



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

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SUMMARY

Incest Trauma Center - Belgrade and Wildwasser, Berlin, carried out multi-level training that has been recognized as a successful one both by participants, trainers and organizers themselves. This joint view on 12 days of 25 female professionals, practitioners from 16 GOs and NGOs working in the field of human rights and intervention against abuse, we find of ultimate significance and acknowledgment for strategies and efforts of the Incest Trauma Center - Belgrade (ITC) regarding period May - October 2004. Although SC, UK supported 3 from 4 trainings in this serial, we find natural to report on the whole of our work.

Another action within the project supported by SC, UK relates to ITC opening of 1st 24 hours crisis hotline for survivors of sexual assault in our country and we are progressing with high satisfaction level toward starting this crisis hotline on November 19 - World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse. 18 young female students will be carriers and main helpers to survivors of sexual assault and their supportive persons who call our hotline. Funding organization that in the biggest extent supported our 24 hours hotline is the Reconstruction Women's Fund (RWF), therefore ITC will in the month of November submit main report on the establishing hotline activities in total to RWF and forward it's narrative to SC, UK, too.

AIMS REACHED / GAINS VISIBLE

A) Training for 23 female professionals by Wildwasser, Berlin, trainers (enclosed program includes time-schedule) - In the content, we worked on numerous case studies, learned further on supervision methods and improved counseling skills. We spoke on counselor as a person and designed each own professional atom in order that each of us can look into herself in analytic way and get to know others. We opened "shadow sides" when working in the context of violence in long-term. Numerous role-plays took place and we found this important because it demystifies direct work of professionals by putting them on the spot in a safe way. Besides cases related to individual counseling, we tried out leading group work both for girls who survived sexual assault and for mothers whose children have been assaulted. Themes and methodology were practiced in a concrete way. Introduced and reinforced psychodrama method when applicable. Related to certain themes, there have been used creative methods such as sculptures, rituals, music, etc. Some of remarkable case studies we all gained from worked on the context of Roma community and domestic violence. Along the training it showed up the need to practice longer special issues regarding cases of childhood sexual assault and how to do intervention and supervision, therefore we agreed on postponing the theme of indirect traumatization for later. All written materials used during trainings remained on disposal for group members with agreements on individual copying and further distribution. Several articles that have been put by ITC volunteers into electronic version have been distributed to everyone already.

We reached significant group cohesion since not all group members knew each other earlier or have been co-operating. We spoke on concrete ways of working together and how to combine expertises that are different but to make them compatible. We highlighted what exactly our roles are for survivors and our domains. We spoke on boundary and as well interconnection between counseling and therapy. We considered how to integrate activist part into usual institutional (GO) approach and worked further on strengthening authentic partnership between NGOs and GOs. An open atmosphere has been achieved that enabled to give suggestion to trainers along this serial what exactly in the content to emphasize more, to add or reschedule since it's been known already by group members.

There were agreements on future meetings to articulate precisely integration of newcomers in the Network. This process will go in steps in terms of formalizing co-operation in the month of October and direct joint intervention around survivors have been already started during months behind.

B) Training course for 18 female student volunteers to start up 24 hours crisis hotline -

During 54 hours training ITC staff taught volunteers on international documents and conventions our country ratified and has been obliged to implement them in the context of violence against children and women. We investigated motivation of each volunteer in a very detail way and stimulated it toward long-term involvement in gender-based violence area. We taught on advocating in the best interest of gender-based violence child and adult survivor and how to work with supportive persons. We entered mentorship period and by the end of October 2004 it will give final results of selection process and in November will be started up 24 hours crisis hotline for sexual assault survivors. We worked intensively on checking volunteers' responsibility attitudes and introduced ITC policies and procedures if abuse of child and survivors reporting their cases to ITC would have happened by ITC helpers.

Wildwasser trainers assisted our volunteer program by carrying out 15 hours of ed. program. Themes that have been worked out: dynamics of abuse with special attention on loyalty, ambivalence, boundaries. Volunteers role-played certain situations that might be waiting for them on crisis hotline e.g. survivor as a caller, offender as a caller, etc. Parallel with working in the group A, trainers worked with volunteers on their professional choice to work in the context of violence and worked on the theme "counselor as a person". Another theme that occurred related to group work with girls who survived childhood sexual assault and both prevention theme had been introduced through storytelling and later on speaking back on dynamics of abuse.

1st 24 hours crisis hotline for sexual assault survivors and their supportive persons will be open November 19 (World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse) and day earlier we'll announce it on press conference (will be agreed in time with SC, UK on joint appearance of ITC, RWF and SC, UK). At the same occasion, we shall carry out several actions with schoolchildren and adolescents. These actions will be led by our volunteers. All the work of volunteers is supervised by ITC staff.

OBSTACLES

A) Since it took time to put in accordance heterogeneous group that entered our training (different backgrounds, experiences and institutions / organizations they come from), we've followed trainers' suggestion to postpone the theme of indirect traumatization and focus on case management since the aim of expanding Network of Trust clearly remains strengthening our intervention team of practitioners and improving their service quality.

B) No obstacles.

FUTURE PLANS

Usual case management sessions of the Network, followed by other advocacy / lobbying activities will continue in coming months. At the beginning of 2005, in the shape of expanded Network of Trust, we shall agree on the moment needed to add the theme of indirect traumatization. Besides, regarding group dynamics issues, we shall invest specially into rivalry and professional concurrence issues and in that way take good care of Network's organization structure and group climate. Both indirect traumatization and rivalry issues should have been done in facilities out of Belgrade to get the best result.

We express our thanks to SC, UK to support this project in a very smooth way and would be pleased to continue co-operation.

Sincerely,

Dušica Popadić
director

Belgrade, September 28, 2004