



INCEST TRAUMA CENTER – BELGRADE
Support Group for Child Sexual Abuse Survivors
and War Survivors of Sexual Violence

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THE REPORT OF INCEST TRAUMA CENTER - BELGRADE ON OPENING THE FIRST 24-HOUR CRISIS TELEPHONE SERVICE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULT SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE (PERIOD OF PROJECT: JULY 1-NOVEMBER 30 2004)

Goals achieved

The first 24-hour crisis telephone service in the country for children and adults survivors of sexual abuse was opened in Incest Trauma Center-Belgrade on November 19, 2004 (the World Prevention Day of Child Abuse). It was announced by the street action in three points in Belgrade, and by the press conference that gathered 13 media representatives. The point in front of municipality of Vračar (where ITC is located and with which ITC has various supportive agreements), shopping center «(New) Merkator» in Novi Beograd and Trg Republike were used for distribution of 20 000 leaflets by which we announced the beginning of the crisis line work and the World prevention day of child sexual abuse to citizens. We printed the leaflets with the support of Reconstruction Women's Fund and the private sector partners (Hemofarm concern and Zepter International).

10 days earlier we started the preliminary activities by circular letter to the media we regularly cooperate with, with an appeal to announce for free (with an article) that the crisis telephone service of Incest Trauma Center - Belgrade (ITC) is extending its working hours to 24 hours. Some of the media that did so are, for example, B92 that repeatedly broadcasted the information during their electronic news, weekly magazine «Reporter» by an article (November 17, 2004., p.4), Newspaper of the Stari Grad municipality that is regularly distributed to post boxes of the municipality's citizens. Besides the media (listed in the attachment) that were present at the conference, the special attention was given (through the interviews) to the city television Studio B and ANEM Network for the Serbia, that repeatedly broadcasted the crisis line number during the interviews. The copy of videotape from the press conference is available at ITC. The office of Save the Children, UK in Belgrade also participated at the press conference, and supported opening of the crisis line by providing trainer's fees.

ITC continuous crisis line was also announced through all the mailing lists available - our own and our partner's organizations (for example, ASTRA mailing list and bulletin, Žene na delu bulletin, Anti-trafficking team at the region of Serbia (announced by the Republic Ministry of the Interior), all the ITC's partners individually and through the Network of Trust (the intervention system of practitioners that is ITC's project, consisting of 15 GO and NGO, and from all the sectors: school, health service, police, social work, NGO, prosecution, etc.))

The process that led to opening of ITC crisis telephone service

24-hour ITC crisis hotline is maintained by the girls from different faculties who were, during the period of July-November 2004, specially trained for the work, and then carefully guided through processes of intervision (Tuesdays from 5 to 8 p.m, on regular basis; besides regular case studies and ITC procedures, the emphasize is on the prevention programs. Total number of hours is 24) and supervision done by ITC personnel. The main educational program of 54 hours in July 2004

was done by ITC personnel. The program was done completely by the agenda given in the first version of the project, and mostly using the methodology shown in the ITC GBV (an authorized manual that ITC, as a training center, uses). During 2003 ITC was required - as a part of the training for teachers within police schooling - to make the manual for the War Trauma Foundation (Dutch foundation that supported the project). The manual contains knowledge and skills ITC uses in trainings. We used the opportunity to systematize our own method, not only for the profiles included by this project but for all profiles, considering that ITC has been working as a training center since its beginning (in 1994) and has educated more than 3000 professionals from different GOs and NGOs. The manual was originally written in English and ITC personnel uses it in all kinds of educational programs. So, of course it is used in training program for its members.

The main programme of 54 hours was followed by: a) 15 effective hours of additional education on practical counseling skills, by German feminist trainers from women's NGO Wildwasser, Berlin; b) 3 hours in meeting the members of Network of Trust; c) 14 hours of learning and doing practical exercises considering communication and team work (back-up staff member available for all the personal processes in volunteer program); d) visiting workshop (2 hours - RWF); e) 12 hours of effective work on the crisis hotline during September-October 2004 (majority of the volunteers exceeded the requested number of hours during the selection process).

On November 1, 2004, following the usual ITC procedures, the selection was completed and the following was completed:

- 32 girls from the different faculties applied for the training for ITC volunteers
- 19 girls passed the in-take interview and started the training
- 1 girl dropped out during the training
- 18 girls were admitted to ITC volunteers
- 15 out of 18 girls filled the criteria needed for direct work with children and adult survivors of sexual abuse and signed 1-year volunteer contracts, while 3 girls are available for the different jobs that do not include direct work with the clients. 2 of 15 girls are expected to fill the specific additional tasks until the final signing of the contract (so-called «temporary 3-months contract»)
- 1 girl was admitted to ITC personnel.

There was an agreement on 24-hour back-up of the partner organizations / institutions that provide police assistance and placing in shelters in Belgrade and Novi Sad. For everything needed, volunteers on duty on ITC crisis line have 24-hour back-up in Center personnel through on-call mobile number.

The whole street actions, by creating transparencies, were done by the volunteers; the idea and making of the leaflet itself were the complete author's work of the girls in ITC volunteer program. Participating at the press conference as well as including the different schools in announcing the World Prevention Day of Child Abuse was done with the maximum effort of volunteers. This is in the aim of implementing workshops with school children (general population and disabled children) as well as pannel for children's parents and other adults. The action in total remains as the specific subject of evaluation in the following period with the foreign supervisor of the Center.

Important! From the perspective of ITC personnel, the most important goal achieved is that we worked on building Center's team in total by strenghtening the volunteer's team. We worked constantly with the new team members on promotion of the philosophy, mission and communication skills when working with children and adult survivors of any form of violence. We worked on cohesion of the personnel's work with the volunteer program and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities and strenghtened concentrating to tasks and professionalism, regardless the status (volunteer or staff). We believe that, until now, the understanding, accepting and mutual promotion of values needed in our work is formed and further promoted towards the clients,

citizens, experts /partner organizations (in mutual appearances) and also among us during the process of team building. These achievements encourage us in realization of ITC's long-term plans.

Changes of the project proposal submitted to RWF

Thanks to additional joint investment of the private sector partners we used a part of the amount planned for making and printing of the leaflets, and projected in the budget proposal for RWF for gynecological services for the clients who came to ITC during the project. Because it's not the big amount, which original purpose is diverted in purposes useful for our everyday work (about 2.5% of the total budget approved), we hope RWF will approve it. The other changes consider work content and have actually been just broadening of the goals initially projected.

Notes for the future work

It's important to work continually on advertizing the 24-hour crisis hotline itself and to develop strategies specifically considering that and counting on the budget line for advertising as the future permanent need of ITC. Regarding maintaining of the line and the volunteer's program capacity, that can be strong only if regularly renewed, it's important to follow the usual rhythm of organizing regular training programs for new volunteers (in the women's centers abroad that are like ours, it' like three times a year with the process lasting four months - the same duration as in ITC). Given the ITC context, it's necessary to develop a rhythm of year's training in this cause and this permanent budget line to be open up in ITC's strategic plans.

Until the next training program is organized and the volunteers' number is increased, it's especially important to respect possibilities and limits of the current program. Regarding that, one of the «safety plans» is to cover the reported cases during the particular number of hours by mobile phone (for example, by diverting the «night calls» to mobile crisis number that's with the volunteer on duty instead of her being at the offices of ITC along the time when volunteers are additionally busy studying for the exams)

Concluding remarks for RWF

It would be important to us if the Reconstruction Women's Fund could occasionally repeat the information about ITC 24-hour crisis telephone service on its mailing lists, which would help us in advertising. We also find it important to think of the possibility of printing ITC GBV manual with the support of RWF, considering the TOT activities planned together with RWF. In this way, a multiplied transfer of knowledge would be achieved - more important than the level achieved by ITC alone as a training center. The team of the Incest Trauma Center - Belgrade sincerely thanks Reconstruction Women's Fund for all the support given.

Documents enclosed:

- the leaflet on November 19 and on the opening of ITC 24-hour crisis telephone service
- the announcement of the press conference
- the ITC's press package
- the list of media representatives, present at the press conference

Respectfully,
Dušica Popadić
director

Belgrade, December 26, 2004