing a Farm and Agri-Business Support Services (FABSS). This programme was funded by the Know How Fund through Agri-Systems UK. Two - 2 day workshops were run for managers and practitioners of social services agencies. (1998-2000)

Training the Trainers.

Training the trainers course, provided for practitioners who had been trained on youth social workers' courses run by the Centre in Kyiv, Kharkov, and

Odessa between 1995-97. This aimed to train workers from the governmental and non-governmental services for young people in the skills of running Social Action training courses for fellow professionals in Ukraine. The courses was funded by the Know How Fund and co-ordinated by the Institute of Social Research in Kyiv (1998-1999)

Street Children

Two separate training programmes with practitioners and policy-makers in Ukraine to transform their work with street children so that it conforms with the principles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Training courses were run with practitioners working with children on the streets and in children's shelters. (1998-1999)

Youth Cafes

Two separate training programmes, funded by UNICEF, as part of a feasibility study to establish youth clubs/cafes in Kyiv. This entailed carrying out research with young people to establish the need for youth clubs/cafes, outlining and developing a business plan to establish the viability of developing such a resource, investigating the training and employment opportunities for young people and assisting them to devise an action plan to progress the development of these activities. (1998)

Youth Friendly Clinics

Ten-day training programme funded by UNICEF, to assist policy-makers and staff in Kyiv to develop a youth friendly clinic. The training aimed to develop communication skills and promote confidentiality and "youth friendly" characteristics. (1998)

UNICEF Ukraine

In late 1997 the Centre established a partnership with UNICEF-UKRAINE, which had the objective of transforming the state institutional care of children in Ukraine. UNICEF agreed funding of \$100,000 in the first year, to be spent in Ukraine on measures to improve current child care provision. This was part of a 3-5 year UNICEF programme in Ukraine. The programme consisted of three main parts:

- The deinstitutionalisation of children's homes and the development of alternative models of care.
- The setting up of a foster care programme.
- Preventing the need for state care through the development of support services for families under stress, developing outreach and other support services for disabled children and their families and establishing outreach and detached work with street children.
- **Training**
In February 1998 the Centre ran a training course for researchers who were researching alternative child care models, monitoring and evaluating current and new models being developed as part of the UNICEF programme. The training introduced participants to qualitative and Social Action research methods. In March 1998 two training

courses were run, one for residential care staff from children's homes who are part of the de- institutionalisation programme and the other for social workers who will recruit, train, support and supervise the work of foster parents.

Youth Social Work Training Courses, Ukraine

The Centre received funding from the Know How Fund to run three Youth Social Work courses in Kiev, Odessa and Kharkov for practitioners in the Social Services Centres for Youth, Ukraine. (1996-1998)

Study Visits for Ukrainian Youth Social Work Policy Makers and Practitioners

The Centre hosted two study visits for policy makers and practitioners in youth social work. The project was organised in collaboration with the Youth Problems Institute Kiev and funded by the British Council. (1993-1994)

Study Visit, Ukraine

Following contact made in Moscow in 1991 a two-week study visit was carried out by three representatives of the Centre to look at the range of youth social work institutions being developed in Kyiv/Ukraine. The visit was hosted by the Youth Problems Institute Kyiv. A programme of collaboration was developed and a partnership agreement signed. (1992)

Study Visit, Russia

Two representatives of the Centre carried out a study visit to look at social work and non-governmental organisations in Moscow. The Youth Institute Moscow hosted the visit. (1991)

UK Study Visit - Moscow Hospice at Home

The Centre hosted a visit of three children's oncology specialists from Moscow. They visited hospices, hospitals and training institutions in the Midlands to study provision in the UK, to assist in the development of their community based services for terminally ill children in Russia. (1996).

Research

The Centre carried out its own independent evaluation of this programme and the impact of the Social Action approach. (1997-1998)

The Know How Fund (KHF)

The Centre was commissioned to carry out a research project funded by The Know How Fund through the British Embassy in Kyiv. The research was a feasibility study on the Development of Services for Young Offenders and Drug Prevention. The study took place in Kyiv and Kharkiv and involved the police, prison and probation services as well as health, community and social work professionals. (1997)