

The Oasis logo consists of a white circle with a smaller white circle inside it, followed by the word "oasis" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The logo is centered within an orange parallelogram that is tilted upwards to the right. This parallelogram is positioned between two parallel orange lines that run diagonally across the top of the page.

Oasis

The background features several orange lines. Two parallel lines run diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. A third line starts from the left edge, runs diagonally down to the right, then turns sharply to the left, and finally runs diagonally down to the right again, creating a large, abstract shape that resembles a stylized letter 'A' or a similar geometric form.

Oasis Kyrgyzstan  
Annual Report 2015

## Preface

The work of Oasis in the Kyrgyz Republic has proven its value time and time again, in each young person supported as they leave institutions. At this point of transition they are extremely vulnerable to traffickers, involvement in crime and extremists. They would be on their own except for their Oasis mentors. But, really this support work should be the domain of Kyrgyz Government social workers. The reality is these care-leavers fall through the gaps of three Government departments.

Last year was a tough one as funders don't want to resource the support of children in care or leaving care. They want all institutions closed and children being cared for in families. While we totally agree with this, it is just a sentiment without funding to make it a reality. There are no international funders willing to underwrite this. Therefore institutions will prevail and children will continue to leave, 450-500 each year, each one vulnerable to exploitation.

We are responding with a strategic plan that involves building capacity at Government level through firstly, a change in legislation, and then secondly through an online information portal. We have funding for our 13 month legislative advocacy programme, and have applied for funding for the web development.

There is more in the pipeline too: a food bank, prevention work to stop children being dumped in institutions and development of our property.

I commend not only the work of Jim and the team in Kyrgyzstan but also want to thank the Swiss Embassy, East West Management Institute, The Betty Lawes Foundation, Dorfred Charitable Trust, Innocent Voices and our friends in Switzerland, the UK and Bishkek for their support in 2015 and we hope into the future for the sake of these children.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Sexton".

Andy Sexton  
(Chair of the Oasis Kyrgyzstan Board)

## 1. Introduction

2015 will be remembered as both a challenging and a creative year for Oasis' work in Kyrgyzstan. On one hand, we continued to prepare young people living in institutions and orphanages for their transition to living independently, supported them as they made this transition, completed valuable research into what their vulnerabilities, rights and needs are, and developed a strategy that will both provide better support for care leavers, as well as develop work that will prevent young people ending up in institutions in the first place. On the other hand, with no replacement for a significant grant that was completed at the end of 2014, and uncertainty about whether further funding would be available, our on-the-ground activities to support young people had to be decreased for the initial eight months of the year.

With the development of one-year partnerships with the Embassy of Switzerland to the Kyrgyz Republic and with two Swiss Foundations (Petram and FOR), from September we were able, once again, to offer support to young people who left orphanages in the summer. As well as supporting around seventy young people, this also contributed to Oasis' newly developed strategy, informing advocacy work (starting in January 2016) to improve legislation to enable the government to better support care leavers – which will ultimately mean that much of the support offered by Oasis can be provided by government agencies and contractors.

Much of Oasis' work is dependent on the building of effective relationships, and this is entirely the result of an effective staff team. Despite the uncertainty of the first half of the year, all members of the team remained cheerful and determined to continue the work started, a tremendous witness to their commitment to the young people they are supporting.

During the year we have sought to recruit and involve volunteers in all aspects of our work. Many of them, themselves young people, have made significant contributions, particularly on the summer camp and to activities at the youth centre, such as teaching maths and English, providing homework support, running extra



Young people and staff on the summer camp

curricular activities and visiting orphanages with our case workers. It is exciting to see how they have been inspired to really step out of their comfort zones and support vulnerable young people. It has also been really encouraging too to see some of the young people from previous years programmes, including House Kairat and Erkindik become involved in our work on a voluntary basis.

## 2. Project Overview

### a. Care Leavers Support Project, January – August 2015 (including work at the Belovodskoe Special School for Boys, funded by UNICEF)

Aim: to see disadvantaged young people who have been brought up in government institutions make a successful transition to living independently where they avoid the vulnerabilities of hardship and poverty, are able to continue with their education, and empowered to find worthwhile employment and where they develop a supportive social base.

Target Group: boys and girls brought up in government (and other) institutions, namely:

- Belovodskoe Special School for Boys (18 boys)
- Approximately 70 young people living in orphanages in orphanages and children's centres in the Chui valley who were preparing to graduate in the summer of 2015

Key Achievements:

- In May, 18 boys at the Belovodskoe Special School for Boys completed 8 month life skills course. A survey of 'Developmental Assets' done before and after the course indicated that all the boys had strengthened their 'assets' as a result of the course.
- 10 visits were made to institutions (not including the Belovodskoe Special School for Boys) between January and April
- Preparation of 21 boys leaving the Belovodskoe Special School for Boys in summer 2015
- 90 young were people supported by case workers through their first year of living independently
- 90 young people participated in youth centre activities including, help with homework, courses in computing, cookery, life skills and English, craft activities, games nights, sports, and celebrations of national holidays
- 104 food parcels given to neediest young people



Participants on a life skills course

### b. Care Leavers Practical Support Project, (with funding from the Embassy of Switzerland) and Care Leavers Strategic Development Project (with funding from Petram Foundation and FOR Foundation), from September 2015

Aim: to enable young people to make a good transition from living in orphanages and institutions to living independently, so that they are contributing to society and are economically empowered, rather than a drain on state resources.

Target Group: 145 young people brought up in government (and other) institutions.

Key Achievements:

- Weekly visits to Belovodskoe Special School for Boys to run life skills course and sports
- 4 visits to institutions (other than Belovodskoe Special School for Boys) made in November and December, meeting with 57 young people
- 73 leavers being supported (60 from summer 2015, 13 from previous years)
- 85 food parcels given to neediest young people

**c. Summer Camp, June 2015 (with funding from Innocent Voices)**

Aim: To prepare young people for their transition to living independently, and build relationships between young people and Oasis

Target Group: Young people leaving institutions in the summer 2015 (i.e. at the time of the camp)

Key Achievements:

- 27 young people attended the 3 day camp
- Activities included team building exercises, training on personality types and the ‘Five Languages of Love’, a seminar on legal processes and requirements (documents etc.), games and time at the beach.
- 7 volunteers participated in running the camp and received specific training



Summer camp activity

**d. Research Report – ‘Orphanage Graduates of Kyrgyzstan: An Assessment of Rights and Needs’**

This 8 month project, done in partnership with the local NGO ‘Our Voice’, analysed existing legislation and research and gathered original data from interviews with 350 care leavers into a report: ‘Care Leavers of Kyrgyzstan: Assessment of Rights and Needs’. This was published and

presented in February and has since been used to inform both Oasis’ advocacy plans and engagement with government, and also the development of Oasis’ strategic plans for 2015 – 2018.



Oasis team members with the Research Report

Amongst other findings, the report highlighted

- the lack of legislation and state oversight of young people as they leave institutional care
- the socio-economic, financial, housing, emotional and psychological challenges that care leavers face
- and the need to improve the way that young people are supported to become a part of society once they leave institutions.

Key recommendations were made in the report to the government, INGOs and directors of institutions.

Aim: To better understand and have robust evidence of the challenges, vulnerabilities and the extent of the problems faced by care leavers.

Key Achievements:

- Presentation of research in February (in Russian, Kyrgyz and English versions) to representatives of government ministries, INGOs and business people.
- As a result of the presentation and subsequent engagement with government ministries and committees, Oasis and Our Voice submitted recommendations to improve the support of care leavers to a joint parliamentary committee that met in June. They recommended that the measures we suggested should be taken into account by all ministries, and further, the committee mandated that the Ministry of Youth, Labour and Migration should keep a database of all young people leaving institutions. This was a significant step as there had never been any cross ministry agreement on this particular issue, but sadly was not able to be followed up because after the elections in October, the Ministry of Youth, Labour and Migration was split up and once again no entity exists to take overall responsibility. This will be once again picked up by the Care Leavers Advocacy Project in 2016



Delegates at launch of Research Report

**e. Key areas of focus in coming years**

During the course of the year, a new strategy for Oasis (September 2015 to August 2018) was prepared with the following objectives:

- to develop ‘hubs’ in ‘source communities’ (i.e. seeking to prevent young people from becoming institutionalised)
- to work with government agencies and departments to improve government support for care leavers
- to educate and inform society about the effects of institutionalisation and advocate for de-institutionalisation
- to prepare the most vulnerable young people living in government institutions for their transition to independent living, walk with them as they make this transition, and support them as they start to live independently

As well as the development of projects, the strategy addresses the need for Oasis to become more sustainable. Key to this is the development of an income stream to cover core costs.

### 3. Illustration of Impact of Oasis' support

Maria (name changed) lived for about a year and a half in House Erkindik (Oasis transition home from 2011 to 2013) and was then supported by Oasis as she started to live independently. She had fled from emotional and physical abuse at the hand of her mother, who ultimately refused to provide Maria with any form of identity or documentation, or sign application forms. Eventually, in January 2015, (and after Oasis staff had prepared countless letters, petitions and application forms during the course of approximately three years), Maria finally received her identity documents.

In May she received an offer of work from a Kyrgyz family living in Istanbul, Turkey, looking after their two year old son. Oasis staff warned Maria of the risks and, because they were unable to meet the family in person, went with her to meet the grandmother who signed a contract with Maria.

In December, Maria returned to Bishkek; she had worked hard but had never received any money and after a while began to realize that the family had no intention of paying her, knowing that without money she would not be able to leave. Throughout her time in Istanbul she had remained in touch with Oasis staff who connected her to a former member of staff now living in Istanbul. This lady called a lawyer who involved the police. The father was arrested and the mother immediately bought Maria a ticket to return to Bishkek. Sadly, no salary has ever been recovered. By the end of the year, Maria had found a job and was renting a single room apartment, and with support from Oasis staff, is once again getting back on her feet.



A training course at the youth centre

## 4. Governance

'Public Charitable Fund Oasis' is an organisation registered in the Kyrgyz Republic (number 196366-3300-ОФ), and as such is accountable to a local board for operational governance. In addition, as a part of the 'global family' of locally registered Oasis organisations around the world, is accountable to the Oasis Global Council for organisational ethos and for participating in the achievement of globally agreed goals.

During the year, the Chair of the Oasis board has participated in Global Council meetings and the Director in six monthly meetings of the Oasis Global Executive.



Showing off dance moves at the Oasis summer camp

## 5. Finance

### a. Funding Partners

Oasis is entirely dependant on charitable income, and during the year, Oasis has received funding from:

- UNICEF (carried forward from grant received in 2014 for completion by March 2015)
- IYF (International Youth Foundation)
- Betty Lawes Foundation (UK trust)
- TBC (UK church)
- Petram (Swiss Charitable Foundation)
- FOR (Swiss Charitable Foundation)
- The Embassy of Switzerland in the Kyrgyz Republic
- Dorfred Charitable Trust (UK trust)
- Innocent Voices (US Foundation)
- ICB (International Church of Bishkek)
- Training services provided to BPN in Kyrgyzstan (Business Professionals Network)
- Individuals in Kyrgyzstan, UK and US

## b. Summary of Income and Expenditure 2015

### i. Income - in currency received

Project	KGS	USD	EUR	GBP
Total Income (including carried forward from 2014)				
CLSP	161,906	7,287	-	10,863
Research	366,444	-	-	-
CLPSP	575,000	4,061	-	787
CLSDP	-	11,195	12,729	3,962
Central	198,464	7,496	2,246	1,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,301,814</b>	<b>30,039</b>	<b>14,975</b>	<b>16,922</b>

### ii. Expenditure - all expenditure in KGS, with USD equivalent at rate on 31-12-2015 (75.8993 KGS:1 USD)

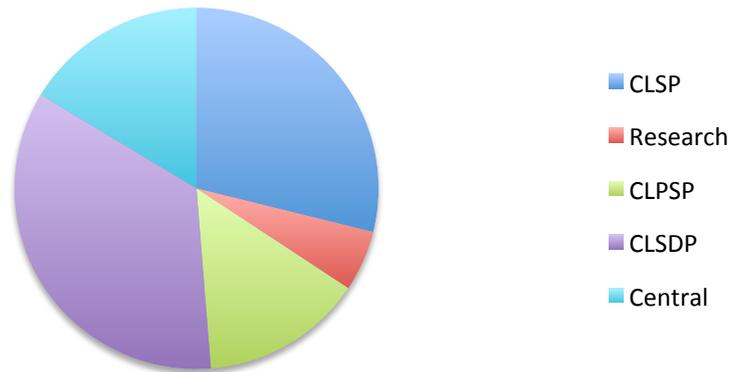
Project	KGS	USD
CLSP	1,468,751	19,351
Research	366,444	4,828
CLPSP	476,393	6,277
CLSDP	541,721	7,137
Central	873,809	11,513
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,727,118</b>	<b>49,106</b>

### iii. Total to carry forward into 2016 - in currency as received and held in bank

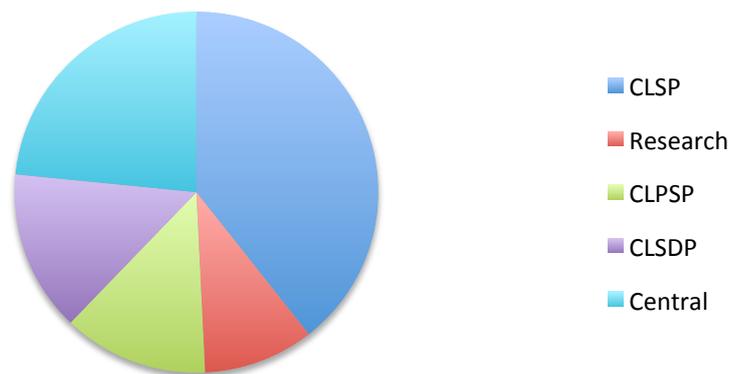
Project	KGS	USD	EUR	GBP
CLPSP	98,607	4,061	-	787
CLSDP	63,699	6,256	10,229	3,962
Central	93,884	736	2,246	-922
<b>Total</b>	<b>256,190</b>	<b>11,053</b>	<b>12,475</b>	<b>3,827</b>

c. Analysis of Income and expenditure 2015

**Breakdown of Income 2015  
by Project**



**Breakdown of Expenditure 2015 by  
Project**



N.B. The above charts are not intended to correlate, as the breakdown of expenditure does not include income carried forward into 2016; for example, the majority of income for the CLSDP was received in 2015, but will be spent in 2016.