

MHPSS TWG 12.04.2024 Meeting minutes

Date: 12 April 2024

Chaired by: Przemysław Marszał UNHCR

Minutes taken by: Joanna Brzezinska WHO, Przemysław Marszał UNHCR

Participants: Aleksandra Zapolska (Zustricz), Oleksandra Myronova, Adrianna Babik (Save the children), Oksana Lonska (IOM), Matalia Mysula, Maja Włodarczyk (UNHCR), Iza Trybus (PCTS), Anna Szadkowska (AHF), Izabela Solarska (LWF), Aleksandra Nędzi-Marek (PCTS), Anna Zubachova (IOM), Joanna Glazewska (MoH), Sana Vitvitsja (Fundacja Q), Aleksandra Kaplon (UNHCR), Iza Pazdan (SKA), Anna Kyriienko (Soleterre), Katarzyna Topolska (HIAS), Marta Michalska (Teach for Poland), Kate Ovsianykova, Marzanna Farnicka, Emilia Schwertner (HOPE), Asli Velieceoglu Yonca (UNHCR)

1. Introduction and welcoming of new members and partners.

2. Izabela Trybuś, Aleksandra Nędzi-Marek: Polish Center for Torture Survivors

Polish Center for Torture Survivors - an organization addressing issues related to war trauma. Activities undertaken include:

- Assistance to torture and war rape survivors
- Training
- Legal, psychological, social, and medical assistance
- Advocacy

The foundation operates within the Survivor-centered approach and trauma-informed approach, meaning that the rights of survivors are paramount in every interaction. Through these approaches, PCTS trains professionals such as social workers, doctors, lawyers, psychologists, psychotherapists, etc.

In November 2023, PCTS organized the first international conference dedicated to working with survivors.

WAR RAPE SURVIVOR SYNDROME (WRSS) by Wiola Rebecka:

- WRSS is a consequence of traumatic experiences related to rape during war/genocide. It is a combination of physical, medical, psychological, and social/cultural symptoms at both individual and group levels.
- Psychological symptoms of WRSS include dissociation, depersonalization, shame, guilt, anger, depression, and psychotic episodes.
- It is an experience that changes the body and mind in a way that cannot be compared to any other life experience.
- More information can be found in the book "Rape: A History of Shame. Diary of the Survivors."

SERS - Survivor Empowerment and Recovery Strategy - by Wiola Rebecka consists of the following elements: Stabilization - Education - Reframing - New Orientation - Self-regulation - Reinforcement.

3. Anna Zubachova : International Medical Corps – PM+ and SH + implementation

Project since December 2022:

- 1st phase - TOT: 15 trainers trained
- 2nd phase - PM+ helpers and SH+ facilitators trainings, with supervisions after that
- 3rd phase - currently: active implementation of both interventions.

Several groups of SH+ currently in Warsaw and Gdańsk. Facilitators present in other cities as well.

It is possible to join existing groups if anyone knows potential beneficiaries.

IMC is open for collaboration with the organisations from the whole country, in a various modalities (trainers are based in different locations, it is also possible to provide sessions online). More information: Anna Zubachova: azubachova@InternationalMedicalCorps.org

4. MHPSS TWG Updates:

a) Project of amendment of the Special Act including nostrification - restoration of the previous state planned for the period from July 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025 - currently, public consultations are ongoing: [link to legislation.gov.pl/project/12383814/catalog/13050432#13050432](https://legislation.gov.pl/project/12383814/catalog/13050432#13050432)

b) Reporting RRP to Activity Info - the reporting deadline for the first quarter: April 12.

c) TWG in-person meeting together with the Health sector - May 10-11 in Warsaw. Preliminary declaration of participation possible via the link: [Registration of interest to participate in the in-person meeting May 10, 2024](#)

5. Partners updates

Soleterre - concluding activities in Poland in June, support needed for the continuation of therapeutic actions (clients takeover): more information available from Anna Kyriienko.

AHF - AIDS Healthcare Foundation - a new member of TWG. An organization dedicated to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and support.

Useful materials:

- [Poland MHPSS TWG Drive](#)