

FINAL REPORT 23 NOV 2014

**Roundtable discussion
MAINSTREAMING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS)
INTO HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS: FOCUS ON EAST AFRICA**

**Wednesday, 6 November 2013, 2:30–3:30
Silver Springs Hotel, Room 3**

Report of the Roundtable and Actions for Follow-up

I. Background

1 International organizations and NGOs are becoming increasingly aware of the need for a programmatic approach to Psychosocial Support and Mental Health (MHPSS) in order to address the needs of their beneficiaries such as refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Mainstreaming MHPSS into humanitarian programming requires international agencies and their implementing partners to optimize the linkages among existing programmes, e.g. education and health, nutrition and agriculture, community services and livelihoods. With this in mind, a Roundtable Discussion was organized in the context of the First East African Regional Conference on Psychology on 6 November 2013 in Kampala.

2. The Final Programme of the Roundtable is in Annex I, the email addresses and affiliations of the participants are in Annex II.

II. Participation

3. The Roundtable Discussion was held during the first day of the three-day First East Africa Regional Conference on Psychology, sponsored by the Government of Uganda (Ministry of Health) and Makerere University Business School in Kampala and the Department of Psychology.

4. The Roundtable was attended by approximately 40 representatives of academia (MA and PhD Candidates, professors from academic institutions, students of Counseling Psychology, Organizational Psychology and Applied Psychology); social workers (HIV, substance abuse, domestic violence, urban youth, the aged, children, SGBV, etc.), former members of international organizations (UNHCR, Medecins sans Frontieres) from across Africa (Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa) and from the West (Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the United States).

III. Objectives

5. The Roundtable was opened by the facilitator, Brinda Wachs, former Senior Technical Advisor to UNHCR as a deployee of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and currently a PhD candidate at the Carl Jung Institute of Analytical Psychology in Zurich (Switzerland).

She outlined the objectives of the Roundtable, to explore:

(1) How best to advocate for and provide MHPSS services to those in need;

(2) The most feasible and fundable options to “piggyback” MHPSS onto existing programmes, such as Agriculture, Community Services, Education, Health and Livelihoods;

(3) How to raise awareness of MHPSS in the donor community to attract funding.

IV. Panelists’ remarks

6. Ms. Bellah WARIMU, Project Coordinator, Friends of Waldorf Project, Kakuma Refugee Camp (UNHCR, Kenya), described UNHCR’s refugee operations at Kakuma, a camp administered by UNHCR since 1992, comprising now 17 different nationalities with a population reaching approximately 100,000 in 2012. She explained that there was a shortage of materials and facilities for schools for children in the camp and that Friends of Waldorf had developed Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) for education and trauma recovery assistance at seven different locations in the camp.

7. Mr. Valerian MBANDI, Area Coordinator, Friends of Waldorf Project, Kakuma Refugee Camp, (UNHCR, Kenya) gave the background of the Waldorf School, founded after WWII by Austrian Rudolph Steiner. There were approximately 5000 Waldorf Schools worldwide, from Kindergarten to Primary to High School. The Waldorf Schools used an alternative approach to education, linked nature and body awareness and allowing free expression through the “Seven Arts:” Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Music, Theater, Body Movement (Eurythmics) and Literature. The Friends of Waldorf programme at Kakuma drew on the philosophies of the Waldorf approach of child-centered learning, to help children use artistic and creative expression to deal with depression, anxiety, grief and trauma as a result of the refugee experience.

V. Discussion

8. The Roundtable held a “Tour de Table” with each participant introducing themselves and stating their interest in the topic. Several issues emerged as particularly important and the Roundtable had an exchange of views, noting in particular the following issues:

-- **Removing stigma** of MH

-- Psycho-social support (PSS) for **Youth**, youth empowerment, youth employment

-- **Counseling** Psychology as an important domain

-- **Education Psychology** and the Psychology of Education, Special Needs and Disability

-- **Suicide Prevention** among youth, youth violence, problem of bullying

-- Issues of **aging** in society, mental health in families

-- Psychotherapeutic approaches to **substance abuse/alcoholism** and drug addiction

-- **Sexual and gender-based violence** (SGBV)

-- The **nexus of physical-mental-community** health and well-being (mind-body-community), collective neuro-science, resource centers for community

-- **Cross-culturally-sensitive Family Therapies and Family Rights**

- The **bio-psycho-social** approach to mental health and illness
- The importance of prioritizing mental health and PSS for **refugees**
- More research needed on MHPSS interventions for refugees and IDPs
- MHPSS and **reintegration** for ex-prisoners and ex-combattants
- The link between mental illness and **non-communicable diseases** (diabetes, respiratory disease and obesity)
- The importance of **physical activity** to combat mental illness
- The use of **art**, music, theatre/drama and body movement in alleviating depression and addressing trauma
- The important of **assessment tools** (WHO, UNHCR, IMC, MHGap curriculum, IASC pyramid)
- Girls schooling, **girl-child**, SGBV, gender mainstreaming
- **Language gaps** in providing PSS, importance of accurate interpretation.

VI. Outcome and follow-up

9. The Roundtable discussed possible follow-up actions as below to build capacity in the region in the areas of MHPSS in humanitarian action:

-- **Information exchange**

Share information and resources, using existing tools, such as the MHPSS.net. All members were encouraged to register (free of charge) with this online forum, including subscribing to separate groups on the MHPSS.net (e.g. Child Protection Group, Africa Group, etc.);

-- **Psychology education, tools and training**

Enhance education and training in psychology through online resources (www.coursera.org) and share information on additional education resources;

-- **Awareness-raising**

Link with International Organizations, UN and NGOs, academia and donor governments and organizations (NIH, EU, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, USA, others?) to raise awareness on the importance of mainstreaming MHPSS and prioritize for funding.

-- **Launch of East Africa Psychology Network (EAP.net) at follow-up meeting: Nov/Dec 2014 (Nairobi?)**

10. The Roundtable raised the possibility for a follow-up meeting, possibly in East Africa in autumn 2014 (or embedded in the (Second?) East African Conference on Psychology at a later date).

11. The follow-up event could launch a new East Africa Psychology network (EAPN or EAP.net), focused on selected topics from the list above. The format could be a few expert speakers and several working groups, eg. an exercise in proposal-writing for grants in the health and mental health field. Potential donors (Norway, Sweden, UK, US, EU?) could be invited to the event to give tips on applying for grants and on donors' funding priorities. Another training module could be on Psychological First Aid (PFA),d e.g. in emergencies. Other working groups could be topic-specific: substance abuse and addiction, suicide prevention among teens, gender-specific issues, such as "Psychology of the Girl Child in East Africa." etc.

-- **Your further involvement and ideas are welcome!**

12. **Your further comments and inputs** are welcomed in order to carry on this work. Colleagues with experience in fund-raising through grant proposal-writing and application procedures are particularly welcome to present a module on proposal-writing at the next Roundtable in 2014. A final version of the Report will be submitted to MHPSS.net to post to their website.

ANNEX I

Roundtable discussion MAINSTREAMING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS) INTO HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS: FOCUS ON EAST AFRICA

FINAL PROGRAMME

2:30–2:35 Opening remarks: Moderator (Ms. Brinda WACHS, PhD Candidate, Carl Jung Institute of Analytical Psychology, Zürich, formerly of UNHCR, Geneva)

2:35–3:00 Panel discussion

- **Ms. Bellah WARIMU, Project Coordinator, Friends of Waldorf Project, Kakuma Refugee Camp (UNHCR) Kenya,** "The use of Child-Friendly Spaces in schools and other interventions for Education and Trauma recovery assistance"
- **Mr. Valerian MBANDI, Area Coordinator, Friends of Waldorf Project, Kakuma Refugee Camp, (UNHCR) Kenya:** "Using the "Seven Arts" of the Waldorf School philosophy to help children deal with their grief, depression and trauma through art, music and body movement (eurythmics)

3:00–3:15 Tour de table and discussion

3:15–3:25 Conclusions and recommendations: The Roundtable discussed the various issues that arose and the moderator and panelists will summarize the discussion and its conclusions and recommendations. A draft report will be transmitted to all participants inviting comments. A final report will be posted to MHPSS.net and shared among all participants to the First East Africa Regional Conference on Psychology.

3:30 Close of Roundtable, exchange of contact information, photo-taking

ANNEX II

LIST OF EMAIL CONTACTS

Organizer:

Brinda Wachs, Phd Candidate, Carl Jung Institute of Analytical Psychology,
brindawachs@gmail.com

Panelists:

Bella Warimu, Waldorf Kakuma Project, Kenya, bella@waldorgkakumaproject.org

Valerian Mbandi, Waldorf Kakuma Project, Kenya: mbandi@waldorfkakumaproject.org

Participants:

Mwesigye Jackson, MUS, hannsnsheka@gmail.com

Doreen Katiba, KENYU, dorkatiba@yahoo.com

Prisca Tarus, Mt. Kenya University, tarusprisca@gmail.com

Evarist Ankwasiiize, Kisubi University, evaristank@gmail.com

Kiriza Julian, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, kirizajulian@yahoo.com

Jane Van Es, St. Paul's University, vanesjr@spu.ac.ke

Andrew Ssemata Sentoogo, Makerere University, andrewssemata@yahoo.co.uk

Jane Ngure, African Nazarene University, jngureos9@gmail.com, jngureo59@gmail.com,

Teopist Babuije, Kisubi University, babsthc@yahoo.com

Roselie Unezulike, Nwafor-Orizu College of Nsugbe-Nigeria, roseunezulike@yahoo.com

Jonathan Nattel, Hopethiopian/Rwanda, jon.nattel@gmail.com

Joseph Fingaca Thuku, Mt. Kenya University, josephngaca@gmail.com

Lillian Otieno, Lillgthe Valley Psychosocial and Health Centre– Kenya,
belltam2003@yahoo.com

Sharon Komwhangi, Ndejje University, gransik@yahoo.com

Kevin Turner, Invest in Children: Africa, brewfresh@gmail.com

Roos Korste, in2mentalhealth, in2mentalhealth@gmail.com

S.Idemubia Erhabor, Northwest University, RSA, sundayidemudia@yahoo.com

Oluyinka Ojedokun, Adekunle Ajasin University, NIgeria and North West University, RSA,
yinkaoje2004@yahoo.com

Stephen Asatsa, Mt. Kenya University, asatsas@yahoo.com

Janet Nambi, Makerere University, Uganda, jnambi@muip.mak.ac.ng

Habiba Corodwa Mohammed, Women and Development Against Distress in Africa
(WADADIA) – Kenya, habiba@wadadia.org

Jacinta Ondeng, Kenyatta University, jacintasnd@yahoo.co.uk

Zimbini Ogre, Fort England, South Africa, zimbinio@gmail.com

Gilbert Ogwang, Butabika School of Psychiatric Nursing, ogilberts@yahoo.com

Kimberly Krauk, Invest in Children Africa, kkraukiic@gmail.com

Jane Ochola, Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA Kenya), nyajery3@yahoo.co.uk

Christiana Njuguna, Mt Kenya University, cmatheru@gmail.com

Jane Nyutu, Mt. Kenya University, Lifeskillsmku@gmail.com
