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Project Title: Assistance to the Independent Monitoring of Human Rights: Russia
(Independent Monitoring Project)

Date: January 2000-May 2003

Location: Russia; Nottingham

Unit: European Human Rights Law

Core Staff: Patrick Twomey, Former HRLC Co-Director

Funder: Department for International Development

Project Summary

The project was designed to improve the monitoring of, and report-writing on, Russia's compliance with human rights standards, by increasing the relevant expertise of participating Russian NGOs. A series of 10 workshops were held across Russia on monitoring skills, human rights standards (covering a range of substantive topics) and NGO capacity-building, as well as a study visit and workshop on monitoring of policing in Belfast. Selected NGO's also engaged in a pilot monitoring exercise. The project activities contributed to the creation of a collection of human rights training materials which were widely disseminated to relevant IGO's and NGO's. Funded by the Department for International Development (DFID).

Objectives

The project was guided by the following objectives:

- To facilitate the establishment of a system of credible and authoritative NGO monitoring of, and reporting on, Russia's compliance with human rights standards, in particular its Council of Europe human rights obligations;
- To improve the existing monitoring and report-writing expertise of participating NGOs in selected regions;
- To develop a transferable human rights monitoring template and a core of Russian NGO activists trained to undertake monitoring training;
- To contribute to the wider improvement of the general capacity and substantive human rights knowledge of participating NGOs;
- To produce a sustainable good practice template for human rights monitoring;

Participants

The project engaged a range of human rights NGOs drawn from a number of regions (Krasnodar, Rostov, Nizhny Novgorod, Krasnoyarsk and Archangel). NGO's included Novorossiysk City Public Fund 'School of Peace', Nizhny Novgorod Society of Human Rights, Christians Against Torture and Child Slavery.

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Activities

Training

- HRLC conducted a series of 10 workshops across Russia on monitoring skills, human rights standards (covering a range of substantive topics) and NGO capacity-building;
- Members of Russian NGOs participated in the HRLC 3 month Short Course in International Human Rights at the University of Nottingham;

Visits

- Members of Russian NGOs participated in a study visit and workshop on monitoring of policing in Belfast held in conjunction with Northern Irish NGOs, The Police Service for Northern Ireland, members of Queens University Human Rights Centre;

Pilot Monitoring Exercise

- Implementation/Supervision of three selected regional NGO monitoring projects during March 2002 - March 2003.

The three selected pilot monitoring projects were:

- *Novorossiysk City Public Fund 'School of Peace'*- Rights of children from ethnic minorities in Krasnodar Krai.
 - *Nizhny Novgorod Society of Human Rights* – Independence of the judiciary in Nizhny Novgorod
 - *Christians Against Torture and Child Slavery* (Rostov) – Juveniles in the criminal justice system: review of UNDP Rostov Juvenile Justice Project.
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- Three pilot human rights monitoring projects, selected by Centre, and implemented by three of the regional NGOs based in Rostov, Nizhny Novgorod and Novorossiysk, working as part of the NHRLC Moscow Helsinki network, carrying out monitoring and report writing, ending with the delivery of their reports to an invited audience of HR actors following the final workshop held in Moscow at the end of the project.

Outcomes

The findings of the three monitoring exercises were presented at a public meeting in Moscow in March 2003 (copies in English and Russian are available from the implementing NGOs).

- The Workshop series and pilot monitoring contributed to the development of a collection of human rights monitoring training materials entitled *Human Rights Monitoring: Training Manual for Russia*, launched at the project conclusion in Spring 2003. The collection is aimed at Russian speaking human rights trainers with the documents in both Russian and English where available. Distribution included NGOs across Russia as well as in other Russian-speaking jurisdictions

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and to selected IGOs and international NGOs working in Russia. Copies can be obtained from the HRLC.