

**Psychological Help  
and  
Humanitarian Assistance Initiatives  
implemented in  
Armenia & Nagorny Karabakh (NK)  
since September 27, 2020**

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# Main Directions of Psychological Assistance Initiatives

Assistance was provided to:

- Soldiers who participated in hostilities and their family members
- Families of victims
- Wounded soldiers
- Family members of PoW (Prisoners of War) or persons missing in action
- Inhabitants displaced from NK and children
- Displaced people
- **Hotline services provided**

# Activities by Psychologists and Volunteers During the 44-Day War

- **190 specialists** provided primary psychological care
- Volunteers mainly coordinated logistics of humanitarian assistance and psychological care
- Work conducted in **50 medical centers in Armenia**
- In more serious cases (of mental disorders) work was conducted in 3 main institutions:
  - *Kanaz Hospital Psychological Rehabilitation Center*
  - *Zar Center (changed its profile during the war)*
  - *Mountainous Armenia Resort in Dilijan (changed its profile during the war)*

# Activities by Psychologists and Volunteers During the 44-Day War (continued)

- **Psychologists trained clergy** on how to provide primary psychological care and on professional burnout
- International and local Psychological Support Centers conducted **online supervision courses** for psychologists
  - Intra Psychology Center (Armenia)
  - Armenian American Mental Health Association (USA)

# Collaboration with State Bodies

- Ministry of Health (MoH)
- Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
- Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA)
- Ministry of Defense (MoD)
  - *Department of Moral and Psychological Support*

# Ministry of Health (MoH)

- Coordination of the humanitarian aid sent from the Diaspora and international partners (medicines, medical supplies, equipment, etc.)
- Collaboration has been implemented with:
  - Armenian Psychiatric Association (local)
  - Center of Psychosocial Regulation (local)
  - Armenian Medical Association (local)
  - With the World Health Organization (international)
  - With Commonwealth of Independent States structures (international)
  - In a number of health care sectors, including mental health and rehabilitation (international)

# Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES)

- MES coordinated the provision of psychological assistance to combatants and their families.
- Eight psychological support centers were selected through a tender to work in a consortium :
  1. *INTRA Mental Health Center*
  2. *APAGA Psychological Service*
  3. *AMBRA Mental Health NGO*
  4. *Center of Social Psychological Rehabilitation*
  5. *Armenian Psychiatric Association*
  6. *Armenian Professional Union of Psychologists NGO*
  7. *LP Psychological Center*
  8. *“Zhest” Psychological Center*

# Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

MFA coordinated assistance from international inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and foreign states. Types of assistance provided were:

- **Financial**
- **Food**
- **Medicines and medical supplies for Armenia**
- **Reimbursement of utility expenses** for guest houses and hotels provided to the citizens of NK

*Support came from:*

Countries/Regions	Organizations
<i>Canada</i>	<i>Armenian Red Cross</i>
<i>Cyprus</i>	<i>Medecins Sans Frontieres Holland</i>
<i>France</i>	<i>UN</i>
<i>Francophone cities</i>	<i>UNDP</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>UNICEF</i>
<i>Russian Federation</i>	<i>USAID</i>



# Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA)

Organizations which offered their services to provide psychological and social rehabilitation assistance:

- *Towards Life* Initiative
- *Armenian Rehabilitation Center* charitable NGO
- *Improviz* LLC
- *Azatuni* NGO
- *GiHi* Association of Psychologists and Armenologists NGO
- *Ayg* psychological services center
- *Armenian Psychiatric Association*

# Ministry of Defense (MoD)

MoD Department of Moral and Psychological Support coordinated psychologists' work with wounded soldiers and directed specialists to specific medical institutions.

## **Future Perspectives:**

- Possible collaboration between Yerevan State University (YSU) and the Moral and Psychological Support Department is envisioned.

# Diaspora Psychological Assistance Initiatives

- Armenian American Mental Health Association USA
- The Armenian Canadian Medical Association of Ontario Canada
- McGill University in Canada Canada
- Konstantin Bochaver (individual) Russia
- Jana Shahbazyan (individual) Estonia

# Psychological Support Centers in NK

- Artsakh State University (ArSU) Psychology Center
- *Empathy* Mental Health Center

*Previous cooperation with RA psychological centers and possible cooperation with international organizations and centers*

## **Activities conducted:**

- Meetings with teams of psychologists accompanying Russian peacekeepers
- Conference on *Post-war Issues and Challenges* in NK conducted in June, 2021 in collaboration with YSU and ArSU
- Trainings for social workers from NK conducted in cooperation with the Association of Social Workers (Armenia)

# Humanitarian Assistance Initiatives implemented in Armenia and NK

Local organizations	International organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Mission Armenia,</li><li>•COAF</li><li>•All Armenian Fund</li><li>•OSF</li><li>•Caritas</li><li>•Armenian Red Cross</li><li>•AGBU</li><li>•Armenian Progressive Youth</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•ICRC</li><li>•UN-YSU</li><li>•UN-Fast Foundation-COAF project</li></ul> <p><i>Support from the Diaspora (including from Armenian communities and Embassies)</i></p>

# Children of Armenia Fund (COAF)

## **During and after the 44-day war**

- Group sessions with children
- Psychological assistance was provided to those who lost relatives during the war
- Work with wounded soldiers who have returned from the war
- Support to the families of those missing in action
- *“Your personal TF-CBT workbook” Handbook on how to overcome trauma.*

## **Current initiatives**

The residential construction program for people who moved from NK to Armenia.

# Joint Program of COAF, UN & FAST Foundation

## Revive Veteran Support Program

The **GOAL** is to help veterans begin their own startup or expand their current business while supporting their education and career growth opportunities.

### Stages of the Program

- Mapping the labor market
- Capacity development
- Online community
- Scholarship and practical experience

# Needs in Psychological Assistance in NK and Armenia

## *Current Challenges*

- Apathy among population in NK and Armenia
- Need to get professional psychological support for rural population both in Armenia and NK
- Low activism at the community-level

## *Recommendations*

- To enlarge psychological support initiatives in communities of NK and Armenia
- To train psychologists and to allocate them to the regions to provide continued assistance
- To conduct community development programs in regions of Armenia and NK



# Research Methodology

- **17 Expert Interviews** with psychologists conducted
  - 15 in RA and 2 NK
- **14 Surveys with organizations** providing psychological and humanitarian assistance conducted
  - Local -10
  - International – 4
- **5 Surveys among State Bodies** conducted
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
  - Ministry of Defense (MoD)
  - Ministry of Healthcare (MoH)
  - Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA)
  - Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES)