



protecting **CHILDREN** and
uniting **FAMILIES ACROSS BORDERS**

CFAB is the UK member of the International
Social Service global network



International Social Service

Annual Review
2017 - 2018

Our Chair's Introduction



Alan Howarth, Chair of Trustees

It is a privilege to write this introduction to Children and Families Across Borders' annual review for the year ending March 2018. I started as Chair at the beginning of the financial year and have seen staff through their challenges and successes. The political and economic context in the UK has made it particularly difficult for us to advise local authorities throughout the European refugee crisis. The UK diverged from Europe in its requirements to satisfy child placements long before 'Brexit' was even a concept – but the formal split will only further complicate our ability to work with our European partners.

However, negotiating the complexities of cross border child protection and child placement casework is what we do best. We continue to rise to the challenge. Every one of the 444 children we supported this year is our priority – no matter where they come from. We are truly global in our outlook, as we worked with over 130 countries this year, navigating a multitude of languages, cultures, family practices, child welfare systems and various immigration statuses.

We would not be so successful were we not the UK representative of the International Social Service (ISS) network. The ISS is one of the great success stories coming out of World War I, and our link to it spans more than six decades. In this booklet, we offer you a review of our work, our link to the ISS network, the challenges we face, the impact we achieved and the key people who helped make our organisation the success it is today.

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Our Mission

Vision

CFAB's vision is of a world where the complexity of migration and international separation does not deny already vulnerable children the right to care, protection and a safe family environment.

Mission

CFAB's mission is to use our expertise and experience to ensure vulnerable children and families who are separated across international borders are given care and protection, no matter where they come from. Where possible, we work to reunite families.

Values

CFAB's values of professionalism, impartiality and respect underpin everything we do.

Professionalism: As the UK arm of the ISS Network, CFAB is part of a worldwide network of professionals working in over 130 countries, allowing us to access expert support from around the world to protect children at risk. CFAB's team includes professionally qualified Social Workers and Case Workers specially trained to manage inter-country social work cases.

Impartiality: CFAB's work is grounded in the best interests of vulnerable children and adults and we defend and uphold their rights to protection, care and family life. CFAB does not have any political affiliation or agenda. We work with local authorities, the courts, the police and other agencies to ensure that the protection and care of vulnerable children and adults is at the heart of decision-making.

Respect: CFAB ensures children and vulnerable adults play a role in decisions that affect their lives. We value the role, expertise and experience of our overseas partners, without whom we could not effectively safeguard children and vulnerable adults. We recognise that the complexity of international social work demands we all work together to secure the best outcome possible for every beneficiary.

Our World

We live in an increasingly globalised world. Over 50 million children are on the move around the world. More than half of them have been forcibly displaced by conflict. Some are escaping war or persecution. Others are searching for respite from violence or abuse, too often perpetrated by their own family members. 13% of the UK population is foreign born and a third of children born in England and Wales have one or more parents who were born outside country.

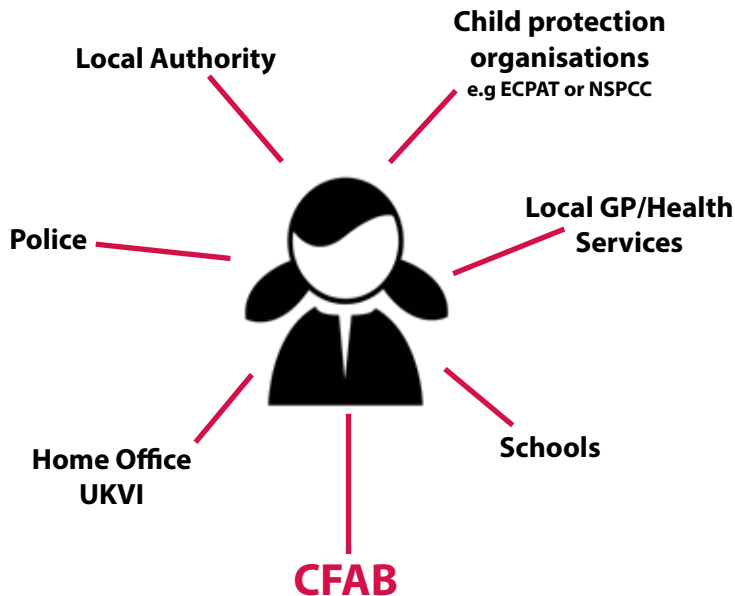
All are vulnerable: to the dangers of the journey itself, all too often deadly; to smugglers and traffickers who prey on these children for profit; to being detained or denied their right to family; to discrimination, xenophobia and violence; and to a gaping absence of opportunity.

In these situations, there is a need for multiple child rights agencies to support any one child – from identifying them and their immediate needs, advocating for their legal rights, caring for any physical, emotional and psychological impact, identifying and assessing potential carers (ideally family members) that exist where they are found or anywhere else in the world, and supporting them to stay safe on the remainder of their journey. CFAB plays a role no other UK charity can – giving that child the best chance of being reunited with their families. There is an increased demand for assessments to be done on the family member of the child, which are essential in giving children the best chance of being reunited with their families. International cases can also require specialist knowledge, for example around trafficking, FGM and honour-based violence. The social workers at CFAB have experience in providing advice and recommending solutions on this.



The Child Protection Process

Just within the UK, there are a range of organisations that will be tracking a child's case – from the point they are first found through to the point they get on a plane to be reunited with their family. Often, the local authority will play the lead role but will be calling on information and expertise regarding immigration status and travel arrangements, health concerns, criminal investigations, child welfare or specialist support, etc. CFAB's role is unique, liaising with many of these UK agencies to help advise them on how to process the case and provide effective outcomes for children moving across borders.



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There is a further need to support children and their families once a child has been reunited within the family environment. Living with family members is often the best option for many vulnerable children. This is a more long term option than foster care; children experience fewer moves and they feel more secure, settled, safe, happy and loved. However, many family member carers receive limited or no support to help them care for these children, many of whom have emotional, behavioural and relationship problems.

What We Do:

Advice & Research



Between April 2017 and March 2018 we responded to 1,800 advice line enquiries relating to nearly 3,000 children from over 130 countries in a range of challenging circumstances. There were 1,236 calls from children's services teams that received advice and support from our staff to assist them in resolving complex cases. 136 calls were received from abroad that required information on children and families based in the UK. 164 calls were from private individuals, legal representatives and other NGOs all concerned for children in vulnerable situations or at risk and 76 calls were from other charitable organisations such as the NSPCC, Red Cross and Migrant Help all working alongside CFAB to provide a better future for children at risk.



We also analyse advice line calls to identify any emerging issues and to share our learning with other organisations via national working groups (e.g. the Harmful Practice Working Group and the Human Trafficking Advisory Forum) and government departments, Children's Services and NGOs etc.

We are currently undertaking research to identify and share examples of best practice regarding international child protection and international child placement. This will involve an audit into best practice and the challenges in resolving inter-country children and family cases. We will use the knowledge gained to lead on advocacy initiatives that will improve policy and practice and create practical resources and training for front line professionals.

What We Do: Our Case Work



Child Protection Alert

Reporting suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child/ren to welfare organisations abroad

376 Child protection alert calls to our advice line

62 Child protection alert cases conducted



Record Check

Requesting and receiving social services records/information from authorities abroad

316 Record check calls to our advice line

97 Record check cases conducted



Welfare Visit

Conducting a one off visit and producing viability reports on risk, protection and welfare of children

193 Welfare visit calls to our advice line

44 Welfare visit cases conducted



Full Assessment

Conducting comprehensive assessment of a child/ren and providing extensive reports in line with the social care assessment framework.

444 Full assessment calls to our advice line

114 Full assessment cases conducted



Post-Placement Support & Other Services

Welfare visit/s to confirm a child/ren health, safety, routine and emotional development within a new family environment. Other Services include independent referee reports and local assistance service for UK social workers traveling abroad.

412 calls to our advice line

114 cases conducted



Number of children we have helped this year

444 Children helped

172 Organisations seeking advice

72 Organisations which required support

Working With Our Partners In The UK

There are 212 children's services departments across the UK, and CFAB has provided advice and support to 83% of these. 98% of children's services departments in England have accessed our support. Over 1300 calls were received last year from our partners in the UK, these include Local Authorities, NGOs and Individuals.



Scotland & North England

74 Children helped
36 Partners seeking advice
20 Partners which required support

East of England and The Midlands

114 Children helped
39 Partners seeking advice
19 Partners which required support



The West, Wales & Northern Ireland

35 Children helped
17 Partners seeking advice
11 Partners which required support



London & South East

87 Children helped
42 Partners seeking advice
22 Partners which required support



What We Do: Capacity Building

In the UK...

The past 12 months have seen an increase in the number of calls to our advice line. CFAB now engages with 179 children's services teams across the UK, an increase of 22% on the previous year. Our priority is to ensure the best possible outcome for children. With over 28,500 children and family social workers in the UK, we aim to advise and support them with cross-border cases involving vulnerable children. Future plans to further increase our engagement with more children services teams in 2018 will be to focus on Scotland and Wales, where current levels of engagement are low.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, we have been delivering FREE training to front line social workers, training them on International Social Work practices. 206 social workers have been trained throughout the UK in 2017/18 and a further 550 social workers will be trained in 2018/19. Our training had the following feedback:

- 98% of attendees would recommend the training to a social work colleague
- 91% of attendees rated the training good or excellent
- 94% of attendees felt more confident when dealing with this subject in a working environment
- 98% of attendees thought the training would have a positive impact on their work when managing cross-border cases.

Training was also given to help consular officials and community representatives based in London better understand the UK child protection and care system. The delegates heard presentations from CFAB social workers, CAFCASS and REUNITE International Child Abduction Centre.

Abroad...

CFAB recognises the importance of enabling our partners abroad to understand what is expected by the UK Social Work and Court System and our goal is to replicate these models for Bangladesh and India in 2018-19. Whilst we strengthen the capacity of our existing partners, we have also identified other countries with scope and demand to improve. Capacity Building of our partners overseas can be a slow process, but in previous years we have demonstrated successful business models in Pakistan, Nigeria and Jamaica.

Working With Our ISS

Claude emigrated to the UK with his mother. When he was 13 his mother died. Although the UK was the only home he had ever known, he was aware of no friends or relatives here who could care for him and he was placed into care. Our assessment of a family member in Canada concluded that it would be unsuitable for Claude to return there. We later discovered that he had relatives living in London and thanks to our help he was able to remain in the country he calls home.



Kristina was seven months pregnant with a baby girl and living in the UK. She had recently ended a physically abusive relationship with the baby's father who had returned to Latvia. Suddenly, Kristina left the country without telling anyone. Kristina's social worker contacted CFAB and we issued an urgent Child Protection Alert. Our Latvian partners engaged with the authorities and issued the alert. We were able to establish that she and her baby were safe and that her ex-partner was not residing with them. Kristina's baby was born into a safe, supportive home and Kristina now has the professional support in place that she needs to take care of her baby.



Esther was 16 years old and living in Nigeria when she was sent by her parents to study in the UK. They thought she would be safe living with their cousins. Instead, Esther was forced into domestic slavery and was forced onto the streets. The local authority contacted CFAB. We worked with our partners in Nigeria to help Esther be reunited with her family.



International Social Service

Partners Worldwide

Nico was just 14 when he was trafficked from Romania through Italy and onto the UK. Forced into prostitution in both countries, he managed to escape and was picked up by the police. All Nico wanted was to go home and be with his family who he had not seen for over a year. We contacted our partners in Romania who managed to track the family down. They conducted a family assessment and Nico was reunited with them.



Sarah and Jason who were 5 and 3 years old when they were taken into care as a result of their mother's drug addiction. Sarah's behaviour was also a concern, which social workers believe was caused by the violence she had witnessed when living with her mother. With CFAB's help the children were placed with their grandmother in Australia, Sarah's behaviour was markedly improved and they both now enjoy a settled family life.



Rhiam was found alone in Italy after she fled the Syrian civil war. Rhiam knew that she had a cousin living in the UK. Our Italian partners asked CFAB to assess whether Rhiam's cousin was able to care for her and what support she would need in to help her deal with the effects of trauma she had endured. On our recommendation, Rhiam was reunited with her only remaining family.



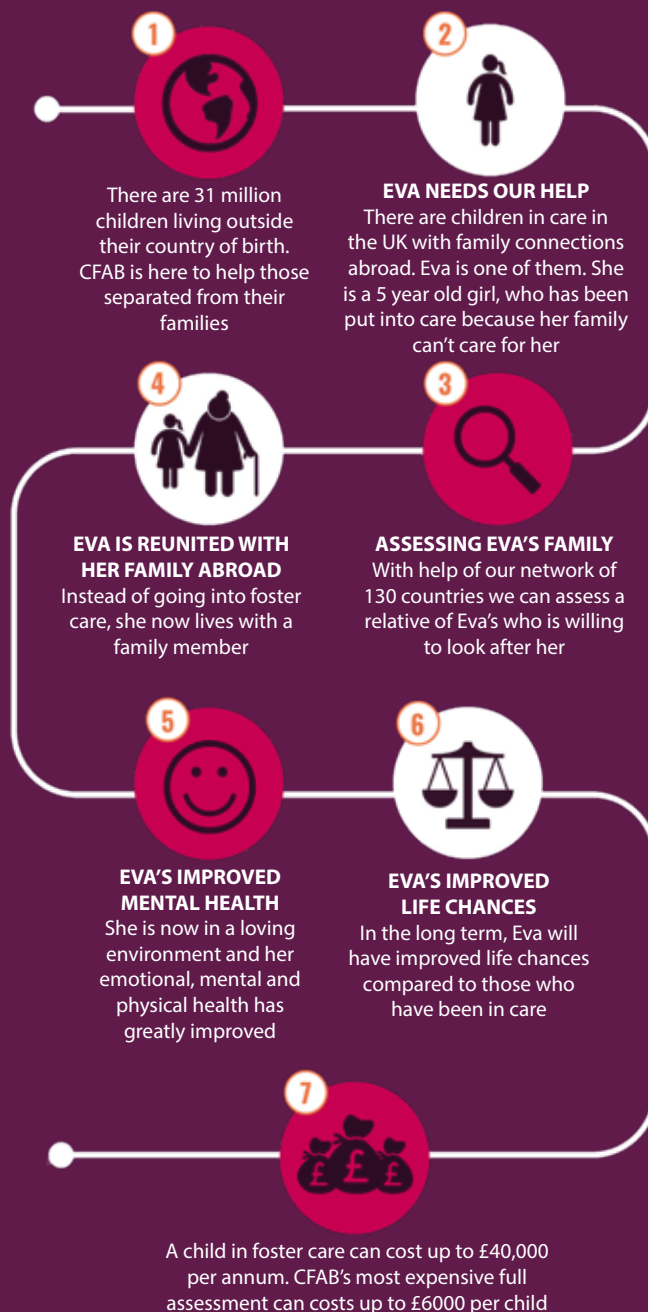
Danny and Rosie's mother suffered from severe mental health problems and after a few years they were placed in foster care. The children had a father who lived in Australia. CFAB was asked to investigate whether Danny and Rosie's father was willing and able to care for them. Our Australian partner assessed the father and judged that he would be a good carer and so it was arranged for Danny and Rosie to return to Australia to live in a loving family with their father.



Our Impact

CFAB's work enables children from around the world to live a safe and healthy life and, where possible, within a loving family environment. An estimated 18,500 children in the UK remain in care although they have relatives overseas. The children that we work with are three times more likely to face multiple deprivations during their childhood – meaning that they are more in need of long-term and specialist support. Wherever possible, CFAB helps children remain with family instead of entering foster care, where we know that foster children are four times more likely to experience a mental health difficulty during their childhood. They will be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and miss valuable education time, severely compromising their future potential. The diagram below helps to show the impact our work can have on a child's life.

“Negotiating the complexities of cross border child protection and child placement casework is what we do best”



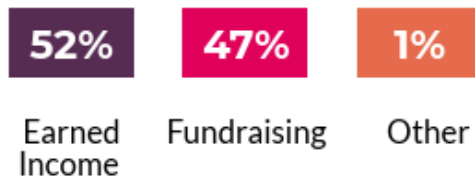
How We Are Funded

This year CFAB had a surplus of £125,650 although the underlying shortfall for the year was nearly £112,759. This is due to income raised for the Emergency Fund of £40k and other Income from Grants £199k, ring-fenced as restricted income for expenditure in 2018/19 or in later years.

Earned income, in the form of casework/membership fees, constitutes 52% of the charity's income. Fundraising, in the form of grants, fundraising events, individual donors and corporate partners, makes up the remaining 47% of the charity's income. We are incredible grateful for all the support the charity receives.

Liquidity is also positive with cash-flows of £2k in the year. We close the financial year with reserves at six months of operating costs.

17/18 Income - £824,321



17/18 Expenditure - £698,671



Who We Are: Trustees, Patrons And CFAB Management Team

Led by our Chair, we are governed by a Board of Trustees, who provide good governance across CFAB. They provide strategic guidance to the senior management team to fulfil their role and to the CEO to take full operational responsibility for the running of the organisation. The patrons participate in the formal governance of our work, we receive significant support from them and our President, Douglas Lewis.

Trustees

Alan Howarth (Chair)
Anita Kara (Vice Chair)
Duncan Walker (Treasurer)
Billy Cometti
Marion Davis
Christopher Hames QC
David N. Jones
Mark Tate
Carolina Marin Pedreno

Royal Patron

HRH Princess Alexandra

Patrons

Douglas Lewis, CBE, President
Sir Harvey Mcgrath
Sarah Palmer
Steve Rider
Monir Sattaripour
Lady Françoise Middleton
Baroness Scotland PC, QC
Dalal Al-Duwaisan

"I wholeheartedly support CFAB in reuniting children with their families"

Monir Sattaripour, Patron

CFAB Management Team



Carolyn Housman, CEO

Carolyn leads CFAB's strategy and overall operations with support from the Board and the Senior Management Team. She has extensive executive experience and practical knowledge of migration and policy development. She holds a BSc in International Ethics, an MSc in International Relations and an MBA.



Rob Hardy, Head of Fundraising

Rob has overall responsibility for voluntary income generation, constituting approximately 50% of the charity's turnover.



Tom Moore, Engagement & Business Development Manager

Tom's role is to engage with organisations that would benefit from our advice and support. He uses his vast experience in the media sector to ensure CFAB is meeting the demands of UK organisations. Tom has a passion for voluntary work and is a trustee and deputy chair of Relate London NW



Liz Nuamah, Finance and HR Manager

Liz has responsibility for the good financial management and HR practices of CFAB. She has extensive experience in both management and financial accounts across private and public sectors. Liz is a qualified Accountant (CGMA) and is also a Fellow of the Association of Accounting Technicians.



Noriko Takahashi, Principal Social Worker

Noriko leads the social work team. She has extensive statutory social work knowledge and experience in the areas concerning child protection, court work, parenting assessment, disability, refugee and migration. She holds a BA in International Politics and Anthropology, and MA in Social Work.

Thank You To Our Partners And Supporters



29th May 1961
Charitable Trust



South Birmingham Friends Institute Trust, Southampton Row Trust, Waynflete Charitable Trust, Gowling WLG (UK) Charitable Trust, Bryan Lancaster's Trust, The Jessie Spencer Trust, Sir John Beckwith, Henhurst Charitable Trust, Edgar Lawley Foundation and our individual donors

“CFAB staff are extremely knowledgeable about other jurisdictions and international social work practice”

external evaluation 2018

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Charity number: 1085541 | Company number: 4025539**



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