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Calling all volunteers!

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Batik painting by Irina Bogomolova, an artist with a disability, shown at the BEARR/CEELBAS Forum (page 3)

The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme 2013: Outcome

The BEARR Trust received fewer applications for grants this year, especially for Section A, perhaps due to the narrower scope of the areas to be covered. This was itself introduced to ensure there were not too many disappointed applicants. However, we received some high quality applications. Grants have been offered as follows:

Section A: For projects to combat drug dependency among young people in the Volga Federal District of the Russian Federation

Volunteer Development Centre 'Volonter', Yelabuga

Working with various partners, including official institutions, the NGO 'Makheev' and youth centre 'bars', Volonter aims to train 40 young volunteers from 17 different NGOs in 16 cities in Tatarstan and Kaliningrad. The training is to enable them to engage in anti substance abuse work. These volunteers will then run social events warning of the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and drug dependency, targeting schoolchildren from socially vulnerable families as well as college students.

Section A is funded through a grant from the Moscow office of the law firm Baker Botts. This will also cover ongoing support for students from Kitezh orphan community to assist them with their continuing education.

Anti-drug Programs (ADP), Perm

For a project with their partner NGO Tserkalo, focusing on drug abuse prevention work, planning cooperation with a youth theatre and peer education groups. Activities include a forum in June 2013 on best practices in anti-drugs work amongst young people in the Perm region. This project aims to spread best practice and innovative techniques in preventing and combating drug dependency in young people throughout the region.

Section B: For projects in the field of the arts and disability in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan

Pyunic, Erevan, Armenia

With their partner Association for People in Need of Special Care (APNSC), a Georgian NGO working with the disabled, the project is to introduce disabled people to the arts to improve their quality of life and their opportunities to work – painting, embroidering, wood carving and ceramics. Georgia will do the same and they will share experience and hope to meet at the end of it.

Theatre for Changes, Armenia

Theatre for Changes has staged theatre productions showing children with disabilities for 9000 children in Yerevan and 55 regional communities. The BEARR grant will help them reach 16 more communities (2000 children aged 7 – 13 and their teachers) with eight performances of each of their two plays. Co-funders are the Child Development Foundation Armenia, which is funded by World Vision, and T4Cs.

Agate, Gyumri, Armenia

The project involves cooperation with the Armenian Centre for Contemporary Experimental Art (NPAK), to put on 'silent theatre' for people with hearing and other special needs.

We send our congratulations and best wishes to all the grantees, and look forward to hearing about their experiences on completion of their projects. In addition to formal assessments, grantees will be asked to contribute a short report for publication in the BEARR Newsletter, so that everyone can learn from their project.

You can read reports of some previously funded projects on [page 8](#) to [page 10](#).

Russian Bookshop

A new Russian Bookshop has opened at Waterstones in Piccadilly. It stocks nearly 5,000 Russian language titles, including classic and contemporary literature, foreign literature in Russian, books on art, history, politics, biography, philosophy and culture and many books for children. Also learning resources in both Russian and English and dual language books, an extensive selection of English translations of Russian books, books about Russian history and politics, biographies of Russian personalities, books on art and culture and travel guides for Russia and the former Soviet republics.

BEARR/CEELBAS Forum, 22 March 2013

The Arts and Attitudes to Disability in Russia and Eastern Europe

This forum was the third joint event organised by The BEARR Trust with the academic consortium CEELBAS (Centre for East European Language-based Area Studies). The aim of the forum was to explore the depiction of disability in different art forms in Russia and Eastern Europe, to assess how its depiction might be influencing public attitudes to people with disabilities, and to see how the arts might be used to change those attitudes.

The forum was opened by the Chairman of The BEARR Trust, **Robert Brinkley**, who welcomed all participants and chaired the first panel. The first speaker was **Irina Yasina** from Moscow, a journalist and campaigner. She said that disabled people in Russia still had great difficulty in getting around and participating in normal activities, like going to theatres and concerts. This was especially the case outside the main cities; in Moscow, however, access and facilities were improving. For disabled people, both accessing and creating art is still difficult. Many disabled children go to special schools with very limited opportunities, while others now attend mainstream schools, but this arrangement also has its downsides. University entrance, too, is very difficult for young people with disabilities.

Yasina gave examples of two children, one who had a stroke at the age of eight and another who was written off as a 'vegetable' at birth. Their parents were real heroes and had helped them to achieve a great deal in painting. Another talented artist, Irina Bogomolova, is a young woman who developed MS at the age of nineteen and paints African scenes without ever having been to Africa. (See cover picture.) Disabled artists have few opportunities to show their work apart from on the internet. Galleries are not interested in disabled artists, and if the artist does not live in Moscow, where opportunities to hold exhibitions are greater, travel is very difficult.

The next speaker, **Professor Jose Alaniz**, from the University of Washington, Seattle, focused on 'Disability

Report by Janet Gunn, BEARR Trustee



Irina Yasina addresses the Forum

in Russian Visual Art'. He gave a historical overview of the depiction of people with mental disabilities in art, such as the 'holy fool' in the Middle Ages, in paintings by Nesterov, among others. Such people were considered the result of divine intervention. Paintings of 'yuroduviy', as they were known, often showed them naked and in chains, and had pagan overtones. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there was a more secular representation in, for example, paintings by Vasily Perov. Repin included disabled people in his painting of a religious procession, showing them barefoot in the snow, and at the same time objects of pity but treated cruelly. Prior to the Russian Revolution, disabled people continued to be treated as objects of both love and pity, as God's children carrying the burden of mankind's sins. There was, however, no attempt to integrate them into society – they remained outsiders, awaiting their reward in the afterlife.

In the Soviet period, images of people with physical disabilities were used to convey social propaganda messages, such as blame for misconduct, in pictures of amputees who were victims of car accidents. After the Second World War, their treatment was more sympathetic and on occasion positive, such as in the case of a fighter pilot who overcame the loss of his leg and returned to action, about whom a

film was made. By the 1960s, when disabled war veterans began to be removed from major cities and hidden away in remote regions, this trend ended. Sculptures of this period, such as by Vadim Sidur, showed a darker side of disability, in which the victims were objects of pity. After the collapse of the Soviet system, the situation of disabled people became very difficult indeed, and this was shown more often than previously in the media as they had to go onto the streets to beg and were once again visible to the rest of the population, but in abject circumstances. More recently, however, they are more often depicted as normal people with differences. The film *Strana Glukhikh*, about a deaf criminal mafia, became extremely popular. Its characters are not objects of pity, but articulate, active, and highly communicative. Many comics also depict people with disabilities in various situations.

Dr Oliver Ready, Research Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford, spoke about 'Attitudes towards mental disability in recent Russian fiction'. He said he would only deal with characters with cognitive disability, such as Downs or autism, and not people with psychiatric illness. In today's Russia attitudes are more open and taboos much weaker. Instead of describing someone like the historical 'clever fool', writers try to inhabit the life of people with mental disability. The Russian holy fool sometimes gets lucky but is not quick-witted like the British medieval fool. In the 19th century, Russian romantic writers began to identify with fools, but not in the sense of western rationalists. After the Soviet period, though, intellectuals and writers began to take a more rationalist view, and to consider the ethical challenges. Parents started to take babies with disabilities home rather than give them up to children's homes, since the cruelty of these establishments had been exposed. Parents wrote about their experience of bringing up a disabled child. Quite a lot of writing about disability is in the genre of 'women's writing', such as magazine articles and interviews, and stories about how families care for children with disabilities, such as *Ulitskaya*. In Russia, women writers tend to write more realistically about disability than men, who tend more often

to depict the children as gifted or ultimately able to overcome the disability.

In the discussion which followed, participants commented on how disabled people are depicted on television in Russia. There is apparently a tendency for able actors to play the parts of disabled people, and for the storyline in soaps and dramas still to end with the disabled person cured of their disability.



Denise Roza, Claire Shaw and Michael Rasell

The second panel was chaired by **Michael Rasell**, from the University of Lincoln. The first speaker was **Artur Kocharyan**, President of the NGO New Life in Konotop, Ukraine. His presentation, 'Recipe for success: understanding through art' was about a project in 2009 which had received funding from the BEARR Small Grants Scheme. First he provided some statistics for disabled people in Ukraine (6% of the population – much lower than the 10% for the UK, and thus thought to be only those with severe disabilities), and their monthly state benefits. Then he described the project, which involved seeking out disabled people who had achieved success, and showing them to young people without highlighting their disabilities.

Young people were invited to become volunteers doing art work with children with disabilities, eg at a summer art camp or for a painting competition. They also produced a programme for local television. The presenters did not mention the disabilities, but these were of course visible. As previous presenters in the



Artur Kocharyan



forum had also commented, it was not easy to persuade disabled people to allow themselves to be shown on television or in public. They do not like to attract attention to themselves. Artur showed two videos, both made by a young woman with mental disabilities. She made the first when she was thirteen years old, and had never done any art work before. It showed homeless children and adolescents, hinted at the difficult family situations they had grown up in, and appealed to other members of the population not to ignore them or judge them. The second video was much more sophisticated from a technical point of view, showing her singing in a pastoral, folksy scene in the Ukrainian countryside. She made it when she was sixteen years old. She now works as a volunteer in the children's home where she grew up.

Dr Claire Shaw, a lecturer at the University of Bristol, gave a presentation on 'The Silent Screen: Deafness in Post-Soviet Russian Film'. Soviet film tended to show stereotypes of the deaf as isolated and disturbed individuals. Prior to 1991 deaf people in Russia moved within their own community, in clubs and theatres set up for them. All those state-run facilities collapsed in 1991, and deaf people had to integrate into the mainstream of life. Today's films show deaf people engaging in layers of communication, using signing, vibration, speech – altogether quite noisy films and not easy for hearing people to watch. She showed clips from two post-Soviet films, of which one was also mentioned by Professor Alaniz – Todorovsky's *Land of the Deaf (Strana Glukhikh)* about a young woman working as a prostitute in a gang of deaf mafia criminals. Far from showing silent and isolated people, the film shows animated, emotional and vocal discussion and negotiation between the deaf and hearing characters. The film was a big hit, but brought the disadvantage of a stereotype of deaf people as part of mafia groups. Dr Shaw also showed clips from *Shapito Shou*, about life at a Crimean holiday resort and funfair, also with realistic portrayal of interaction between deaf people and between deaf and hearing people.

Denise Roza, Director of the NGO Perspektiva in Moscow, has worked for 20 years with disabled people in Russia. Her theme was 'Mobilising and Raising Awareness with Disability Film Festivals'. She described Perspektiva's biennial international festival of films about disability, 'Cinema without barriers' which shows films at many art house cinemas in Moscow and in several other Russian cities. The festival has been running for twelve years, and presents films from all over the world. Many Russian were astonished when they first saw films which showed how independently disabled people can live in the US. About eighty films are shown at each festival. The films submitted are chosen by a steering committee which includes members of disability NGOs. It

Festival VI at Movie Theater in Center of Moscow



is often difficult to find suitably accessible venues to show the films, however, especially outside Moscow. Denise is now sharing her experience with organisations in Armenia, Abkhazia and Tajikistan.

In her closing remarks, BEARR Trustee **Nicola Ramsden** said she had learned a great deal that was new to her. The change over time from the historical portrayal of disabled people in Russian art and film to today's much more realistic depiction, and with disabled people playing the parts of disabled characters, showed how much had moved forward. The NGOs represented in the panels had shown how much they were contributing. At the same time exclusion remained a major problem, and there was still a lot of vital work for NGOs to do in this area.

BEARR would like to thank CEELBAS for co-sponsoring and helping to organise the forum, and all the volunteers involved, especially **Tatiana King** for her excellent interpreting.



Shapito-Shou (Sergei Loban, 2011)

Can Russia Modernise? The BEARR Trust Annual Lecture

This year's lecture was held, as usual, at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It was given by Professor Alena Ledeneva of University College London. She dedicated her lecture to her friend the late Jill Braithwaite, founder of The BEARR Trust.

To judge by how quickly the frustrations of dealing with some aspects of Russian bureaucracy have diminished since the 1990s, Russia is well on the way to modernisation. Professor Ledeneva described her recent application for a Russian passport, a process that took only 10 minutes, involved no queue and was handled by a smiling official. The anecdote was appreciated by her audience, but the story behind it turned out to be more ambiguous. Professor Ledeneva's definition of modernisation was 'a system of government that allowed institutions to work without personal intervention'. On the face of it, the efficient issuing of passports was encouraging. However, Professor Ledeneva believed that President Putin and his circle had created a system of government – 'sistema' – that had been effective in reducing chaos initially, but that now held them hostage in a vicious circle of clan politics. The non-transparent sistema networks had merged with, exploited and diverted official hierarchies. The personalisation of bureaucracy had intensified as a result, and led to widespread familiarity with the open secrets of how Russia was really run – things that people acknowledged with a knowing smile but did not name.

Perhaps Russia is inevitably prone to corruption – Jonathan Charles, the EBRD's Director of Communications, suggested in his introduction that Russia's lack of economic diversity and continued dependence on natural resources had encouraged complacency. But Professor Ledeneva stressed that the existence of a 'sistema' was not uniquely Russian. Such patterns of informal power were universal – most countries had them. There were common features: connections and privileges that sped you through the system but hooked you in to it, or the revolving door of appointments between public and private sectors. Other aspects included the personalised loyalty of dependants who supported you but could eventually desert you and leave you vulnerable, and the circularity of relationships based on possession of incriminating information that prevented anyone leaving without damaging the whole structure. In the Russian case, the latter had been particularly associated

by Nicola Ramsden, BEARR Trustee



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with the violence of organised crime, but had now given way to the more insidiously sophisticated cycle of collecting, selling and leaking 'kompromat' to ruin reputations. This had developed to the point of absurdity where – and with echoes of history – some people would reveal 'kompromat' about themselves in order to demonstrate their vulnerability, thereby showing that they were part of the network.

Professor Ledeneva's point was that informal governance systems were not a specifically Russian phenomenon, but that they had developed differently on Russian soil. She used wine production as an elaborate extended metaphor to explain how Russia's sistema was characterised by a pre-modern reliance on personal networks ('blat') to compensate for lack of trust in official institutions and at the highest level on personal loyalty – features that, in her view, made it difficult for a person of integrity to work in the Russian government. This would have to change if Russia was to modernise. According to her metaphor, constraints on modernisation included the administrative culture inherited from the Soviet administrative system (the 'bottling' of the wine); the political culture inherited from Russian patrimonial rule (the 'barrelling' of the wine) and the social networks that featured in every country's informal governance systems but had flourished on Russia's 'soil and vine' in a particularly dysfunctional way. There were of course plenty of factors that

should encourage change: the introduction of a monetised economy and the evolution of business and technology should weaken the power of an overly administrative culture, for example. But it was the sheer scale of corruption within Putin's own network that made Russia a case on its own, and Professor Ledeneva concluded that Putin himself was now a liability because of it.

This was the essence of Professor Ledeneva's analysis, but along the way she provided many more insights into the nature of Russian society and its body politic. She turned the spotlight onto Western European attitudes to Russia, describing the deep emotions revealed when EU officials were asked which words they associated with the country: admiration (literature, music and churches); anxiety (resources, big neighbour, fear of invasion); disapproval (oligarchs, human rights abuses); respect (Kalashnikov, Sputnik, hockey, the Red Army) and surprise (Gorbachev, Glasnost, Perestroika). She also surveyed how other academics have examined the questions regularly asked about Russia: Is Russia a normal country? A democracy? European? Pre-modern? Understandable? And the questions Russians have always asked about themselves: Who is to blame? What is to be done? Who in Russia lives well?

The jury was still out. On the one hand Russia could be regarded as a country going through transition as one would expect, with further liberalisation bound to follow. On the other hand, its abnormal political economy and the top-down mechanics of its modernisation meant that it was unlikely to democratise and develop the potential of one its great assets

– a higher level of education than the OECD average. Russia's particular brand of democracy could be qualified by a variety of adjectives, but the evolution from a hybrid regime to near full-scale autocracy now put it in the 'sovereign democracy' category. As for whether Russia is a European country, the Levada Centre's 2012 survey suggested not – most Russians considered their identity to be exclusively Russian, with over half claiming not to identify with Europe at all. Perhaps, Professor Ledeneva speculated, that might give some clue about the form Russia's modernisation would take.

There were some signs that those who benefited from sistema also recognised its paradox – that its informal tactics for getting things done undermined the institutions that needed to be modernised. While some people have simply given up and left the country, others have brought in legislation to try to restore the independence of officials, for example. Popular reaction to recent elections had stimulated 'reflexive modernisation'. There were risks – sistema was also a form of social glue, and the elimination of 'blat' could change the nature of friendship in Russia. When pressed during the questions that followed her warmly received lecture, Professor Ledeneva came up with a perhaps surprisingly optimistic estimate of when Russia would eventually modernise and separate the personal from the institutional. The generation born after 1991 was now coming of age, she said. So the answer was: soon.

The BEARR Trust is most grateful to EBRD for hosting and sponsoring Professor Ledeneva's lecture.

'The uses and abuses of social networking for health and welfare NGOs in the BEARR region'

The 2013 BEARR Trust Annual Conference, 15 November 2013

This year's conference will be on the highly topical subject of social networking, and the various ways in which social media can be used to enhance or promote the work of NGOs but also misused for bullying, grooming, etc. It will look at how to harness the former and combat the latter.

The keynote speakers providing a broad overview will be Dr Vikki Turbine of the University of Glasgow, a leading specialist on social media in the FSU, and Elena Temicheva, the social media specialist at the Agency for Social Information (ASI) in Moscow.

There will be panels on the use of social media for publicity and fundraising, and as an element in NGO projects and programmes, and one on child protection.

Panellists will bring first-hand experience from Russia, Ukraine and Central Asia as well as the UK.

Put the date in your diary now!

Elderly torture survivors gain new outlook on life

'Memoria' is a non-governmental organisation located in Chisinau, Moldova, whose mission is: 'Rehabilitation through comprehensive medical, social and legal assistance for victims of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; as well as the promotion of a society free of torture'.

'Memoria' was the first, and remains the only rehabilitation centre in Moldova that assists survivors of torture. Its beneficiaries are classified into three basic groups: (1) victims of political repression, including those exiled to the Gulag, (2) recent victims of torture, including those from the Transnistrian region, and (3) victims of torture among refugees and asylum seekers in Moldova.

The aim of the project funded by The BEARR Trust was to improve the elderly victims' quality of life by reducing their feelings of isolation and cultivating a positive feeling of group belonging. The specific objectives were to provide continuing comprehensive assistance to the elderly people, increase their sense of social inclusion, and increase public awareness of the situation of elderly victims of political repression in Moldova. The project's target group was elderly people affected by social and health problems creating varying degrees of dependency on medical and social institutions, suffering from social exclusion, and in need of comprehensive support.

At the project launch conference at the National Library of the Republic of Moldova on 5 July 2012, beneficiaries, journalists and other guests were informed about the project's target group, purpose, and planned activities. There

were presentations on practices in Poland and Romania which facilitate better involvement of the elderly in society. Journalists interviewed the beneficiaries of the project—mostly survivors of Stalinist deportations and political repression. Thanks to 2012 being declared the European Year of Active Aging and Solidarity between Generations, this project became a model for other institutions.

Through this project, 'Memoria' was able to provide 52 victims of torture with the comprehensive medical, psychological and social assistance they needed. Medical assistance was focused on treating the long-term physical consequences of torture, and treatment included consultations, diagnoses, health screening and monitoring, the provision of medicines, and support for the treatment of chronic diseases. As for the psychological status of this target group, many of the participants reported that their present psycho-emotional condition correlated with the physical and psychological traumas they suffered in the Gulag. Extensive mental health assistance was therefore provided which included evaluation, monitoring, treatment and therapy.

During the course of the project, seven socio-cultural events (including excursions, conferences and meetings with journalists) and nine creative-informative events (including handicrafts, cooking and birthday parties) were set up for the participants. Through these events they had the opportunity to meet other individuals who had experienced similar traumas, to communicate and share their experiences and to participate in excursions for which they would have otherwise lacked the opportunity. After participating in these activities, many of the elderly people discovered that they could be

more socially active, innovative, and creative than they had previously believed, regardless of their advanced age and the difficulties they had faced.

While the project was under way, a brochure entitled '10 Steps to Feel Better at Any Age' was written and edited by 'Memoria' staff, with support from The BEARR Trust. This 40-page information brochure provides useful recommendations for every target group and age. The project participants and their families were the first to receive these brochures, but by the conclusion of the project 250 copies had been printed for distribution.



Enjoying a bowl of cherries at a Memoria event

Continues opposite

A Positive contribution to understanding HIV in Khakassia

In the middle of summer there was a unique project in Khakassia – volunteers from the republic's NGO 'Positiv' held an event to support health. For the first time in the region people could have an HIV test without an appointment and without queuing, completely confidentially and free of charge, and rather than in a dreary hospital, at the most popular beach in the city.

Volunteers who are either themselves HIV positive or just have an interest explained simply and accessibly what happens when you are HIV positive, and took time to answer questions which people are too embarrassed to ask their doctor. During the event people could take part in a quiz and check their knowledge of how to prevent HIV infection. The prizes were a cycle trip and condoms.

The event changed many people's attitudes to HIV, to their health, and also to people affected by the virus. Holidaymakers began to understand what they should fear and what they need not fear. They saw that people with HIV are not a threat, but people just like themselves, but who carry a virus. They understood that they can be friends with them, meet them, hug them, and enjoy themselves in their company. This was made possible by the fact that many of the volunteers are themselves HIV positive, and they had a unique opportunity to talk to and spend time with the holidaymakers and tell them about HIV, so that more people would become aware of the illness.

During the project there were also sad moments; during the tests three people were found to be HIV positive. A psychologist talked to them on the spot and took them to



the local HIV centre to check the results were accurate and to ensure they received the best professional help. Thanks to this project, the issue of HIV in the Khakassian Republic was widely discussed in the media, with the result that it will be possible to hold a similar event this year, and we hope it will become an annual event. On behalf of the volunteers and the people who received information and tests during this event, we thank The BEARR Trust for taking an interest in our project and helping to make it happen. Thank you!

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'Memoria' continued from previous page

The project concluded with a closing conference on 28 May 2013, during which the results were presented and feedback was collected in front of radio and television journalists. Many of those involved now have a more optimistic view of life, believing that they will once again be able to smile more often and feel empowered to take the necessary steps to improve their lives. One participant in the project remarked, 'Although I have been retired for many years, my participation in these activities made me feel eager to live, to be active, to forget about my troubles and to help others.'

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Developing volunteering in Russia

'Volunteer' is one of the oldest voluntary organisations in the Republic of Tatarstan, established in 2002. Its main objectives are to promote the idea and practice of volunteering in Russia and increase the level of social activity among young people, run social projects and provide assistance to socially vulnerable groups of the population. It is recognised as 'one of the best promoters of the development of volunteering in Russia.'

In 2012, 'Volunteer' was awarded a grant under The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme with the project 'Interregional Academy of Applied Social Management'. The project is aimed at developing and supporting social volunteering in Russia through the creation of 'Volunteer' regional development centres in the Kaliningrad region and an International Volunteer Camp in Yelabuga in the Republic of Tatarstan.

This project is a logical continuation of 'Volunteer' activities for the development of volunteering in Russia. During the period 2010-2012, 'Volunteer', in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Protection of the Republic of Tatarstan, organised a large network of 17 municipal 'Volunteer' centres, working on the basis of social security institutions of the Republic of Tatarstan.

During this time, 'Volunteer' achieved significant results and accumulated extensive experience in the development of the volunteer movement, which brought it up to the most advanced Russian level. This prepared the way for the project 'Interregional Academy of Applied Social Management'.

On 19-20 October 2012 'Volunteer', with the support of the Ministry of Social Protection of the Kaliningrad Region, held a seminar which resulted in the establishment of the first regional 'Volunteer' development centre in the Kaliningrad region.

It is no accident that Kaliningrad was chosen. Since 2011, the Kaliningrad oblast has sent a representation to the 'Volunteer' interregional volunteering centre. Volunteers from Kaliningrad regularly visited Yelabuga in Tatarstan to share experiences, participate in training sessions, and take part in the project 'Interregional Academy of Applied Social Management'. It was during these trips that we conceived the idea of establishing a centre in Kaliningrad for volunteer development.

To ensure that this plan was put into effect required a huge amount of preparatory work. Our partner in the project was the Ministry of Social Protection of the Kaliningrad

region, and the workshop took place thanks to the support of The BEARR Trust. During the workshop, with a team from the new Volunteer Centre, we identified the main areas of activity: organising in the Kaliningrad region a network of municipal volunteer centres, attracting resources to help socially vulnerable categories of citizens, conducting classes on preventing the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs by children and young people, and support for children with disabilities.



In order to expand international cooperation in solving Russia's social problems, and gain familiarity with foreign experience in the field of volunteering and training volunteers, we organised the International Volunteer Camp 'Volunteer of 2012' in Yelabuga in August 2012. The programme of the International Camp included lectures, classes and workshops, identifying small grants available in the republic for 'Volunteer' organisations. Other key tasks for 'Volunteer' organisations are to identify and support socially active young people, and those willing to be active, and train leaders, activists and members of volunteer organisations in the management of public associations and the social skills of leadership.

In May, August and December 2012 'Volunteer' held three four-day training sessions at the 'Inter-Regional Academy of Applied Social Management', preparing and training 40 youth leaders. Volunteers were given training in the legal framework of social activity, social marketing and PR, social skills, social management, fundraising, public speaking and IT skills, methods for preventing substance abuse among children and young people, and the voluntary organisation of social support for children with disabilities. As a result of



the 'Interregional Academy of Applied Social Management', 35 'Volunteer' organisations were established with 700 volunteers, and hundreds of social events and activities organised. A system of training for leaders and activists for the Volunteer Centres has been set up, with a training course every three months through the Academy.

A system now exists to continue the work of volunteers in helping children with disabilities and children from orphanages, shelters and rehabilitation centres, and to foster

the involvement of young people (in secondary, vocational and higher education institutions) in voluntary activities. In 2013-2014 'Volunteer's' priority will be to continue the work of creating a network of regional centres in the federal districts of the Russian Federation. The second regional 'Volunteer' centre will be set up at the beginning of October 2013 in the Republic of Tuva, and negotiations are under way on the establishment of such a centre in Krasnoyarsk region. Work also continues on the prevention of substance abuse among children and young people, and social voluntary support for children with disabilities.

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Grassroots initiatives in Kazakhstan

Caz Hattam is a Cambridge student spending her year abroad with Tselina, an NGO based in Atbasar, a town in northern Kazakhstan. Tselina's mission is to manage grass-root initiatives in the town, and the main projects currently under Caz's umbrella are a refuge and mushroom farm for recovering alcoholics, English and German lessons for kids and adults, craft clubs for disabled children, an annual summer camp for 150 teenagers by Lake Karagay, and a youth centre.

Caz writes:

I've somehow landed in my element in what even its most patriotic residents call the dirtiest city in Kazakhstan, three hours away from the second coldest capital in the world. People knit their own socks, make fruit tea out of apple peel, own aggressive-looking meat-presses and know how to create delicacies out of animal intestines. In winter, it's mostly too cold to do anything other than admire the snowdrifts from beside the stove. It's not the kind of exotic and desperate poverty sometimes portrayed in romanticised pictures from Africa, but there are serious problems here.

What drives so many here to drink and suicide isn't the fact that the shops don't stock brown bread, let alone baking soda, or that they can't drink the tap water, or that there's

no sewage system, all of which are facts of life. As far as I can work out, people despair because they can't see any way to change anything, or aspire to anything.

Tselina is a seven-year-old NGO dedicated to doing all it can for young people here. I want to introduce you to Atbasar and to Tselina through my friends here.

Natalya Pelikh must be one of the most inspiring, loving and persistent women to have come out the other end of Soviet culture. Tselina means 'virgin land', and I forgot all about the Soviet ring to it when Natalya explained that the name refers to the new NGO sphere, where Kazakhstan needs to take the initiative and plant new projects, and where nobody really understands what she's doing or why. Her life is a permanent storm of activity and new ideas and baking. Some is, admittedly, hot air, but she's also brought Peace Corp volunteers and government grants to this unattractive corner of the country. She tirelessly celebrates the teenagers' birthdays and achievements, turning up in the front row at school concerts and digging presents out of her own cupboard when there's nothing to fund them.

Arman comes three times a week to Tselina's English Club. Arman's dad left him to look after his mum and little brother and moved a couple of houses down the road with a new

Developing leadership in Ukraine



Young participants at Tselina's weekly English Access Club

lady. Arman's friends joked with him that he skated like a cow on ice when we went to the local rink in a barn. He laughed with them, and confided that he never had time to practise because he studied so hard, taking one more subject than his classmates. He needs English to study engineering in Russia so that he can provide for his family in a decade's time.

Tanya is 12, and incredibly bright. I met her when Natalya invited her round for a slice of apple cake on her birthday, and then recognised her as the adorable dragon that had starred in the school concert the week before. Both her parents are alcoholics, but she makes conversation as if she'd

been brought up with Obama, and immediately agrees to come to the Tselina's thrice-weekly craft club that afternoon, writing down both my and Natalya's phone numbers, patiently correcting my Russian pronunciation, and then bundling her little brother into his puffer jacket and taking him home. She insisted on snuggling up beside me there, pining for nothing but warmth and affirmation.

Tselina is essential in motivating and stimulating young minds here and providing a warm place away from often unhappy home situations and minus temperatures, for what the Russians call 'obshenie': communicating, hanging out, getting to know people, laughing.

If you think you'd like to volunteer or form a partnership with Tselina's team, or could help them access resources, don't hesitate to get in touch!

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Atbasar, Kazakhstan

<https://www.facebook.com/tselinaatbasar?fref=ts>

To grow, to lead, to change – support for young leaders in Ukraine

Civil society leaders have always been at the forefront of social change. History knows many cases of NGO members, trade unionists and youth and religious representatives becoming opinion-formers and triggering significant transformations. These people need to live up to the highest expectations of society and deal with all the difficulties and obstacles that get in their way. In Ukraine, as in other post-Soviet countries, civil society has to confront the threat of authoritarianism, economic instability, loss of moral values and other specific challenges.

The Institute of Leadership and Management of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv has been working to support civil society organisations and youth leaders for 10 years. Its curricula are designed to help people see their work in the global context. The institute equips them with knowledge, skills and tools commensurate with the challenges of today's world, thus helping bring about social progress in Ukraine.

by Natalya Bordun, Director of the Institute of Leadership and Management, Lviv

Each programme run by the Institute of Leadership and Management has three dimensions. The intellectual dimension is reflected in a systemic, deep and academic approach to work. The ethical and spiritual dimension spins around the idea of helping others: ILM teaches people how to achieve their goals while standing by their principles and values. The practical dimension of programmes means that efficient, up-to-date teaching techniques and tools are used to achieve quality results.

But most of all, ILM helps individuals and organisations do good in a more professional way.

The Institute has developed a one-year certified programme, 'Non-profit organisation management', that is absolutely unique for Ukraine. In the course of just one year, the programme provides students with systematic



Strilky boarding school: learning effective communication skills

knowledge of all aspects of organisational development in the civil society sector. The Institute has managed to attract the best national experts in business and NGOs to teach on the programme. Particular attention is paid to the need for each organisation to adapt its methods and tools to its vision and mission. Such balance is seen as a key to the success of the non-profit sector in Ukraine.

Public events and annual conferences organised by ILM strive to raise topical issues and themes. Over the past few years, participants have discussed non-profit marketing, social entrepreneurship and moral leadership.

ILM also actively contributes to the formation of a new generation of leaders by offering special programmes to community leaders and students. The three most popular youth programmes include 'Choose your Future', 'Community Leaders Summer School' and 'Training for Trainers'. All of these programmes work in conjunction with one another to help develop young people in their communities. 'Choose your Future' is an interactive programme for orphanages in western Ukraine that helps students enhance their communication skills, public presentation and time management. The 'Community Leaders Summer School' is a two-week residential programme for young people who are active in their communities. The programme includes a learning session followed by projects to be completed in students' respective communities. The brightest students are often invited onto the 'Training of Trainers' programme, to become leaders for 'Choose your Future' and other youth programmes in their communities.

Within the community of like-minded people formed by ILM alumni around the Institute, anyone can find support and advice for their ideas and initiatives.

At the moment, ILM is a unique educational institution working on civil society organisational development in Ukraine. An important task of the Institute is to respond to society's expectations and requests, as well as to share its experience with those who need it. A recent initiative by the Institute to develop a wide international network will help transfer its valuable experience to other post-Soviet countries.

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NGO Profile: St Gregory's Foundation

Six ways St Gregory's reaches the disadvantaged in Russia and Georgia

St Gregory's Foundation (SGF) was started in 1990 and has been working since then mainly in St Petersburg and Karelia, and in recent years also in Tbilisi, Georgia. Over the last 23 years our activities have changed as the needs and the possibilities have changed. The constant factor has been the commitment and imagination of our colleagues, who add value to all the projects we support.

Disability

Very early in our history we realised that disabled people in Russia would benefit from physiotherapy as practised in the UK. In 1993 we organised our first seminars for Russian doctors led by the eminent British physiotherapists Lois Dyer and Ida Bromley. Twenty years later, the programme has led to the foundation of Physical Rehabilitation, an organisation

NGO profile: St Gregory's Foundation

that provides training in physiotherapy and occupational therapy and services to disabled children and their families in St Petersburg. This year Physical Rehabilitation and St Gregory's Foundation are working together on materials to show medical professionals and carers how to lift and move people with motor disabilities. Astonishingly, this is not a standard part of Russian nursing training. Physical Rehabilitation's Facebook page will be useful to many organisations working with people with physical disabilities: www.facebook.com/mobis.pro.spb.

For our Russian colleagues, physiotherapy wasn't just a set of techniques, but a new approach to disability that focuses on potential rather than impairment. This perspective will be at the heart of a centre for disabled teenagers we are creating in St Petersburg. The centre will provide vocational training, adapted PE classes, and domestic skills training to enable people with disabilities to have greater independence.



Children in institutions

Another area in which St Gregory's Foundation has been very active is in preparing children and teenagers in institutions for independent life and preventing children at risk from being institutionalised.

In 2005 we published a Life Skills course for use in orphanages with children of all ages. It includes topics ranging from personal hygiene to applying for jobs. The course is still available electronically and is widely used across the Leningrad region.

In St Petersburg we work with Sunflower Centre, a psychologist-led organisation that helps prepare teenagers soon to leave institutional care for independence. The

Centre also supports families in which the parents grew up in orphanages and are struggling to care for their own children. Our colleagues also run training courses for staff in institutions and will shortly be publishing their methodology.

In Tbilisi we fund Mkurnlai to provide a legal service for street children. St Gregory's also helped the charity to buy a large house where many of the teenagers live after they are released by the police or from prison. Mkurnali runs a social enterprise which provides training and employment for their over-16s. The rehabilitation they provide is very successful at preventing offending, and they are proud of all their charges who have gone on to find stable jobs or set up their own businesses.

Local communities

We do not always work with charity 'professionals', but are also keen to encourage volunteering and local initiatives. Our roots in the Orthodox Church have helped us to make contacts in far-flung and rural areas which have little access to outside funding.

The centre of this activity is Kondopoga parish in Karelia, and we have spread out to surrounding villages and to the town of Suoyarvi closer to the Finnish border. After 20 years of intensive input, the parish is now able to sustain an extraordinary level of activity without outside funding. A greenhouse and vegetable store provided by St Gregory's make it possible to feed up to 70 homeless and destitute people each day helped by local donations. St Gregory's funded the building of a large dacha that provides free holidays for over 100 children each summer. Next to the dacha, on the banks of a beautiful lake, we helped build four tourist cottages, and this social enterprise funds the maintenance of the dacha.

This is just a brief summary of St Gregory's Foundation activities, with the emphasis on those projects that have materials or experience that may benefit other charities working in the sector. We are always keen to share experiences, and are grateful to BEARR for helping start many a useful conversation.

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Enterprising Care?

Unpaid voluntary action in the 21st century by Irene Hardill and Susan Baines

Review by Megan Bick and Jenny Wildblood

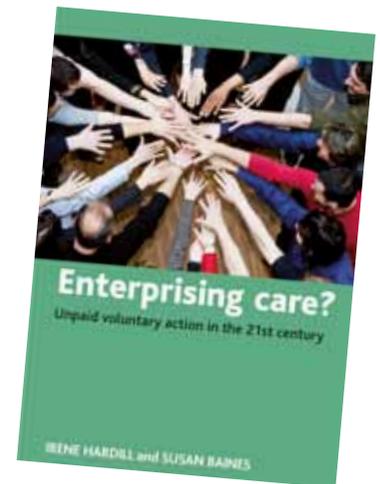
Current economic uncertainty is giving rise to, on the one hand, government rhetoric of ‘Big Society’ and social entrepreneurship and, on the other, a real need for individuals and communities to find new ways of supporting themselves and each other. In an environment where governments want to enrol communities in the task of regeneration, but where the financial resources aren’t being made available to make this happen, how can volunteers make a real difference?

This timely book is based on research undertaken with individuals and organisations mainly in the UK, but its analysis of the opportunities and structural issues inherent in unpaid work is internationally applicable.

Enterprising Care? brings together all the main issues affecting the

motivation, role, benefit and management of volunteering, and reviews this from a feminist perspective. The ‘voluntary sector’ is a notoriously difficult concept to pin down, but the authors manage to make sense of the extremely varied activities and viewpoints contained within the term ‘volunteering’. The very interesting case studies are well chosen to illustrate the issues and to ground the theory in the everyday practice of real-life groups.

A particularly valuable aspect of the book is the attention paid to the role of ‘volunteer manager’ and the focus on the value of volunteer management as a particular set of skills and expertise. The tensions arising from the need to compete and be ‘entrepreneurial’ are also well illustrated.



We’d recommend this book to anyone interested in the past and future of volunteering as a road to positive change for individuals and communities, and as a thorough introduction to the theoretical background to the topic.

Become a Friend of BEARR

Support BEARR’s work in health and welfare, get this Newsletter regularly and receive details of all BEARR’s activities and other items of interest by becoming a Friend of The BEARR Trust. Your subscription (£30 minimum) will support BEARR’s activities throughout the coming year.

Please subscribe and pay through our website at www.bearr.org, or fill in the form below and send it to The BEARR Trust office. Ideally, please pay by Banker’s/Standing Order or direct transfer – this eases our administrative burden.

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New BEARR Patron and Trustee

BEARR is delighted to announce that Lady Ellen Dahrendorf, a distinguished historian and translator of Russian works who has been associated with BEARR from its earliest days, has kindly agreed to be a Patron of the Trust.

BEARR is also delighted to announce the appointment of Dr Michael Rasell as a new Trustee. Michael will bring much useful experience and excellent contacts to BEARR's activities.



Michael is a sociologist and senior lecturer in social care at the University of Lincoln. His research focuses on disability services and community welfare in Russia and the former Soviet Union. He has also participated in several EU and MacArthur Foundation projects to develop social work education in Russia. Michael sits on the editorial board of the Russian-language Journal of Social Policy Studies (www.jsps.ru) and coordinates an international Masters programme in advanced social work, www.socialworkadvances.org.

Michael's PhD from the University of Birmingham involved twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork in Kazan and the Volga region of Russia, where he studied the support offered by social services and NGOs to disabled children and adults.

Michael has been involved with BEARR since 2008, when he spoke at the Trust's annual conference on 'Changing Attitudes to Disability in Russia, Ukraine and Central Asia'. This event stimulated Michael to organise and edit the forthcoming collection of research papers on Disability in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (Routledge, 2013). As a Trustee, he is particularly interested in developing BEARR's links with UK and local academics working on health and welfare in the post-Soviet region.

About The BEARR Trust

Patrons: The Duchess of Abercorn, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Elena Bashkirova Barenboim, Lady Ellen Dahrendorf, Myra Green OBE, Professor Geoffrey Hosking, Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG, Sir Jonathan Miller CBE, Rair Simonyan, Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

The BEARR Trust is a British registered charity. It was formed in 1991 to act as a bridge between the welfare and health sectors of Britain and the former Soviet republics. Its mission now is to help children and other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Russia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus. We believe the best way to do this is to help small NGOs working in health and social welfare to build knowledge, know-how, skills and contacts including with those doing similar work in the UK.

We pursue our aims by:

- supporting organisations committed to reform in the health and social sectors
- facilitating networking and exchange of information
- encouraging sharing of experience and learning
- helping organisations working in the region to identify potential partners
- providing seed funding to assist selected organisations to launch or extend partnerships.

Trustees: Robert Brinkley (Chairman), Megan Bick, Janet Gunn, Daryl Ann Hardman, Marcia Levy, Ann Lewis, Jo Lucas, Nicola Ramsden, Michael Rasell, Robert Scallon, Mike Simmonds

Hon Treasurer: Carolyn Davis

Staff: Information Officer: Renate Wright

Moscow rep: Igor Timoshin

Volunteers: Vicky Arnold, Mary Brinkley, Ute Chatterjee, Joanna Hoare, Pamela Jackson, Tatiana

King, Antony Lewis, Philip Michaelson, Zoryana Mishchyi, Malcolm Mowat, Jenny Wildblood, Hannah Wilson

Newsletter: Editor: Ann Lewis; layout: Leila Carlyle

Calling all volunteers!

The BEARR Trust has a minimal paid staff – one person one day a week – and relies heavily for all its activities on the Trustees themselves and a band of dedicated volunteers.

Our volunteers are so good that they tend to leave for paid jobs in related areas, with our blessing. The result is that we are always looking for new volunteers. We need:

- Volunteers to join a team of translators for ASI's news bulletin. Must be native English speakers with excellent Russian.
- Help with the November conference, a few days in October and immediately beforehand. Some Russian desirable.
- Russian speakers to assist non English speakers at the conference (not formal interpreting).
- Administrator for the Small Grants Scheme. Intensive activity March-April, sporadic at other times. Some project experience desirable, likewise some Russian.
- Help with general office administration, data processing etc.
- Expertise in PR and fundraising.

If you would like to help, please send your CV with a covering email to info@barr.org.

The BEARR Trust endeavours to include as wide a debate and as broad a range of opinions as possible in the Newsletter to capture the diversity of NGO activity in the region in which it works. The BEARR Trust cannot be held responsible for the views expressed by authors in their articles.