

HealthProm

Ensuring vulnerable children have the best start in life

Annual Review 2016-17



About us








Established in 1984, HealthProm began as a Medical Exchange Programme between the United Kingdom and the former USSR, set up by doctors and allied health professionals to promote health education and exchange. With a founding emphasis on maternal and child health, our remit today reflects an expanded focus on promoting the health and social inclusion of vulnerable children, women and families, as well as an expanded geographical breadth covering Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Afghanistan.

Our mission is to support vulnerable children and their families and enable them to overcome the barriers of poverty, social exclusion or disability in order to have their rights realised.

Our Values

- Commitment to local engagement and partnership;
- Respect for human rights;
- Empowering individuals and communities;
- Commitment to learning, innovation and exchange, and
- Promoting inclusion and equality across sectors.

Where We Work

 AFGHANISTAN	 RUSSIA
 BELARUS	 TAJIKISTAN
 KYRGYZSTAN	 UKRAINE
 MOLDOVA	

The Challenges

HealthProm works to address three key challenges where it operates:

1. Poor maternal and child health (Afghanistan, Central Asia);
2. High levels of child institutionalisation;
3. Social exclusion of children with disabilities.

What We Do

We **strengthen families and communities** through engagement of parents and carers and facilitation of peer support, we **increase access to health and social services** by improving the physical accessibility of services and raising awareness of the availability and right to use services, we **promote education for all** by improving professional capacity in inclusive education and reducing stigma, and we **support policy development** through mobilising civil society organisations and advocating for the rights and needs of vulnerable children and their families.





Foreword

HealthProm is as committed as ever to its work in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Afghanistan and to its vision of ensuring vulnerable children have the best start in life.

But as a UK-based non-governmental organisation, how can we best have an impact on the many challenges that lie in the way of achieving this vision? What impact can we point to? What lessons can be drawn about the most effective ways of working? How do we adjust to changing models of aid-giving and the uncertainty of Brexit? These and other questions have been the subject of a year-long review of HealthProm's strategy involving partners, staff, trustees and consultants.

The Board has now approved a new strategy for 2017-22. This reaffirms our commitment to the mission, vision and values which already underpin HealthProm's work. We see a continued catalytic role for HealthProm in supporting and empowering local partners, to tackle the continuing challenges of child institutionalisation, social exclusion of children with disabilities and the still high levels of maternal and child mortality in countries like Afghanistan. Within our existing regional focus, we are ready to expand activity to new countries where we can add value. We will improve the communication, dissemination and management of knowledge from HealthProm's work and develop a wider pool of local and international expertise. We will support inter-regional projects and stakeholder networks to share learning and best practice. At the same time we will strengthen aspects of our internal organisation and critically look for longer-term funding arrangements that can ensure a stable future.

For all the uncertainties of a changing world, we remain convinced of the help and support we can bring to local children, to their families and to the many people who work with them. The reports and stories in this annual review speak for themselves. We are grateful to all our funders who have made this work possible.

Simon Ray

Chair of the Board of HealthProm

Afghanistan

HealthProm continues its work in rural areas of Balkh Province, Afghanistan to improve maternal, newborn and child health. The past year has seen the continuation of our well-established range of community-based initiatives to achieve this, including the facilitation of peer support through Safe Motherhood Groups and Men's Support Groups, improving midwife outreach for antenatal care, the provision of a maternity waiting house for women in late pregnancy, and the training of community health workers to provide basic primary health care in villages. Acknowledging that many factors contribute to the health and well-being of women and children, our holistic approach also extends to improving nutrition by planting fruit trees and vegetable gardens, livelihoods and access to clean water.

Our advocacy efforts reached many levels of stakeholders including the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, UN organisations and the European Union.

We have more recently become involved in several advocacy initiatives in Afghanistan, working collaboratively with Marie Stopes International. These initiatives have focused on advocating for the importance of accurate national maternal mortality estimates in Afghanistan, as well as the continued need to prioritise the quality and mechanisms of health service delivery. As a result of this work, two advocacy videos were produced and aired by BBC Persia and one article was published in the international journal the *Lancet*.[†] With the support of the CAF Advocacy for Development Fund, these advocacy efforts have reached many levels of stakeholders including the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, UN organisations and the European Union.

Local Partners: HealthProm Afghanistan, Bakhtar Development Network, Balkh Provincial Directorate of Public Health



Photo courtesy of HealthProm Afghanistan



CAF Advocacy for Development Fund



In addition to the funders above, this work has been made possible by the generous support of a number of Trusts and Foundations (please see the full list at the end of this report).

[†] Britten, S. (2017) Maternal mortality in Afghanistan: setting achievable targets. *The Lancet*. Vol 389, May 20th. Pp. 1960-2.

Belarus

Local Partner: Belarusian Children's Hospice

HealthProm began working in Belarus in 2016, expanding into a new area of palliative care for children with severe disabilities and life-limiting conditions. Supported by the European Commission, our partnered project with the Belarusian Children's Hospice aims to protect and promote the rights of these children and their families in Minsk, Mogilev, Gomel and Grodno regions. This project funds the work of a legal adviser and four regional family support coordinators who provide individual support to families.

A key component of this work is raising awareness amongst parents and carers of their legal rights to state benefits and services, and helping them to exercise those rights. In 2016, the Belarusian Children's Hospice published a successful resource booklet for parents called the "Little Book of Big Rights". The booklet summarises all available benefits and service entitlements for families in Belarus and is in great demand by both parents and professionals.

Another component of our work is strengthening the organisational capacity of the Belarusian Children's Hospice itself to enable them to become more effective in championing the rights of children with disabilities and their families at both regional and national levels.

A key component of this work is raising awareness amongst parents and carers of their legal rights to state benefits and services, and helping them to exercise those rights.



Photo courtesy of the Belarusian Children's Hospice



Funded by the European Union



Segey and Alyona live in the small town of Bobruisk, Belarus. Their son has a life-limiting medical condition, and for years both parents had to spend extended time with him in hospitals. During this period, they were forced to leave their older daughter in the care of grandparents in another town over two hours away. “We saw our daughter once every three months in between hospital stays”, remembers Alyona.

When their son’s condition became more stable, the family was able to be reunited. However, their living conditions in a family hostel were not suitable for a disabled child – their room was on the fifth floor without a lift. The family was forced to find expensive rented accommodation in a run-down building, putting them in serious financial hardship. Alyona describes this as a very difficult time for her family: “I look after our son, while my husband works. Most of his salary is spent on our rent.” The family remained on the waiting list to receive subsidised social housing for three years: “when we first joined, we were number 1,500 on the waiting list” recalls Alyona.

This situation could have continued for many more years, had it not been for the support of our project’s regional family support coordinator, Anastasia. Anastasia liaised with the town administration office to explain the family’s situation and to advocate on their behalf. Within three weeks the family received a letter explaining that they were entitled to receive a discounted mortgage and subsidy in a new block of flats that was being constructed in Bobruisk.

“Our current rent is twice the cost of the mortgage payment, plus we got a very good subsidy which covers one third of the total cost of the new flat,” Alyona explained happily. “We hope for a better life and dream to move to our new house.” She adds: “But this is all thanks to Anastasia. She gives us energy and motivation. We didn’t know about the benefits that we were entitled to.” The family is pictured in front of the new block of flats which will be completed in the spring.

Photo courtesy of the Belarusian Children’s Hospice

Kyrgyzstan

Local Partners: Kelechek Plus, ICCO, Uplift

HealthProm completed a successful three-year project in Kyrgyzstan supported by the Big Lottery Fund. The aim of this project was to contribute to the prevention of institutionalisation of children with disabilities by improving community-based support services. HealthProm worked with nine community Day Centres across seven regions of the country to strengthen and enhance their service provision to children and their families. These centres became a true alternative to institutional care as they proved to be a successful model of sustainable community-based rehabilitation, education and family support. We hope to build upon this success with additional projects in Kyrgyzstan in the future.

HealthProm worked with nine community Day Centres across seven regions of the country to strengthen and enhance their service provision to children and their families



KYRGYZSTAN STORY

One of the most notable successes of our project in Kyrgyzstan was its positive impact upon parents of children with disabilities. Across the seven regions where we worked, over 1,000 parents became involved in our project activities through their local Day Centre. Parents reported increased understanding of their child's disability and improved awareness of services available to them. Nearly 100 went on to become parent leaders and active members of parents' committees. Pictured above are three mothers from our project who are now amongst the most active parent advocates in Kyrgyzstan. Clockwise: Saltanat (Bishkek), Gulmira (At Bashy village, Naryn region) and Tamara (Leninskoye village, Chui region).

Photo courtesy of Kelechek Plus

Moldova

Local Partner: Partnerships for Every Child

Our work in Moldova aims to strengthen capacity and cooperation between local authorities and civil society organisations to improve access to pre-school support services for children with special needs. HealthProm is implementing this project in collaboration with Moldovan NGO Partnerships for Every Child and UK-based organisation Mellow Parenting. One of HealthProm's key contributions to the project is the design and delivery of a comprehensive training programme for professionals from five regions of Moldova. In 2016, 40 education and social care professionals were trained in Portage, a home-based educational support approach for children with special needs, whilst 50 educators and therapists were trained in Therapeutic Interactive Music Making, which is now being implemented in a range of settings. HealthProm also successfully coordinated the development of the first Romanian version of the Makaton language programme, which is now being rolled out following training of key professionals.



Photo courtesy of HealthProm



Funded by the European Union

Russia

Local Partner: Krasnoyarsk Centre for Community Partnerships

We launched our Siberian Initiative for Inclusion in 2016, with support from the European Commission and the British and Foreign School Society. The project promotes the inclusion of children with disabilities into mainstream education in four regions of Siberia – Krasnoyarsk, Altai, Novosibirsk and Tomsk. Our approach works across sectors, involving local community groups, parents of disabled children, schools and local Departments of Education in each project region. A key feature of this work is raising awareness and knowledge about inclusive education amongst key stakeholders. Over the past year, HealthProm organised a number of events including training sessions, workshops, forum meetings and round-tables with education and social work professionals as well as local authorities. We also train local schools in inclusive education practice, including developing staff skills to work with children with various disabilities, as well as how to improve educational facilities. In addition to professional capacity building, we also support parents of children with disabilities by teaching them how they can support their children to develop skills and knowledge, and how they can access schooling.

Our approach works across sectors, involving local community groups, parents of disabled children, schools and local Departments of Education in each region.



Funded by the European Union

British & Foreign School Society

Tajikistan

Local Partners: Sarchashma, Hayot Dar Oila, Iroda

Our work in Tajikistan continues to grow. In 2016, HealthProm was awarded a second grant from the European Commission to expand work already initiated through a previous project. Building on the successes of this earlier work, our new project focuses on three objectives: assisting the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MOHSP) with implementation of new regulations to transform existing orphanages, or Baby Homes, into comprehensive centres of support for children and families; continuing the pilot of a new foster care service launched during our first project; and strengthening the capacity of local authorities and other stakeholders in child protection.

Over the past year we have worked hard to support the MOHSP to finalise the new policies that guide the transformation of the Baby Homes. Meanwhile, our family support services already operating within existing Baby Homes have continued to work with local government authorities to reduce institutionalisation and improve the lives of vulnerable children. The Government of Tajikistan has now formally recognised foster care as a viable care pathway, and we are working with UNICEF to assist them in their new commitment to this area. We are continuing our training and policy development in child protection, which is a very new concept in Tajikistan. Our trained child protection workers are now embedded in family support centres and in a government Child Rights Unit.



Over the past year, we have worked to support the Ministry of Health and Social Protection to finalise new policies that guide the transformation of Baby Homes.

With HealthProm's support, our local partner Sarchashma was successful in obtaining a grant from a new donor organisation in early 2017. The project will explore the impact of our work in Tajikistan on early child development. We have engaged a Developmental Psychologist to assist us in the measurement of child development outcomes within the project. This is a new area for HealthProm, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to develop a new measurable evidence base for our work.



Ukraine

Local Partners: Charity Fund Early Intervention Institute, Kharkiv; National Assembly of People with Disabilities

Launched in 2016, our two parallel projects in Ukraine continue to support the development of the national agenda on Early Intervention for young children and their families, and to strengthen the voice of parents of children with disabilities. HealthProm secured an initial grant from the European Commission to develop this work on parent-led advocacy in seven regions. An additional grant was subsequently awarded by UNICEF to extend this work to a further three regions in Eastern Ukraine, including some conflict-affected areas. Our work now spans a total of ten regions: Kharkiv, Lviv, Odesa, Zakarpatia, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporozhia, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kyiv and Vinnitsiya.

HealthProm commissioned a participatory research study examining the experiences of 238 parents raising young children with disabilities in Ukraine.

A key objective of these projects is mobilising parent-led civil society organisations and strengthening their capacity to engage in policy dialogue. This has been fostered through the creation of a national parent platform: the All-Ukrainian Parents Forum for Early Intervention. The first official meeting of the Forum took place in December 2016, and was attended by forty-seven representatives of parent-led organisations from across the country. This work also strives to generate qualitative and quantitative evidence to enable parents to more effectively engage in advocacy.

In 2017, HealthProm commissioned a participatory research study examining the experiences of parents raising young children with disabilities in Ukraine. Implemented by the Kiev International Institute for Sociology, the study involved 238 participants. Research findings have been released in a Ukrainian report: *Heeding the Voices of Parents*, and reported at meetings with high-level government representatives and stakeholders.



Funded by the European Union





Photo courtesy of Olga

Part of our work in Ukraine uses a participatory approach to train parents of children with disabilities to interview and collect the stories of other parents. These interviews, or 'Life Stories', are powerful advocacy tools.

Olga (pictured) is one of the parents involved in our project. A mother of a child with a disability, she travelled from Eastern Ukraine to the capital Kiev to attend a training to be a Life Story interviewer. The training was conducted by a UK expert in oral testimony methods. Olga found the training extremely motivating, and is now committed to using her new skills to publicly advocate for the rights and needs of children with special needs in her region.

"The Life Story project personally affected me and became part of my life [...] Besides meeting new extraordinary people, I was presented with a formidable learning experience [...] Now I know exactly what I need to do in my town.

We have to create a strong parents' movement, to implement Early Intervention services in order to help those children who are not even born yet. This is what really counts. [We must] reach everyone concerned: government officials as well as social workers and the average Ukrainian citizen, to show them that children with special needs do exist – they live close to us and need help and support."

Regional initiatives

International Conference

Innovative approaches to working with children with special needs: Kyrgyz and international experiences

HealthProm is deeply committed to learning, innovation and exchange. In May 2016, we organised an international conference on child disability held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. In collaboration with our Kyrgyz partner Kelechek Plus, this high-profile event brought together more than 240 people from 16 countries to exchange experience and knowledge in the area of child disability, and key topics including Early Intervention and inclusive education.

Attendees included representatives from the Kyrgyz government, international organisations, academics and donors. Also in attendance were HealthProm's international project partners from Belarus, Russia and Tajikistan.

The conference provided a valuable opportunity for them to learn more about the approaches developed as part of our work in Kyrgyzstan, and to discuss challenges and lessons learnt with their international colleagues.



Regional Forum

Perspectives from multiple sectors working with children with disabilities in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine

In November 2016, we hosted a Regional Forum event in Kiev, Ukraine with participants from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. This was an innovative event which brought together a small group of professionals and parents from different sectors in each country, with the aim of sharing experience and regional approaches to addressing the rights and needs of children with disabilities. It provided a unique opportunity to share innovations in health and social services, inclusive education, advocacy and partnered working between civil society organisations and local Government in each country. Participants included medical providers, education specialists, civil society organisations, advocates and representatives from local government.

This was made possible through a small grant from the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in collaboration with the European Union, the National Endowment for Democracy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Czech Republic



Key Achievements

155 pregnant women from remote villages in Afghanistan stayed in our maternity waiting house, ensuring access to a skilled birth attendant at the time of delivery.

193 families in Belarus caring for children with severe disabilities and terminal conditions received consultations, legal advice and advocacy support from our local partner the Belarusian Children's Hospice.

1,586 children with disabilities living in remote areas of Kyrgyzstan received assessments by mobile medical teams.

Nearly **600** professionals and volunteers from across our projects received training in topics including child protection, approaches to working with children with disabilities, rights-based service delivery and community health outreach.

Your support



Photos courtesy of HealthProm

Over the past year, our generous supporters have contributed their time, skills and money towards HealthProm's work to ensure that vulnerable children have the best start in life. We are immensely grateful for your support.

Numerous charitable events were hosted over the past year in support of our work. Several music recitals took place at venues around London, whilst others participated in charitable 'Fun Runs' on our behalf.

Another form of support we receive is through our volunteers. We are continuously grateful for their hard work and commitment, which makes our mission possible.

Contact us

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How you can help

Make a donation

Regular giving provides essential support to the running of our projects. You can set up a regular donation or a one-off contribution on our website www.healthprom.org. Any donation, no matter how small, helps to support our work helping vulnerable children.

Legacies

Bequests can provide essential funding for HealthProm. To find out more about how your legacy could help, please contact us using the information below.

Fundraise for us

Check our website for news about our regular fundraising events. You will find information about how you can participate in one of our events or take part in a sports challenge to raise important funds for our work.

Corporate involvement

If your company is interested in sponsoring events on our behalf or nominating us as a charity of the year, please get in touch.

Thank you

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our funding partners. We would like to thank the following donors:



 STATES OF GUERNEY



British and Foreign School Society

Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust

Bryan Lancaster Trust

CAF Advocacy for Development Fund

Cauda Trust

Doris Pacey Charitable Foundation

Dr Michael & Anna Brynberg Charitable Foundation

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MPM Charitable Trust

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Oakdale Trust

Open Gate Trust

Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity

Philip Henman Trust

Purley Overseas Trust

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Rotary Club of London

Society for Protection of Animals Abroad (SPANAN)

Souter Charitable Trust

St James' Place Foundation

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The Toy Trust

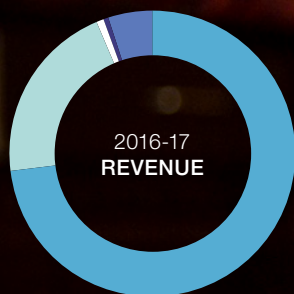
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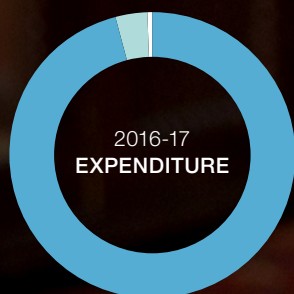
We are also grateful to our individual donors for their generous financial support.

Cover photo courtesy of HealthProm Afghanistan.
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Financial summary



- Statutory **£534,589**
- Trusts & Foundations **£148,825**
- Events **£7,466**
- Individuals **£4,395**
- Others **£34,587**



- International activities **£721,827**
- Operational programme support costs **£25,797**
- Cost of generating funds **£3,503**

