Training teachers in areas of armed conflict

Anica Mikuš Kos

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Introduction

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It is a Sunday morning and the group gathers in a hotel that has seen better days, on the outskirts of the small town of Prizren, south of Kosovo and close to the Albanian and Macedonian border. It is last day of a psychosocial training seminar for teachers who have been working in the poor and war-affected area of Skenderaj, a province north of Kosovo. Inside the rooms, it may look quiet, but this is only an illusion.

In each room, five groups of ten teachers are working on one of their last assignments: making a drawing that expresses an aspect of the lessons given during the training seminars. One group draws a dove flying above Kosovo. Another group draws a man watering a tree, a reference to a small project that supports schools in tree planting. A third group draws two faces: one looks severe, with a big mouth and small ears and eyes, representing the attitude towards the children before training; the other face looks happy, with a small mouth, big ears and eyes wide open to represent the change of attitude after training.

These teachers are participants of the psychosocial training seminar for teachers described in this manual. They attended lectures and participated in small workshops. The lectures not only provided information relevant to the current daily work in the schools, it also provided new information. More importantly, it assisted teachers in developing more of an awareness of the acquired knowledge and skills they already possessed through the use of an overview.

The lectures also had another purpose; to act as a warm-up for the group work to be carried out in the workshops on

participants experiences and best practices. For many teachers in an area of armed conflict, participating in group work may be an entirely new experience.

These workshops, on average ten participants guided by two trainers, were opportunities to share examples of good practice, receive emotional support and acknowledgement. In addition, they offered chances for participating in role-play exercises; each one a new opportunity for the development of practical skills and empathy.

During the workshops the teachers were also encouraged to look for new solutions to their daily problems, and plan the introduction of feasible innovations within their schools.

Psychosocial interventions in areas of armed conflict often include training of diverse groups such as: counsellors, community health promoters, nurses, doctors, midwifes, community leaders, etc. This special supplement is about the training of teachers, one important target group for community-based intervention, because of their daily contact with children.

The teachers participating in this seminar were, in a sense, privileged. Most teachers in areas of armed conflict globally work in difficult circumstances and would benefit from a support project like the one described in this manual. The training methods described in this manual appear to be applicable in diverging cultures, and contexts.

If you are an experienced professional working in the field of child psychology, or child psychiatry, this manual gives you all the information needed for organising a support program for teachers that would benefit children and their families in areas of armed conflict. When reading this manual, we hope trainers of counsellors and psychosocial workers may feel challenged to think about their own approach to training and the support of traumatised communities.

In many psychosocial projects a Training of Trainers (ToT) is part of the package. These ToT's are rarely described. In this manual, the ToT is described in detail, and the ideas behind it are explicitly defined.

The description of the training for trainers, and the seminars for teachers, clearly show that they mirror each other. Both are aimed at active participation of the trainees, at empowerment, at creating and safeguarding an atmosphere of respect, support and encouragement, which eventually will be mirrored in a more protective school climate.

This manual describes development work that is still in progress. Some sections could be improved with more elaboration and comments from our readers; for example the ways in which teachers participating in the seminars can share their newly developed views and knowledge with colleagues. This publication offers an approach that has been effective in diverging contexts, but it is not the perfect manual. It is meant to be adapted to new situations and unforeseen challenges, and to inspire others to develop their own manuals and methods. However, the editors of Intervention believe that publishing such 'work in progress' is an important contribution to the development of our knowledge of good practice in psychosocial work. We look forward to your comments.

Ria Stiefelhagen & Guus van der Veer

Ria Stiefelhagen, child psychologist, works at War Trauma Foundation and was guest-editor for this special supplement to Intervention 3.2

1. The importance of good people

The design and composition of a psychosocial program is determined by many factors. One factor of a practical nature is the circumstances under which the program will be run. Definitions of circumstances can include both the needs of the population where the programme will take place, but must also include a thorough understanding of the local facilities available. For example: you can't rely on video equipment or a PowerPoint presentation as a feature of training when local availability of electricity may be erratic. Similarly, you cannot accommodate teachers in a hotel if there is no hotel. Also, an awareness of the educational level of local trainers and teachers is essential to adapt the program for local conditions.

The design of a program also is dependent on ideas developed from the professional and private background of the designer. Often ideas originating from personal life experiences are just as, or perhaps more, important than theoretical concepts. Therefore, it is apt that I begin with a personal experience of my own.

I was eight years old in the winter of 1943. My parents had just joined Marshall Tito's partisan army. During a fascist offensive I hid with peasants in the village. They saved my life by telling the fascist soldiers that I was a relative, risking their own lives to do so. In the midst of such horror and evil, people such as those peasants greatly influenced my view of humanity; I perceived the world as a place in which there are very bad people, but even more who are good.

At the time, German soldiers who were perceived as an evil-force occupied the country where I lived. Yet, one day a German soldier saw me walking in 'shoes' made of straw wrapped around my feet with a cord. As it happens, he was a shoemaker and a good person, so he made me a pair of shoes with wooden soles. That man changed my vision of the Germans. Because of him, I was able to recognise that all Germans were not evil people, among them were also good people.

These are some of my life experiences that have shaped my views on what can be done to empower children affected by wars and social adversities, as well as what can be done to stimulate the healing process. The simple deeds of good people can make an enormous difference. Any positive experiences can help to counterbalance the experienced, and the perceived, evil. When that happens, the opportunities to overcome harm and heal scars increase significantly.

It is very important that the 'good' is generated from environments outside the family circle. In war related and other socially conditioned adversities, it is not the family, which creates the evil. It is humanity in the larger sense of the word. The 'they' in this case is perceived to be those outside of the family, even though the harm is felt within it and impacts on the healthy functioning of it. Yet, for the child it is essential to meet 'they' who are agents for good; teachers, volunteers, international helpers, good soldiers and other representatives of humanity who can bring moral, emotional and practical goods in the child's life. People involved in psychosocial programs are, or can be, representatives of good forces in the world. I also leant that winter that the quality of

everyday life significantly determines a child's ability to cope. The material quality of my life at eight years old, surviving a bitterly cold winter, increased significantly when I received a proper pair of shoes. The material quality of life in war affects children as much, if not more than the adults around them. For the majority of children in post war circumstances the quality of life is generally bad, with extremes of deprivation.

While material help is necessary, sometimes little can be offered. Emotional 'goods' such as; empathy, support, safety, routine, and opportunities for joyful activities, for learning, and for positive interpersonal experiences are also important for the quality of everyday life. Psychosocial programs can provide these 'goods' and thus can tangibly improve the moral, emotional, interpersonal and social quality of a child's life. They can strengthen the coping mechanisms of children to deal with loss and traumatic experience, as well as with social and material adversities.

A good, caring school and teachers with sufficient energy can create a life space of quality. In that way, teachers can have a protective function in the development of children affected by war and social deprivation. Many other activities occurring in the normal everyday life of the child, can work in the same way.

As the school is the most universal, and most important, institution in the child's life as well as the most important life space for children outside the family, I invested my energy mostly within that environment. My goals were aimed at ameliorating the school environment in terms of humanisation, empowerment and mobilisation of social capital. All processes from which all members of the system can benefit: children, families and teachers.

2. Training teachers in areas of armed conflict: basic principles

This manual describes a psychosocial program for teachers in areas of armed conflict. It was developed within the framework of Slovene Philanthropy and carried out in Slovenia with Bosnian refugee teachers. During the war I also worked with teachers in Bosnia. Later, CARE International implemented the program in Kosovo, and in North Caucasus. After the creation of the Foundation 'Together', the program was adapted to post conflict circumstances to be implemented in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, North Osetia and Iraq. These programs proved to be an efficient method to both educate and motivate teachers. They, in turn, then created an effective instrument to facilitate capacity building and sustainable school based activities.

Teachers were, in spite of their bad economic and uncertain social position, very enthusiastic about attending training courses. After the training, the level of implementation of acquired knowledge and new ideas was very high. International experts were surprised again and again by teachers' good will, readiness, and capacity to apply a diversity of models of good practice to assist children in distress.

The program is based on the concept that the school and the teachers have important psychosocially protective influence on the present well being, mental health condition and psychosocial functioning of children. They can also positively influence future development for all children in school. These protective factors are even more important for children affected by armed conflict, as they must cope with the nega-tive and ongoing consequences of the conflict.

The program has four important characteristics. First, the program is *comprehensive*. It is aimed at stimulating a wide range of factors within the normal development of children. It does not narrowly focus only on the consequences of trauma, and strategies for dealing with those consequences.

Therefore, the program is aimed at mobilising all possible protective factors that can be provided by a school and benefits not only children at risk, but all children.

Second, the program is aimed at *mutual support*. It achieves this by promoting contact between the teachers and encourages support of each other. The combination of lectures and group work, as well as the interactive nature of the training, were designed with this goal in mind. The contents of the lectures are close to the knowledge and experiences of the teachers. The lectures are presented in every day language without professional jargon or unnecessary psychological gibberish. Therefore, they also function by providing a common language in which the teachers can discuss, and reflect upon their experiences. The group work is a platform for exchanging experiences between teachers and is where the real work takes place. Teachers learn a lot, if not most, from the experiences of other teachers and it is essential trainers should facilitate this process in order to be successful. Trainers should continuously strive to connect with the teachers.

Third, the program is *interactive*. Teachers play an important part in the construction of the program of seminars. The trainer has

a prepared program, but one that remains open to changes. Often, by the end of the first module, the teachers participating in training are invited to express their aims and goals for the program. In this way, the program becomes easily adapted to both the local needs and the conditions of the teachers.

Fourth, the program is *community based* and encourages schools to cooperate with organisations that can be of assistance, or start new Non Governmental Organisations (NGO's). The program includes the introduction of voluntary work into the school.

This manual describes in detail the philosophy of the program, the training of the trainers, and the training seminars for teachers. It includes descriptions of the content of lectures and suggestions for group work. It describes difficulties, and problematic situations that may occur during the training. It also gives thought to methods for testing the impact of the training, and it describes the potential impact of the program on the community.

The development of this manual

This book is the result of thirteen years of practical experience in training local professionals and teachers, in times of armed conflicts, and post conflict in former Yugoslavia, Caucasus and Iraq. The programs were well accepted and fruitful in all mentioned regions.

The main lessons learned during these years are:

- programs should be adapted to the local context: the social, economic situation, present circumstances, state of mind of the target groups (teachers, children, parents, etc), the prevailing beliefs, religious, ethnic and cultural traditions;
- the implementers and main actors of the program should be local persons, who should be prepared for their role; this means that local capacity building should be the leading principle of the program;
- the program should be run in the spirit of mutual respect and awareness that all parties involved contribute with their own: philosophy, knowledge, experience and know how to the developed body of knowledge, towards the dynamic and impact of the program;
- in addition to cognitive and experiential learning, the program should empower the participants and encourage enthusiasm.

The use of the manual

This manual is intended for people who are interested in developing school and community based programs for the protection of the mental health and psychosocial well being of children. The applicability and usefulness of the described program is not limited to regions affected by armed conflict and post conflict circumstances. It is also appropriate for regions suffering serious social adversities stemming from other causes.

This manual contains two types of information: information that could help aid organisations and trainers to develop and prepare training programs, and information that could be handed out to participants in training courses. The contents presented in this manual can (and should) be adapted to the specific needs of the beneficiaries.

The quality and impact of the program described in this manual depends primarily on how it is brought to life. The design should be conceived and finalised along with local partners. The programme should be flexible and adapted to local circumstances.

3. The protective role of school

An important life space

The mental health of children, their psychosocial development and their chances to overcome war related adversities, all depend on the organisation and quality of their every day life.

The school is, after the family, the second most important life space for school-aged children. Almost all children between the ages of 6-15 go to school and spend a large part of their waking life there. The school, therefore, can have an enormous impact on the quality of life and psychosocial well being of almost all children in any community. Most traumatised, or otherwise psychosocially affected children may not receive professional mental health care but can be helped by their teacher within the context of school.

The school as a field of psychosocial functioning

The wellbeing and development of children is based on how they feel (e.g. sad, joyful), how they look at the world around them (e.g. optimistic, pessimistic), how they look at themselves (e.g. with high or low self-esteem) and how they behave. Their behaviour can be accessed by: whether their social behaviour is adequate or inadequate, do they or don't they fulfil the normal tasks connected with their age group, and have high or low learning achievements. All of these differing factors are interconnected.

We often observe signs of emotional distress and sadness in children affected by war, but at the same time their social behaviour and achievements are surprisingly satisfactory. Having the opportunity to interact within a framework of adequate social behaviour is a very important protective mechanism against the deterioration of psychosocial functioning. It can also prevent the later development of psychological problems by helping these children to cope with their distress and sadness. Lack of opportunities for normal social interaction will endanger a child's wellbeing and development.

Thus, the school is a very important place for the psychosocial functioning of a child. The quality of the school determines the range of opportunities for normal social interactions, and therefore the wellbeing and development of the child. Within the school, both adults and peers are models of appropriate social behaviour and in turn, can provide positive reactions in response to adequate social behaviour shown by the child. This aids in development of a feeling of social competence, which in turn contributes to the development of self-confidence, and a positive attitude.

Success in school work; being a good student or at least excelling in some school related activity such as sport or art, is a potent force for enhancing self esteem and self confidence. Both, self-esteem and self-confidence have a positive influence on coping capacities.

The importance of school during and after armed conflict

During an armed conflict the school may be one of the few continuous aspects of normal

life. Often school is the *only* institutional structure that has remained a constant from their previous life, the pre-war life. The complete break with the normal life after displacement is bound to have a severe psychological effect on children. Therefore, every activity that can narrow the gap between the normal life and life in exile will have a large impact on the child's psychological condition. Going to school is an activity that can successfully narrow the gap, and therefore makes the lives of children more normal, even for displaced and refugee children.

Going to school also fills the daily life of children with purposeful activity; it gives structure and meaning to each day. Inactivity is one of the greatest hardships of refugee life. In refugee camps, people often are forced into a state of idleness. Idleness, time wasting and emptiness enhance passivity and can result in, or deepen, a depressive mood. A meaningful, regular activity like going to school can prevent this from happening to children. The school also creates opportunities for children think of the future: the class of tomorrow with the next lesson for which they need to do some homework, the end of the school year, etc. The school facilitates encounters with new, interesting and attractive people. A child can make new friends. In school he/she will find new acquaintances and friends so that the circle of his social contacts broadens and becomes more diverse. The people he/she meets are no longer just family, extended family, or people with whom he is sharing accommodation.

At school, the children can hear new stories. In a refugee centre, the child will often hear stories of disasters that have hit, or may hit, family members or friends. They will also often hear worried adults talking about war events. In school, the child's thoughts are engaged in the pursuit of other topics. His/her intellectual and experiential world is broadening and filled with new ideas. The school offers opportunities for acquiring new knowledge and insights, as well as developing new interests. The school can make the child mentally and emotionally more active, awaken their curiosity and motivate them to prepare for further intellectual and social development. The school can also help the child develop good working habits. In normal life most children would have some household duties or chores, but in refugee life these duties may be very limited. The working habits connected with school become, therefore, all the more important. A child going to school is, to a certain degree, gaining control over their life. He/she is at least partly relieved of dependence on others. Participating in school enhances independence and self-reliance, as it is up to the child whether they do their homework, learn the lesson, what their grades are and whether they will pass the class.

Going to school also tends to stabilise the daily life of children. During political tension or armed conflict, when it is impossible to know what the next day will bring, any stabilising elements that bring some predictability are of the utmost significance for the psychological condition of children. Refugee children, characteristically, have a feeling of insecurity. The terrible events and shocks they have experienced were usually unexpected. A continuing uncertainty surrounding their present life situation also contributes to a feeling of insecurity. Within the school there is a regular rhythm and predictability that can counter these feelings and enhance the feeling of safety and security in children.

A recognised effect of becoming a refugee is the negative impact on self-esteem.

Children experience injustice and humiliation, just as adults experience these feelings. They are deprived of many of the material and social attributes that previously supported their positive self-image. As school children, they partly regain a social role. They are students again and they receive recognition for their work, which helps develop a sense of competence. The school makes it possible for a child to be successful in certain subjects, or in extra-curricular activities. The teacher, who respects and accepts the children they teach, can considerably raise the children's self esteem.

The school gives refugee children the feeling of belonging to a social structure, which constitutes part of the broader social structure, and enhances the sense of belonging to a community.

At school a child meets many people who may help him with his developmental and psychological problems. These are his teachers and schoolmates. School acts as a remedial agent for all refugee children, but it is also a rich source of psychological help for the children with serious emotional problems. This is particularly true when parents are - for whatever reason - unable to provide the support and consolation needed. A male teacher may become especially important to children who have lost their father, and may occasionally assume the role of father. By the same token, a female teacher may become especially important to children who have lost their mother.

The teacher is also important in maintaining contact with, and offer support to, parents. As a result, the relationship between parents and their children (even the ones that are too young to go to school) may be vastly improved.

Protective factors in general

A popular topic for discussion in develop-mental psychology is the huge range of possible responses to stressful events and deprivation. In children, the adaptive reaction to stress are thought to be related to *coping skills*, which in turn are seen as the result of a balance between more or less permanent *stress factors,* and *protective factors* (Garmezy, 1985).

The term stress factor (or risk factor) is commonly used to refer to factors that include: traumatisation and neglect, marital conflicts between parents, delinquency or mental disorder in one of the parents, etc. These factors are thought to interfere with normal personality development, and may also make the individual more vulnerable to traumatic experiences. In a retrospective investigation, Davidson, Swartz, Storck, Krishnan & Hammet (1985) have shown that 66% of the people in their sample who were suffering from a mental disorder after a traumatic experience came from a family in which one of the members had a prior mental disorder.

The term protective factors may refer to *individual characteristics* observable from early childhood, such as activity, social responsiveness, social intelligence, the capacity to seek and accept help from others, and other temperamental characteristics. These can be considered congenital. It may also refer to *capabilities* like the ability to emotionally distance oneself from traumatic memories, the ability to assimilate the knowledge that one survived traumatic circumstances, and to transform this knowledge into a feeling of inner strength. It may be seen as the ability to find meaning in one's life (Helmreich, 1992).

Trust, in the sense of a belief that one can overcome life difficulties also seems to be a protective factor. This trust is often connected with meeting, 'by coincidence', a person who provided opportunities to over-

come a problem, and thus encouraged a more positive self-image and view of life (Werner, 1993).

Another group of protective factors is related to *favourable family conditions*, such as the availability of at least one competent adult, opportunity for autonomous behaviour, and the absence of disrupting conflicts.

A further group consists of conditions outside the family, such as a supportive school environment. Some authors subsume both family conditions and protective factors outside the family under the single heading of *social support* (Oei, 1987; Parry & Shapiro, 1986).

Next to psychological factors however, some *material* parameters, whether within the family, the school, or the wider environment, may be more protective than others. For example: a freshly painted school building with clean toilets and adequate educational tools will be more protective than a derelict building without facilities (Van der Veer, 1998).

Finally, the term protective factor may also be used for individual characteristics resulting from a process of personality development where experience and *interaction* with the environment played an important part. Examples show an increase in positive self-image and self-respect; the experience of 'required helpfulness', that is the experience of *competence* as result of the necessity to help others, (Rachman, 1979); or, a friendly, cooperative attitude which invites favourable reactions from the social environment.

Protective factors appear to be similar in diverging cultural situations (Werner, 1989).

Protective factors in the school

Maintaining good schools and developing their protective psychosocial shield is an efficient way of improving coping capacities for the local population of children. Many studies (Rutter, 1994; Garmezy, 1985) show that the school can be an important protective factor for many children experiencing armed conflicts, social adversities, or adverse family situations.

In these studies, the following factors are recognised:

• good school achievement,
• good relationship with teachers (who offer social support),
• good relationships between peers, (belonging to a group, having a friend)
• being competent and successful in sport, art or other activities, in or outside school.

A school of good quality with regard to; the psychosocial climate, the relationships among teachers and children, and the psychosocial help offered to the children, has all the potential to act protectively.

Good school achievement has a significant impact on self-esteem of children. This is of special importance for children who have been exposed to multiple traumas and adversities. Children with high self esteem experience the feeling more often that they can directly influence their lives and have more active coping strategies.

Offering social support means providing additional resources and/or reinforcing existing resources. For children who have experienced important traumatic events and losses the most available support system beyond the family is the school.

The importance of the school, under these particular circumstances, is much greater than in normal life circumstances. The parents can be as seriously affected as the children and frequently; the impact of war events has a much longer and more severe impact on parents than on children. Therefore, the natural supportive and pro-

tective role of primary caregivers is reduced, or even absent, in many families. The school can fill this gap to a large extent. Research (Rutter, 1994) has shown that the protective role of the school is more significant in children with family adversities, than in children from normal family environments.

Prevention of negative school experiences

Multiple traumas and emotional distress increase the risk of psychosocial disorders. Unfavourable and stressful experiences in school (rejection by mates, conflicts with teachers, school failure, drop out) could be the final straw to break a child's self-esteem, hope and coping capacities. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance to prevent school failure and other negative school related experiences.

The school is the space in which children with problems can be identified and helped by teachers

Schools are social spaces in which children spend as much time with teachers and classmates as with their own families. Teachers have ample opportunities to systematically observe the children and identify those in crises, or with special needs.

Teachers are also in a relatively good position to provide various ingredients of psychosocial help to children, such as emotional support, enhancing the child's self-esteem through educational achievement, developing social skills, etc. Events and experiences that can cause emotional problems to many children can be treated within the framework of different school subjects, like arts and sports. The experience and knowledge of teachers can be enriched by special training, which will therefore enable them to act as psychosocial helpers. And last but not least, all school children are reachable with-

in the school; all those who would never visit mental health institutions can therefore be exposed to a positive influence. These influences may be of a structural nature (such as organisation of life, predictability, being challenged to deal with age appropriate tasks), an interpersonal nature (such as teachers' empathy, support, exchanges, and debriefing with schoolmates) or even based on more specific psychological interventions like expressive techniques and behaviour therapy, all implemented through the teachers within the framework of the school.

The psychosocial climate and relationship are the most important

Children damaged by war and exile need warm human relationships more than techniques. The three main pillars of each helping, or therapeutic relationship, with a child are:

1. an empathic *human relationship,*
2. *interventions that change the social reality of the child's life*: improving the child's life situation, for example by boosting his integration in the class, including him in various activities, enriching his social network through befriending as a volunteer,
3. *specific professional knowledge:* psychotherapeutic techniques, psychoactive drugs, special teaching techniques, etc.

In normal life circumstances the last mentioned component, specific professional knowledge, is usually considered as the most important. Yet, when dealing with children affected by armed conflict, it is the human relationship that acquires a tremendous added importance, as it works to counteract the previous war-related negative emotional experience. As for the second component, both teachers and clinicians in conflict areas know from experience, that interventions that change the

social reality are also much more important than the use of specific therapeutic knowledge.

However, often psychosocial programs implemented in schools are based on the use of therapeutic techniques, such as play therapy and art therapy. Such programs are frequently, at least initially, much liked by teachers or paraprofessionals because they give some concrete tools of how to work effectively with children.

But, the efficacy of these therapeutic techniques when used without the other two pillars of a therapeutic relationship should not be overestimated. Specific professional knowledge does not change the broader social context of the child's life. Nor does it tackle the problems of the child outside the therapeutic hours, and therefore such knowledge is in most cases not sufficient on it's own.

Supporting the school is supporting the parents

I have been often asked: '*your program is aimed at supporting teachers, what about parents and families*'? In (post) conflict areas there are always large numbers of families, which, according to mental health standards, need support. In practice however, it is often not feasible to reach a significant number of these families. Access to both teachers and schools is much more feasible. Community-based programs, oriented directly to children do influence the quality of the child's life and the range of their experiences; even when the family is not directly included.

That does not mean that parents and families do not benefit from the program described in this manual. In the frame of the program, teachers are empowered to cooperate with parents, to support them, and to counsel them.

And finally, the child is not only just *submitted* to family influences, the child is also *shaping* the family atmosphere, as well as influencing the emotional status and energy of his parents. The child can also actively contribute to the healing processes in his/her family[1].

Supporting the school

In order to assume the protective functions described in this chapter, the school needs capable teachers. Teachers can be empowered and supported: psychosocially, educationally and morally. This can be done through Seminars for Teachers, conducted by local trainers.

In addition, volunteer work can be introduced in order to enhance the protective climate in the school.

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[1] In ideal circumstances, and with sufficient resources, all families needing psychosocial help from external professionals should be supported. However, the existence of a school-based psychosocial program should not be an obstacle to developing programs of specialised psychological assistance to the most affected families in a community.

4. The training program

Basic assumptions

The goal of the training program is to improve the psychosocial climate of the school. A well functioning school offers a safe, supportive and motivating environment for all students. It also provides some basic psychological and psychosocial assistance to children with special needs, and to those who are traumatised.

The training of the teachers has one primary message: *Teachers are very important people in children's lives. They can make a real difference by using their both their inborn capabilities and those developed through the learning process and experiences within their professional work helping children*. The training is meant to be a process that empowers the teachers by stimulating their pedagogical involvement and their psychosocial support to the children.

Teachers already have a lot of practical experience in dealing with children in distress and those with special needs, and are experienced in managing critical situations in the classroom.

During the training they are given ample opportunity to present and demonstrate their own philosophies and strategies in working with children, as well as share examples of good practice.

The training emphasises the positive aspects of handling problems: coping, resiliency, protective factors and empowerment processes. It tries to avoid the development of victimisation and learned helplessness in children, as well as in teachers.

The training is comprehensive. It is based on a systemic approach to the psychosocial functioning of the school. It integrates psychosocial contents (in the narrow sense of the term) with other educational approaches: civic education, child's rights protection, mutual tolerance, respect and co-operation. Therefore, it is also aimed at trust and confidence building.

The training program is conceived as a partner-relation between trainers and trainees-teachers. Both can contribute to the quality and richness of the program. It should enhance teachers' incentives for the modification of the program, and support their initiatives for introducing psychosocial and related activities in schools.

An overview of the program

The program includes the following activities:

1. Selection of schools and teachers through a local partner organisation;
2. Recruitment of local trainers;
3. Training of local trainers by international trainers;
4. Training of teachers by local trainers;
5. Implementation in the schools by the trained teachers.

Activity 1: selection of schools and teachers

Fifty to 100 teachers, from 5-10 schools, or more, are included. Local implementers of the program and local trainers are responsible for selecting the participating schools. Priority is given to schools from the most affected villages, and from schools with a very large number of Internally Displaced children, returned refugee children, or children otherwise affected by armed conflict.

During the selection process, special attention is paid to the most remote schools and those that have not been included into psychosocial programs so far. Often, it is these schools where the needs for educating and empowering teachers are most pressing.

A minimum of two teachers should participate in the program from each school selected. If the school is large, the number of teachers included should be proportionally higher. This principle is extremely important, because it is very difficult for one, single teacher to introduce innovation. It is helpful if school principles participate in the seminars as well, as this gives them intimate knowledge of the program. The support of the school principle cannot be over-stated in the implementation of new approaches.

Teacher selection within any one school should be based on considerations of the following: age to create a mix of older and younger, experience and less experienced, sex (genders should be represented proportionally related to the gender structure of the teaching staff), and varying levels of classes. In multi-ethnic schools, the ethnic ratio should be respected in the choice of participants.

It is essential that the participation of teachers be voluntary.

Activity 2: recruitment of local trainers

The program is designed to use local trainers, as often as possible, to carry out the training program with the teacher's chosen. This is important because they speak the local language and are familiar with the context, the culture, general attitudes and concepts related to education.

The trainers may come from a range of professions and diverging educational backgrounds. The composition of the group of trainers depends on who is available in the region. Trainers can be teachers who have special interest in the psychosocial field, or have already attended some kind of course in this field. They can also be: other school workers, university teachers, psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians, nurses, other health workers, social workers, religious leaders, or community leaders. It is very important that the group is multidisciplinary and that the representatives of the various professions and sectors cooperate.

It can be difficult to find good trainers and there is a high incidence of dropouts and false starts. It takes time to develop and encourage creation of an involved and reliable core group.

However, it is always possible, and sooner or later, development of an efficient program is assured.

The local partner organisation is the main agent for recruiting and appointing trainers who will implement the program. A local organisation can be a non-governmental organisation, school, university, or any other institution.

Candidates for trainers are invited to an introductory informative meeting. The interviews can then be conducted individually, or within the group.

For the training of trainer's sessions, we always invite more trainers than we need to carry out the training of teachers. It is our experience is that some candidates will dropout of the program for various reasons. The number of trainers required depends on the number of groups; for each group consisting of 10 teachers, 2 trainers are needed.

During the first meeting the philosophy and action model of the program are presented to the trainers. They are briefed about what they can expect in terms of financial reward, and rewards beyond money, such as new knowledge, interesting professional social contacts and moral satisfaction. Their

obligations and responsibilities are clearly presented: they have to be present at all sessions of their training, they have to prepare and performing lectures during the seminars for teachers, and they have to facilitate group discussions, role-playing and other activities, They are also expected to visit trained teachers at their schools. It is also made clear that they are expected to actively participate in the creation of the program. The final version of the program will be the result of a cooperative, working exchange between local trainers and international professionals.

Activity 3: training of local trainers by international trainers

The main message of the training of trainers is: *Training is an interactive process in which trainers and participants cooperate in order to further develop their insights, knowledge and skills.* The participants are trained to carry out seminars for teachers using educational methods such as giving mini-lectures, facilitating group discussion and group reporting, and carrying out role-play exercises[1].

Activity 4: training of teachers by local trainers

The most important contents of the seminars for teachers are:

- The protective role of the school and teachers for children at risk and for children with psychosocial problems
- The psychosocial climate of the school and class
- The teacher and students
- Trauma's and losses
- Children with psychosocial difficulties and children with special needs
- Learning difficulties and learning disorders
- Relationships between peers and education for pro-social behaviour

- School violence and bullying
- The impact of poverty on children and how the school can help reduce this
- Co-operation between teachers and parents
- Co-operation of the school with the community and mobilising resources for the benefit of children and school
- Volunteers helping children with psychosocial and learning difficulties
- Children as volunteers
- The teacher – his work and his family, his professionals burdens and stresses, prevention of burn out
- Civic education and children's rights

Activity 5: implementation of new ideas and practices into the schools by trained teachers

The training of teachers is divided in four seminars, or modules, over the course of 3 days. After each seminar, the teachers immediately puts into practice what was learned during the training. The trainers support the teachers in this implementation process through school visits in between seminars. Therefore, training and implementation alternate.

During their visits, the trainers discuss any matters the teachers want to share, for example: individual children, difficult situations in the classroom, job related problems, and their own painful experiences and losses. The trainers try to help teachers realise their incentives and goals, develop new activities, and use their newly acquired skills and knowledge in the daily reality of the school. This is aided and supported by short workshops, lasting two to four hours each and attended by all teachers of the visited school. In some cases, parents of children having difficulties are invited for consultations. In other workshops, local trainers can present a short lecture and run a group discussion with parents within a framework of parents' meetings.

[1] *Expressive techniques and physical exercise*. Personally I do not often use expression techniques in my programs, because I prefer to give priority to reflections, insights and psychodynamic dimensions. But, it can be useful to integrate some techniques into the program. Expressive techniques, such as drawing, may stimulate self-reflection. Physical exercises may work as energisers, ways to restore concentration, or help the participants to acquire relaxation skills (Van der Veer, 2003).

It is important to ensure that these techniques do not overload the program. Local professionals, who have learnt these techniques in various international programs, often wish to extensively introduce these methods.

Teachers can sometimes feel unhappy, because local trainers can force them to experience situations perceived as inappropriate for their age and position, such as sitting on the floor, or climbing during games. On the other hand, many exercises are well accepted by teachers, and sometimes with great enthusiasm, because teachers have the feeling that they have concrete to work to do with children.

Other methods of work. It is possible to introduce other methods of work, such as using dolls to explore a difficult situation a teacher experienced during his work (Van der Veer, 2003). With regard to each of the educational methods described in this chapter, the trainer should always consider how people from a different cultural, or religious, background might experience these methods.

5. The Training of Trainers

The main message of the Training of Trainers

The main message of the training of trainers is: *training is an interactive process in which trainers and participants cooperate in order to further develop their insights, knowledge and skills.*

Training methods used in the training of trainers

The following methods are included in the program: giving short lectures, group discussion and group reporting, role-play exercises[1] and some expressive and relaxation techniques.

The program

The program consists of the following elements, or items:

1. Ensuring the cooperation between local trainers and international trainers;
2. Explaining the program;
3. Preparation for giving short lectures;
4. Preparation for group discussions;
5. Exercising group work;
6. Reflection of the day;
7. Preparation for role-play exercises;
8. Practising role-play
9. Discussing the problems most frequently encountered during group work;
10. Evaluation of the training of trainers;
11. An overview of the program, roles and functions of local trainers in seminars for teachers;
12. Preparation of the program of the first module.

The items

Item 1: Ensuring the cooperation between local trainers and international trainers

Purpose:

1. To establish a respectful partner relationship between international and local trainers, so that the local trainers will identify with the program,
2. To encourage the local trainers awareness that they are co-creators and therefore co-owners of the program, and that the outcome of the program depends mainly on the quality of their work and personal involvement,
3. To assess the knowledge, attitudes and concepts of the local trainers about training.

Content: The knowledge and opinions of the participants on:

1. The situation, needs and existing resources for helping children in the region,
2. Prevailing educational practices and those of dealing with psychosocial problems,
3. Training needs of teachers.

Method: Group discussion.

Item 2: Explaining the program

Purpose: To explain the whole program and its basic assumptions as described in the previous chapter to the participants, who may have authoritarian attitudes and practice methods.

Content: Important principles and the main characteristics of the program, as well as the most common errors made by inexperienced trainers.

The important principles are:

• Trainers have to respect the teachers' knowledge and experience and to be

aware how these can complement trainers' knowledge and skills. Only a synthesis of knowledge and skills from both teachers and trainers' will enrich school practice.

- The trainers should use a language that is understandable to teachers, which means that they have to avoid the use of professional jargon, and in particular, medical terms.
- Trainers must be aware that teachers learn the most from one another, and that their own training activities may serve mainly as a warming-up for the exchanges between teachers.
- Group discussions, interactive learning and other social processes are the most important vehicles of the program.
- During the program, school-based activities are enhanced, or developed. These school-based activities are aimed to at empowering teachers to provide support and assistance to children with psychosocial difficulties, and to enrich and improve the psychosocial climate of the school as a whole.
- The program also is aimed at linking the community with the school, and developing methods of mobilising resources in the community, especially through developing voluntary work.
- During the training course for teachers, the participants are given opportunities for exchange and for active involvement. The discussions are about their work with children and their families, but may also be about losses, traumatic experiences and post war stress of the teachers themselves.

Method: Lecture and discussion.

Item 3: Preparation for short lectures.

Purpose. To train the participants in preparing and giving short, or mini, lectures about topics relevant for teachers in areas of armed conflict.

Content:
1. General information on topics relevant for teachers in areas of armed conflict, provided by the trainer and local information on the same topics provided by the participants.
2. The skill of preparing and giving lectures, using paper sheets (flipcharts), whiteboards, or blackboards.

Method:
1. Individual work on preparing a lecture. Texts are prepared by the trainer and translated into the local language are then provided. The participants are requested to choose topics they want to present during the Seminars for Teachers according to their prior knowledge and interests, and to write mini lectures about the topics they have chosen.
   It is explained to the local trainers that their lecture has to be based on concepts and experiences that are close to the social and professional reality of teachers. The lecture has to connect with the prior knowledge of teachers.
2. Individual discussion of the lecture with the trainer.
3. Presentation of the prepared lectures followed by group discussion, during which the quality of the lecture is discussed; this process should be handled with delicacy in order not to trigger anxiety or offence in presenters.

Item 4: Preparation for group discussions

Purpose: To discuss the educational method of group discussion, the rules during group discussions and the tasks of the group leaders.

Content:
1. Basic principles: Group discussions are

opportunities for the participants to express themselves and exchanges experiences within a safe atmosphere where they feel accepted and respected. In addition, group discussions are meant to produce a product, such as a summary of the different views, or strategies to resolve a problem.

2. Rules: Quite often leading group work presents a new, or personally not yet experienced, form of pedagogic activity for trainers. The house rules for group discussions have to be presented to local trainers in a clear and simple way. It is advisable to give the trainers an example of house rules in writing (Box 1.).

3. Tasks of the discussion leaders, as summed up in Box 2.

Method. Lecture and discussion. The lecture is presented with examples of the most common problems, and those appearing through group work (for instance: how to stimulate shy participants, how to limit long speeches, etc.).

Item 5: Exercising group work

Purpose: Training in the skill of leading and facilitating group work.

Content: A subject chosen from the program of the seminars for teachers, for example: a traumatised child in my classroom (or in my family, or vicinity). How did I help him/her and what else could we do for him/her?

Method.

1. Small group discussion. The trainer divides the participants in two or more groups. Each sub-group is asked to choose two group leaders. The topic is then discussed for 45-60 minutes (depending on available time).

2. Discussion in plenary session. After the discussions in the sub-groups have finished, the groups are invited to present their findings in a plenary session, on posters or orally.

3. This exercise is done on the first day and repeated during the second and third day of Training of Trainers. On the second day and third day, the participants are invited to comment on the performance of the group leaders, and their feelings.

Box 1. Rules for group discussions

Group work should be run in a pleasant atmosphere.

Each group member is equal to all other group members, regardless of differences in age, gender, professional position or social status.

Each group member is free to state her/his opinion.

Each group member should tolerate and respect the opinions of other group members.

When one person talks, the others listen and do not interrupt.

All group members come on time.

The discussions are confidential.

Group work should conclude a few minutes before the agreed time; these last minutes should be dedicated to reflection on the question 'How did you feel as a member of the group?'

A member of the group makes a report that can be presented to other participants in the training seminar.

Item 6: Reflection on the day

Purpose:

1. To receive feedback from the participants,
2. To develop critical thinking in the participants,
3. To promote group cohesion and a sense of safety within the group,
4. To help the participant's get an overview of what they learned,
5. To discuss possible changes in the program for the next day.

Content: The program and the events of the day.

Method: Group discussion. All persons present are invited to comment on the proceedings of the day, and to point out positive events and difficulties, as well as strengths and weaknesses, of the program. They are also encouraged to suggest alternatives, or express desired changes for the coming days.

During the discussion the participants are encouraged to talk openly about their opinions and feelings. The trainer acts as 'role model' by discussing his/her own fears and negative emotions, or admitting mistakes or lack of knowledge on certain matters, in front of the group.

Item 7: Preparation for role-play exercises

Purpose: To introduce the purpose and the method of role-play exercises [2].

Content: Purposes of role-play and procedure (Box 3.).

Method: Lecture and discussion

Item 8: Practising role-play

Purpose: To exercise the educational method of role-play, in order to be able to apply this method during the Seminars for Teachers.

Content: A role-play about a problematic event relevant to for teachers in areas of armed conflict, for example: an experience of one of the participants with a traumatised child in which this participant did not know how to respond.

Method: Two participants are asked to act as facilitator of the role-play. They are asked only to facilitate the choice of the scenario and players, and not to dictate what should be done. After the role-play all participants

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Box 2. Tasks of the group leaders

They introduce themselves to the group and invite the participants to do the same.

They give the participants basic information on group work, including the purpose and the rules.

They explain their own role as moderators and facilitators.

They ensure that one or two reporters are chosen and that each time other members of the group will act as reporters in the plenary session.

They ensure what the tangible object the group discussion will produce through exploration of the topic, for example: problem solving, sharing experiences, mutual counselling, and how this will be reported (e.g. through a poster).

They try to find an appropriate balance between creating a safe and comfortable atmosphere in the group and the efficiency of the group; through maintaining respect of rules, ensuring that the discussion does not diverge, and by keeping time.

To provide psychological assistance if some member of the group has an intense emotional break down.

To report critically about group work at the evaluation meeting of trainers at the end of the day.

are invited to offer feedback to the whole group concerning their feelings, their attitudes to the solutions for the problem presented, or suggestions for different solutions.

Item 9: Discussing the problems most frequently encountered during group work
Purpose:

To prepare the participants to cope with problems arising during group discussions.

Content: The following problems:

1. How to stop a participant who talks too much and who takes to much time,
2. How to do this when the person in question is either elderly, or someone with special authority,

3. How to do this with a traumatised person, who really needs time to express inner distress.

Method: Role-play.

Item 10: Evaluation of the training of trainers
Purpose: To receive feedback about gains, feelings and sense of satisfaction of the participants, to evaluate the impact of the training on the participants, and to develop a constructive critical attitude.

Content: The skills acquired by the participants during the training, reflections and feelings, questions and uncertainties, issues to be clarified.

Method: Plenary group discussion.

Box 3. Purpose and procedure of role-play

Purposes: Role-playing enables participants to:

• Better understand others and the dynamic of interpersonal relations,
• To empathise with others,
• To find out and elaborate new solutions for problem situations,
• To reflect on and analyse personal feelings and interpersonal processes.

Procedure of role-play. During the role-play, a real, life event personally experienced by one of the participants is acted out. It is best to start with relatively simple situations and with a minimum of characters. In order to prepare the play, the participant who experienced the event has to briefly explain the situation and the people involved. Then, other participants are requested to play the roles of these characters. Each of the participants taking part in the role-play then gets a description of the reactions of the character she/he will play. The trainer explains once more that the exercise is not concerned with acting-skills, but an instrument used for the purpose of gaining an understanding of the event in question.

Playing should not last longer than 5 – 10 minutes. After that, each player is asked how they felt while playing the character, how they perceived the other characters, and what they learned from the experience. In addition, the group is invited to comment on the event that was acted out.

In the discussion, participants may say they would have reacted differently to the event, and suggest an alternative way of coping with the situation. In that case the role-play can be repeated with the participant in question in the role of the teacher. This second play is also discussed, and in turn this discussion may lead to yet another way of problem solving that can be tried out in role-play, and so on.

To conclude the session, the trainer summarises what was learnt from role-playing and writes it down on a poster.

Item 11: An overall prospect on the program, roles and functions of local trainers in seminars for teachers

Purpose: To give the participants a clear idea about their tasks[3] during the seminars for teachers and the implementation of the program in schools.

Content:

1. The program of the seminars, mentioning the topics of all modules (Table 1.) and the content for group discussions (Table 2.). It is stressed that this program is only a point of departure and that it will be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the teachers participating in the seminars.

2. The roles and functions of presenters, moderators and facilitators.

3. Previous experiences of the participants with similar programs.

Method: Plenary group discussion.

Item 12: Preparation of the program of the first module

Purpose: To prepare the first module.

Content: The initial draft of the first module prepared by the international trainer, specifying:

1. Some obligatory topics, which should be dealt with during the first module for teachers, like presentation of the program, the role of the school and the

Table 1 An example of a program of the seminars for teachers

Seminar	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1.	• Introduction to the program • Philosophy and methods of work • The current role of the school and teachers in the region • The protective role of the school and teacher in the psychosocial development of the child • Introduction to group work	• Psychosocial climate of the school • Communication in the classroom • Relationship of teacher to pupil • Cooperation with parents • Introduction to role-playing	• Burdens and stress on teachers • Prevention of burn out • Information about next module
2.	• The school and the family • Dysfunctional families • Child abuse in families • How poverty affects the child, his position within the school and school achievement	• Traumatised child, his family and his teacher • Stress and chronic adversities in childhood • Resiliency and coping	• The school and the community • Voluntary work in schools • Information about next module
3.	• Physically handicapped children, children with healthproblems, etc. • Cooperation between school and health services	• The depressive child • The hyperkinetic child • The aggressive child • Fear in school / school phobia	• Drug abuse and its prevention • The teacher and his family • Information about next module
4.	• Peer relationships • Education for pro-social behaviour • Violence in school and peer bullying	• Motivation for learning • School failure, how to help the child • Specific learning difficulties • Intellectual disabilities	• Child's rights • Relationships among school staff • Conclusion of the program

teachers, the present situations of the schools and the teachers in the region.

2. Topics chosen according to the needs of the served population. Each module should include a topic dealing with teachers' job related or other burdens, stress and ways of coping[4].

3. Important topics the local trainers are not familiar with, for instance peer bullying and other 'taboo' topics, should not be dealt with during the first module before some mutual trust has been established among the participants.

Method: Plenary group discussion.

[1] *Expressive techniques and physical exercise.* Personally I do not use expression techniques often within my programs because I give priority to reflections, insights and psychodynamic dimensions. However, it can be useful to integrate some techniques into the program. Expressive techniques, such as drawing, may stimulate self-reflection. Physical exercises may work as energisers or ways to restore concentration, as well as help the participants to acquire relaxation skills (Van der Veer, 2003). Yet, care must also be taken that these techniques do not overload the program. Local professionals,

Table 2 Content of group discussions

Seminar	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1.	• A child at risk in my class – how does the school help the child and what else could be done? (group work)	• Exercises in good communication (group work) • 'Difficult parents' of my pupil – how can I improve relationship and cooperation (role-playing)	• Burdens and stresses related to my job – what helps me cope? (group work) • Evaluation of the module –what have we learnt, what will we use in our work? (group work)
2.	• Some relaxation exercises • The teacher helping pupils to cope with poverty (role-playing)	• The traumatised child in my classroom – how can the teacher and the school help him/her to cope? (group work) • Some cases of resilient children and children who coped well – what helped them? (group work)	• Introducing voluntary work in school (group work and role-playing) • Evaluation of the module – what have we learnt, what have we already used, and what will we use in the future?
3.	• A child with serious health problems in my classroom – what can schoolmates and teachers do for him? (role-playing) • Cooperation of school and health services (group work)	• My hyperkinetic pupil – how can I help him and myself? (role-playing) • My pupil was afraid of school – how did we help him, what else could be done? (group work)	• Prevention of drug abuse in our school (role-playing) • How the profession influences a teacher's family life (group work) • Evaluation of the module – what have we learnt, what have we already used, and what will we use in the future?
4.	• How can we promote pro-social behaviour of pupils within the framework of the school (group work) • My experience with bullying – how I intervened, what else could be done (role-playing)	• Increasing motivation for learning (group work) • Helping a child with learning difficulties or school failure (role-playing)	• Relationships among school staff (group work) • Evaluation of the module • Evaluation of the whole program – what have we learnt, what have we already used, and what will we use in the future?

who have learnt these techniques in various international programs, often wish to introduce these approaches extensively. This can create unhappiness amongst the teachers because local trainers can force them to experience situations perceived as inappropriate for their age and position, such as sitting on the floor or climbing during games. Many exercises are, on the other hand, highly accepted by teachers, sometimes with great enthusiasm, because teachers have the feeling that they have concrete work to do with children.

Other methods of work. It is possible to introduce other methods of work, such as using dolls to explore a difficult situation a teacher has experienced during her/his work (Van der Veer, 2003). With regard to each of the educational methods described in this chapter, the trainer should always consider how they would be experienced and perceived by people of a different cultural or religious background.

[2] Role-playing is a method usually less known to local trainers (and teachers) than group discussions. Even though I have often expected that trainers and teachers will not wish to cooperate, or participate in this form or work, it has never happened. On the contrary, role-playing has always been implemented with a lot of fun. The problem was that they often saw this kind of work as a game. They did not initially recognise it a tool for analysing a problem, for understanding the emotions of the people the play was about, for understanding the dynamic of events, or for trying out new coping strategies. As a result, the role-playing itself was usually very interesting, but later reflection and discussion, was mostly poor.

[3] At the end of the first Training of Trainers the participants must form pairs, who in turn will lead the groups during the seminars for teachers. Our advice is that pairs should be mixed in a variety of ways: male and female, experienced and less experienced, school worker and health worker (or other professional combinations).

[4] This topic is recommended for the third (last day) as it gives to teachers the feeling that the program is taking care not only of children with whom they work, but also the wellbeing of the teachers in considered.

6. The seminars for teachers

The main message

Teachers who volunteer for training usually have a variety of motives. Some teachers wish to receive professional support and help with solving their everyday problems, some want to fill their knowledge deficits, some will want to receive confirmation for their pedagogic endeavours, and some simply want to come in contact with people who have similar problems and to exchange experiences with them. All of them want to receive recognition for their efforts. The main message of the training could therefore be summarised as follows: *Teachers are very important people in the life of children. They can make a real difference, just by using their natural capacities and acquired professional skills and attitudes.*

Basic goals

The seminars for teachers have the following basic goals:

1. Empowerment of the teachers through enlarging their capacities to cope with professional burdens and their own traumatic experiences,
2. Organising existing knowledge and insight, and where necessary, providing additional knowledge of psychological, psychosocial and cognitive processes in students and teachers,
3. Enabling exchange of experiences among participants and encouraging them to share and transfer knowledge in the local school system, and in the community in general,
4. Motivating and energising participants to acquire new attitudes and implement psychosocial activities in their work within the classroom, and with individual children and parents in need.

The seminars as steps in a process

The program for teachers consists of four modules of 3 days each. They represent a continuous learning process and application of new knowledge in practice. At the end of each module some time should be dedicated to discussing what the teachers will be able to transfer to their schools.

In order to ensure continuity, the interval between any two modules is preferably four weeks. At the end of each module, teachers receive a certificate. The final certificate is issued after the last module.

The original structure can be changed according to circumstances (shorter duration and more than four modules, etc.) but continuity is needed for building group cohesion and fulfilling learning and motivating processes.

Educational methods

The following methods are used: lectures of 20 - 30 minutes, discussion in small groups, presentation of the results of discussion in small groups to all participants, role-play, relaxation techniques and expressive exercises (drawing, positive imaginary, play, etc.). In terms of the program, we recommend the following:

1. Start with two or three short lectures. The first is about the general principles of the program and is delivered by the international trainer (in the remainder of the seminars, the international trainer is active only as a coach for the local trainers). The second lecture, run by a local trainer is about the local situation, psychosocial problems, and the situation of the educational system and teachers in the region. The third lecture

introduces the topic of the first group discussion.

2. Group discussions will be done in groups of 10 participants. The organiser should insist on mixing teachers from different villages and schools in each group. Teachers from the same schools tend to remain together and to enter into the same group.

   Each discussion takes 90 minutes. It treats a topic presented in one of the presented lectures (for example: *The traumatised child in my classroom – how have we helped him, what else could we do for him?*). During the group discussions, teachers present examples from their practice and their own ways of solving problems. At the beginning of the meeting, the group chooses the reporters, and at the end the group prepares one or more posters.

3. Presentation of the results of discussion in small groups to all participants in the plenary session. This can be done through prepared posters with some additional oral comments and explanations by the presenters, or by plenary presentation of role-playing.

4. Role-play can be used as a tool for the teachers when they want to present examples from their own professional experience. In the beginning role-play should deal with less demanding problems, only after participants are well acquainted with this method can more difficult cases and situations can be tackled. In the session intended for role-play, the group can perform two or three different scenarios. Role-play can also be presented to all participants.

The first seminar

The first seminar is always the most difficult; it is the test of the program. Both the international and local trainers are anxious at what might happen. Will all participants accept the program? Will they find it interesting? Will they be willing to cooperate within group discussions and in role-play?

The participation of teachers during the second module, i.e., the dropout rate after the first module, depends on their satisfaction with the first module. We can say that the first module tunes the program and formats the attitudes of teachers toward the program as a whole.

During the first module, teachers should gain mutual trust and a feeling of security, and feel both accepted and respected. The trainers should repeatedly stress the contribution of teachers to the child's wellbeing and positive development. Teachers are rarely praised for their merits. Stressing the value of their support to children is an homage, which they merit. Teachers who volunteer to participate in a psychosocial program are those who are the most eager to help children and parents.

International trainers must provide support to local trainers and give them supportive feedback, tactfully suggesting alternatives to counter possible imperfections in their approach.

It is important to stress, that the program is a process, in which the knowledge and know-how of teachers, and the local and international trainers, are developed step by step. It does not have to be perfect from the very first day.

It is essential to use the 'we approach' from the very beginning of common work. If there are some mistakes, or failure in the realisation of the seminar, than those are due to both agents - local and international trainers. If problems arise, they have to be discussed and solved in a constructive way, stressing the common objectives of all people involved in the program.

During the first seminar, teachers are accepting the principles of the program, adjusting to the climate and rules of work. Therefore people leading the seminar have to insist on punctuality, on not commenting during the presentation (if not agreed otherwise), and on the principles and rules of group discussion, etc. If the rules are not respected during the first module, it will be much harder to achieve later.

The period between two modules

This period in between is the time for teachers to implement new attitudes, knowledge and models of good practice in their classrooms and schools.

Visits of trainers are a potent means for implementation of psychosocial attitudes and activities in particular schools and in the school system.

Two trainers of different professional backgrounds, for instance a teacher and a physician, will visit schools included in the program, on as regular a basis as possible.

The program of visits may include:

- Discussions with the director and with teachers about needs of the school and implemented psychosocial activities,
- Short workshops, lasting two to four hours, attended by all teachers of the visited school. These workshops are run by local trainers, and are about subjects such as: Traumatized children and children experiencing loss – how to help them; How to help children with learning difficulties; Prevention of violence in the school; Cooperation with parents; The professional burdens of teachers and prevention of burn-out. Planning future cooperation of trainers with the school,
- Workshops or other activities such as lectures, meetings, discussion with groups of parents. Local trainers who visit the school in cooperation with the teachers also run these activities. They improve the functioning of the school concerning cooperation with parents and demonstrate models of good practice of such cooperation,
- Discussion with individual teachers about general problems concerning the psychosocial climate of the school, or problems of psychosocial nature that the schools are facing,
- Group work with children. Local trainers, in cooperation with volunteers and teachers, carry this out. The aim is to offer the children interesting activities, permitting them to express their feelings, and to develop social skills,
- Monitoring of psychosocial activities introduced and run by teachers,
- Assessment by the local trainers of problems with individual children, learning problems, behavioural problems, etc.,
- Counselling for children, parents and teachers of children with problems by local trainers,
- Introducing and supporting activities of volunteers where possible,
- Any other activities required by school.

The following three seminars are tailormade; choices were based on the experiences of the teachers and their needs. Items can be chosen and adapted from the overview in the next paragraph. See Table 1. For an example of a program using all four seminars.

The program

A choice is made from the following items:
1. Introduction
   Item 1.1 The aims, the philosophy and the methods of the program for teachers
2. Methods used during the training of teachers

Item 2.1 Group work
Item 2.2 Role-play
Item 2.3 Expressive and relaxation techniques

3. The role of the school, creating an empowering and protective school
   Item 3.1 The protective role of the school
   Item 3.2 The psychosocial climate of the school
   Item 3.3 Communication
   Item 3.4 Relationships between the teacher and pupils
   Item 3.5 Relationships between teachers at school
   Item 3.6 Motivation for learning

4. The child, the family and the school
   Item 4.1 Cooperating with parents
   Item 4.2 Trauma in adults
   Item 4.3 Dysfunctional families
   Item 4.4 Violence and child abuse in families – the protective role of the school
   Item 4.5 The impact of poverty – how the school can counteract and reduce the effects of poverty

5. Relationships among peers and problems between peers
   Item 5.1 Relationships among pupils
   Item 5.2 Bullying and school violence – how can the school prevent it

6. Most common problems of pupils- how to help the child and how to manage the problems in the classroom
   Item 6.1 Stress in children
   Item 6.2 The traumatized child
   Item 6.3 Loss and grieving of child and family
   Item 6.4 The depressed child
   Item 6.5 The child with health prob-
   lems and the physically disabled child
   Item 6.6 Cooperation between the school and health services
   Item 6.7 The hyperactive child
   Item 6.8 The aggressive child
   Item 6.9 Learning difficulties and school failure

7. The teacher as a person, the teacher as a professional today
   Item 7.1 The situation of the school, and the situation and role of teachers in our region today
   Item 7.1 The impact of the teachers' profession on his family life
   Item 7.3 Burdens and stress linked to the teaching profession
   Item 7.4 Burn-out: coping and prevention

8. Linking with the community
   Item 8.1 The school and the community
   Item 8.2 Voluntary work in schools
   Item 8.3 Children's rights

9. Evaluation
   Item 9.1 Evaluation of the previous seminar
   Item 9.2 Final evaluations

The items
Item 1.1: The aims, the philosophy and the methods of the program for teachers
Purpose:
• To inform the teachers about the aims, the philosophy and the methods of the program.
• To highlight the usefulness of the program in the present situation in the region
Content:
• The aim of psychosocial programs for teachers in the development and integra-

tion of protective factors and processes in the functioning of the primary school, which is the institution including all school-aged children

- The program is interactive, all participants are owners of the program, it is mostly based on local know-how of local trainers and teachers, and on exchange of experience
- The methods of the program: short lectures, group work (presentation of cases, sharing experience, discussion, reflection, etc.), plenary group reporting and presentation of posters produced in the group work, role-play, expressive and relaxation techniques, assessment of the implementation of acquired skills at previous modules, evaluation by teachers in group work and by questionnaires
- The implementation of learned ideas and models of good practice in schools is the ultimate goal of the program

Methods:

- Lecture presented by the international expert, 15 minutes
- Some introductory words by the local person responsible for the program, 10 minutes

Item 2.1: Principles and methods of group work

Purpose:

- To prepare the teachers for facilitating group work within the framework of the seminar
- To stimulate the teachers to use group work in their classes

Content:

- A summary of different groups in which people are included (family, working groups, groups of self help, sport groups, etc.)
- The function of groups: emotional and practical support
- Basic principles and rules of group work:

equality, mutual respect, the right to express one's opinion without being criticized, respecting time limitations, respecting confidentiality, respecting formal agreements, seating arrangements, turning off mobile phones, not smoking, etc.

- The role of the moderators (facilitators, trainers) during group work
- The output of group work: exchange of ideas, exchanges of models of good practice, emotional support, acknowledgement of members of the group, possible solutions for unsolved problems, motivation and empowerment for introducing innovations, etc.
- Appointing the spokesman and preparing a poster for reporting results in a plenary session
- Plenary presentations of discussed cases, identification of helping or problem solving approaches, identification of unsolved problems

Method:

- Short lecture, 10 – 20 minutes

Item 2.2: Role-play

Purpose:

- To explain to the teachers the aims and benefits of the method
- To explain the principles and the procedures of role-play
- To motivate the teachers to participate in role-play during the present course

Content:

- The function of role-play is to provide opportunities for players to '*enter into the shoes of somebody else*', to develop understanding and empathy for other people's difficulties, to display different and alternative solutions
- The procedure of organizing role-play: defining the scenario, defining players, duration of the play
- Discussion by players and by the audience

- Formulating the lessons learned
- Most common problems: too complicated scenario's are chosen in the beginning, players are switching from their role to the role of observers and commentators; participants and observers are tempted to evaluate the quality of the acting instead of discussing emotions, insights and solutions

Method:
- Short lecture, 10 minutes

Item 2.3: Expressive techniques and relaxation techniques
Purpose:
- To raise awareness of the participants of the importance of expressive and relaxation techniques for the psychosocial and emotional development of children
- To motivate teachers to integrate expressive and relaxation techniques in every day professional activities in the classroom

Content:
- Explanation of the function and the empowering or healing influences of relaxation and expressive techniques in every day life, in stress situations, and when dealing with children with difficulties. Teachers play an important role in the development of children's imagination and in encouraging various ways of expression. Creative work will raise children's self-esteem
- Presentation of some expressive and relaxation techniques, which can be used by teachers for themselves and for their students
- Demonstration of some techniques appropriate for use in school: drawing, painting, sculpting, drama, music, physical exercises, and social games

Methods:
- Lecture, including some practical exercises, 45 minutes

- Asking participants to present some expressive and relaxation exercises, which are familiar to them, or which they have already used in practice
- Performance of some exercises by all participants

Item 3.1: The protective role of the school
Purpose:
- To give information about the importance of the school as a protective factor for the psychosocial development of children and their mental health
- To raise awareness of the participants of the irreplaceable role of the teacher in identifying children living in difficult circumstances, and helping them by strengthening these positive factors
- To empower and motivate the teachers for taking on the role of psychosocial helper to children in need in their classes

Content:
- The importance of the primary school: it is a place where children are obliged to stay for at least 6, and often, 9 years
- Brief presentation of the eco-system approach: different systems (family, school, neighbourhood, religious organizations, health services, etc.), which interact and determine the child's mental health, psychosocial development, psychosocial disorders and coping capacities
- School in itself has many positive and protective factors (see chapter on protective role of the school) especially a good relationship with the teacher, good relationships with peers, success in learning, or in a particular course, or in a particular activity developed at school.
- The protective role of the school is of special importance in cases of traumatized children and children living in difficult circumstances since in these cases the family could be affected as well, and

not able to provide sufficient protection and support for these children

- The school can also be a potent source of risk factors, affecting the emotional wellbeing and psychosocial development of children
- Risk factors like school failure, bullying, exclusion, problems with teachers, etc. are especially dangerous for children who already have psychosocial problems, or are burdened by other risk factors as family war traumas, family adversities, etc. In such cases school related risk factors can have a cumulative negative impact
- School failure affects the child's self esteem, motivation, and relationships with parents, psychosocial wellbeing, and coping capacities. The last is especially important for traumatized children

Methods:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes

Item 3.2: *The psychosocial climate of the school*

Purpose:

- To raise the awareness of the participants of the importance of the psychosocial climate of the school, and of the classroom, for the emotional wellbeing of children, their sense of security, motivation for learning, and positive social behaviour
- To analyse factors and circumstances influencing the psychosocial climate
- To inform and motivate the teachers to create a good psychosocial climate
- To draw attention to the importance of the teacher in the psychosocial climate of the classroom

Content:

- The meaning of the school for the quality of life of children, their emotional wellbeing, motivation, and psychosocial development
- The school as the social system

- The roles of the teacher, class structure, interpersonal relationships, written and unwritten social rules, school and class ethos, cultural and social characteristics of parents, school principal, characteristic of the school system, general social, cultural and political circumstances
- The importance of a positive psychosocial climate of the school, and in class, for the efficient work of the teacher and for a good school output
- Some indicators of a good psychosocial climate of the school: providing a friendly, rewarding and motivating climate; the level of safety feelings in children, tolerance, supporting cooperation and active learning; absence of physical punishment and violence; preventing bullying, maltreatment and discrimination; appreciating development and creative activities; connecting school and family life through involvement of parents; promoting equal possibilities and participation in decision processes of children, constructive ways of solving conflicts

Method: Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes

Item 3.3: *Communication*

Purpose:

- To raise the awareness of the teachers of the importance of quality communication in general, and especially the communication between teachers, students and parents
- To demonstrate different ways of communication, focusing on good models
- To draw attention to most frequently occurring mistakes

Content:

- Communication - the essential part of the relationship between the teacher and his students, and the teacher and the parents
- Verbal and nonverbal communication
- The ability and art of listening

- Different tools of communication: body language, facial expression, gesturing, characteristics of the voice, positioning, etc.
- Examples of common inappropriate or harmful methods of communication

Method: Lecture, 30 minutes

Item 3.4: Relationships between teacher and pupils

Purpose:

- To give information about productive methods and forms of a good teacher-student relationships
- To raise awareness of the importance of a good teacher-student relationship for the student, and for the teacher

Content:

- The key-word characterising a good relationship is mutual respect between the teacher and his students, and between students
- In school, teachers should create good relationships with their students by being friendly and using humour; by knowing the students and their situation; by accepting the students as they are, with their disabilities, without undervaluing them and ridiculing them; by stimulating children's positive contributions by giving compliments; by maintaining discipline using appropriate methods; by communicating with children in a friendly, accommodating and understandable way; by using creative activities; by supporting good family-school relationships

Methods:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes.
- Group work with the following instructions:

1. Describe a case of a pleasant relationship with a pupil; what are the characteristics? Write your answers are on a big sheet of paper
2. Describe a case of a difficult relation-

ship with a pupil, what did you do to improve the relationship? What was effective and what made things worse? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper, mentioning problems and strategies used.

3. Enact a role-play about 'talking to a difficult pupil with whom a problem was solved'. Choose one of the problem situations described earlier in the session. Participants not involved as actors in the role-play observe the communication between the teacher and the pupil, in particular the verbal and non-verbal aspects. Another option: make groups of three: one acts, as the teacher, one as the pupil and one is observer. Discuss the feelings experienced by participants acting as a teacher, as a pupil, and as an observer. Discuss:
   What was helpful and what was not?
   Write your conclusions on a paper
   After this, a role-play can be done with another successful case or a case can be played that not is solved yet. This role-play is also followed by discussion and the conclusions are written down

4. Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about effective strategies related to problem solving with a pupil?

Item 3.5:   Relations between teachers at school

Purpose: To raise attention to good collegial relationships between teachers, good relationships between teachers and other workers in school, and the role of the school principal in supporting these good relations

Content:

- The psychosocial climate and relationships depend upon the profile, or personal and social characteristics, of members of the school, organisational charac-

teristics (authoritarian, democratic, etc), physical, economic and broader social characteristics in which the school works, the educational policy, the attitudes of the society at large towards education

- Good relationships can be maintained through mutual respect, good leadership by the school principal, cooperation between teachers, knowing each other, etc.
- Ways of conflict prevention and management.
- The impact of disturbed relationships among teachers on students.

Method: Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes

Item 3.6. Motivation for learning
Purpose:
- To give information about ways of motivating children for learning
- To raise the awareness of the participants of the connection between academic performance of children and 1. their relationship with the teacher, and 2. didactic methods used

Content:
Ways of motivating pupils:
- A good relationship between the pupils and the teacher
- Use of methods that stimulate the curiosity of children
- Make subjects of teaching relevant for children's life
- Make abstract things concrete
- Make lessons interactive
- Ask for opinions; stimulate children to free thought and sharing
- Give feedback on what they did right and what went wrong
- Let them work in groups

Method: Lecture and discussion, 20 minutes

Item 4.1: Cooperating with parents
Purpose:
- To raise the awareness of the participants

of the importance of a good cooperation between the teacher and the parents with respect to the child.
- To explain the interaction between the school system and the family system
- To present models of good practice and problem solving solutions
- To point out most frequent pitfalls of teachers which can have a harmful impact on parent-teacher relationships

Content:
- Successful functioning of the teacher-parent-child triangle is a guarantee for the wellbeing of children in the school, and for successful problem solving
- The school system and the family system: good cooperation, lack of cooperation, conflicting relationships
- The importance of understanding the difficulties of parents, and establishing partnership with parents
- Formal and informal ways of communicating with parents
- The special importance of good cooperation with parents of children having difficulties and in crisis situations
- Most frequent obstacles, difficulties and conflicts in cooperation with parents
- So called 'difficult parents'
- Most common pitfalls for teachers, which can contribute to problems: lack of teachers' understanding of the family situation, of social adversities affecting the family, lack of communication skills, blaming parents for the child's problem
- How to talk with parents about their child having a problem in a non-offensive and non-judgemental way, and without harming the child
- Prevention and solutions of problems
- How to run attractive meetings for parents
- Parents councils
- Involving parents in school activities as

helpers, and in raising funds and other resources for the school

Methods:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work on the following instructions:

1. Describe a case of a pleasant relationship with a parent, what are the characteristics? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper.
2. Describe a case of a difficult relationship with a parent, what are the problems of the relationship? What factors or causes are contributing to the difficult behaviour of the parent? What did you do to improve this relationship? What was helpful and what was not? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper, mentioning problems, causes and strategies used
3. Enact a role-play about: *'Talking to a difficult parent with whom a problem was solved'*. After the role-play, discuss the feelings of the participants acting as a parent, as a teacher or as an observer. Discuss what was helpful and what was not, and write your conclusions on a paper. This role-play can be repeated with other participants playing a problem that was solved, or with an unsolved problem.
4. Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about problem solving strategies with regard to problems in relationships with parents?

Item 4.2: Trauma in adults

Purpose:

- To introducing the concept of trauma, how it is caused, symptoms of trauma, how to identify traumatized persons and how to help them.
- To make teachers acquainted with symptoms of trauma, with the process of healing and with long lasting consequences of trauma

- To stress the normality of traumatic reactions
- To present coping and healing resources at both the individual and the community level
- To draw attention to additional factors which can deteriorate the situation of a person experiencing traumas and loss

Content:

- Traumatized adults usually suffer from nightmares, sleeping problems, flash backs, low level interest for different activities, they feel fearful and are too sensitive. If these reactions do not last for a long time, they are considered as normal reactions in abnormal circumstances
- The traumatized family: lack of communication, misunderstanding, secrets, children taking a parental role, etc.
- The traumatized community
- The specific situation of the traumatized teacher working with traumatized children and their parents
- Explaining the phenomena of vicarious trauma
- Resources for coping with traumas in adults; the role of the family, colleagues, religion, broader social networks, social context
- What can be expected from professional mental health treatment

Methods:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work: Describe cases of people you know that are traumatized, what are their problems and how did you help them? What was helpful and what made things worse? The answers are written on a big sheet of paper, mentioning problems, strategies for helping

Item 4.3: Dysfunctional families

Purpose:

- To introduce the characteristics of the dysfunctional family, the impact on chil-

dren living in such families and suggestions of how to handle and help these children at school

- To raise the awareness of the teachers of the protective factors that can be activated or strengthened within the framework of the school
- To stimulate the exchange of experience of how these children can be helped
- To motivate the teachers to act as psychosocial helpers

Content:

- The characteristics of the functional family: children's needs are recognized and respected, clear rules, clear communication, flexibility, openness for changes and respecting individuality, the family has the energy and strategies for helping the child and other family members in distress
- The dysfunctional family has the reverse characteristics listed above
- Consequences of living in a dysfunctional family for the child: the child feels confused, insecure, emotionally deprived or otherwise emotionally harmed, having social, behavioural and learning problems
- Possible causes of family dysfunction: relation problems of the parents, divorce, death of a family member, alcoholism, psychiatric problems of a parent, stress in the family, war related trauma of parents, family crisis, etc.
- Teachers can help these children: by creating a good psychosocial climate in class (see the chapter on Protective role of the school); by providing special attention and special support to the child; by activating protective resources within the framework of the school (activities, raising the child's self-esteem, increasing his coping capacities, etc.); by activating protective resources within a broader environment (involving volunteers as psy-

chosocial helpers - 'big brothers', including the child in extra scholar activities, etc.) by talking to parents about the needs of the child and motivating them to accept more appropriate parental roles; by showing empathy and supporting parents; by referring the parents to a mental health institution, if necessary and possible

- Teachers should be aware that even in cases when the child's family situation can not be changed, positive experiences and relationships, both in the school and outside the school, can act as a counterpart to family risk factors and influence the child's view of the world and help protect the child's development

Methods:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work with the following instructions: Describe cases of pupils living in a dysfunctional family. How did you recognise them, what did you do within the framework of the class and the school? What more could be done to activate protective factors in these children's life? The answers are written on a big sheet of paper mentioning the problems of children living in dysfunctional families and strategies for helping them. The answers are analysed with regard to problems related to gender, age and strategies that are effective in particular situations. Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about pupils living in a difficult family situation?

Item 4.4: Violence and child abuse in families - the protective role of the school

Purpose:

- To sensitise the teachers to the signs of child abuse and domestic violence, and to stimulate them to talk about these issues

- To equip teachers with the knowledge needed to recognise signs indicating child abuse
- To help teachers react in an appropriate way when there is suspicion of child abuse
- To prevent pitfalls, which could harm the child, the family and the teacher
- To motivate teachers to protect the abused child
- To discuss what the school can do to protect the abused child

Content:
- Definition of child abuse (physical, sexual, psychological) and neglect
- Most common causes and dynamics of child abuse in families
- Symptoms (physical, emotional, behavioural, learning difficulties) which raise the suspicion of child abuse
- What to do in case of suspicion of child abuse, most common mistakes harming the child, the family, the teacher, the school
- How can the school contribute to the prevention of child abuse in family
- How can teachers help the abused child and his parents

Methods:
- Lecture and discussion
- Group work on the following instructions: Describe cases of children who are a victim of child abuse. How did you recognize them? What were the causes of the abuse? What did you do to help the child in the frame of the class and the school? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper, mentioning, problems, causes, and strategies for helping. What more could be done to introduce protective factors in the life of the child? Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about the

problems of the pupil's victim of child abuse?

4.5 The impact of poverty - How the school can counteract and reduce the effects of poverty

Purpose:
- To expose the multiple impact of poverty on the child's quality of life and development
- To raise the understanding of teachers of family related problems, of poor families and limitations of parents to support the child
- To motivate the teachers and generate new ideas on how a poor child can be supported within the framework of the school

Content:
- The impact of poverty on the quality of life, health, development, education and learning of children
- Social exclusion and its emotional, behavioural and motivational consequences
- Most common difficulties in poor families affecting the position of the child in school and school achievement
- What can teachers do to help a socially deprived child with learning difficulties
- Activating resources in the frame of the school and in the broader community for helping the child
- What can teachers do to help children cope with poverty
- Developing solidarity among children

Methods:
- Lecture with models of good practice and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work on the following instructions: Describe cases of poor pupils, how did you recognise them? What problems do they have? How did you help them and what more could be done? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper,

mentioning problems and strategies for helping. Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about the problems of the impact of poverty in children's lives?

Item 5.1: Relationships among pupils

Purpose:
- To highlight the importance of peer relations for the child's wellbeing in the school, for the quality of life and for psychosocial development
- To present most common problems in the field
- To equip teachers to reduce and solve these problems

Content:
- The impact of the child's temperament, the family, the school and broader environment affecting peer relationships
- Children having problems in peer relationships (the 'different' child, the shy child, the immature child, the destructive child, the aggressive child, the manipulative child, the child blaming others, the emotionally distant child, the child lacking social skills, the child with many bad experiences in interpersonal relationship, etc.). Harmful consequences of interpersonal difficulties for the child
- Why adults often do not recognize problems, not being aware of the importance of bad relationships among peers, underestimating the problem, the child hiding the problem
- How the teacher can help a child having difficulties in peer relationships (understanding, raising self confidence and confidence in others, mediating peer relationships, teaching social skills, inclusion in special groups, running team activities, creating a pro-social atmosphere in the classroom and in the school, acting as

role model, discussing peer relationship with the class, etc.)

Methods:
- Lecture with models of good practice and discussion, 30 minutes

5.2 Bullying and school violence - how can the school prevent it

Purpose:
- To draw the attention of teachers to the phenomenon of bullying and to help them to recognize it
- To equip teachers with knowledge of how to react in case of bullying
- To describe characteristics of a school which prevents bullying

Content:
- Definition of bullying
- Description of different forms of bullying (physical, verbal, humiliation, exclusion, etc.)
- Signs which can raise suspicion of bullying
- How can parents recognize bullying of their child
- Bullies and victims – most common characteristics
- Emotional and social consequences of bullying
- How can the teacher stop bullying (interventions with the victim, with bullies, with parents of both, discussing the problem in class, sanctions, etc.)
- School models for prevention of bullying

Methods:
- Lecture, 30 minutes, with presentation of cases by participants and discussion
- Group work with the following instructions: Describe cases of bullying, describing incidents in detail. What did you do to stop the problem? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper, mentioning problems, the characteristics of the victim and the bully Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to

the following question: What are methods to prevent bullying in class and in school?

Item 6.1: Stress in children
Purpose:
- To give information about stress and signs of stress
- To give information about ways of helping children showing signs of stress
- To motivate and help teachers to reduce or prevent stressful experiences of children in school

Content:
- Definition of stress, process of appraising events as harmful, threatening or challenging and assessing one's capacity to handle and control the situation as deficient, (events that are perceived as exceeding one's coping resources are experienced as stressful)
- Signs of stress in children: emotional (angry, bored depressive, guilty, powerless, passive, stubborn, low self-esteem); behavioural (behaviour problems, difficulties in dealing with self-control, hyperactivity, etc.); social problems (conflicts with peers, adults, in the family, aggression and/or withdrawal, etc.); psychosomatic reactions (fast heart beat, headaches, stomach aches, sleeping problems, low appetite or exaggerated appetite, etc.); learning problems (lack of energy and motivation, problems with concentration, memory problems, etc.)
- Causes of stress: stressful events, stressful family situation: economically, relationally and/or emotionally, lack of adequate parenting skills, excessively demanding parents, school related stress, stress stemming from relationships with peers, etc.
- School related causes of stress: fear of school, fear of a teacher, fear of exams, fear of bad marks or marks not meeting the pupil's expectations or the expectations of parents, fear of peer conflicts and bullying
- How can the teacher help the child exposed to stressful circumstances in and outside the school: 1. try to find out what the causes of the stress reactions are; 2. show empathy and understanding for their feelings; 3. try to reduce stressful circumstances if possible; 4. try to increase the child's capacities of mastering stressful situation and coping; 5. give the child the possibility to talk, to express their worries; 6. try to discover with the child what can help; 7. teach relaxation techniques and other practical strategies of mastering stressful situations

Method:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes

Item 6.2: The traumatized child
Purpose:
- To inform the teachers about the impact of traumatic events on children, what are normal reactions and what are not
- To give information about the role of the teacher in helping these children and giving indications when they should refer to professional institutions
- To give information about establishing a good cooperation between the teacher and parents of traumatized children

Content:
- Trauma refers to a sudden and often unexpected external event that threatens the integrity or life of a person or others and to which the person responds with intense fear, helplessness or horror
- Traumatic events can be accidents, violence, fires, sexual abuse, physical abuse, physical assaults, kidnapping, war events, catastrophes, a serious disease of a loved one, etc. One can be victim or one can be a witness to a traumatic event

- Possible reactions are: loss of a feeling of security, intrusive memories, nightmares and sleeping problems, avoiding situations that refer to the traumatic event, avoiding contact, hyperactivity, concentration problems and learning difficulties. Psychosomatic problems like headaches, stomach aches and bedwetting. Aggressive outbursts, nervousness, being easily frightened, feelings of depression, aggression guilt, shame, and or revenge
- Each child reacts differently, depending on: age; nature and duration of the traumatic event; the occurrence of previous traumatic events; personal characteristics of the child like a balanced temperament, good self esteem, good social-emotional abilities, or lacking these protective characteristics; the family situation (the family capacity to support the child or put additional burdens on the child, school related resources (a good personal relation with the teacher, belonging to a group, having a friend, good academic performance, a positive social climate in class, or missing these protective factors), the characteristics of the community (traumatisation of the community as a whole, the context of traumatic event and loss, the role of religion, the meaning of the traumatic event for the community, available coping resources in the community, etc.)
- How to help traumatized children: 1. tell the child that the aforementioned reactions are normal; 2. give emotional support; 3. give possibility to express themselves by talking, playing or by other expressive techniques; 4. teach relaxation techniques; 5. if the child gets intrusive memories, find out what makes them anxious and explain that their reaction belongs to the stressful situation of the past; 6. teach the child ways of dealing with the situation, don't make them dependent on others; 7. restore a normal routine in daily life; 8. give the child new opportunities for social contacts and activities

Methods
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work: Describe cases of traumatized children in your class, how did you recognize them as traumatized? What did you do in order to help them, in class, in school? The answers are written on a big sheet of paper: cases, problems, and strategies for helping. What more could be done? Are important issues missing? What did we learn about trauma?

6.3 Losses and grieving in children and families

Purpose:
- Giving information about the meaning of loss for children
- Describing the mourning process
- Discussing war related losses in the regional context
- Equipping teachers with the skills for helping the child and the parents
- Motivating teachers for supportive and helping attitudes and behaviour

Content:
- Losses belong to life; life is a continual process of changes. Sometimes losses happen that do not belong to the normal pattern of life, like losing a parent, a family, losing a child, or a friend
- Losses in wartime and war-related situations
- Phases that normally occur in relation to mourning: 1. Shock and denial: one does not admit it happened; 2. Self control: In order to survive, one admits it happened but avoids thinking and feeling in relation to the losses; 3. Experiencing the loss:

one allows oneself to think about what happened and to feel, to go through and accept the pain of the loss - feelings of depression, aggression, guilt and shame are normal feelings belonging to the process of mourning; 4. Adaptation: to accept the loss, to learn to enjoy life again and to learn to invest in new relationships

- Factors that influence the mourning process related to wartime: circumstances of death, relation of the child to the lost person, the way the death of a beloved one is valued by the relatives and by the community, the importance of having information about the death of a beloved one, the possibility to bury the dead person, the influence of multiple losses, the broader concept of losses (loss of home, of animals and toys to which the child was attached, of the teacher and school mates, of the social network, etc.), about memories and anniversaries of tragic events
- Issues about the grieving process in the community, cultural values with respect to loss and grief
- What teachers and parents can do to help a child who lost a beloved person: 1. Providing a safe environment where communication is possible; 2. Being physically present; 3. Letting the child decide about what she/he wants to talk about and letting them talk as much as they want; 4. Giving emotional support; 5. Checking if the child has a good understanding of what happened; 6. Helping the child to express his/her feelings; 7. If the child feels the need, they can draw their experiences, or write a letter; 8. Trying to find out if the child has feelings of guilt in relation to the situation and what other feelings (anger, anxiety, etc.) and fantasies the child has; 9. Establish a certain routine in class; 10. Help the child- if necessary- to integrate

among peers; 11. Do not make the child dependant on your help and attention
- Be alert to quiet, withdrawn children as well as aggressive children
- The school can make the children play a part in community events, like commemoration days.

Methods:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work with the following instructions: Describe a case of a child that lost a parent. What problems came up? What did the teacher do to help the child and the family? What did the family do to help the child? What more could be done? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper, mentioning problems, strategies for helping the child and the family, ways in which the family can help the child. Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about loss and grief?

Item 6.4: The depressed child
Purpose:
- To give information about the problems around depression

Content:
- Depression is an emotional state that is characterised by deep sadness, worrying, feelings of guilt and worthlessness, social withdrawal, sleeping problems, lack of appetite, agitation or lack of energy
- Causes of depression: loss and grief, abuses, stress, learning problems, depressed parents, etc.
- Teachers can help these children by talking to the child and his parents, trying to find the negative thoughts and to restructure these negative thoughts by stimulating the child in case of social withdrawal, encouraging children to try new activities

Method:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes

Item 6.5: The child with health problems, the physically handicapped child

Purpose:

- To raise the awareness of teachers of the importance of children's health condition for emotions, energy, motivation and learning capacities
- To present the importance of the teacher and of the school for coping with and overcoming health-related problems.
- To motivate teachers to meet the special (practical, emotional and learning) needs of children with health problems, and physically disabled children in their class
- To motivate teachers to include health education activities

Content:

- Most common health problems among pupils
- Emotional and social consequences of illness
- The influence of illness on children's motivation and capacity to learn
- The situation of the physically disabled child in the class
- How can the teacher provide special help (practical, emotional, educational) to the child with health problems and to the physically disabled child
- Cooperating with parents
- Mobilising resources and solidarity in the classroom
- Mobilising resources in the broader community
- Cooperating with health services

Method:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work on the following instructions: Describe cases of children with health problems. What were the problems? What did you do to help the child? What resources did you use both in and outside of school? What was helpful and what was not? Describe problems that not could be solved. List all your answers on a big sheet, mentioning problems, and strategies for help. What more could be done to introduce protective factors into the life of children with health problems? Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: How can teachers cooperate with the health services?

Item 6.6: Cooperation between the school and the health services

Purpose:

- To raise the awareness of participants of the importance of cooperation of the school and the medical services on behalf of pupils with health problems and for spreading the health education in schools;
- To discuss obstacles and problems in communication between the two systems and possibilities of improvement.

Content:

- The definition of health according to WHO (physical, mental, social and economic situation); underlining the connection between physical and mental health.
- The importance of the school for children's health in general and especially for children with health problems
- Medical institutions in the region, important for health care of school children.
- Health protective activities in which the cooperation between the two systems is essential (preventive measures, medical education, systematic health checks of students, etc.).
- The cooperation between teachers and health workers in case of children with health problems: examples of problems and of good practice.

Method:

- Two short lectures, one by a speaker

from the medical profession and one by a speaker from the educational profession.

Item 6.7: The hyperactive child

Purpose:
- To introduce the phenomenon of hyperactivity, its causes and consequences
- To prevent inappropriate attitudes and reactions of teachers towards the hyperactive child
- To equip teachers with some practical skills how to handle the hyperactive child in class

Content:
- Description of the phenomena and causes (biological, developmental and emotional)
- The connection between hyperactive behaviour, attention problems and specific learning disorders
- Emotional, relational and behavioural problems linked to hyperactive behaviour
- Handling the hyperactive child in class 1. Let the child sit in your proximity 2. Help the child to structure all sorts of situations; 3. Let them repeat a task or make a schedule 5. Give them one task at a time; 6. Break the work up into smaller parts and check their work more often; 7. Give opportunities for permitted moving: ask to clean a table, bring the chalk etc.; 8. Teach them how to check their own work, make a list of things to check; 9. Give them 20 minutes work and the possibility for a short walk; 10. Give them oral examinations in case of writing problems; 11. Help to find friends and how to keep friendships; 13. Teach them to think first and then do things; 14. Stress the child's positive qualities and achievements; 15. Adjust the expectations and requirements to the childs' good and bad days; 16. In case you lose your temper: apologize and explain why it happened.

- Cooperating with parents (explaining the nature of the problem to parents, counselling parents, supporting parents, etc.)
- Activating external resources (for instance including the child in sports activities, referral to mental health services if available, etc.)

Methods:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work: Role-play. One of the teachers is asked to describe the case of a hyperactive child. He or another participant is asked to play the role of the hyperactive child. Somebody else plays the teacher. The other participants of the group play the other pupils in class. The teacher has to teach arithmetic or another subject to his pupils while the hyperactive child is disturbing the lesson with his hyperactive behaviour. The teacher is asked to show how he should deal with the situation.

  After the role-play, the feelings of the participants while playing their role are discussed as a teacher, as the hyperactive pupil, as one of the other pupils? Did the teacher satisfactorily handle the problem? The role-play can be repeated with different participants playing the teachers, in order to explore the impact of different strategies

Item 6.8: The aggressive child

Purpose:
- To give information about the characteristics of aggressive behaviour and causes of this behaviour
- To raise the awareness of the teachers of the needs and fears of the aggressive child
- To give a general approach on how to handle these children

Content:
- Characteristics of mildly aggressive behaviour: often quick-tempered, opposing orders from others, not doing what is asked, not taking and accepting responsibility for their own behaviour, quickly angry, vengeful, fretful. This is all normal behaviour but when it causes problems or does not fit the age of the child we call it problematic behaviour
- Characteristics of serious aggressive behaviour: delinquency: fighting, intimidating, continuous lying, hurting others directly, but also indirectly by gossiping and causing trouble
- Causes: 1. Biological factors in the child like a difficult temperament; 2.Family factors: inadequate parental methods like neglect, not setting limits, physical abuse, tensions and stress in the family, psychiatric problems of a parent. These factors harm the psychosocial development of the child, making him/her feel insecure. This goes together with a low level of frustration tolerance causing immediate aggressive responses. 3. Imitation of aggressive role models that contribute to the use of aggressive behaviour. 4. Children can use aggressive behaviour as a way of drawing attention, a way to get what they want.
- How teachers can help: 1. Teachers can help these aggressive pupils by realizing there are hidden needs behind the opposing and/or aggressive reactions. They can talk to the child, show disapproval of the behaviour but ask for the real need and reflect on possible solutions. 2. Teachers can help children to control their aggression through setting clear limits, asking for pleasant behaviour in class and by reinforcing good behaviour. In case children do not accept rules: make them responsible for their own

behaviour. Do not accept excuses. 3. In case of many social problems, the teacher can talk to the child and reflect with them on what went wrong, what they really need (e.g. a friend). He/she can teach the child to take into consideration the perspective of the other person, and reflect on alternate better solutions regarding the problem. 4. Teachers can talk to the parents, explain the problems and seek their cooperation. 5. If necessary and possible, refer to the school worker or a mental health clinic.

Methods:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work on the following instructions: Describe cases of aggressive children in your class. What sort of aggression did they use? Why did they use it? What did you do to deal with this problem with regard to the aggressive pupil and the victim? What was helpful and what was not? List your answers on a big sheet of paper. Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about aggression in schools?

Item 6.9: Learning difficulties and school failure

Purpose:
- To sensitise the teachers to emotional, psychosocial, motivational and other consequences of learning difficulties and school failure in children
- To enable the teachers to understand different interactive causes of learning difficulties
- To present possibilities of helping children with school or external resources
- To motivate teachers to help the child and cooperate with parents in cases of learning problems

Content:
- Main causes of learning difficulties and

their interactions: intellectual disabilities, specific learning disabilities and concentration problems, health problems affecting learning capacities (vision and hearing problems, brain damage, problems linked to some medication, etc.), emotional problems (including traumatic reactions), lack of motivation, lack of stimulation and learning opportunities in the family, etc.

- Specific learning difficulties (this subject should be elaborated because many teachers are not familiar with the phenomena and can not understand partial deficiencies in learning): writing and reading difficulties, difficulties in mathematics, concentration problems etc.
- The emotional, psychosocial, behavioural, motivational, social and other consequences of learning difficulties and school failure in children
- How the teachers and the school can help the child with learning difficulties and prevent school failure: understanding, support, motivation, adapted teaching approaches, requirements adapted to child's learning capacities, giving opportunities for developing self-esteem, etc.
- Cooperating with parents
- Mobilising external resources: peer assistance, volunteers, etc.

Methods:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work with the following instructions: Describe cases of children with learning problems. What type of learning problems did they have? What did you do to assist these children? What was helpful and what was not? Write your answers on a big sheet of paper: mentioning problems and strategies for helping these children. Are there problems with these children that not could be solved? What more resources could be activated in order to help these children?

Item 7.1: The situation of the school and the situation and role of teachers in our region today

Purpose:
- To analyse the situation of the school in the context of the present social and political situation in the region, and in the historical and cultural perspective of the covered region
- To analyse the situation of the teacher in the present circumstances: war related traumas and loss, post conflict social adversities, huge numbers of children affected by war, by poverty and by family adversities, etc.
- To raise the awareness of teachers of their multiple roles in the lives of children living in deprived and adverse circumstances and the moral and protective value of taking over different roles

Content:
- Presentation of the situation of the school within a recent local social context
- Multiple roles of teachers, especially in rural environments: educator, social worker, psychosocial helper of the child and of parents, health educator, and sometimes partly taking over the role of the missing parent
- Special focus on supportive and protective influences from which teachers gain power and coping capacities
- In post-war circumstances the teacher is expected to make an extra effort to counteract the negative experiences of war and post-war circumstances by supporting children and parents
- In order to fulfil these complex tasks, teachers themselves need support. This support can be offered through recognition, mutual support among the group of teachers in the school; psychosocial seminars, and other adequate

learning opportunities are all important tools for empowering teachers

Method: Lecture and discussion,
        30 minutes

Item 7.2: The impact of the teacher's profession on his family life

Purpose:

- To highlight the interaction between job and family life of teachers.
- To give opportunities to the teachers for reflection on family burdens and problems, stemming from their job.
- To give opportunities to teachers for reflection on the supporting role of the family.
- To discuss approaches for overcoming identified problems

Content:

- Most common problems affecting the family life of teachers (bringing work home, being a public person and a public family, not earning enough money to assure an economically secure life, not having opportunities to marry for women teachers, working in distant villages, etc.).
- Having your own child as pupil in the school in which the teacher is working
- Other problems experienced by the participants
- Identifying resources stemming from the family

Methods:

- A short introductory lecture, 15 – 20 minutes, which should preferably be presented by a teacher and not by the trainers from other professions, followed by discussion.

Item 7.3: Burdens and stresses linked to the teachers' profession

Purpose:

- To inform the teachers about the factors and circumstances that can cause stress in regard to their job

- To sensitise them to signals that indicate overburdening
- To identify protective resources

Content:

- Specific burdens linked to the profession: working with huge number of different children (in maturity, temperament, motivation, intellectual capacities, etc.), that are expected to behave in the same way and to achieve similar results in acquiring knowledge; great responsibility in relation to children, parents and society; frequently unrealistic and exaggerated expectations and requirements of the school system/curriculum regarding the knowledge, which children should master; permanent giving of attention, energy and motivation to children; work that is never completed – impossible for all the pupils to master all the knowledge, all the problems in the classroom are never solved; practicing the profession always in public and being a public person, even outside the classroom; lack of recognition from the authorities, etc.
- Context and situation related burdens: experiencing personal traumatic events and loss in times of armed conflicts; working with children and parents, who experienced traumatic events and loss; taking over an increasing number of roles in relation to pupils besides being a teacher and educator, such as the role of psychosocial helper, social worker, health worker, proponent for children's rights; bad social and economic position of the teacher, etc.

Methods:

- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- Group work with the following questions: In what situations are you stressed? How do you notice that you are stressed? What are the causes and

what do you do to help yourself (strategies for the moment and strategies for the future)? Write all your answers on a big sheet of paper. What strategies are helpful and what was not? What can you do to prevent stress in your life? Summarise the session: the group makes an overview in reaction to the following question: What did we learn about stress in our own lives?

Item 7.4: Burnout: coping and prevention
Purpose:
- To inform the teachers about the phenomenon and process of burn out
- To enable them to recognise threats and their own symptoms
- To enable them to react quickly and in an appropriate way in order to prevent burn out process
- To exchanging useful models of activation of resources and individual coping strategies
- To empower the teachers for helping colleagues in need.

Content:
- Definition: Burnout is defined in many ways: To exhaust one's physical and mental resources. To wear oneself out by excessively striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by oneself or by the values of society. 2. Burnout is a process that begins with excessive and prolonged levels of job stress. The stress produces strain in the worker (feelings of tension, irritability and fatigue)
- Causes of burn out: non-war related causes (external causes, internal causes as too high expectations of one self, etc.); specific causes in areas affected by armed conflicts (teachers experience themselves traumatic events and losses; they work with a huge numbers of children emotionally harmed by armed conflicts and

with their parents; the post conflict situation is full of social adversities, etc.)
- Symptoms: low job performance/little job satisfaction, physical exhaustion/fatigue, irritability, anxiety, rigidity to change, loss of flexibility, decreased communication/withdrawal, physical symptoms, apathy/loss of concern, cynicism, emotional exhaustion and reduction of empathy and positive interactions with pupils and parents, interpersonal conflicts at job and family conflicts
- Ways of preventing and coping: make your job more satisfying by creating a good psychosocial climate in class and using good pedagogic and didactic methods; maintain an active personal, social and religious life outside work; take time-outs when you need them, maintain a regimen of proper nutrition and physical exercise; take yourself seriously and set realistic goals; recognize the symptoms of stress and burnout; ask for help and be open when it is needed; develop a personal support system; develop self-help strategies as relaxation, leisure time activities; accentuate the positive; be willing to accept counselling when needed

Method: Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes

Item 8.1: The school and the community
Purpose: To explain the importance of the cooperation of the school with the community and with civil society, NGOs, services and local authorities, and motivating school workers to develop such cooperation and to mobilize resources in the community for the benefit of the school and of individual children in need

Content:
- The school can mobilize community resources (help of parents, religious organizations, volunteers, local businessmen, etc.)
- Parents are an important vector linking

the school with the community; individual parents have social influence in the community and can contribute to the wellbeing of the school; another vector are parents' councils

- Of special importance is the cooperation with health services, social services and other institutions, dealing with children and families
- Connecting with local NGOs and international NGOs can be a good way of activating various resources for helping children in need, improving the situation of the school and including the school in various educational programs for school workers
- In situations of poverty, financial and material resources can be raised for helping the most deprived children and to support the school (activities, facilities, school equipment, etc.)
- The importance of the transparency of the work and activities of the school in public (public events, links with media, etc.)
- The school, which shows its involvement in reducing problems in the community (for instance; by organizing pupils volunteers who help elderly people, or by organizing some joyful event for the community at large) will be more supported by the community itself

Methods: Lecture with examples and discussion, 30 minutes

- Group work on the following: Describe an example of good cooperation with a member of the community. Write all your answers on a big sheet of paper mentioning the situation in which the cooperation took place, the problems that were addressed and the strategies that were used.
- Role-play: Play what happens when a delegation of a school (the principal and a teacher) visit a wealthy person in the community persuading him to give money or materials for the school. After the role-play, discuss how all actors felt during the role-play and the observations of the other participants. What strategies in the communication were effective and which ones were not? Repeat the role-play, with other participants of the group taking the role of the teacher and principal. Then discuss the same questions once more.

Item 8.2: Voluntary work in schools

Purpose:

- To explain the concept of organised voluntary work, its links with past and present solidarity networks in the region covered by the program, raising awareness of the multiple values of voluntary work
- To motivate the participants to develop voluntary work in their schools
- To give information about the organisation of voluntary work

Content:

- The concept of organised voluntary work and its integration in the existing concepts and practice of solidarity in the region
- A description of some voluntary activities organised by children and youth
- How to apply voluntary work in schools
- How to identify needs for voluntary work
- How to prepare a project
- How to obtain financial and other resources
- How to introduce voluntary work in schools
- How to recruit, to motivate and prepare volunteers for their activities
- How to introduce volunteers to the parents of the helped children

- The role of mentors: monitoring and supervision
- Giving acknowledgement to volunteers
- How can volunteers help their "beneficiaries" (children, elderly persons, disabled persons, etc.)?
- The benefits of volunteering for volunteers, for the school and for the community
- Voluntary work as a tool of civic education for participative citizenship
- Most common problems
- Promoting voluntary work in public

Methods:
- Lecture and discussion, 30 minutes
- If possible, presentation of young volunteers' activities by young volunteers (this is usually the most encouraging and motivating component)
- Group work with the following questions: What are the needs and possibilities for developing voluntary work of children and youth in the frame of the school? How can volunteers be introduced as helpers for children with psychosocial and learning problems? Which small steps have to be taken to realise such a project? Role-play: play the following situations. 1.Two teachers try to convince the director of the school to permit the development of voluntary work in the school. 2.Two teachers present the aims and activities of volunteers and the recruitment process of volunteers to fellow teachers in their schools. 3. Two teachers explain to parents the aim of the volunteer project, and describe how it is meant to work. They also ask parents for permission and support for the work of the volunteer. Afterwards, the feelings of the actors and the observations of the other participants are discussed. Conclusions are formulated on what

strategies were effective and which ones were not.

Item 8.3: Children's rights
Purpose:
- To inform the participants of the Convention of Children's Rights
- To sensitise them to the issue of children's rights and their violation
- To motivate them to spread the concepts of children's rights among parents, other caretakers, and among children

Content:
- Childhood is the period between 0-18 years
- The protection of children in the present situation of the region covered by the program
- Presentation of the Convention on the Rights of the child, focusing on those aspects in which the school has an important role
- How can the school violate children's rights?
- How can the school and teachers protect children's rights, when those are threatened or violated outside the school
- How to spread the awareness of children's rights among school workers, parents, other caretakers and children themselves
- Examples of good practice

Method:
- Lectures and discussion, 30 minutes. If available, distribute the document of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, translated into the local language

Item 9.1: Evaluation of the previous seminar
Purpose:
- To give the participants an opportunity to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction and criticisms, needs and wishes for the continuation of the program (for

instance concerning topics, organizational issues)
- To give feedback to the trainers
- To give the trainers the possibility to adapt the program

Content: The answers of the participants to the following questions: Of all the things you learned in the previous seminar, what did you use or try to use? Which problems did you encounter?

Method: Small group discussions with production of posters, which are presented in a plenary meeting

Item 9.2: Evaluation

Purpose:
- To give the participants an opportunity to express their satisfactions, gains, dissatisfactions and criticisms, their needs and wishes for the continuation of the program (for instance concerning topics, organizational issues)
- To give feedback to local trainers, international experts, organizers and donors
- To modify the program according to the expressed opinions and proposals of participants
- To prepare reports on the program

Content: The contents of the evaluation depend upon the environments in which the programs are run. If teachers are used to evaluation processes, more sophisticated methods and contents can be used. Basic contents of evaluation are:

- The satisfaction with the program in general, with special sections or presentations, with various methods of work, etc.
- Measuring the increase in knowledge and know-how in different fields
- Applicability of acquired knowledge and know-how in professional work of teachers and their private coping capacities
- Observed changes in understanding, insights, attitudes
- What was implemented from the program in everyday activities
- The impact of the program on personal life (mood, habits, relationship, family life)
- Gathering proposals for changes of the program
- Gathering critical remarks and dissatisfactions
- Identifying new needs

Methods:
- The participants are asks to fill in a questionnaire
- Small group discussions with production of posters, which are presented in plenary. The following topics can be discussed: What did we learn and what did we use in our daily work, what did we implement? What were our experiences, difficulties in applying what we learned? Lessons learned? What do we need?

7. Voluntary work inside schools

The importance of restoring 'natural resources'

In the chapter 3 we mentioned the importance of the social network for coping and healing processes in children affected by war. In war-related circumstances the natural social network is impoverished, or lost. Volunteers represent the possibility of an enlargement and enrichment of the affected social network. They can contribute in various ways to the empowerment and wellbeing of children affected by war, and of refugee children. This chapter describes the introduction of volunteers into the school.

When we want to help children to restore the conditions for a normal psychological development, the most effective method may be to restore 'natural resources', such as a supportive social network. This is true, even when some children may need additional therapeutic attention.

It took many years before the majority of mental health workers to recognise the meaning and importance of a 'natural resource', within the broader social network and social context, for the rehabilitation of people affected by war and exile. Therapy, or counselling, aimed at overcoming traumatic experience is not the only answer to the psychological problems of people affected by armed conflict.

The psychosocial function and healing tools of volunteers

A variety of people can work as volunteers and offer support to teachers working with children affected by armed conflict. How volunteers can offer help to refugee children is shown in Table 3. (below), listing volunteers' activities and their impact on the life and psychosocial well being of refugee children from Bosnia and Herzegovina, living in Slovenia (1992-1995).

In chapter 3 we already mentioned the requirements for successful psychosocial assistance: a positive relationship between the helper and the helped person, the ability of the helper to make a positive change in the life situation of the helped person, and specialised professional knowledge.

Lay volunteers possess the listed requirements in different proportions from those of mental health workers. Many people, who have no professional training, are gifted with extraordinary sensitivity and understanding of psychological problems, and have inborn capacities for psychosocial help.

In creating an interpersonal relationship between the helper and the helped, the volunteer is often better placed than a professional. The volunteer is more accessible socially and emotionally, has more time, and often more energy to spend with individuals in need as he/she is not usually responsible for a large number of clients. A volunteer can provide benefits stemming from a good social relationship, such as warmth, security, support, empowerment and motivation, which can be more intense than those provided by mental health professionals.

The second requirement for successful psychosocial assistance is the capacity to change the life situation of the receiving person and to provide practical help. In the case of children, this could be helping the

Table 3 How volunteers can help refugee children

Stress of refugee children	Help of volunteers
Loss of domestic social network	Creation of new social network
Bad experiences with people, disappointment, emotional harm	Kindness, friendship, the experience 'there are still good people'
Social isolation, life in a ghetto	Volunteers bridging the refugee community and the hosting community
Exclusion, xenophobia, rejection	The message ' *we do care about what is happening to you, we want to help you'*, counteracting prejudices and xenophobia
Deprivation concerning normal leisure pursuits and other activities	Organisation of various leisure time activities for children
Not speaking the language of the asylum country and related difficulties	Teaching the language through befriending, playing and through instructions
School and learning difficulties	Learning assistance
Difficulties in integration in the new environment due to not being familiar with patterns and rules of social behaviour	Host country volunteers teach children characteristic patterns of behaviour, volunteers help children to acquire social orientation and to adapt to the new environment
General impoverishment, deprivation, multiple adversities	Enrichment of life, better quality of life
Psychological traumatisation due to war-related trauma and loss	Volunteers work as psychosocial helpers, contributing to the psychological healing and rehabilitation of children, empowering children to cope better

child move from a position of failure to one of achievement in the classroom (for example through additional coaching on a subject). This then, influences the self-esteem of the child and therefore his/her capacity to cope. The inclusion of children by volunteers in various sports, games and cultural activities enriches their lives, improves their quality of life, and broadens their interests and horizons. All of these factors have a healing influence on traumatised and depressed children.

Specialised mental health knowledge in lay workers is very limited. Yet, volunteers can acquire this knowledge step by step through reflections of their experience during training or supervision.

Volunteering is not just one-way traffic either. It is important for one's own personal development and aides in developing a wide range of abilities. For young people, being a volunteer has an important protective impact on their psychosocial development, because they become involved in pro-social activities. This helps to prevent delinquency and drug abuse by endowing the young with a sense of purpose and dignity. Voluntary work enriches the life of young volunteers; it adds new meaning to life, new satisfactions, and new joys. Volunteers learn to become socially responsible citizens. They develop a set of pro-social values such as solidarity and a moral obligation to actively participate in problem solv-

ing. They become sensitised to social processes in their communities, especially those linked to poverty and social exclusion. They experience for themselves that the impact of these processes can be reduced by the activation of civil society. They acquire new practical knowledge, know-how and skills (for example: in communication, in supporting people in need, or in advocacy for deprived groups). Receiving recognition for their social activities increases their self-esteem. They no longer see themselves as the helpless victims of evil and social adversities. On the contrary, they see themselves as active creators of their own life-situation and the situation of their communities. Voluntary work provides opportunities for children and youth who are at the receiving side of help to in turn, become help givers to others. This has a positive effect on their self-esteem and their personality, in general.

Volunteers in different war-related situations

During a *war-related emergency* we do not envisage planned psychosocial activities on the part of volunteers. Psychosocial help is somehow supposed to be spontaneously integrated into other practical activities, such as the distribution of food, and logistics of care for the sick and wounded.

Like other disasters, war-related circumstances evoke a huge amount of spontaneous solidarity in people directly affected by the tragedy. People provide mutual help within the framework of their groups and communities. But their ability to help their fellow human beings is mostly limited, and is generally devoted primarily to, the care of family members and other loved ones.

In *long-lasting situations of armed conflicts* many psychosocial programmes run by volunteers can be developed, for example in *exile situations*. As well as providing practical assistance, psychosocial, educational and other kinds of support, volunteers have a positive influence on the public attitudes and behaviour of the host country. They bridge both communities – the community of refugees on one side and the community of the exile country on the other side. Volunteers often act as a pressure group lobbying in favour of refugees in political decisions made the asylum country.

Prolonged situations of exile are characterised by general dependency, passivity and depression. Motivating displaced people and refugees to volunteer in the interest of their community, and facilitating such activities, provides multiple practical, social and psychological benefits for the refugees, as well as for those volunteering.

The *post-war situation* is of crucial importance for the recovery process. Human resources available in post-war circumstances are reduced. Humanitarian organisations, foreign volunteers and other 'imported resources' leave the country quickly. The mentality of the population after war undergoes a change. The solidarity that characterised the war situation vanishes. After war, everyone becomes more self-centred. However, war traumas have not yet healed and new social problems emerge. People experience many disappointments and numerous expectations are not fulfilled. In the regions of former Yugoslavia affected by war, a multitude of social problems emerged: poverty, unemployment, and injustice. The state institutions and services for health-care, social welfare, etc., were dysfunctional and corrupt. In such a situation, there are enormous quantities of needs that go unmet.

For instance, to mention just one, returnee children often have often great difficulty integrating back into their native schools

due to social and emotional reasons, one of which can be because they have been studying a different curriculum and often have language difficulties.

Volunteers can be invaluable helpers to different groups in need, especially children. They can also compensate for family deprivation and parental dysfunction to some extent. Parents are more affected than their children by loss of family members and property. The atmosphere of the family is depressive. Numerous parents have no energy or the emotional capacity to support their children. A volunteer who is not burdened by distress and sadness can bring positive emotions, humour, joy, positive dreaming, etc. into the life of the child.

In a post-war situation, as well as being a human energy, 'here and now' resource to people in need, volunteering represents an important moral value for the community. It acts as a counterweight to the morality of the market economy, which is certainly not based on solidarity or care for one's fellow man. The organised activities of volunteers enrich the social tissue of postwar communities and provide socially deprived individuals with an increased sense of security.

The development of new forms of postwar, community-based voluntary work can result in a sustainable local, or regional culture of voluntarism, with the social responsibility of every citizen to improve the quality of life of the most deprived and vulnerable. In fact, it can improve the quality of life of the whole community, as all of the above have an influence on the individual and collective healing process.

The post-war period should also be a time of reconciliation. The process of reconciliation is affected mainly through common activities, by uniting all sides involved in the conflict. Involving volunteers from different ethnic and religious groups in common pro-social activities is an important means of working towards social reconstruction and reconciliation in the community. The volunteers' network contributes to the development of tolerance, confidence building, and conviviality in the community.

Developing a volunteer program in a school

How children and the school benefit. In school, the school director and the teachers must be motivated to support the ideas of, and believe in, the advantages of voluntary work. Volunteers can be recruited from the community, parents, or other interested people, as well as from inside school. Children can be a great help in supporting their (mostly) younger fellow pupils.

All children can benefit from volunteers' activities. But, volunteers may become very important especially for physically handicapped children, sick children, children with psychosocial problems or disorders, socially deprived children, children suffering from trauma-related complaints and symptoms, and children from dysfunctional families. The contact with volunteers can protect deprived children from allowing the impact to worsen, and to stimulate healthy psychological development. It can improve the psychosocial quality of their lives by involving them in various social activities that bring joy and happiness, and thus countering the process of social exclusion. It can advance their social functioning, because the volunteers can serve as role models. It can help them to develop new interests, and it can contribute to an improvement of their school achievement. It may also give them corrective experience with 'good' people that helps compensates for painful experiences and thus give the children a more positive outlook of humanity.

The school as a whole benefits from the work of volunteers because it promotes a good reputation in the community as a caring institution.

A local partner NGO could develop this sort of volunteer program. The schools must of course be willing to cooperate. Teachers from schools included in the program can be mentors for the volunteers. Parents have to consent to their children becoming volunteers, or that their children are helped by volunteers. Local trainers run workshops for mentors and supervise the volunteers' programme.

Training mentors. When voluntary work is part of a psychosocial intervention, the organisers need to start with training mentors. These mentors will monitor and supervise the work of the volunteers. Volunteers should be prepared for their work; they should have regular group encounters with opportunities to discuss problems and their own difficulties and dilemmas. Volunteers should be supported, but organisers and supervisors should not devote the bulk of their time and energy to volunteers' problems. There is a danger that the volunteers' group becomes centred on its own problems, so that the war-affected community are no longer the main beneficiaries.

There are situations when volunteers should be protected; for instance, from unjust accusations by refugees. The organiser must be aware that volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to war-affected people can be very vulnerable to such harassment. In addition, volunteers may have unrealistic and idealised images of the war-affected population.

Their own community may regard domestic volunteers who offer aid to refugees in the host country with suspicion, especially if this is unfriendly towards refugees, or by negatively minded refugee camp managers. On the other hand, volunteers often reflect a positive image of refugees back to their family, or institutional environments.

Selection of volunteers. When engaging volunteers, the organisers must pay attention to the selection process. Some people who wish to be volunteers in situations related to armed conflict do not have adequate skills for coping with the difficulties they are likely to encounter. Their volunteering can cause harm to themselves, or to people with whom they work.

Volunteers with a patronising attitude towards victims of war and refugees can be harmful. It shows lack of respect for the coping capacities of the local people. On the other hand, it can push more vulnerable people into a position of helpless victim, thus preventing the mobilisation of their own coping energies and efforts. Volunteers should act in partnership with those they wish to support and their behaviour should be culturally appropriate.

Sensitisation of the community. Other people working with children, like doctors, social workers, etc., can be informed about the services volunteers are willing to provide in their communities. Initiating voluntary work is a social innovation, which needs adequate preparation, acceptance, and the sympathy of the environment. Therefore ample time and energy should be invested in informing and explaining the concepts and practicalities of voluntary work to all parties involved.

Starting to work as a volunteer. Volunteers, who participate in a program aimed at strengthening the protective role of a school, are brought in contact with a 'client'. They meet this client once a week throughout the whole academic year. The people receiving help can be elderly people, dis-

abled people, or other people in need. Most frequently young volunteers help children. Volunteers can be very efficient assisting children with learning difficulties. This aid can be provided by peers, by children from higher classes, by secondary school students, and by university students. Befriending, and being a role model, is another important function of volunteers working with children with emotional and psychosocial problems, disabled children, and children with special needs.

The mentor is responsible for the implementation of the program, for its quality, and for the respect of ethical standards. Mentors are prepared for their role and activities by attending a training session before starting their work with volunteers. The initial step in involvement for young volunteers is the organisation of a workshop run by the mentors. The purpose of the workshop is to acquaint volunteers with the aims and values of volunteering, to prepare them for practical work according to the defined tasks and beneficiaries (for instance, how to help elderly people, how to help children with learning difficulties, etc.), to acquaint volunteers with their obligations, and with the support which will be provided to them by mentors and organisers. The mentors meet biweekly with groups of volunteers working in the same field (for instance, the group of volunteers helping elderly people). Those meetings include monitoring of volunteers' activities, supervision, discussing problems and their solutions. If volunteers work in institutions (for instance, in a home for handicapped children), the mentor is cooperating with such institution on regular basis. The task of the mentor is also to acknowledge volunteers and give them opportunities to present their work in the public, and through the media.

8. The impact of the program

Introduction

The impact of community-based programs is always difficult to evaluate. This is true in particular, as programs are not targeted to treat a narrow range of symptoms, or on other isolated and easily quantifiable phenomena. Programs are based on the assumption is that they will have broad impact within a large context.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the programme are children. Unfortunately, it is not easy to measure the impact on children[1]. It is also a question of money. In a similar psychosocial programme for teachers run by UNICEF in Bosnia during the war, it was found that the costs of a reliable and scientifically correct evaluation would be higher than the costs of the program itself.

Also, research-like activities may raise suspicion in local people involved in the programs. In many countries affected by armed conflicts and other disasters, foreign researchers came and literally exploited the situation for research purposes, but not for the benefit of the affected people. I often heard statements from local people like: '*We do not want to be research material!*'

Quantitative research can also introduce other problems causing which may cause unease. For example, if before starting the program you evaluate the knowledge and know-how of teachers through a questionnaire so that comparisons of the increase of knowledge, know-how and capacities acquired through the program may be calculated, you can create unease in teachers. Sometimes, this can even create resistance to the program as a whole.

In general, the qualitative methodology is much more useful than the quantitative one. But, it would be a mistake to claim that figures are unimportant. They are especially important for some donors, and other decision makers. Figures are an indicator of the realisation of the principle '*include a critical mass of entities (teachers, schools, services, volunteers, etc.) in the program*', which is one condition of producing an impact on the community at large.

In the psychosocial program presented here, we suggest using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation.

We also suggest inviting an external evaluator because the psychosocial program for teachers is expensive. It usually triggers new activities for which funds are needed, and donors wonder whether past and future activities are really worthwhile and deserve funding. The opinion of an external evaluator can be a convincing document.

Measurement methods for the impact of the training on the teachers

The satisfaction of the participants in the training courses and the impact of activities can be measured by:

1. questionnaires for teachers completed at the end of each module,
2. observation of the active involvement of the teachers during the training,
3. self-evaluation by the participants of their knowledge on specific topics before and after the seminar,
4. group discussions of teachers and trainers,
5. group reports of teachers on implemented activities in their schools.[2]

Questionnaires and evaluation sheets for teachers completed at the end of each module enable the quantitative evaluation of their individual satisfaction with lectures, group discussion, role-play and the organisation of the seminar. Table 4 is an example evaluation sheet. The data collected with these questionnaires consistently show that teachers especially appreciate group discussions, because these discussions give them an opportunity for exchanging experiences and to learn from each other. Teachers are also asked to evaluate the usefulness and applicability in their every day professional activities with children of: ideas, information, and models of good practice, which were gathered during the seminars. Of special interest are the open questions in which teachers express their personal experience of seminars and gave suggestions. The data show that the teachers experience the seminars as both empowering and motivating.

The impact of the training on the personal life of the teachers can be assessed through a questionnaire. See Box 4. as an example.

Observations on the active involvement of the teachers. Observations clearly show that the teachers participate very actively. They seem to appreciate the opportunity for exchanging their working experience and learning from each other. Table 5. gives an example of a form for this measurement.

The data acquired through this method in Bosnia and Kosovo show that the knowledge of the teachers concerning the main topics of

Table 4. Evaluation sheet for teachers

Grade your evaluation of the importance of the following aspects: (1 = least, 5 = most)					
	1	2	3	4	5
Lectures					
Group work					
Organisation					
Social life					
The role of trainers in group work					
Were the presented topics interesting for you?					
How useful will this be for your everyday practice?					
Your dissatisfaction and criticism:					
What did you like most, and what was most useful for your work in the classroom?					
Other comments and suggestions:					

Box 4. Example of questionnaire on the impact of the program on the personal life of teachers

We kindly ask you to reflect on how the program that you have attended influenced you personally and within your personal relationships?

Please answer briefly the following questions:
1. Have you noticed any changes of an emotional nature, motivation, or energy in your professional work after your participation in the seminars? If so, what kind of changes?

2. What changes have you noticed in your family, life and personal relationships?

3. What sort of changes have you noticed in other areas of your private life (for example: relaxation, socialising?)?

4. What sort of changes have you noticed in your emotional life and mood (for example: security, self -confidence, optimism, etc.)?

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the program increased by more than 20%, even though the acquirement of factual knowledge is not the main aim of the program.

Group discussions of teachers and trainers. Data from these discussions show that the teachers feel empowered and stimulated in the sense that they felt that they had more energy for coping with their job, as well with their own difficulties in life situations. They experience the program as meaningful as well as a kind of social reward for their work. Teachers included in the program, as a rule, live in very difficult life circumstances. Although the program does not improve their material situation, it does have an impact on their moral strength and self-esteem. See Box 5. for some quotes from these group discussions.

Group reports of teachers on implemented activities in their schools. From the systemic reporting of teachers on implemented activities it can be assessed how and to what extent they were able to put into practice: gained knowledge, transfer gathered information to other

teachers in their schools through informal channels and within the framework of formal meetings of teachers, by distributing leaflets and books on treated topics, etc.

Teachers should be asked particularly about using acquired knowledge in working with parents. Usually the amount of reported activities involving parents is significantly smaller than the reported activities involving children. The most frequent tangible innovation is the introduction of voluntary work in schools.

Some teachers use their group reports to mention more general matters, such as an increase in their sensitivity and their capacity to recognise traumatised or other emotionally hurt children. Also mentioned were: an enlargement of their repertory of helping interventions, a stronger motivation for providing to both children and their parents, a better understanding and more appropriate approaches to children with fear in school and school phobia, a better recognition of emotional disorders of children in general (especially of the anxious

Table 5. Example of self – evaluation questionnaire for teachers addressing acquired knowledge

| *Dear participants,* |
| *We would appreciate if you would grade on a scale from 1-5 your acquired knowledge of the topics listed, and presented in the seminar.* |
| *Use the first line to inform us about your knowledge before the seminar, and the second about your knowledge after the seminar.* |

1. The protective role of the school and teachers for the psychosocial well-being of children

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

2. Psychosocial climate of the school

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. Group work

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4.   Communication in the classroom

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. Peer relationships- bullying

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. Stress of teachers

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7. Burn out and its prevention

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8.   Education for pro-social behaviour

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. Voluntary work in school and community

| Before the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| After the seminar | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

and depressive type), and more fruitful contacts with parents. Other results of the program mentioned by teachers are: the introduction of more interactive teaching methods, increased cooperation with other schools, and more involvement of their schools in community activities. The multitude of small but important changes in attitudes, behaviour and functioning of teachers stemming from a better insight in psychological and psychosocial processes, and from an exchange of experience with their colleagues however, are difficult to measure.

The results of all measurements can be summed up in a table, see Table 6. for an example.

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[1] An interesting methodology for measuring the effect of community oriented psychosocial programs for children is discussed by Bragin (2005).

[2] One could also use a *goal attainment scale* based on the learning wishes formulated by each individual participant on the first day of the training.

See: http://www.ed.psu.edu/paliteracycorps/forms/gasprocedures.htm

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Box 5. Bosnian teachers on the seminars organised by Foundation 'Together'

'We are so glad that you invited us to this seminar, we already felt that everybody forgot us.'

'This is the first time that primary school teachers, especially those teaching the first 4 grades, and those working in rural schools are invited to the psychosocial seminars. We really need this kind of support. We work in very poor conditions, with mostly refugee children, in refugee camps. Parents do not cooperate with us and we are blamed for everything.'

'We are fed up with seminars on school reforms, seminars which are very technical, seminars in which we are not considered as human beings, and seminars where our needs or needs of our pupils are not important.'

'We like the lectures in the seminar. They are brief, concise; and deal with the topics we really need in our everyday work with children.'

'It is so good to meet so many teachers, to exchange our experience, and to speak directly to the medical professionals.'

'I like the session where we talked about teachers' burdens, stress at work, and burn-out prevention.'

'The social component of the program is excellent.'

'This seminar gave us new energy and motivation; we feel a lot more capable now to help our pupils.'

'This is the first time I listen to the lectures on the topics, which are usually not treated as important in our work and most of the time ignored by teachers, like for example Specific Learning Difficulties, or school phobia, or chronically ill children.'

Table 6. Effectiveness of the program in Kosovo

Activity	Purpose	Indicator of effectiveness	Instruments used	Results of measurements	What was learned for the future of the project
1. Training of trainers	1.1 Trainers are able to provide good lectures and run plenary discussions	Satisfaction and positive evaluation of teachers - participants	Questionnaires for teachers	Average 4.8 points (maximum 5)	Lectures should be short. The language should be familiar to teachers
	1.2 Trainers learned interactive methods	Trainers learned interactive methods of group work	Questionnaire for teachers	Average 4.9 points (maximum 5)	Group discussion is the most valuable part of the program.
2. Seminars for teachers	2.1 Better recognition of signs of trauma related problems (and other emotional and psychosocial and learning disorders)	Level of group discussion, group reporting on posters; reported individual cases by teachers; self – evaluation questionnaires	Self – evaluation questionnaire, knowledge on special fields	Measure increase in knowledge (about 20%)	Teachers already had certain knowledge and capacity to recognise trauma, which is understandable as they are familiar with traumatic experiences; but their knowledge could be substantially increased
	2.2 Teachers offer psychosocial assistance to children	Reported cases in group work	Observations Listening Number of reported cases	Various figures 20 - 40	The mutual exchange of practical approaches of help for children is an excellent method of learning and generating new ideas
	2.3 Creating a safe, protective and motivating psychosocial climate of the classroom	Reports on concrete changes, small innovations introduced by teachers in their classroom	Narrative reports in group work (registered by group leader) Open question in the evaluative questionnaire for teacher.	Number of innovations Descriptions	The program can generate gradual changes. Teachers need support in school for such changes to occur
	2.4 Better communication and cooperation with parents	Less conflict situations with parents Higher participation of parents in school	Cases reported by teachers Narrative reports in group work (registered by group leader) Open question in the evaluative questionnaire for teacher.	Number of improved cooperation Description	This effect is the least present.
	2.5 Empowering teachers to overcome traumas and stress and cope with adversities	Grades given by teachers on topics of professional burdens, stress and prevention of burn out. Intensity and quality of group discussions on the topic.	Self – evaluation questionnaire, knowledge on special fields	Average grade for the mentioned topics- 4,8	For empowerment of teachers it is crucial importance to discuss their own problems and coping mechanisms
	2.6 Involving volunteers as helpers to children	Number of children helped by volunteers Number of volunteers Number of volunteers' working hours Number of mentors Number of mentors working hours	Description and assessment of Activities Figures.	About 200 children, helped by volunteers. Teachers' report - observed improvement in children.	Schools are ready to introduce voluntary work. Secondary school students and upper class primary school children can be good helpers (learning, befriending, providing psychosocial support) to younger children.
	2.7 Developing voluntary work with primary school children	Number of children, as volunteers Number of volunteers Number of volunteers' working hours Number of mentors Number of mentors' working hours	Description and assessment of activities Figures.	About 326 young volunteers, active in their school or in their community	There is a great readiness for schools to develop voluntary work with their students. In order to maintain the introduced activities teachers / mentors also need support.

9. Preventing difficulties

Every program runs into difficulties or must cope with difficult situations. These can vary from conflicts with staff members of the partner organisation, to the inability of participants to cross military checkpoints, or even engine trouble with the buses bringing the participants. There are some preventative measures that could prove useful:

The main basic condition for the realisation of the program is a good and reliable partner organisation. Usually, the organisation will be a local NGO, either an already existing one or a new one started for the purpose of implementing the program. The local organisation should be continuously supported in a variety of ways: financially, with expertise and morally. This is essential in order to develop identification with the program and to maintain momentum. It is expected that within the process, the partner organisation may go through a crisis in which special support is needed.

Local trainers should be well prepared for their roles. Often a problem appears when academic trainers, such as university teachers, are involved. They can have severe difficulties moving from highly abstract and sophisticated academic presentations into more interactive ones using concepts and terminology closer to the teachers' level.

International trainers running the program should internalise the philosophy of the program. It is not unusual for mental health professionals to use the vocabulary of community based psychosocial programs, but without changing their clinical approach. This is then reflected in their work.

Psychosocial programs require a special sensitivity for cultural, religious and other community specific concepts. It is possible for participants to be offended due to a small mistake on the part of the international trainers, or due to a linguistically caused misunderstanding. For example: a group of local trainers was unsatisfied because religion was placed at the bottom of the list of protective factors. In another example: a group of local trainers in another country were offended when the international trainer mentioned that children with Attention Deficit and Hyperkinetic Disorders (ADHD) have frequently been involved in dangerous situations, also sometimes, in war. The sharp response to this comment was that their young, national heroes were not disturbed people.

International trainers, as well as local trainers, can become emotionally exhausted from the overwhelming multitude of sad stories and atrocities. I have, in the past, protected myself by not listening to all stories presented during group discussions and role-play. So, in this way I have only taken in the number of stories that I felt was in my range to cope.

Frustration and feelings of helplessness can demoralise international trainers, and can often stem from an awareness that so little can be done to change the conditions of life and the amount of suffering of the served population. I often asked myself: does it make sense, does it mean anything to the school in the village where 60 civilians were killed in one day, to be included in a psychosocial program? These questions are

best answered within discussions with local participants.

The success of any program depends upon the invested energy and social wisdom of those who are responsible for it. Professional mental health knowledge is only one, small ingredient in the package of required qualities.

Sometimes the program is reproached for being logistically too luxurious; *'why do you bring the teachers to a hotel? You could let them travel in every day, that would be cheaper!'*. Teachers are hard workers and in areas of armed conflict, or former armed conflict, living and working in the most unfavourable circumstances. Introducing them into a nice environment acts on many levels to enhance their motivation and cooperation, as well as a sign of respect and a small social reward. Any money invested in providing comfort and some small pleasure to teachers is very well invested.

Shortage of water, electricity and other logistical problems are a rule rather than an exception, and organisers should not be too distressed when they occur. Lectures and workshops can be run without water and electricity if needed.

In order to help prevent difficult situations arising, contact with relevant local authorities should be established early and courtesy visits paid to school authorities, community leaders, and others deemed essential.

Security problems should be handled with caution. Sometimes participants are willing to attend seminars, even under insecure conditions. The issue should be discussed with partner NGO's, trainers, and of course, with teachers. Frequently an argument put forward by local people, in favour of the continuation of the program despite security risks which may influence their motivation and cooperation is; *we live in dan-ger all time, so why stop coming to the seminar*?

Another difficult question is when programs can be started. When are conflicts deemed to be over and when are they still present? The answer is not easy, but some examples might prove helpful. Similar programs run in Bosnia during the war, have also been run in Iraq, despite continuing violence and terrorist attacks. However, without question, the program should be adapted to current, local circumstances.

In the described program, evaluation is always deficient. The main reason for this lack is probably due to fatigue and time constraints on both international and local people running such programs. Often, they are so involved in fieldwork and coping with the reality on the ground that they have no energy to invest in the evaluation. Therefore, direct interactions with participants of the program enhance the estimation that the program is helpful and worthwhile. As a local trainer and colleague said; '*I do not need any scientific evaluation when I visit a school in the mountain village and speak with teachers, I can recognise the value of the program*'.

In circumstances where ethnic groups in conflict live in communities together, the question of inter-ethnic seminars is often raised. Of course, inter-ethnic seminars could contribute to tolerance and peace building. But be forewarned, in my experience, it can be risky to start with inter-ethnic seminars. This not only creates difficulties in introducing the innovative approach, you will have to struggle with inter-ethnic tensions. This can surface in the most basic elements of the program, such as translating lectures and group discussions. That said, if the organisers have enough courage and energy, and if the circumstances allow it, it is still worth a try.

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