

# Training for the world's leading charitable organisation for children

Unit4 Business World (Agresso) ERP



When Save the Children, the world's leading independent organisation for children, set up a new entity, Save the Children International, to bring all its international programs together in one line management structure - it faced a major challenge in rolling out its Agresso ERP system to 55 countries worldwide and training 1,000 people to use it.

Save the Children recognised early on that to be effective, it needed a bespoke and flexible training programme that was designed specifically for a wide range of users in their day-to-day roles. The courses would need to be adapted to meet the financial and tax reporting regulations of the individual countries as well as to fit different cultures and languages.

Save the Children had no internal training resource available so Optimum, a specialist IT training consultancy, were selected to design and develop their training courses and materials. Richard Blundell, global IT programme director, advised "Optimum had already demonstrated the expertise to deliver because they'd carried out a similar very large-scale, multinational training project for the Department for International Development," he said.

## Project Scope

- New implementation of Unit4 Business World (formerly Agresso) ERP system.
- Major undertaking with the system being rolled out across 55 different countries across the globe.
- Optimum developed 13 different role-based course in just eight weeks.
- Optimum stepped in last minute to deliver in the UK, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal.

## Methods Used



**RapidScope®**  
Planning & designing your training



**Reference Guides**  
Comprehensive end-user manuals



**Trainer Packs**  
Lesson plans for consistent delivery



**Presentations**  
Demonstrations to large groups



**Online Solutions**  
Various web-based learning options



**Quick Cards**  
Double-sided simple process cards



**eLearning**  
Interactive modules & passive videos



**Skill the Trainer**  
Prepare internal team for delivery



**Classroom Delivery**  
Hands-on training sessions



**Go-Live Support**  
Onsite floor-walking and hypercare

“The Optimum consultants showed outstanding commitment and always went that extra mile to make sure they delivered to our country office staff.”

**Richard Blundell** Global IT programme director

With the user acceptance testing phase approaching, the training programme had to be prepared rapidly.

“Optimum’s people have the detailed system knowledge that allows them to drop into a project at short notice and get on with producing a training programme very quickly,” added Blundell.

Two Optimum consultants carried out a detailed training needs analysis, designed 13 different role-based courses and wrote all the corresponding training materials for Save the Children over a period of just eight weeks.

The original plan was for Optimum to train Save the Children staff to deliver the courses to users themselves. However, a lack of resource meant that Optimum stepped in to deliver the training for the first six scheduled countries - the UK, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Bangladesh and Nepal. The company then helped Save the Children recruit four additional trainers to take over the delivery programme but the consultants returned in particularly busy periods during Save the Children’s two and a half year transition programme to deliver training in Kenya and Ethiopia.

Over a two year period Optimum has supported the Agresso roll outs across all 55 countries by adapting the training materials to fit the needs of each region. Flexibility has been critical, with Optimum working with Save the Children to modify courses and documentation to reflect local variations in processes and on-going system improvements.

To make the training as logistically effective as possible, Optimum designed and wrote a range of eLearning courses. These allowed Save the Children staff working in remote areas to be trained without them having to make difficult journeys to the country’s main office.

Another key part of Optimum’s role was to develop and train staff on a programme of post-go-live floor walking. Save the Children wanted face-to-face support to be available in each country for the first month as a way of making sure the system was used effectively and that the users didn’t feel abandoned before their first month-end. Optimum carried out the floor walking in those locations where they had delivered the training.

Blundell reflected: “Floor walking is very different from systems training; it’s much more about applying business knowledge and supporting users in the effective and accurate use of the system on a day-to-day basis. Optimum took the time to develop this extra layer of understanding and could give us that crucial support. It was very successful.”

Under a global licence agreement Optimum has handed the entire suite of training documentation over to Save the Children so the materials can be shared between members without incurring further fees.

Blundell said: “The materials have been updated regularly and are standing the test of time. It’s a huge bonus that we can continue to use and update the reference guides ourselves in



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“They’re approachable, flexible and responsive. They communicate very openly and in my experience they always have the client’s long term interests at heart.”

**Richard Blundell** Global IT programme director

order to deliver ‘business as usual’ training and keep users up to date.”

Optimum faced a wide range of cultural and political differences in designing and adapting the training across 55 countries but feedback from the Save the Children teams on the ground was overwhelmingly positive. The consultancy’s previous track record in multinational training projects was an important factor for Save the Children who needed a company with the ability to fit in and adapt to very different environments.

Blundell commented: “The Optimum consultants showed outstanding commitment and always went that extra mile to make sure they delivered to our Country Office staff.”

Save the Children is currently using the GL, AP, bank reconciliation and planner modules of Agresso, with plans to expand into P2P, assets and expenses in 2014. The organisation is also rolling out a new SharePoint-based HR system, and Optimum is producing user training reference guides and e-learning modules for that project.

“Optimum are a pleasure to work with,” Blundell observed. “They’re approachable, flexible and responsive. They communicate very openly and in my experience they always have the client’s long term interests at heart.”



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