

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON: Pilot project, St. Petersburg

DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPERATIONAL MODEL OF AN INFORMATION AND ANALYTICAL CENTRE FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT AND REHABILITATION OF THE DISABLED

Within the framework of a local self-government co-operation project between Denmark and the Russian Federation supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Russian Embassy in Denmark

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1 Introduction

In the period from June 2008 to August 2009 a project of cooperation between local self-government in Saint Petersburg and the City of Aalborg has been elaborated. The project has been managed by Danish consultancy company COWI.

The overall objective of the project has been to design and develop an operational model of a Saint Petersburg based information and analytical centre for social support and rehabilitation of disabled people (IAC).

The targets outlined in the task description covered:

- Study and analysis of existing Russian and European disability Legislation
- Study of the experiences of public authorities and social institutions in St. Petersburg and Denmark in the provision of information and methodological support in the area of disability and rehabilitation
- Proposal of measures and legal documents regulating the establishment and operation of the information and analytical centre for social support and rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

In sum analysis and exchange of experiences between the municipality of Aalborg and St. Petersburg representatives has been one of the project activities. It is this particular part of the project activities that is being wrapped up in this paper with concluding remarks.

The expected project results encompass the Danish-Russian exchange of experiences as an intermediate aim in the establishment of the overall objective of the project – the establishment of the IAC. Therefore the conclusion and evaluation of the cooperation only relates to the cooperation activities as such and only tentatively touches upon the overall objectives of the project.

Three areas of special interest have been identified as the focus of the IAC by the Russian partners. These three areas cover (for a more detailed description see the paper “proposal for the cooperation program with Saint Petersburg within the framework of a project...” 2008):

1. Information-analytical activities
2. Coordination-methodological activities
3. Educational-methodological activities

It was agreed between the Russian and the Danish partners of the project, that a concluding paper could include supplementary descriptions of the Danish bodies handling analytical, methodological and information tasks in the Danish national context. Also an overview of various methods applied in the Danish context aiming at the training and specialization of relevant personnel is included. In sum this description can serve as inspiration for the further development and structuring of tasks in the St. Petersburg based analytical and informational centre in St. Petersburg.

2 Project activities and concluding remarks

In compliance with the overall project description several activities and analytical notes have been elaborated in the Danish-Russian cooperation. These activities are lined up in the following chart along with a short description of the outcome of the activities.

Activity	Outcome
Kick of seminar in Kaliningrad	Introduction of the project objectives.
Short description of the areas of interest for the Russian partners	Provided guidelines for targeting the Danish planning of activities in the following study tour and in the Danish analytical notes on the structures for information sharing and coordination in the Danish sector of disability
Analytical note from the Danish partners.	An overall description of the Danish system of services for disabled citizens. Emphasis on the policy practice of disability policy. Focus on structures for sharing information and coordination within the local context of the municipal unit.
Analytical note from the Russian partners.	<p>Presentation of the lines of interest for the Danish – Russian cooperation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cooperation with Danish government authorities 2. Cooperation with educational and practical institutions 3. Cooperation aimed at establishing and developing a St. Petersburg based Information and analytical centre for social support and rehabilitation of disabled people. <p>The paper included an overview of the tasks expected to be placed as key areas in the IAC.</p>
Visit of Danish municipal representative and COWI consultant to St. Petersburg	<p>Roundtable discussion and outline of experiences in the project.</p> <p>Presentation of the status of the activities tied to the planning and designing the operational model for the IAC.</p> <p>Visits in St. Petersburg to two district centres for social support and rehabilitation for disabled children and adults. Outline of the experiences in developing centers for social support and rehabilitation in the 18 districts of St. Petersburg.</p>
Analytical note from the Russian partners	<p>Extended description of the Russian project activities and outline of the status of the overall objectives of the project.</p> <p>Presentation of the reassignment of major organizational and methodological tasks and activities to the Department of Methodological Guidance in the area of rehabilitation of disabled persons in the Committee for Social Policy. Social support is maintained as the responsibility of the Centre for Technical Rehabilitation Aids, Urban Accessibility and Physical Education for disabled People. The IAC was thought to be affiliated with the</p>

Sct. Petersburg delegation visit in the Municipality of Aalborg and meetings in Copenhagen	<p>same Department as the Centers for Social support and rehabilitation of disabled people in practice. The reassignment of tasks means the organizational separation of the two functions.</p>
Danish analytical report on project activities	<p>Visits in Aalborg and Copenhagen. Roundtrip to several centres for social support and rehabilitation for disabled children and adults in Aalborg and the Centre of Equal Opportunities in Copenhagen.</p> <p>Roundtable discussion and outline of experiences in the project and conclusions on which activities should be included in recommendations from the Danish delegation toward planning and designing the operational model for the IAC.</p> <p>Concluding remarks on the activities of cooperation between the municipality of Aalborg and St. Petersburg.</p> <p>Specification of relevant experiences on the Danish national level.</p>
Closing seminar in St. Petersburg	<p>Presentation of the project results.</p>

2.1 Conclusions on the cooperation and exchange of experiences

The overall outcome of the project activities of Danish – Russian exchange of experiences has mainly focused on the social service system for disabled citizens in both countries in practice. The focus on social support and rehabilitation in practice has given a natural approach to other relevant subjects related to the overall goal of the project, the establishment of an IAC in St. Petersburg.

One of the conclusions drawn from the process of exchanging experience is the recognition of a very similar approach in both St. Petersburg and Aalborg to the service delivery in the sector of social support for disabled people in general. In this respect a common point of departure for both Denmark and Russia - The United Nations “Standardrules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.” – is probably of considerable importance as it sets and or reflects the overall international trends regarding the status of disabled people in society in general. For example the focus on inclusion and compensative measures for support depict some of the common approaches.

On the other hand structural, historic and cultural differences in the two countries are reflected in different solutions to the similar challenges regarding the social support schemes.

For example the structural setup of the units providing social service and rehabilitation differ in the Russian and the Danish context. One key element in the identity of the social service units in Denmark is the distancing from the medical and health care sector. The social service units are almost exclusively staffed by professional pedagogical staff, which means that the perspective on compensative support mainly springs from a social pedagogical approach.

Whereas it seems that the distancing to the medical and health care sector has been less acute in the Russian context. This seemingly has given a more broadly based combination of services offered in the day-centers of social service and rehabilitation for disabled people in the districts visited in St. Petersburg. This gives opportunities to develop cross-functional social services adapted the individual need of the person with disability.

Another obvious difference between the system of social service in Aalborg and St. Petersburg is that of unit sizes of the service producing units. Aalborg is only one of 98 municipalities in Denmark. The responsibilities for all services for disabled were transferred to this local governmental level in 2007. The system of social services for disabled in Aalborg consists of a relatively large number of specialized service producing units, organized both in different departments in the municipality, but also the tasks of social service delivery for disabled persons is also a responsibility split between the municipal and the regional level of local government. This gives a rather complex picture of coordination and information sharing tasks at national level, where the ties between local level policy in practice and national level policy at times differ.

In St. Petersburg the goal described in the task description, is to establish service producing units in all 18 districts of St. Petersburg. This relative organizational simplicity seen from a Danish perspective holds several advantages as regards to coordination and information sharing.

To conclude several characteristics of in the sector of social services and rehabilitation for people with disabilities are similar in the context of Aalborg and St. Petersburg. However the structural and institutional setup is in many ways younger, which could create windows of opportunities in so far as creating the IAC in a manner that embrace both the regional social support centers for disabled people and the different formal governmental structures and other relevant partners such as the educational institutions etc.

During the visits both in St. Petersburg and in Aalborg several legislative issues where touched upon. For example the legal acts regulating housing schemes for disabled were reviewed. The possibilities to classify areas for staff and training of abilities for disabled people as service areas in buildings for dwelling were of interest for the Russian partners.

The overall conclusions of the visits to Stc. Petersburg, and the roundtable discussions in Sct. Petersburg and Copenhagen is, that the people working on designing and developing an operational model of a Saint Petersburg based information and analytical centre for social support and rehabilitation of disabled people (IAC) is well in the process of becoming a reality.

This project has hopefully contributed with inspiration on various models for an IAC in a context that will work within the financial, legal and political frames that are offered in Sct. Petersburg.

3 Danish institutions for information and analysis in the sector of disability

The IAC in St. Petersburg was in the first analytical note from St. Petersburg identified to cover three key areas:

1. Information-analytical activities

- Related to the gathering and systematizing of information related to the functioning of the system of rehabilitation and social service. (Legislative framework, rehabilitation institutions, services etc.)
- Systematizing and analyzing of statistical data on disability issues.
- gathering and analyzing summary reports on the functioning of rehabilitation institutions and services within the rehabilitation system (state system of social protection of population and non-state systems)
- preparing analytical materials for administrative agencies and mass media;
- interaction with the AIS “Electronic Social Population Register” and the service on information-methodological support and consultative assistance for the population

2. Coordination-methodological activities

- planning of activities to ensure organizational-methodological provision of matters related social support and rehabilitation of disabled people
- coordination of activities of methodological subdivisions operating in institutions affiliated with the Committee on Labor and Social Protection of Population
- organization of interaction with administrative agencies operating within the system of social protection and other departments as well as with non-governmental structures (including international ones);
- organization of monitoring (on-site monitoring and monitoring based on results of questionnaire surveys) of institutions operating within the rehabilitation system;
- preparation of draft management decisions and draft normative-methodological materials on issues related social support and rehabilitation of disabled people

3. Educational-methodological activities

- organizing ongoing seminars and meetings on rehabilitation-related issues with the participation of methodological subdivisions of institutions affiliated with the Committee on Labor and Social Protection of Population
- examining and disseminating best practices (Russian and international) in the rehabilitation system
- overseeing development and dissemination of methodological material
- setting up a library that will contain information and methodological materials on issues related to social support and rehabilitation of disabled people
- interacting with educational and research institutions

3.1 The institutionalization of informational-analytical-coordinating-methodological-educational-methodological activities in a Danish national context

The above described functions in a Danish national context are divided on different governmental and semi non-governmental institutions. Because of the historic, structural and cultural differences between the Danish model and the model chosen for St. Petersburg, it is only relevant and possible to provide a catalogue of inspiration for the partners involved in the development of the St. Petersburg based AIC. Four Danish institutions stand out of particular importance in the solving of analytical, methodological coordination and analytical research. The below descriptions is meant to serve as inspiration.

We will not in this context give a full description of the four institutions, but only give a short summary of the organizational setup and the tasks of the institutions. If they in their work find it interesting to find out more about these institutions and their more precise work, we trust that they will seek further knowledge directly from these institutions.

First the **National Board of Social Services** is responsible for the ensuring that national social and welfare initiatives passed by the Danish Parliament are put into practice in Denmark's local authorities as intended by the Parliament. In this process the National Board of Social Services offers counselling and assistance to the local authorities. Read more below and on: <http://www.servicestyrelsen.dk/wm142447>

Secondly the **VISO**, a special advisory organ provides methodological guidance for the institutions of social services for disabled and other marginalised groups in society. VISO consists both of a standing team of consultants placed in the central organisation. However the "backbone" of the construction is a network of 140 national of expert from different levels and types of institutions for social services for disabled people. It is this network that handles special tasks related to unravelling (diagnosticing) and specialised counselling in complex cases. In this way the best expert knowledge on disability and social service in the country is put into play. Read more below and on: <http://www.servicestyrelsen.dk/wm143004>

Thirdly the institute of **SFI** – the Danish National Centre for Social Research contributes to the building of knowledge about the effects of Danish policy on different areas – including on the effects of social support for disabled i.e. the overall participation of disabled citizens in all spheres of society. **SFI** is an independent body of government and private interests. Read more below and on: <http://www.sfi.dk/Default.aspx?ID=2631>

Last but the "**Centre of Equal Opportunities**". The tasks of the unit is described by parliament resolution: "This unit is to collect, initiate and communicate, nationally as well as internationally, the information and expertise required about the situation of disabled people and the effects of particular disabilities. Moreover, the unit is to pay attention to instances where people with disabilities are discriminated against so that the Danish Disability Council can raise the issue with the relevant authority." The Russian partners visited the centre during their stay in Denmark, and were introduced thoroughly to the organisational setup and the tasks of the centre. Read more on: <http://www.clh.dk/index.php?id=760>

The principle of sector responsibility in Denmark also affects the way that information sharing, analytic research and methodological support in the sector of social service for disabled is divided between

institutions with broader focus such as the national centre of social research and the national board of social services; and on institutions more targeted at the challenges special for the disability area.

3.1.1 The national board of Services

The National Board of Social Services is an independent subdivision of The Ministry of Social Welfare. Founded on January 1st 2007, the Board is located in the south of Denmark in Odense, with units in five larger Danish cities. The Board aims to promote new development and initiatives in social services while also supporting and counselling local authorities in providing services to disabled citizens among others.

The Danish Parliament decides the political social and welfare initiatives to be implemented in Denmark. In addition; the Board offers specialist consultancy and specialist assessments in complicated and specialised individual cases in the field. In such cases, the Board also offers specialist consultancy to citizens.

The National Board of Social Services is responsible for a variety of other projects such as managing the Social Services Gateway ("Tilbudsportalen"), analyses concerning the Consolidation Act on Social Services and tasks related to follow-up and innovation in the field of specialist consultancy in its entirety.

The National Board of Social Services aspires to help securing the welfare of children, young people, socially marginalised groups, elderly and disabled, and to insure that related initiatives reflect scientific research and meet standards of efficiency and documentation.

The National Board of Social Services is comprised of the following units and centres:

- Board of Directors
- Communications
- Secretariat & Human Resources
- Finance
- Analysis & Data

- Social Vulnerability Services in Odense/Copenhagen/Esbjerg/Aarhus
- Disability Services in Odense / Ringsted
- Child and Youth Services in Odense/Aabenraa/Copenhagen
- Senior Citizen Services

Resource centres:

- Danish Centre of Autism
- The Danish Resource Centre on Congenital Deaf blindness
- VIKOM - The Danish Resource Centre on Communication and Multiple Disabilities concerning Children and Young People without Spoken Language

Also associated with the National Board of Social Services are these organisations:

- Age Forum
- The Danish Knowledge Centre on Physical Disability
- Information Centre for Hearing Disabilities

- The Information Centre for Acquired Deaf blindness
- Danish Epilepsy Resource Centre
- The Brain Injury Resource Centre
- The Danish Information Centre for Dyslexia
- The Stuttering Information Centre of Denmark
- The Visual Impairment Knowledge Centre
- The Danish Centre for Assistive Technology
- Centre for Rare Diseases and Disabilities
- The Centre of Research and Information for Social Psychiatry

3.1.2 VISO

VISO offers specialized consultancy to municipalities, citizens, institutions – when the right expertise is not contained within the municipal institutions. The organization has a professional board that contributes to the strengthening of the specialist activities.

VISO cover the areas:

- Children, youngsters and adults with disabilities
- Socially vulnerable children, youngsters and adults
- Special education and special pedagogical aid for children, youngsters and adults

One of the tasks of VISO is to gather, develop and communicate knowledge to the municipal, regional and private service units of social services for disabled people. This means that VISO is responsible for the methodological support for the organizations handling the social service tasks in practice. This task is carried out in cooperation between the central unit of specialists employed in VISO, the specialist network consisting of a 140 national experts from different areas and in cooperation with 14 different research centers specialized in different types of disabilities.

The research centers count;

- Center for small groups of disabilities
- Danish research centre for dyslexia
- Danish research centre for Stuttering
- Physical aids institute
- Research centre for Autism
- Research centre for physically disabled
- Research centre for acquired deaf-blindness
- Research centre for deaf-blind
- Research centre for Epilepsy
- Research centre for brain damage
- Research centre for hearing disabilities
- Research centre for social psychiatrics
- Research centre for visual disabilities

- VIKOM - Research centre of Communication and Multiple Impairments of children and adolescents without an oral language

3.1.3 The Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI)

The Centre conducts research and carries out commissioned projects in the area of welfare state policies, and disseminates the results. The job is to generate new knowledge of relevance to society. The Centre is a sector research institution under the Ministry of Social Affairs. Its primary focus is therefore on matters concerning the Ministry, but it also deals with wider issues such as, employment, integration and labour market conditions, economic and family-related issues, and other national and international social conditions and development trends of significance to the living conditions of the population. The Centre provides:

- International research
- Independent evaluations
- Professional data collection
- Consultancy and dissemination
- Internationally qualified research studies on the effects of social programmes.

The Centre disseminates its findings from both research and commissioned projects to the public via its website, and by publishing reports, working papers, a quarterly magazine, press releases, presentations, etc. The Centre often also invites people to attend after-work meetings, with its own researchers giving presentations.

The Centre has two independent departments. Firstly, SFI-SURVEY, which collects and processes data for use by researchers, public authorities, and private organisations and enterprises, conducting almost 90,000 interviews per year.

Secondly, SFI Campbell, which contributes to improving the knowledge-base for the effects of initiatives in the social and welfare sector. This is achieved by preparing and disseminating systematic research reviews on the effects of social programmes.

The Centre has a total annual budget of over DKK 100 million, of which approx. DKK 70 million is allocated to research and evaluation/elucidation projects. The research is financed in part from a basic appropriation under the Danish Finance Act and in part from foundations, etc. Evaluation and elucidation projects are financed by the initiating party – typically ministries, and local and regional authorities. The Centre employs approx. 140 staff – 60 of whom are researchers.

Overall management of the Centre is the responsibility of the Executive Board, which is independent of the Minister for Social Affairs and lays down the general guidelines for the Institute's activities and development. Research programme 2008-11

The research programme of SFI – contains two parts. Part 1 comprises research on 15 policy areas focusing on a number of major social issues. Part 2 consists of two strategic research programmes of broader society relevance.