

2.1 Intervention Journal

As of March 2014, the Intervention Journal continued operations, and with a new lay-out, under the name 'Intervention Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Areas'. An evaluation was carried out for the first time in the existence of the Journal, to find answers to questions such as: what is the Journal's readership, where do they work and why do they read Intervention? Does the Journal really serve as a bridge between science and practice? How accessible is the Journal for authors and readers from conflict areas and low and middle income (LMIC) countries? How sustainable is the Journal? The findings of the evaluation have been incorporated in an action plan which, among other things, focuses on raising the number of readers from LMIC countries and detailing the 'open access' or 'free to view' models.

These are some of the findings of the evaluation report:

- Intervention is mostly read by practitioners and professionals from low and middle income countries and barely by policy makers from the healthcare industry.
- There should be more publications from LMIC countries.
- Although readers are happy with the quality of the Intervention Journal, there is some room for improvement.
- The 'peer reviewed' articles and the programme descriptions are appreciated most and are used to develop programmes, training courses and educational programmes.
- Intervention provides added value in addition to existing journals. While it has a low academic 'impact rate', the journal has a high impact on the execution of the programmes.
- Thanks to the contribution and participation of MHPSS professionals from the field, Intervention is able to make a vital contribution to the debate on MHPSS in emergencies.
- Intervention can present a stronger profile by supporting authors from LMIC countries with writing and publishing articles.

In 2014, three issues of Intervention were published as well as an extra supplement.

The three regular issues each had a 'special section' which focused on a specific theme.

- The first issue had a special section on 'Peacebuilding and psychosocial work', with guest editors Brandon Hamber and Elizabeth Gallagher, both working for INCORE, the International Conflict Research Institute of Ulster University, Northern Ireland.
- The second issue featured a special section on Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET), and involved various authors entering into a debate with each other.
- In the third issue, Intervention focused on child soldiers, with guest editors Ilse Derluyn of Ghent University, Centre for Children in Vulnerable Situations, Lucia DeHaene of Leuven University, Centre for Children in Vulnerable Situations, Wouter Vandenhoe of Antwerp University, Chair Children's Rights UNICEF.
- Intervention also published an extra 'free to view' supplement in 2014, which had the theme 'New Frontiers' about future developments in MHPSS. The guest editors of this supplement were Peter Ventevogel, UNHCR; Mark Jordans, HealthNet TPO and Wietse Tol, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

One of more important themes for the short term remains the dissemination of knowledge and scaling up high-quality psychosocial support. The Intervention Journal website received a complete overhaul, drastically improving the accessibility and findability of previously published articles.

2.2 Other publications

In 2014, vigorous efforts were made to develop and write two educational manuals, related to two projects of the WTF and its partner organisation in Sudan and the West Bank, Palestinian territories.

Enhancing MHPSS Capacity in Low Resource Settings

Based on the project in Sudan, the WTF and the Ahfad University for Women in Khartoum developed a manual: 'Enhancing MHPSS Capacity in Low Resource Settings'. The manual consists of three parts: Being the Helper, Enabling the process, and From Individual to collective healing in practice.

This manual will be published in the first quarter of 2015, in English and Arabic.

Multi Family Approach

The WTF and the Institute for Community and Public Health, Birzeit University implemented a Multi Family Approach (MFA) project in the West Bank, in collaboration with the community workers of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR). Based on these experiences, we have developed a manual in Multi Family Approach which consists of three parts: MFA for organizations, MFA for trainers, and MFA for 'facilitators'.

The community workers were actively involved in the writing process and participated in a manual writing workshop. The workshop was organised in cooperation with the SIOO Utrecht, and participants were enthusiastic about the working method that was chosen and about the fact that they were able to

describe their own experiences and knowledge for others. This MFA manual will be published in February 2015 in English and Arabic.

2.3 'Mental Health and Psychosocial Support and peace building: gaps and opportunities'

For quite some time now, the WTF has deliberated the question of how to integrate the knowledge and experiences acquired in peace building and reconciliation into the knowledge field of psychosocial support in and after war. Conversely, the WTF also frequently receives questions from various organisations involved in peace building and reconciliation on how they can take the needs of people who are traumatised by war and violence into account. In 2014, the WTF entered into an alliance with the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation in South Africa and started preparations for a work conference on this subject. The conference will be held in the spring of 2015 and will host both professionals from the field and researchers in both areas of expertise.

3. Increasing psychosocial expertise and skills

Middle East and North Africa

West Bank: Multi Family Approach in Community Based Rehabilitation: in cooperation with the Institute of Community and Public Health, Birzeit University in Ramallah, a group of trainers and community based workers was trained to apply MFA to groups of women with multiple problems. As a result of the ongoing conflict with Israel and the economic sanctions, many families live in isolation with limited access to help. The WTF coordinates and finances this programme, and with the input from the Youth & Family Department of Centrum '45 the knowledge is incorporated in MFA. King's College London started a research project in December 2014 which will investigate the results of the project according to the outcome mapping method.

Libya: at the request of the International Organisation for Migration Libya (IOM) and AMICA Germany in Libya, the WTF has evaluated two psychosocial programmes in Libya. Both programmes were initiated in 2011 after the overthrow of the Ghaddafi regime and were entitled 'Psychosocial Assistance for Crisis-Affected Children and Youth and their Families in Libya' (IOM) and 'Strengthening women in Libya (SGBV)' of AMICA. Both evaluations were successfully completed and reports were presented to the organisations involved (for internal use). Libya is different from surrounding countries in that hardly any civil society to speak of developed during Ghaddafi's reign, resulting in a big gap between government services and end users. In Libya, talks were held with the Ministry of Health Care and various organisations in order to contribute to the integration of psychosocial support in the health care system. However, although the WTF invested considerable manpower in this project, it can sadly not be continued in the short term due to the deteriorating political situation, the resurgence of fighting and a situation of lawlessness.

Sudan: Enhancing the MHPSS capability by training professionals (psychologists and psychiatrists) and practitioners (humanitarian aid organisation workers) and embedding this knowledge at the Ahfad Trauma Centre and the various NGOs in the states of Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur.

Continuous fighting in Sudan, particularly in Darfur and Kordofan, has resulted in more than 3 million displaced persons in Sudan. In 2014, over 100,000 refugees from South Sudan entered Sudan. The WTF works in close cooperation with Ahfad University for Women, Psychology Department and the Ahfad Trauma Centre. A group of 10 trainers completed their training programme and will in turn provide training to staff of NGOs in Darfur and other states in basic counselling skills and the application of narrative theatre. A training video has been published, a digital platform for students has been set up and a manual has been written which will be published in February 2015. Several trainers from the WTF network have contributed to this programme: Wendy Ager (developing a guide for case studies), Jaap Kool (therapeutic intervention techniques), Renos Papodopoulos (trauma grid), Yvonne Sliet (narrative theatre, community building) and Pim Scholte (research workshop).

Great Lakes region: **Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo):** Training educators, care givers and staff of the Salvation Army DR Congo in giving psychosocial support to children. The situation in eastern DR Congo remains fragile due to clashes between rebel groups, extreme levels of lawlessness, severe violations of human rights and the lack of basic amenities.

At the invitation of the Salvation Army Netherlands, the WTF conducted an assessment in the spring of 2014 at several schools in North and South Kivu of the nature and effects of the stressors children and care givers experience daily and how educators can be helped in remedying this situation. In November, a group of 25 educators received training. The WTF works with trainers from Burundi and DR Congo (via TPO Uganda).

Asia and Europe

In **Sri Lanka** a two-year programme for scaling up Psychological First Aid (PFA) was concluded. The PFA Application Guide has been translated into Sinhalese and Tamil and will be published in 2015. The guide

provides a method on how to apply knowledge in a specific cultural context. A group of 24 trainers was trained for this. Expanding on this project, the PFA for the World was initiated, which aims to develop innovative communication means to scale up PFA in times of calamities or war.

The four partner organisations in the **Northern Caucasus** published all their training modules in the area of domestic violence. This has resulted in an improved and increased exchange of knowledge between the four republics. A repressive regime is specifically present in the republics of Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria and Chechnya, which are often plagued by armed conflicts between armed militias and the Russian army. The partner organisations in the Caucasus have stated to want to focus more on intra family violence. But as it requires increased efforts to acquire sufficient financial means for this region, it was decided to phase out in 2015.

Between 2009 and 2012 cooperation with two and from 2013 four organisations was intense. In 2014, the partner organisations took it upon themselves to bundle their knowledge, material and publications on domestic violence to enable the republics to share more. This is one of the main outcomes of the alliance of the past few years: sharing and using each other's experience and expertise. The end result is that there now is a large group of psychologists and school counsellors, who can use their experience and knowledge at schools.

Other

How does the Netherlands deal with refugees and migrants with severe psychiatric problems and who are forced to return to their country of origin?

In the 'Terugkeer op Maat' (Tailor-Made Return) project the WTF investigates which mental health care facilities are available in the countries of origin, including **Armenia**. In **northern Iraq, Pakistan and Mongolia**, the WTF and colleagues of Centrum '45 trained staff of repatriation organisations in how to deal with repatriated migrants with psychiatric problems, shame and stigma.

At the request of Free Press Unlimited, the WTF developed the module 'personal health and safety', for the basic journalism course which war reporters take. Together with trainers from the Middle East, the WTF trained war reporters who operate in zones of the current conflict in the Middle East.

Several other international humanitarian organisations submitted requests in 2014 to train their staff in using Psychological First Aid (PFA), with the result that staff of the head office of Plan International in London, Handicap International in Lyon and Summer School in Pisa were trained in the application of PFA.

4. Connect and cooperate

Reference group on MHPSS in emergencies

Starting from February 2013, the WTF and UNICEF co-chaired the Reference Group of the Interagency Standing Committee on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies. Margriet Blaauw MD of Geneva represented the WTF in the reference group. The group plays a crucial role in coordinating and improving the quality of MHPSS after disasters. In 2014, two major programmes were concluded and resulted in the publication of:

- IASC Reference Group Mental Health and Psychosocial Support: Recommendations for Ethical MHPSS Research in Emergency settings (2014)
- IASC Review of the Implementation of the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings: *How Are We Doing?* Both are expected to be published in 2015.

Together with three other Dutch members of the reference group, a round table meeting was held in November which aimed to: 1] demonstrate the need and necessity of psychosocial help after war and disasters;

2] provide insight into the important role Dutch organisations and experts play in the development of psychosocial help in the current crises across the globe;

and 3] formulate recommendations about how psychosocial aid can become a structural part of Dutch humanitarian aid.

The results of the round table meeting 'No emergency aid without psychosocial aid' will contribute to the conference on humanitarian aid which will be organised by 12 Dutch organisations in February 2015. The conference is intended to discuss possible improvements to humanitarian aid and provide input for the UN summit on humanitarian aid, which will be held in Istanbul in 2016.

Strategic partnerships

There is a growing realisation and insight that MHPSS has an important part in dealing with the current major humanitarian crises. Recent analyses of UNOCHA, UNHCR, IOM, and regional NGO networks in the Middle East, for example, have explicitly named the relevance of MHPSS during the emergency phase. Many of these organisations have a great demand for knowledge of MHPSS and how to incorporate it in their emergency aid programmes.

As a centre of expertise and based on its position in the Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, the WTF will further develop its role as centre of expertise in cooperation with humanitarian organisations. In 2014, discussions were held about this development with a number of organisations, and this will be further fleshed out in 2015.