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Follow-up Report

**Capacity Expansion and Exchange Seminar:
Social intervention methods for street children
(Mobile Youth Work) – with a special emphasis
on third-world scenarios**

EFSCW Headquarters, Brussels

31 May – 1 June 2006

EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR STREET CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

Square Vergote, 34 - 1030 Brussels - Belgium
tel +32 (0)2 347.78 48 - fax +32 (0)2 347.79.46 - e-mail info@enscw.org - www.enscw.org

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I

Seminar Description and Programme

Learning objectives:

Knowledge transfer about the modern methods of social and street workers with the objective of supplying sustainable support and integration for street children were emphasised. During this process, special attention was given to illustrating successful methods of intervention in crisis situations (interdisciplinary approach with regard to psychological, medical and social aspects). Community-based approaches were also introduced, which include a view to the systematic and sustained reintegration of all factors of influence and identification of individuals in their immediate surroundings, the extended social environment and, above all, taking into account the viewpoint of children and young people.

The methods implemented by the International Society for Mobile Youth Work were presented. Special emphasis was placed on the third world and developing countries, which are characterised often by insufficient or non-existent security, poor educational and health systems, and having vulnerable children at high risk of being affected by epidemic diseases (AIDS/HIV), child-trafficking, and sexual abuse. The contents and methods of the seminar were organised and introduced by social workers and project managers with years of practical experience, as well as by psychologists, educators, and specialists in the domain of child safety youth homes.

Participants' profiles:

Specialists and disseminators from NGOs operating directly on-site (including current EFSCW member organisations), representatives of child protection organisations, and public child and youth agencies participated in the seminar.

Day 1: Wednesday, 31 May 2006

Time	Topic	Speaker
09.00	Arrival and Registration of participants	
09.15 - 09.30	General introduction	Reinhold Müller - Director EFSCW
		Elisabetta Fonck - Advocacy, Lobbying and Fundraising Officer EFSCW
<u>First Part: Challenges between theory and practice</u>		
09.30 - 11.00	Street children and their environment: Methods of reintegration in various social, economic and cultural scenarios. Experiences from the UK	Brian de Lord Pupil Parent Partnership Chief Executive Officer
	Question & answer session	
11.00 - 11.15	Coffee break	
<u>Second Part: Passing over the urgent relief situation</u>		
11.15 - 13.00	Emergency relief to children in dire situations. Acquisition of theoretical and practical knowledge of the reality of dangerous situations faced by children and adolescents on the streets, and access to emergency primary care.	Sabrina Brutto Istituto Don Calabria - Italy
	Area of implementation: Brazil, Paraguay and Italy	
	Question & answer session	
13.15 - 14.30	Lunch break: Sandwiches and drinks	
14.30 - 16.15	Roma minors in France: The challenge of the educative solutions against trafficking and exploitation	Malik Koudil - Association Jeunes Errants - France
16.15 – 16.30	Coffee break	

Third Part: Innovative methods in the long-term sustainable reintegration of street children

16.30 – 18.00	<p>Rootless and Roofless: Education and Mobile Youth Work in relation to HIV/AIDS prevention programmes. An examination of Learning for Life's work with Street Children</p> <p>Area of implementation: Afghanistan, Pakistan and India</p> <p>Question & answer session</p>	<p>Jitesh Odedra</p> <p>Programmes Officer</p> <p>Learning for Life</p>
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20.30 Dinner

Day 2: Thursday, 1 June 2006

Time	Topic	Speaker
09.30 - 11.15	<p>Casa Alianza LUNA HIV/AIDS programme for street children. 10th year of operation in Mexico city</p> <p>Area of implementation: Latin America</p> <p>Question & answer session</p>	<p>Fred Shortland</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Casa Alianza UK</p>
11.15 – 11.30	Coffee break	
11.30 – 13.15	<p>Street Children: Carrots and Sticks? What is proper participation?</p> <p>Area of implementation: 6 countries in sub-Saharan Africa</p> <p>Question & answer session</p>	<p>Patrick Shanahan</p> <p>Street Child Africa</p>
13.15 – 13.30	Conclusions	
13.30	Lunch break: Sandwiches and drinks	

II

Summaries of Discussions Generated by Speakers' Presentations

Wednesday, 31 May 2006

Brian De Lord of Pupil Parent Partnership (United Kingdom)

Theoretical Framework to Support Social Intervention Methods for Children at Risk

De Lord touched on many theoretical and methodological themes relating to working with youth in general. One common theme that was of particular importance to De Lord was the need for individuals to become aware of others as much as they are aware of themselves. De Lord translates these notions into concrete practice by proposing a re-examination of what it means to be “multi-disciplinary” and how this in turn could affect how practitioners and policymakers do their work.

According to De Lord, multi-disciplinary approaches have often been erroneously equated with multi-agential approaches, and in order for progress to be made, this fallacious way of approaching problem-solving needs to change. Multi-agential approaches involve nothing more than putting people with different qualifications and areas of specialisation together and telling them to “get to work.” Such an approach can hamper the ultimate goal of assisting target groups as it can lead to disputes between those who have different areas of expertise and take different approaches to solving problems. This in turn can lead to ineffective implementation of solutions.

A truly multidisciplinary approach should focus on training individuals in a variety of disciplines, which would in turn allow them to think and solve problems in a variety of ways. De Lord stressed the amount of time needed for practitioners to become proficient in his or her profession, and estimated that it would take at least seven years for such proficiency to be mastered.

In response to a point raised by Mr. Shannon in the discussion concerning how policymakers can “mess up” the implementation of solutions, De Lord proposed that policymakers in governments should receive multidisciplinary training, as well as hold fora with NGOs so that NGOs can have some input in policymaking decisions.

Ms. Pisaska raised the question to Mr. De Lord of how an NGO could quantify success and measure its positive impact on the target groups it works with, as this is often something governmental agencies that control funding to NGOs wish to have. De Lord responded that the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire is used in the UK to quantify a person’s emotional literacy, but that NGOs who do not have time to draft their own indicators often use this as an easy way to quantify their progress. De Lord brought up important non-quantifiable outcomes such as parents choosing to take steps on their own to become a better mentor to their own children or if the children with whom their NGO works eventually turn out to be good parents themselves in the future. Mr. Müller mentioned that such notions need to be mainstreamed.

De Lord also stressed the need to work with the environment in which the child lives in addition to the child, which translates into the involvement of parents and the broader community as a whole. Methodologies De Lord advocates are ones that do not make value judgements by putting the onus of change on individuals and their personal values and habits, as this puts the person in a position of humiliation, which can further alienate the individuals they are trying to help. De Lord cited the example of parents who had chosen to mentor other children realising certain changes they needed to make in their own parenting habits in order to be better parents to their own children.

On a related note, Ms. Ivkova brought up the issue of subcultures such as the skinhead subculture and how to go about tackling this issue. Mr. De Lord spoke of the need of practitioners to understand the value system of individuals who belong to these subcultures and that practitioners need to make it understood that they will not quit until they understand why individuals in these subcultures think and act the way they do. This idea reinforces De Lord's emphasis on relationship-building as key to successfully dealing with the phenomenon of groups such as skinheads. To this, Mr. Shannon added that perceiving such groups as "sub-cultures" implies a value judgement that assumes individuals belonging to these social groups are inherently second-class citizens. It is important to avoid this way of thinking in order to connect with the child.

Sabrina Brutto of the Don Calabria Institute (Italy)

AZIMUT: Network for Integration of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors

In her presentation, Sabrina Brutto presented the Don Calabria Institute and its activities both in Italy and in Latin America. Due to the differences between the two parts of the world, Don Calabria has needed to take different approaches to its social intervention methods.

In Italy, the vast majority of street children Don Calabria works with are of Roma origin and come from Central and Eastern Europe. Many more are from North Africa. Some come alone, while others are accompanied by their families.

In the regions in Italy where Don Calabria operates, the institute has been able to create a successful network that involves effective co-operation on several levels between all relevant actors, including local police, local and regional governments, and officials in foreign countries when it comes to determining the identity of foreign minors. The co-operation of local authorities has led to the establishment of local hotlines in each city that street children can use in emergency situations. This highly practical accomplishment of the Don Calabria institute greatly impressed the seminar attendees. Mr. Shannon mentioned that this had been counter to his experience in Africa, as the police there are often corrupt and not exactly the "best friends" of NGOs. Ms. Brutto explained that the reason for such a tight co-operation with local authorities in Italy is due to the fact that it was the government of the Region of Veneto as well as local police who approached Don Calabria for help in dealing with emergency situations involving street children. This in turn has put Don Calabria in a more favourable position vis-à-vis regional authorities. As Mr. Koudil aptly pointed out, NGOs can take a great deal of the burden off police forces, and this is an attribute that NGOs can play up in their dealings with local authorities. Ms. Brutto concurred, adding that it is often the police or social services who find street children and hand them over to the care of Don Calabria.

Ms. Fonck questioned whether police have accepted to be trained to deal with children, to which Ms. Brutto answered that Don Calabria is currently working on this. Mr. Müller suggested conducting an awareness campaign to bring attention to this issue.

In Latin America, Don Calabria must operate in a different manner, in light of the social, political, and economic conditions in the region. In Brazil Don Calabria has more difficulty in getting the police to co-operate with them, as they often frighten, terrorise, abuse and even beat street children. In Paraguay, the government considers street children as criminals, and it is for this reason that Don Calabria approaches children on the street and does not turn in children wanted by police.

In spite of these unfavourable circumstances, Don Calabria has managed to obtain some level of co-operation with governments and local authorities, although not nearly to the extent that it does in Italy. Ms. Brutto pointed out that there are other ways to build effective networks. In Brazil, there has been a re-awakening of a sense of community involvement since the 1990s and this has led the community to demand community structures to address social problems. Community participation in social problems has slowly been increasing since. Don Calabria has taken this into account, and works closely with the local communities to help re-integrate children with their families.

The Don Calabria Institute aims to provide a structured setting that can get the children back into school and even back into their families in cases where there has been no sexual abuse in the family. Participants questioned how Don Calabria was able to get the children to conform to such a structure, to which Brutto replied that a lot of times a child may approach Don Calabria on his or her own, and since the agreement between Don Calabria and the child is open, the child can always choose when is the appropriate time for him or her to join the structure, so there is no pressure. It is because of this open-door practice that Don Calabria chooses to rely only on funding from their own organisation and private donors and not on funding from international associations such as the World Bank, which usually dislike the idea of allowing children to come and go from a programme at will, as such organisations often want their funding linked to NGOs that can provide them with concrete and quantifiable results.

The issue of how to deal with corrupt government officials and police in these Latin American countries was raised, which in turn lead to the question of how far to go in prosecuting officials and police, as governments who feel reprimanded might kick NGOs out of their countries, despite the fact that these NGOs are supposed to relieve them from some of their burden. Mr. Müller pointed out that linkage could be effective, such as denying development aid to countries that do not abide by minimum human rights standards. Ms. Brutto added that sometimes it is difficult to find a solid linkage issue and that it is more important to create the networks that you can, in the environment an NGO finds itself in.

Malik Koudil of Association Jeunes Errants (France)

Roma Minors in France: The Challenge of the Educational Solutions against Trafficking and Exploitation

Malik Koudil from Association Jeunes Errants in France presented his organisation and brought up many points the participants found useful.

As specific needs vary by region, AJE takes a different approach in each of the three French Departments in which it works (Seine-et-Marne, Bouches-du-Rhône, and Corse). The kinds of children AJE deals with are primarily either Roma from Central and Eastern Europe or children from North Africa who have fallen out with their families, most of whom do not have a legal status in France. The former tend to be in French territory with their families while the latter tend to be unaccompanied.

Mr. Koudil emphasised the need for co-operation not only with police, but with other NGOs as well, saying that they can provide important information for one another. However, AJE's focus is on emergency situations, and this is where the greatest amount of co-ordination with other organisations takes place. The need for relevant actors to understand the social, political and economic situations in the countries of origin of these minors, especially in situations where minors are trafficked, is another aspect that was mentioned.

One practical method Association Jeunes Errants uses in its work is taking advantage of French laws to get street children into schools. As all children are obliged to go to school until the age of 16, regardless of whether they are French citizens or not, AJE has set up a system to help street children enter the French school system. AJE has set up small halfway schools of its own to help prepare the children it works with to enter the French school system, and this transition usually takes place over a period of eight to nine weeks. However, it may not always be easy to convince the parents of Roma children to allow their children to attend school, as they often must work in the streets to collect money for their families. To accomplish this, AJE must barter with the parents, usually offering basic needs such as health care or clothes (but *never* money), or by allowing the children to work in the streets one or two days a week to provide an income for their families. AJE does not put its halfway schools near Roma encampments, as doing so would not encourage Roma children to adapt to a normal school environment. Instead, the halfway schools have been set up close to public transportation hubs. For children who are over 16 and must have a legal status to continue their education in France, AJE tries to work with the local prefecture to place such children in some form of vocational training.

When asked how the French public at large views the activities of AJE vis-à-vis Roma children, and in particular bartering with Roma parents to let their children go to school, Mr. Koudil responded that the French public at large has a negative stereotype of Roma, and that this can be very difficult to change. Ms. Fonck wondered if a public awareness campaign to inform the public about the situation of Roma in France would help. Koudil remarked that non-Roma can know very little about the true reasons for Roma activity, due to the nature of Roma culture, in which all non-Roma are distrusted. Mr. Müller pointed out that Roma clans are not homogenous and that the reasons why Roma clans live the way they do may vary from clan to clan. Müller suggested raising greater awareness in intra-national bodies such as the Council of Europe and creating greater dialogue between the heads of Roma clans and the officials at the local level.

As for children from North Africa, Mr. Koudil pointed out that there is a paucity of media attention concerning the problem of street children of North African descent. Everyone in France has heard about North African children burning cars, but they are little acquainted with the street children problem in this demographic group. Again the idea of an awareness campaign was discussed.

Jitesh Odedra of Learning for Life (United Kingdom)

Rootless and Roofless: Education and Mobile Youth Work in Relation to HIV/AIDS Prevention Programmes

Mr. Odedra presented Learning for Life, outlining their activities in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The presentation sparked much fruitful discussion amongst participants.

The main theme of the presentation and the following discussion centred on the role Learning for Life plays in India and Afghanistan. As the governments in these countries quite often have little or no capacity to address social problems, or if they do they do so in an inadequate or counterproductive manner (as in the case where children in juvenile homes are abused and then run away and become even more afraid of authority), it is up to the NGOs to fill this void. NGOs must fill the void in providing adequate care, education, health care, and other needs to children that the government has forgotten.

One key issue addressed in the discussion was the issue of child labour. Child labour is something that NGOs and human rights organisations would like to see abolished in theory. However, in practice it is much more difficult to get rid of as it provides a means for street children and their families to survive. Ms. Dionysiou openly questioned whether child labour was merely a cultural phenomenon particular to these regions of the developing world. Mr. Odedra responded that it was the government that failed the children in not developing adequate alternatives that would make child labour in India and Afghanistan unnecessary. Another important point brought up by Mr. Shannon is that making child labour illegal might merely force children to work illegally in order to survive, and children who work illegally have a much greater chance of being exploited.

The practical solution to this, said Mr. Odedra, is to educate children for four hours a day, allow children to work legally to support their families, and feed them as they often save the money they earn on the street to give to their families. The objective is to get children to shift their focus from their immediate concerns such as survival to more long-term goals such as getting an education and finding long-term employment. This must be done in an environment that respects the local culture, as well as the wishes of the children and how children themselves perceive what their needs are. As Mr. Shannon pointed out, the average age of persons living in these countries is much younger than the average age of persons living in the countries in which people from the developed world live, so it is important to let the people in the developing countries decide how to model their future.

Related issues are the growing gap between the middle classes and the poor in these countries and the failure of governments to provide a proper education to children. There is a huge disparity between the quality of public and private education in India, for example. While the private education sector has been growing rapidly since 1991, only the wealthy and the middle class can afford to send their children to private school, and this is a small percentage of the population. Government schools do not teach children about how to find a job, how to learn to say no to drugs, how to avoid landmines, or about the increasingly epidemic problem of AIDS, which will, predicted Mr. Odedra, outpace Africa in the next decade. Teachers pay little attention and children who are not learning in school can slip through the system. Learning for Life teaches children about all these important issues. It also provides computer training courses to children to make them computer literate and thus more employable, an aspect that particularly impressed Mr. Müller.

Another important point that was brought up was the importance of local cultural knowledge in the environment in which an NGO works. As mentioned at several other times during the seminar, it is for this reason that it is important for NGOs to employ local workers. A particular cultural aspect of South East Asian cultures that Learning for Life uses to its advantage in the work is that it works primarily with women, as women are often the biggest instigators of change in the household in these cultures.

Mr. Odedra stressed that Learning for Life does not want to permanently replace the role he believes governments should have in these countries.

Thursday, 1 June 2006

Fred Shortland of Casa Alianza (United Kingdom)

Casa Alianza and LUNA: Giving Children Back Their Childhood

Fred Shortland's presentation on Casa Alianza in Latin America created some good discussion amongst the seminar participants. Mr. Shortland discussed the activities of his organisation (which works with street children in Latin America and aims to put children who are not used to a structured environment into one in order to help wean them from a life on the streets) while fielding frequent questions from participants. He examined briefly what it is to "advocate" children's rights in these countries, stating that such activities include helping children to obtain proper citizenship documents (as many from rural areas do not have such documents and having them can help the children obtain employment) and prosecuting those who commit heinous crimes against street children.

Mr. Shortland believes strongly that NGOs should through all means necessary government officials and other individuals in the police who have beaten, tortured, raped and murdered street children, as the crimes would otherwise continue. He also stressed the need to use the already existing UN convention on the Rights of the Child rather than trying to draft new conventions. Mr. Müller wondered whether such public prosecution and the resultant negative image the country would receive would make it difficult to gain allies in the governments of these countries. Mr. Shortland pointed out that sometimes Casa Alianza does help the governments and police forces of these Latin American countries through the work they do, taking some of the burden off the shoulders of the police and the government. He added that if Latin American countries want to be in the international community, they must respect "the rules."

Issues relating to AIDS came up as well. As heavily Catholic cultural traditions predominate in Latin America, it is difficult for children to discuss AIDS or homosexuality with members of their community. Casa Alianza pays to have children tested in countries where the government does not provide free testing. However, as there is a great stigma against having AIDS in these countries, and especially within the social groups street children belong to, many children refuse testing.

Ms. Ivkova questioned whether it was better to try to completely remove street children from gangs with which they often become involved in Latin America in all cases, or if it could be at all possible to change the nature of the gangs, and use the gangs as a positive influence on the

children who belong to them. Mr. Shortland responded by saying that gangs will exist as long as no alternatives to them exist. He conceded to Ms. Ivkova that there can be positive attributes to gangs. For instance, they can serve as a collective defence mechanism against abusive police. Corrupt government and police officials take advantage of the negative image of gangs as an excuse to thin the street child population, often claiming that gang warfare has taken place when in reality it is the police who have murdered these children. Gangs can also act as a sort of family for children who have no other equivalent social bond. This can create peer pressure, which can be either positive or negative. It is important, said Shortland, to use the positive peer pressure to one's advantage when working with street children.

Funding was another major issue that came up. Mr. Shortland complained that the United States and Canada find a large number of kids trafficked from Latin American countries to the brothels in North America and send them to Casa Alianza, yet do not fund the activities of Casa Alianza. He claimed that a very small amount of funding that governments and international organisations set aside actually reaches grass-roots organisations working in the field (He cited \$1.5 million out of \$8 million earmarked). If Casa Alianza asks for money from the governments of countries in Latin America (Mr. Shortland singled out Mexico in his example), they reply that there is government money going to programmes that already exist, when in reality the government has no programmes targeted at helping street children in particular. A negative image of the country plays a part in the approach the governments in these Latin American countries take vis-à-vis the issue of street children. Publicly acknowledging that there is a problem brings a negative image to the country, so it is better not to publicly acknowledge the problem. This, however, does not make the problem go away.

Meeting the funding criteria of governments and intra-national institutions is another problem small NGOs face, as large donors often require their beneficiaries to meet specific standards. Casa Alianza has decided not to change its mission or goals in order to meet the requirements of donors. It is for this reason Casa Alianza prefers private donors and hires local staff. Mr. Shortland highly recommended the Elton John Aids Foundation (EJAF) in particular as a possible source of funding for NGOs dealing with AIDS-related issues, as EJAF provides support to small NGOs that would otherwise not meet requirements set out by more conventional donors.

Guggi Laryea of the World Bank

Brief presentation on current activities of the World Bank

Mr. Laryea from the World Bank gave a short intervention about what the World Bank has been doing lately concerning street children and child poverty issues. He began by mentioning that the World Bank has increased funding targeting youth programmes from 752 million US dollars in FY 2000 to 1.6 billion US dollars in FY 2005. He discussed the World Bank's *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation*, which focuses on schooling, examining how second chances can be provided to youth, how to circumvent health risks, and citizenship issues (as many street children have no proper documentation or citizenship).

It is difficult for the World Bank to work directly on the community level, said Mr. Laryea, as providing loans on such a small level is difficult. One way to circumvent this problem is through public-private partnerships. Currently, the World Bank is in the process of setting up a public-private fund to work directly with youth-based organisations. Whereas the World Bank had been dealing primarily with governments in past funding schemes, the World Bank has more

recently been talking directly with NGOs. The initiative is meant to scale-up and replicate initiatives at youth organisations as well as exchange best practices between youth organisations, the World Bank, and other actors involved in poverty reduction. The three areas being stressed in this round of funding are HIV/AIDS, work access, and conflict resolution.

Mr. Shanahan had one request of the World Bank, which was that the WB ask governments to put people in the country offices who know what they are doing insofar as being able to address competently problem of street children and would be willing to engage people on the ground.

Patrick Shanahan of Street Child Africa (United Kingdom)

Street Children: Carrots and Sticks? What Is Proper Participation?

Mr. Shanahan began his presentation discussing the meaning of “participation,” and his view is that the closer one gets to “real participation,” the more complicated things become. Real participation has nothing to do with using carrots or sticks to coax children into getting children off the street. Carrots do not work because the child may prefer the old way of living to the carrot. Sticks do not work because the children are resourceful and will always find a way to survive on the street, and it may cause the children to become vengeful towards the authorities.

Shanahan’s approach focuses on trying to understand where the children are coming from and avoiding value judgements. Shanahan regretted losing a girl that he had worked with because he did not understand her value system and the approach he had taken had not taken into account the value system of the girl. The moral, said Shanahan, is to understand both the environment and the personal stories of the street child. Shanahan echoed his agreement to the controversial approach of allowing street children to have complete freedom as to whether they stay or leave the street. He underlined the importance of understanding that the street is the home of many of these children, a safe environment that they know very well. If they happen to die on the street, then they die in their home.

Approaching street children must be done in a positive and non-judgemental manner, said Shanahan. Adults must earn the respect of the child, and this can happen through approaching the children and asking positive questions and by reassuring the child that the adult is his or her friend. Asking about negative events only traumatises the child and impedes any possible rapprochement.

Ms. Dionysiou questioned Shanahan as to why children might not want to leave the street, he responded that the street is the children’s home and it is an environment to which children have adapted and for which they have the tools of survival. If children attempt something new without being sure of what they’re leaving behind, then they can never change, said Shanahan. To this point Mr. Shortland added that adults who work with street kids often make the mistake of portraying their value system as being superior to the value system of the child. Approaching street children with this kind of mentality will make it impossible to change them. In other words, it is necessary to take a non-judgemental approach when working with a child. Mr. Müller added that the extent to which a practitioner can “accept” the child’s value system depends on the context and the region of the world in which one works.

Summary

At the conclusion of the seminar, Mr. Müller offered a brief summary of the key issues that had been addressed, which included:

1. Taking a multidisciplinary approach to intervention methods
2. Giving children the power to decide the pace at which they go through assistance programmes and allowing them to leave programmes voluntarily
3. Examine and attempt to understand to the greatest extent possible the individual needs of each child
4. Using integrated packages
5. Involving and co-operating with as many stakeholders as possible, including the police
6. Winning over the child by opening his/her mind via positive access
7. Determining the environment that makes a child the most happy
8. Advocating street children's rights through sanctioning governments and police who abuse, torture, rape or murder children, and raising awareness of this phenomenon
9. Getting children tested for AIDS and other STDs, as governments in many developing countries do not even give the bare minimum of health care in spite of the large amount of money they receive
10. Getting street children into programmes that are well-structured
11. Obtaining funding through awareness-raising campaigns
12. Addressing the problem of why so little government funding reaches the grass-roots organisations it is supposed to reach
13. Taking a realistic approach to the issue of child labour and examining if abolishing child labour could cause more harm than good in certain environments where children need to work in order to support their families
14. Using gangs to practitioners' advantage
15. Co-operating with governments while (and in spite of) prosecuting them for crimes they have committed against street children
16. Examining to what extent practitioners ought to accept the value system of the child, depending on the individual child, the environment, the context, and the micro-context.

III

Feedback from Seminar Participants

**FEEDBACK from Mariana Pisarska – Executive Director –
Alliance for Children and Youth – Bulgaria (EFSCW member organisation)**

Dear colleagues from EFSCW,

It was a great pleasure for me to take part in Social Intervention Methods Seminar, which took place in your office on the 31st of May- 1st of June. The lecturers and colleagues from different organizations shared their experience and good practices, which are very valuable and of significant use for us. This week we plan to organize local seminar for my colleagues from 16+ Center and for social workers from the state departments for child protection, where we will discuss the information which I brought from Brussels. I would like to thank you for the invitation. All the events, organized by the team of EFSCW are perfectly planned and with excellent professionals as participants.

We are looking forward to assist the next meetings.

With best wishes,

Mariana Pisarska
Executive Director
Alliance for Children and Youth

**FEEDBACK from Olga Ivkova – Representative of the
International Society of Mobile Youth Work – Russian Federation
(EFSCW member organisation)**

Ueber das durchgefuehrte Seminar kann ich folgendes sagen:

Ich bin den Veranstaltern fuer die Einladung sehr dankbar. Das war fuer mich sehr interessant und nuetzlich. Ich bin schon 14 Jahre lang im sozialen Bereich taetig (Arbeit mit Strassenkindern und Strassenjugendlichen) und versuche auch meinen Beitrag zu leisten, um gefaehrdete Kinder und Jugendliche besser unterstuetzen zu koennen. Darum sind fuer mich neue, waehrend des Seminars erhaltene fachliche (theoretische und praktische) Erfahrungen sehr wichtig.

Unter anderem hat das Seminar einen Beitrag in der Vernetzung der Fachkraefte und Organisationen geleistet, was sehr wichtig ist. Es ist natuerlich zu unterstreichen, wie gut und professionell das Seminar organisiert wurde. Dies ist sicherlich der professionellen Arbeit der EFSCW-Mitarbeiter zu verdanken.

Dr. jur. Olga Ivkova
ISMO-Vertreterin in Russland

English translation:

Regarding the seminar, I would like to say the following:

I am very grateful to the organisers for having invited me. It proved to be very interesting and useful for me. Since 14 years, I am working in the social field (with street children and teenagers) and am trying to make my contribution to improve the support to children and youth at risk. That is why the expertise and experiences communicated via the seminar (theoretical and practical) are very important. The seminar also succeeded in bringing together and creating a synergetic networking effect between the different actors and organisations concerned with the issue. The good and professional organisation of this seminar should be emphasized. This is of course due to the professional work of EFSCW's staff.

Dr. jur. Olga Ivkova
ISMO Representative in Russia

**FEEDBACK from Ioanna Dionysiou – PhD Researcher
Panteion University of Social and Political Science
Greece (EFSCW member organisation)**

I want to congratulate the European Foundation for Street children worldwide for the excellent organization of the Seminar. I had a wonderful time during the different parts of the seminar. The presentations were excellent made by well informed specialists. I got a lot of information from the question and answer session. In fact I was really impressed by the answers to some of my questions.

I took lots of notes because whatever the speakers were saying seemed to me extremely interesting. I was so inspired by the speakers that I even took down notes about my personal work, during the presentations.

**FEEDBACK from Ann Start –
Human Resources Manager – RETRAK – Belgium**

- Thank you for the details of the photo exhibition. At least 2 of us, myself and Mrs Deborah Walker would like to be there on behalf of RETRAK. Do we need tickets? Also would it be possible to have one free standing poster of RETRAK on display at the photo exhibition? We are looking forward to it very much.
- You asked for feedback on the recent seminar. I thought it was excellent. The presentations were interesting, approaches represented a good variety. I like the facilities for the seminar and you created a good balance of a welcoming informal atmosphere and professionalism. I felt well informed-your printed information was very helpful. I enjoyed the opportunity to meet many new people so the breaks and social times were great. I liked the way Reinhold made a summary at the end of each section. Your staff were all very friendly and helpful. I had been uncertain as to whether this was an appropriate event for me to attend but I want to say to you all that it is two of the most enjoyable and most informative days I have spent in a long time. It also confirmed for me that the best practices I picked up from Acton, Marseilles, Central America and from Africa were all affirming of the approach we take in our smaller organisation. Thank you and congratulations on such a well run seminar.

- I wonder if it is possible to bring my colleague Dave Mann into the office some time in the week of June 26th. He is our UK Fundraising and support coordinator, our only fulltime UK employee & he is visiting Brussels that week. Is there an opportunity to meet with Reinhold that week?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,
Ann

**Feedback from Jolanta Dąbek – The Chairman’s Advisor –
Society of the Friends of the Children (EFSCW member organisation)**

Situation of street children and ways of supporting them are different in every country. Taking advantage in social work so important manners as intervention methods for street children must be discuss, well-prepared and built. The seminar was a very good opportunity in order to acquaint with achievements different European non governmental organizations operating at world level and working on behalf of street children’s good.

The participants came from 9 countries and they received opportunities to meet with special experiences and forms of salvation of street children problem. All pronouncements were proofs on professionalism and engagement in work.

Organizers provided base for seminar, full materials contain program of seminar, list of participants, addresses, presentations, etc. They also were helpful in hotel’s reservation and conceding full information concerning moving for city.

As the seminar’s participant who comes from country with the big street children’s problem I lend recommendation for seminar emphasizing good organization, high level of discuss and presentations.

To sum up I must put emphasis on the obligation in order to organize seminar like that in the nearest future because the street children’s problem is still important and it requires engagement many people, many organizations, many governments.

Jolanta Dąbek

Advisor of chairman

**Feedback from PATRICK SHANAHAN –
Director of Overseas Development, Street Child Africa**

I attended this seminar in my capacity as Overseas Director for Street Child Africa and as a representative of CSC.

I must report that I found the seminar interesting, informative and lively. This was due in no small way to the organisation and welcome of the staff of EFSCW. It was also due to the calibre and content of the presentations.

There were six lead papers given and they covered experiences from the UK, Italy, Paraguay, France, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Mexico and six countries in Africa.

I use “experiences” because the first thing that struck me was the depth of experience and knowledge shown in the papers. My own (very personal) take was to learn from the work with Roma children in Marseilles and street children in Mexico. I could not fault the commitment shown.

As the representative of CSC I gave the final lead paper on the beginnings of working with street children. I stressed again the need to start on the streets as the first point of intervention into young, small lives and to avoid wasting time searching for ‘magic button’ answers and one fit formulae. My title was ‘Carrots and sticks? What is proper participation?’ The heart of the argument was (is) neither stick nor carrot works: street children are in their own, new culture and must be accorded respect. This respect can not be merely a token but has to be proven by the attitude, love and commitment of the street worker.

The list of collaborators and presenters is on the website. I would recommend all the presenters to CSC for the future.

The most impressive aspect for me was the actual staging of the seminar. I must be frank. I thought I was attending yet another meeting/seminar where one could, if wished remain anonymous, fill in the focus and learn nothing. This was different: this was what I call a proper seminar. Small numbers, pleasant ambience, good chairing, clever facilitating. It meant that every presenter was well questioned and that debate flowed. For me it meant that I can hear experts close to home: I can think again about street children and authorities: I can ask agencies about HIV and Drugs and Mobile education. It meant I have heard attempts to derail trafficking. Finally it meant that street children were being listened to.

So for us at CSC – small numbers, good presenters, clever facilitation, and the debate, discourse and discussion will flow. Congratulations to EFSCW and thank you to CSC for allowing me to participate.

Patrick Shanahan
Director of Overseas Development
Street Child Africa