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International Child Development Programme (ICDP) – Current level of the work in the projects of Indienhilfe e.V. in West-Bengal

Visits and Evaluation Discussions with Project partners February 2009
Conclusions and Suggestions

The following conclusions and suggestions are based upon visits to our project partners, carried out from 3 February to 15 February 2009. The following organisations have been visited by us: Manab Jamin (SEVA); Vikas Kendra (SEVA); Bikash/ Bankura; Seva Kendra Kharagpur; Namasole Palli Mangal Samity; Lake Gardens/ Kolkata. At the respective locations we had elaborate evaluation discussions with the ICDP colleagues, individually with mothers and different parent groups. It was partly possible to experience the work with the parent groups live and to supervise.

The following explanations are meant as pre-results for the Working Committee of Indienhilfe e.V., a more detailed report will follow.

1. Effects and Success of ICDP-Work

During the conversations with colleagues and parents the following positive effects have been accentuated:

- Parents show in the course of an ICDP group training more loving attention, empathy and sensitive care for their child;
- They are more patient, considerate and above all more aware of the way they bring up their children;
- Beating of the children is considerably reduced or stopped altogether.
- The children react to this with more cooperation; they are emotionally more balanced and happier.

ICDP proves itself furthermore as a good prevention against increasing problems in context of family's living together. A more positive handling of conflicts not only between parents and children, but also between husband and wife becomes possible. In many cases the communication between all concerned improves. Helpful is in the first instance, that the program does not provide readymade solutions/advice, but emphasizes on searching and the development of own solutions.

Such positive effects show with different parents to a different degree and varying intensity. Concerning the parents themselves, a gradation depends mainly on two criteria:

- Educated – non educated: The more education the mothers have, the better they can absorb the communicated contents and implement them actively, the more alert and interested they are. On the other hand it is also valid: Even mothers without any formal education (e.g. tribals) profit from the training. They accept the ICDP messages more as general approach, not as differentiated guidelines.

- Known – not known: Mothers who had already other trainings or programs before getting to know ICDP (e.g. crèche-offers in the centre or SHG-groups), are more approachable and interested than mothers who have been contacted to participate in such kind of training for the first time.

2. Different ways of ICDP-Work

During our visits we observed at the different locations different ways to do ICDP. These can be differentiated according to two dimensions:

- Centre-based versus field-based (the parent group meets in the project centre; the group training is held in a village in the open or in a small community house),
- Short time-Training versus Fulltime-Training (In approx. 4 group meetings only a part of the program, mostly the „introductory circle“ is carried out; the full program with a minimum of 12 meetings is done).

The following table shows the different ways of work at different locations. In the column „Actual“ the project status we came across has been recorded in the matrix. In the column „target“ is mentioned, which development at the individual locations is possible according to our assessment.

	centre-based	field-based
Fulltime	<p>Actual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Gardens • Bikash (2007) <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikash • Seva Kendra Kharagpur 	<p>Actual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manab Jamin <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikash (CBR; SHG) (longterm) • Kharagpur extension (longterm)
Short time	<p>Actual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child labour mainstreaming centre, Midnapur (via Seva Kendra Kharagpur) <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ??? 	<p>Actual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vikas Kendra Athgara • Kharagpur extension <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Namasole Palli Mangal • Bikash (CBR; SHG) • Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) with ragpickers (Kolkata; SKC) (?)

3. Selection of participants for future ICDP-Trainings

The alarming loss of ICDP promoters who had participated in the year 2005/2007 trainings came out as a problematic finding during the conversations. Only approx. one third of the previous participants is still actively engaged in ICDP work. There are different reasons which will be addressed in the final report.

Further problems concerning the individual participants are a missing professional experience in working with parents and children as well as a low educational niveau – both lead to overstrain in the course of the training seminars.

This could be countered through shorter and more learn intensive training units. At this point a more thorough selection of participants for future trainings should be considered, so that losses can be diminished and a more effective implementation and continuity of ICDP activities can be promoted. We consider the following selection criteria important:

- Minimum age 25
- High-School Certificate; at least one other professional training in the field of Social Work; field experience;
- Clarification of a longterm working perspective in a partner organisation;
- Precise job description, which contains ICDP-work; no official ‚transfer‘ or assignment of other duties, which could hinder ICDP-work;
- Pre-selection through a one day Workshop as well as personal interviews with ICDP-Coordinator Maria Chatterjee.

4. Actively including and winning over of organisation’s management

An important result of our visit is: It depends crucially on the organisation’s head at the respective locality, whether ICDP is practised and implemented actively. The respective head or coordinator should know the ICDP concept, support it and regard it as part of his/her field of responsibility. He has to guide, give appropriate orders, and keep track of the time frame of the training and release the promoter for the ICDP work. If these conditions are guaranteed, the possibility of an active and continuous group work with parents will be very high.

Conclusion: An important task of future ICDP-Training will be to talk first to the respective project heads in order to present the program in detail and to win them over for the ICDP work in their catchment area. Only then we can proceed with the selection interviews or a selection meeting

5. Refresher-Training for promoters

The active ICDP-colleagues expressed consistently the wish for a refresher-training, in which the learned methods would be deepened, new tools acquired and common cases discussed.

The irregular and short „regional meetings“ are not sufficient for that purpose.

Participants, who should be invited for such a Refresher-Training are: Debasish Mukherjee and Supriya Mondal (Manab Jamin); Naresh Sil und Ruma Sikdar (Midnapur); Madhabi Mukherjee (Bikash); Debjani Chatterjee und Sabitri Halder (Lake Gardens); Ruth Mary Roy (Seva Kendra Kharagpur).

6. New Concept for the ICDP-work with tribal-families in Seva Kendra Kharagpur (extension)

The experiences with our last training in Kharagpur (2008), Maria Chatterjees project visits in December 2008 as well as our present discussions have shown, that in Kharagpur for the ICDP-colleagues as well as for the parent groups a slower and more learn intensive approach is necessary. The following steps are planned:

- A two-days Refresher-Training on 7./8. March 2009 for all trainings participants from last year, in which only a part of the ICDP program - the comprehensive dialogue - will be practised. More exercises and homework will bring forward a better implementation.
- Trial phase: Practising of the comprehensive-dialogues in the following months in the different parent groups/localities of SK Kharagpur extension. (Shortterm-Training for parents)
- A second, two-days Refresher-Training in autumn 2009 with the same group, in which the learning success from the trial phase will be reviewed and a further part of the program will be intensively practised.

7. New ICDP-Training for Promoters in Cooperation with other NGO's (local network)

Our experience of the last years is: The establishment and continuous work of ICDP-Regional groups did not function. Although the regional group North (RHDC; Manab Jamin) did meet several times; the cooperation has ceased to function in the meantime. The regional group South (VK Athgara; Bikash; Lake Gardens; SKC; VK Kharagpur) did not develop an active cooperation at all. Besides lack of motivation on the colleague level, the distance between the groups and the time consuming travel are obstacles.

As new concept we favorise therefore the creation of local ICDP-Networks, possibly in Bolphur, Kharagpur or Kolkata. A first step in this direction could be the offer of a training at a certain locality to which also staff of other local NGO's should be invited. Such a training could take place for example in Bolphur; the colleagues of Manab Jamin are willing to initiate the respective contacts. Additionally new colleagues from other projects like Moushumi from VK Athgara could participate.

Condition for such an opening would be the formulation of an ICDP-contracts, to be signed by the trainings participants. This contract would have to contain certain „quality standards“ as demanded by the ICDP-board in Oslo. In such a new training the trainings material would not be handed out in the beginning, but step by step as the trainings proceed.

With the creation of local Networks and the respective trainings offers we expect a more lively ICDP-work locally, more exchange among the promoters and – in the long run – establishment of a positive upbringing and family cultur in a particular region.

8. Material, Application forms and Extra-Costs for the ICDP-activities

From different corners the urgent wish for more material for the work with parents was expressed which should be in Bengali and also culturally sensitive. This wish is more than legitimate, because all the hitherto existing tools are in English and there are only a few photos available which show Bengali children or families. The following steps have been taken in the last few months:

- Translation of the eight guidelines and four diagrams into Bengali and printing those on big vinyl posters. A total of ten poster-sets are available which will be handed over at the individual ICDP-localities.
- The translation of the booklet „I'm a person too!“ into Bengali, done by Maria Chatterjee and Debjani Chatterjee will be finished soon.
- Taking photos or even shooting of a video with „good and bad examples“ did not happen. The respective agreements from spring 2008 have not been fulfilled by the involved promoters. The development of photos with Bengali upbringing and family situations is still an urgent demand!

Regarding the ICDP-application forms we received a subdued feedback. The majority complained that the formats are too complicated and contained too many redundant detailed questions. They appear to be deterrent and controlling and result more probably in a „slowing down the work“. We take this assessment seriously and try for a simplification. Sibani Bathacharia's help is of great value for us in this context!

A recurring problem are also possible extra-costs, which have to be estimated for ICDP. As a matter of principle holds: ICDP-Activity is part of the daily project work and is not paid separately. The aid on the part of Indienhilfe is hence covered in the „general proposal“.

From this common funding we have to differentiate special cost item, which we – with itemization – consider important and justified. Such cost item, which will be listed in detail by Maria Chatterjee are:

- Traveling costs, which result from travel to parent groups or home visits in far away villages (e.g. petrol for Manab Jamin, which is not covered);
- Costs for materials, presented in the separate group meetings or which are made for trainings purpose (eventually copies, photos etc.)
- Costs for refreshment/ tiffin, which, according to our findings are important and should be financed (tiffin has a reward- and compensation character; it is also an expression of hospitality and should therefore not be borne by the group). Other findings, so we were convinced especially by the colleagues of Manab Jamin, are unrealistic!
- Costs for extra ICDP-assignment on holidays or evenings, beyond the normal working hours

Some project partners emphasized on the fact, that in this respect there are often difficulties or bottle necks which have an demotivating effect on ICDP-work

9. Verschiedenes

We want to emphasize on the following individual points:

- ICDP-partners, who have ceased their ICDP work and do not want to continue for different reasons, should return the provided ICDP material. Accordingly the following persons should be requested to return the folder: Chandana Chakraborty; Ruma Sikdar; Aparna Saha; Anima Chatterjee; Sr. Sukla.
- The new colleague Ms Moushumi of VK Athgara could participate in one of the next ICDP-Trainings of Lake Gardens and gather some initial experience.

Nürnberg and Kolkata, 10 March 2009,

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