

**6th Meeting of the Steering Committee on the Barents region' Co-operation programme
"Children and youth at risk"**

Date and time:

Tuesday, May 10th, 2011, 10.00-19.00

Venue:

The Conference room, Bufetat Northern Norway

Department for international cooperation in the Barents region

Storgate 92, Tromsø, Norway

Pål Christian Bergstrøm Chair of the Steering Committee of the Programme "Children and youth at risk in the Barents region

Director General, the Regional Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs in Northern Norway

Elena Krasovskaya Deputy Chair of the Steering Committee of the CYAR programme

Deputy Chair of the commission for juvenile and protection of their rights under The Regional government; Consultant, Department for Cooperation with law enforcement authorities, Office of the Government of the Murmansk region

Roman Kopusov Coordinator of the CYAR programme

Project leader, Department of international relations in the Barents region, the Regional Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs in Northern Norway

Marina Zyryanova Secretary of the CYAR programme

Senior Executive Officer, the Department of international relations in the Barents region, the Regional Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs in Northern Norway

Vappu Sunnari University lecturer, gender studies/equality, University of Oulu, Finland

Ingrid Lövstrand	Project Coordinator, Association of Local and Regional Authorities of the province Norrbotten, Sweden
Elena Dunaeva	Advisor to the Deputy Governor of the Arkhangelsk region on social issues
Ekaterina Kalinina	Head of the department for family and childhood, Agency for social development of the Komi Republic
Anastasia Leonenko	Interpreter

Agenda

1. Welcome speech. Opening of the meeting – Chair.

The Chair welcomed the members of the Steering committee (SC) to Tromsø and opened the meeting with a short presentation of the town, its main institutions such as the University of Tromsø, the Polar Institute and others.

2. Presentation of the participants of the meeting.

All the SC members are present except for the representative of the Republic of Karelia who could not come and the representative for indigenous peoples. The list of the participants is included in the minutes.

There is no need to take a round of presentations as the participants have met many times before and know each other.

3. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair presented the topics for the meeting:

- continuation of CYAR Support project
- CYAR II: the SC can give very valuable input and the Chair hopes for a fruitful discussion and comments on how the programme can be continued and financed further. As stated in the adopted Activity plan, the SC is determined to work on applications for financing of the CYAR activities. The next deadline is June 13, 2011 for the application to EU Kolarctic

The Chair goes through the agenda. The agenda is adopted

3. Adoption of the protocol of the 5th SC meeting from November 18, 2010 in Petrozavodsk, Republic of Karelia, Russia

Comments and remarks on the protocol:

The Chair proposes that from this meeting on protocols should be

- shorter, more result-oriented, bullet-pointed.

- the results, decisions should be pointed out more clearly.

The SC supports this proposal.

Follow-up of the previous SC meeting:

- It was proposed to appoint a contact person for practical issues by December 1st.

The representative for the Murmansk region explains that due to a comprehensive reorganization in the government and ministries no one has been appointed in the Murmansk region. However, the cooperation between Elena Krasovskaya and Natalya Zaytseva has been very productive.

Koposov underlines that among the representatives present at the meeting there have not been any problems concerning cooperation on project activities.

Decision: No need to follow up this point.

Vappu Sunnari representing Finland offers herself as a contact person in Finland (Oulu).

Decision: The Secretariat should direct any contact from any organization/person to a SC member to keep the SC updated.

- At the last meeting of the SC a programme “What about us?” aimed at couples with disabled children was presented. It was open up for requests of interest from the partners. It is added to the agenda.
- At the moment the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social inclusion have signed two 2-side protocols of intentions for cooperation: with the Arkhangelsk region and the Republic of Karelia. The Chair has requested information on the status of similar protocols of intentions with the Republic of Karelia and the Murmansk region.

The protocol is adopted.

5. Information from the regional representatives – relevant news, updates on co-operation activities and prospects in the realm of children and youth at risk.

The regional representatives present political initiatives, future plans and relevant news important for the CYAR programme.

Time frame: 10 min.

The Arkhangelsk region

Elena Dunaeva representing the Arkhangelsk region informed the SC about the news and presented information about the implementation of the CYAR Programme in the region:

- Changes in the regional legislation: the children`s Ombudsman has been appointed at the Governor`s office in the Arkhangelsk region.
- In February 2011, 20 specialists from 7 institutions were trained in Family Group Conferences. The course and the programme received a very good feedback

- In March 2011, a Russian-Norwegian seminar on “Interagency experience exchange on prevention and reintegration of children and youth in conflict with law” took place in Arkhangelsk
- Since December 2010, a “hot line” for children was established in 5 institutions. During the 1st quarter of 2011, 1600 people used the “hot line” and more than half were children.
- The service of accompanying juveniles in the court continues to develop: altogether 43 juveniles in the Arkhangelsk region have gone through the project. Now three districts of Arkhangelsk have implemented and use this service.
- In the Velskij district, at the Velskij centre for help to families and children there has been established a department for socialization of juvenile delinquents. A training seminar has been conducted for specialists of the Velskij centre and Kargopolskij social rehabilitation centre for juveniles. The service of accompanying juveniles in the court has also been implemented here.

Conclusion: A lot of work is being done in the realm of juvenile delinquents. For further development in that area we need mediation.

Sweden

The following news has been presented by the Swedish SC member Ingrid Löfstrand:

- For a couple of years focus is on developing “evidence-based practice” in social work which means that social workers should find the best existing research findings before taking any decision. Social workers should also consider their own professional knowledge and experience as well as the client’s perspectives.
- Establishment of regional centres for evidence-based practice in the area of children and youth at risk will start in autumn 2011. The main objective of such centres is competence building for personel of the local authorities.
- From autumn 2011 the main focus is children and youth who are placed in foster families or institutions.
- A meeting with a National Board on Health and Welfare will take place where possible coordination of CYAR activities and activities of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). One of the issues for CBSS is trafficking and child sexual exploitation.

Pål Christian Bergstrøm pointed out that the Secretariat will have a meeting with the Expert Group of CBSS on CYAR in September.

The Secretariat will send out a link to the Child Centre - Roman

The Republic of Komi

The SC representative could not come. The substitute present at the meeting, Ekaterina Kalinina, is a specialist in charge of the children and family affairs.

Year 2011 was announced “a Year of Children” in Komi.

One of the goals: to support family and children

- support to people of the reproductive age:

- advanced medical equipment for pregnant women was purchased
- more consulting centres were established
- improvement of children health:
 - purchase of special nutrition for infants from HIV-positive mothers,
 - opening of new kindergartens, including private;
 - establishment of the interagency service for urgent social help on the basis of the “hot line” which aim is immediate psychological help or to forward the information to another relevant service in case of domestic violence and similar)
- A new technology “Interactive psychologist” is being developed.
- Support of maternity and paternity
 - financial aid to parents who get their 3rd child – 150 000 roubles
 - increase in the financial aid to those who adopt a child (10 000 - 200 000), if the child is disabled – 15000 – 250000 roubles.
- The 3-year-long interagency programme “For the future” received a grant from the Gordeeva`s Foundation for work with children and youth at risk: prevention of family ill-being and social orphanage.
- “Social expeditions”: social specialists go to remote areas.
- “Summer vacations for family”
- Competence development, further education of the personell
- Successful implementation of CYAR activities:
 - Family Group Conferences: 12 specialists are working, families have been selected. However, no supervision has been conducted yet
 - The Incredible Years: 5 groups, 35 families are being trained
 - an information campaign has been conducted to inform the population and the specialists in Komi about the programme. Huge interest has been registered;
 - the necessary equipment has been bought;
 - the mentor Elena Vorobyeva ran supervision two times in Syktyvkar

Pål Christian Bergstrøm asked about postinternat care for children returning from colonies, which was mentioned by Mr. Semyashkin at the previous meeting.

Ekaterina Kalinina answered that one institution won a grant for children and youth in conflict with law. As for rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents, an agreement was signed with UFSIN.

Mr. Bergstrøm informed the SC that a request for a meeting at the Gordeeva`s foundation was sent but the Secretariat has not received any reply yet.

Finland:

- Finland and the Republic of Komi have been elaborating a cooperation programme for 2012 – 2015. In March 2011, a meeting took place where the partners

were identified and the proposal for the programme was outlined. The final text of the programme is to be ready by the end of May 2011.

- The cooperation programme “Avain” (“Key”) between Finland and the Republic of Karelia was supposed to be presented but the speaker could not come.
- Mrs. Sunnari informed about the work in progress on creating a check list for teachers, social workers, parents to recognize children and youth at risk.
- Finland has also been working on an application to Kolarctic for a project on prevention of corporal punishment. However, the project is not ready yet.
- Together with the Lapland University, the University of Oulu received funding for a studying programme for teachers for recognizing and preventing violence in families.
- Work on problems of trafficking of girls and prostitution is also in progress.
- The local activities mentioned at the previous meeting continue according to the plan.
- The University of Oulu plan a cooperation with an organization which works with ART and Family ART. This cooperation will include training and supervision as well as research.

NB! The Secretariat will forward the information on the ART centre to the Finnish representative so that it is possible to coordinate activities and have access to research, as well as including it in the application to Kolarctic.

The Murmansk region

Mrs. Krasovskaya presented the news from the Murmansk region.

- A children`s Ombudsman in the Murmansk region has been appointed in February 2011 and has been working in close cooperation with Elena Krasovskaya and other relevant units. Now there are ombudsmen in more than 70 regions in Russia.
- In February 2011, a Russian-Norwegian seminar on “Interagency experience exchange on prevention and reintegration of children and youth in conflict with law” took place where Nils Christie participated.
- An information campaign on prevention of child abuse continues. Within this campaign the regional commission for juvenile delinquents and protection of their rights has initiated a regional interagency prevention measure “Childhood without Tears” in the period April 4 – 24, 2011.
- “Hot line” is in active use in the Murmansk region: 9 specialists were trained in Moscow to be qualified to work there. The following statistics have been registered during the 4th quarter of 2010 – 600 calls, during the 1st quarter of 2011 – 1600 calls. That indicates clearly the need for such a service.
- A long-term programme on development of education is launched in the Murmansk region for 2011 – 2015 where a part of the programme includes prevention of juvenile delinquency among pupils. The long-term programme “The children of the Kola area” now also includes problems of family and demographical problems.
- The regular annual programme “Teenager” starts on May 15th and continues till October 15th. Its aim is organization of activities for children with deviant behaviour in summer; children in a difficult life situation are prioritized.

- A project in Monchegorsk (initiated by “Save Children”) aimed at juvenile delinquents who return from colonies and closed educational establishments (closed special schools) continues.
- A law was introduced in 2011 on restriction of freedom as a criminal sanction. In the Murmansk region there were 40 cases where such a punishment has been used, 1 case – for a juvenile delinquent. It is obvious that humanization of the judicial system continues. The reform of the judicial system continues which includes the transformation of colonies into rehabilitation centres. There are now 62 colonies in Russia; only 30 are to be left, and there better conditions will be created for children (bringing in psychologists, teachers, social workers).

Mrs. Krasovskaya has informed the SC about the changes at the level of ministries: the Ministry of Health and Social development has been reorganized, divided into the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (acting Minister - Mrs. A. Volkova) and the Ministry of Health (Mr. A. Rubin)

Mrs. Krasovskaya has also pointed out that the courses in ART, “What About Us?” and “the Incredible Years” within the CYAR Programme support project had been a great success and wondered if it was possible to form one more ART group of social workers and teachers. Another question from the Murmansk region was if it was possible to sign a contract for more than 1 year and simply re-consider it (add amendments) regarding financial issues.

Mr. Bergstrøm answers that when it comes to extending ART activities, the project has used all the existing resources. As one of the aims of CYAR is to build up the competence on the Russian side so if there is need for more courses they should be organized and conducted by the Russian project partners

Norway

Due to the reform within child social care services in Norway, Mr. Bergstrøm pointed out several areas where the biggest changes occur.

- Residential care: institutions of residential care will be divided into 6 major groups and transformed into smaller units. This work will be finished in August-September.
- A problem in recruitment of enough foster parents.
- The results from the survey among children in the age of 9 – 18 from the social care institutions and foster homes have been received. **Results:** children are having better life in foster families rather than in institutions. Some negative results on how children themselves experience their stay in the institutions. A number of spheres have been evaluated: the perception of the life situation, safety, school, other social activities).
- Intermunicipal cooperation on child social care issues: work on improvement of the cooperation between municipalities in providing high quality child care services.
 - Some background information: there are approximately 430 municipalities in Norway (88 municipalities in Northern Norway). Some small municipalities provide child care services of quite low quality.

Questions/comments:

Mrs. Krasovskaya asked what those categories are.

Mr. Bergstrøm named 6 categories according to which institutions of residential care will be classified:

1. Drug abuse
2. Psychiatric disorder of introvert character (depression, anxiety)
3. Deviant behaviour of low risk
4. Deviant behaviour of high risk
5. Care - children and youth who cannot stay at home and haven't got a foster family
6. Short-term crisis institutions

Today all these kinds of children are together. Such a situation is very unfortunate as children may be involved into and later develop undesirable behaviour patterns.

6. Status report on the Activity Plan – Chair

The following activity plan was adopted for 2011 at the previous meeting of the SC in November 2010 in Petrozavodsk.

- 2 SC meetings, one of the Nordic countries and Murmansk
 - The 6th SC meeting, the first of the two scheduled for 2011, took place in Tromsø on May 10th, 2011
- Application to EU CBC Kolarctic
 - The deadline – **June 13, 2011**
 - The Secretariat is working on the application.
 - The SC members have to provide signed partnership statements and information on the budget necessary
- Application to NDPHS for 2011 for CYAR Programme Support Project
 - Submitted on October 15th, 2010 - received funding according to the budget at the same level as last year.
 - A support application was submitted on April 15th
- Cooperation meeting with the Working Group on Children and Youth at Risk of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (WG CYAR CBSS)
 - The meeting is scheduled for September 14th, 2011 in Berlin (Germany) – the CYAR programme and activities will be presented as well as CYAR II, discussion possible spheres for cooperation.
 - The results of the meeting will be presented at the next meeting of the SC in the autumn.
- Report to the Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues (JWGHS)
 - The report was presented by Mr. Roman Kopusov on March 3rd, 2011 in St.Petersburg (Russia) and received positive feedback

- Continue CYAR Programme Support project activities according to the adopted plan
- Elaborate proposal for CYAR II programme to the JWGHS

Other related activities:

- A meeting with NGO “Stellit” (St.Petersburg, Russia) took place in the end of last year where they propose a cooperation on the topic of juvenile offenders and children released from the Kolpino-colony
- In March 2011, a meeting with the regional leader of UFSIN in the Leningrad region took place. The Norwegian delegation has also visited the colony in Kolpino. The colony was not aware of the cooperation with Stellit.
 - Another meeting with the leader of Stellit has to be scheduled.
- A second meeting with Russia`s Children`s Ombudsman Mr. Pavel Astakhov took place- Before this meeting he visited the North-west Russia and knew a lot about the existing cooperation and gave good feedback and supported the CYAR programme as it also corresponds with the federal programme for development of child care services. In North-west Russia social care for children is much more developed than in other parts of Russia. He expressed huge interest in dissemination of these experiences in other regions. To have such a support is very important for elaboration of CYAR II
- Meetings with project groups on juvenile delinquents in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk have been conducted according to the plan
- A request for a meeting with Mrs. Gordeeva, the director of the Foundation for support of children in a difficult life situation, has been sent.
- Planning of a Russian-Norwegian conference on “Children and Punishment” in Oslo on 21 - 23 September 2011.

CYAR project activities in 2011

Mr. Koposov presented the progress for the CYAR Programme support project and paid special attention to:

- the selection criteria of the target groups for further implementation of the methods. He underlined that when only separate segments of a method or a programme are used, or it is applied to a wrong target group, CYAR does not take any responsibility and cannot provide any supervision
- changes concerning the programme Family Group Conferences: a new local coordinator has been appointed - Irina Khanasuk. Supervision in May in Arkhangelsk is therefore delayed.

Mr. Koposov presented the plan for further implementation of CYAR Programme support project and additional activities for 2011 as well as data from the research on efficiency of the ART in North-West Russia.

Conclusion: The CYAR programme and project are being realized according to the adopted activity plans

7. Discussion - Lessons learned of the CYAR programme

The Secretariat has been asked to write shortly about the experiences gathered so far which will be attached to the future cooperation programme of the JWGHS for years 2012-2015. The Chair presented a draft of this text to the SC and after the discussion the following points were approved by the SC.

Recommendations and lessons learned from CYAR programme

1. Increasing multilateral profile of the programme including representation from indigenous people.
2. The SC assembly – positions, stability. The role of the CYAR SC member regionally
 - a) Regional representative should have mandate to act as coordinator and secure multi-agency involvement, establish good contact with both local authorities and relevant local organizations and institutions.
 - b) Chair and Co-chair should consist of one Nordic and one Russian partner.
3. Funding of activities. The first CYAR program did not receive any funding from the starting point. The working group should assist the SC in fundraising for the program related activities. Minimum partner funding, cover costs of SC (member) activities.
4. Improve anchorage of CYAR related activities
 - a) Systematic meetings of the SC with local and regional authorities are essential in order to coordinate CYAR plans with regional plans.
 - b) Use of cooperation agreements securing good exit project strategies. Project sustainability depends on political support. It is necessary to make a written agreement with local authorities in the beginning of the project, to secure all-level-ownership to activities and results.
5. Consider use of LFA in planning activities
Principles of Logical Framework Approach useful when the project related activities are under preparation. These principles assume first of all that relevant parties are included from the very beginning of the project.
6. Continuation of CYAR Support Project - competence building programmes selected
Continuous assessment is furthermore an important part of project management and is vital for long-term projects such as CYAR. Any long-term project would benefit from regular evaluation of project activities (seminars, conferences and courses).
7. Broaden perspective of the program with special attention to:

- more focus on prevention activities/programmes
- alternative family care
- integration of cooperation projects/efforts on juvenile delinquents in the CYAR Programme

8. Systematic contact and cooperation with research units

Project will benefit from involving into cooperation local research organisations. Project owners and authorities need to know the results from methods implementation and whether methods are effective and applicable in local environment. Scientific publications in a native (Russian) language are crucial for any involved in a project as well for other potential readers.

9. User involvement, participation from youth organizations

10. coordinating/contact point of Russian federal level

It is also important to establish contact with authorities at federal level. This anchors existing cooperation nationally and provides it with “weight” locally.

11. Information strategy

a) More systematic use of local mass-media. It is important to establish contacts with local journalists. It can also be suggested to provide the already published material (brochures, books etc) about the project to a journalist with project related activities information. A project benefits greatly from setting up and systematically updating a web-site that includes all the necessary information on the project, news and updates and so on.

b) Strengthen information flow within the program

In international multilateral projects it is important to exercise active information exchange to keep the project manager(s) and the involved parties informed; for example, minutes should be written at important meetings, newsletters should be distributed regularly as well as any other material relevant for the project.

The Chair will alter the text according to the discussion and send the revised version to the Joint Working Group on Health and Rrelated Social issues.

8. Discussion of the application to ENPI Kolarctic

Ms. Zyryanova presented background information on ENPI CBC Kolarctic to the SC. The CYAR SC will apply to Kolarctic for funding of the CYAR programme for 2012 – 2014. The deadline is June 13, 2011.

How to proceed

- Draft of the application – Chair/Secretariat (within 1 week)
- Find out what entities will be Partners and Associates at the regional and national level - SC members
- Contact the Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues – Chair
- Obtain letters of support (the Children`s Ombudsman in Russia, OTHERS?) - Chair
- Signing the application and partnership statements.- Chair, SC members

Conclusion:

- A link to the official web-site of Kolarctic will be sent to the SC members to get acquainted with the programme. Electronic versions of the application guide in Russian will be forwarded to the SC members on the Russian side.
- To translate the partnership statement into Russian, point out that the original should be signed in English.
- Contact information of the information office on the Russian side will be provided to the SC members.
- We proceed according to the plan presented above
- We assess the process continuously if it is possible.
- If we don't succeed we prepare ourselves for the next round.

9. Planning of the next SC meeting

The 7th meeting of the SC will take place in Murmansk, Russia. The date will be set later when the Secretariat has information about the date of the next JWGHS meeting (usually November).

The Chair informed that all presentations from the meeting will be available on webpage of the CYAR.

The Chair thanked everyone for fruitful work and closed the meeting.