



The
CENTER for
VICTIMS of
TORTURE

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Strengthening Torture Rehabilitation Partners

In May, psychotherapist Jesus Perez Cazorla moved to Sierra Leone for a year. A native of the Canary Islands, Jesus is a psychotherapist experienced in working with survivors of torture and other traumatic experiences.

In Sierra Leone, Jesus is working with the Community Association for Psychosocial Services (CAPS), one of the partners in our Partners in Trauma Healing (PATH) project, to train, mentor and support the clinical staff. The placement of Jesus with CAPS “is excellent because after his observations at both our locations, he has been able to explore the skills of the counselors and develop intervention models based on the needs of the clients,” said Edward Bockarie, executive director of CAPS. “Now the clinical supervisors are getting support. Now they have someone to debrief with and to help them greatly improve their skills.”

Launched in late 2010, PATH is providing professional, intellectual and emotional support to ten torture rehabilitation centers to help them grow and develop. “Working in torture rehabilitation is hard,

lonely, and emotionally draining work,” said Pamela Kriege Santos, PATH project manager. “We’re helping the ten centers become stronger organizations, both clinically and administratively, so they can help more torture survivors heal and rebuild their lives.”

Each center will have a psychotherapist/trainer like Jesus for one year to train, mentor and support the clinical staff. Depending on the center’s needs, this work might include expanding therapeutic skills, furthering staff knowledge of clinical approaches, addressing professional ethics or developing systems for supervision, in-take and follow-up. Each psychotherapist/trainer will work with their organization and the PATH staff to define the projects and priorities for the year.

Pubudu Senaratne is the psychotherapist/trainer working with Survivors Associated in Sri Lanka. She and the staff clinicians are developing a training plan to build up the skills of the counselors. “The presence of a psychotherapist helps fill the gaps in our present counseling work,” said Survivors



Staff members of the Liberia Association of Psychosocial Services practice their fundraising pitch. PHOTO © KRISTI RENDAHL

Associated CEO Vithanage Muthurajah. “Our counseling staff feels that Pubudu can help them to address a variety of issues that underlie the mental health difficulties of our clients.”

Each center’s clinical approach to healing and operations is influenced by the history and culture of the country where it is located. Depending on the center, the survivors receiving care may be community members who were tortured during a war or armed

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Restoring
the Dignity of
the Human Spirit

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Letter from the Executive Director

This is a crucial and promising time for the torture rehabilitation movement and the larger effort to stop torture worldwide.

Since its inception three decades ago, the movement has grown significantly in the United States and abroad by extending an array of rehabilitative services to more survivors and developing strategic initiatives to stop torture.

It is within this framework that CVT recently completed work on a three-year strategic plan that will guide us through 2016. With feedback from a broad range of stakeholders both within and beyond CVT, we've developed an ambitious plan.

CVT will expand, build on and strengthen many aspects of our current operations. We will launch a number of new initiatives as we continue to grow as a global organization. And we will double the number of survivors who receive our rehabilitative care each year.

For the first time, our planning acknowledges that CVT extends care to people who endured severe war-related atrocities in addition to those who meet the United Nations and United States definitions of torture.

Survivors of war atrocities are often just as symptomatic as torture survivors. Our professional and ethical obligations to survivors require that we not make too fine a distinction between torture and war survivors when determining eligibility for care. And in our international projects it is simply impractical and impossible to make these distinctions.

Torture continues to be practiced on an alarming scale. According to the United Nations special investigator on torture, torture is committed in over half the countries in the world and in many of those countries, is widespread and systematic.

Governments practice torture across the political spectrum, as do rebel groups and militias, in part through targeting of leaders and during the chaos of civil conflict.

While the movement has restored hope and dignity to hundreds of thousands of individuals, the challenge ahead—to rebuild more lives and prevent torture from happening in the first place—remains as large as ever.

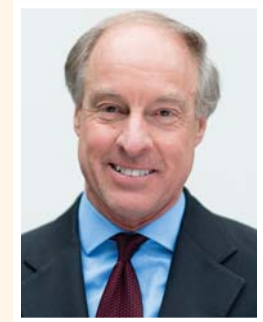
Recently, a survivor told us, “Telling stories of the past helps me remember my human spirit.”

We are grateful you are with us as we launch this ambitious—and hopeful—plan. Your support allows us to help survivors remember—indeed, strengthen—their human spirit, and their stories of pain *and* joy.

Sincerely,



Curt Goering
Executive Director



Curt Goering

Kibrab Gebregzabher, a guard with the new Ethiopia project, spoke out on June 26, UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.



PHOTO © SAFRA FELDMAN

Strengthening Torture Rehabilitation Partners

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conflict, or they may be newcomers to the community from a post-conflict region. The PATH staff respects the individuality of each center by working within its historical and cultural context. While all centers have staff committed to healing, the education levels and trauma experience varies greatly.

An annual week-long conference brings together representatives from each center for in-depth, in-person learning. The conference requires a sophisticated professional system of interpreters and technology so everyone can engage, whether they speak English, French, Bosnian, Moldovan or Tamil. Throughout the year, PATH participants connect with each other and access training materials to share with their colleagues through an online portal. Both in-person and online activities strengthen professional and personal connections, minimizing the isolation that the center staff may feel.

In conjunction with strengthening the clinical skills and programs, we're working with each center to develop monitoring and evaluation systems. This includes assessment and tracking methods so the centers know they are being effective in their work. "The monitoring and evaluation work starts with the clinical work," explained Pamela. "The centers must define their

clinical work to determine what they need to measure and evaluate. For example, one center is working with children and youth, so the staff needs to find age-appropriate ways to measure improvement in the mental health of an adolescent. Our staff is consulting with the partners to help them develop the appropriate measures, but the partners are also helping each other by sharing their tools and explaining their processes."

Developing Sustainable Organizations

To help partners build sustainable programs and systems, we're providing organizational development support, as well. Based on an initial assessment and ongoing planning, we're working with each center to understand and address their challenges, which may be human resources, fundraising, strategic planning or governance. "For example, some partners need help in developing fundraising skills across the staff, so we've given proposal development workshops, and we've provided training on creating elevator pitches and key messages for different audiences," said Kristi Rendahl, the PATH organizational development advisor.

Overall strategy and leadership are important aspects of this support. "We have provided strategic planning facilitation for a number of partners,



CVT clinical advisor David Gangsei and Pravilla Naicker with the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation role playing at the 2012 PATH conference.

and several executive directors and other staff members completed a virtual personal leadership development program to identify ways to improve their own leadership and management practices. The range of competing demands for the attention of executive directors makes it difficult for them to step back to look at the big picture and evaluate how to better leverage board members, staff members, donors, and their own leadership. The organizational development component of this project creates that space."

"It's exciting to see how these centers are growing and developing," said Pamela. "All of the executive directors of our partners are passionate about healing torture survivors, but it's more than that. The PATH partners are committed to developing a greater understanding of mental health and helping men and women so they can build—or rebuild—their communities and countries."



Program manager Pamela Kriege Santoso and clinical advisor Ann Willhoite at an assessment meeting with TPO Cambodia.

PHOTO © TPO CAMBODIA

Partners in Trauma Healing is made possible through the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development and the American peoples' support.



Jane O'Brien: International English Tutor

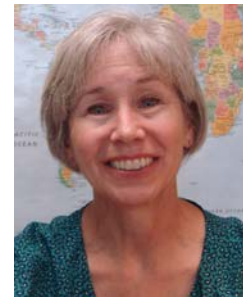


PHOTO © C.C. STROM

Since Jane O'Brien first connected with CVT through her Unitarian church more than five years ago, she has worked face-to-face as a befriender to several torture survivors. But in her current volunteer role, she's using technology to communicate around the world.

Jane is a conversation partner and English tutor to two staff members of RCTV Memoria, a torture rehabilitation center in Moldova. RCTV Memoria is one of the partners in CVT's Partners in Trauma Healing (PATH) project. (Read about the PATH project in the lead article on page 1.)

Three or four times a week, Jane uses the internet video service Skype to talk with staff psychother-

apist Svetlana Visatu and psychologist Violeta Rebeja, who both want to improve their professional English. Typically Jane emails a link to a news article related to their work to start their conversation. After discussing the article via Skype, the women segue into more casual topics. Sometimes, Jane will black out words in the article, and the Moldovans must use the sentence context to determine the missing word. The activity can challenge both vocabulary and listening comprehension skills.

"The women in Moldova are so dedicated. We usually talk at what's nine or ten in the evening for them after a long day of what I'm sure must be difficult work. And on top of that they're switching to a language they

don't speak that often," said Jane, who works as the Associate Director for the Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Minnesota. "They're amazing, and I'm learning a lot. I guess I'm also of the generation where talking with someone on the other side of the world with a computer and a camera is pretty fun."

"It's a great way to volunteer," said Jane. However, most importantly, Violeta and Svetlana are feeling more comfortable with their English skills, which will help them communicate with other torture treatment providers around the world.

Our Matching Gift Challenge Will Double Your Contribution

Each summer, many of our key supporters step forward to help CVT in a very special way—by participating in our Matching Gift Challenge.

The first \$50,000 given by generous individuals like you before August 31 will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, by two longstanding donors. That means your support will have twice the impact.

This Matching Gift initiative couldn't come at a better time. Donations often slow during the summer, even while more and more survivors seek our help. At our Jordan project, there are now more than 500 Syrians on the waiting list. Here's a recent note from our country director:

Large numbers of walk-ins of Syrian refugees—often in very worrisome conditions—untreated wounds, pregnant women who are about to deliver w/out any place to go, individ-

uals walking on the street near the venue seeking CVT's help, highly distressed individuals—unstoppable sobbing—totally out of control—individuals who disclose without any restrictions their horrific stories and often want to demonstrate this to our outreach and counselling staff by showing pictures of killings, electrocutions in front of their eyes, children as young as 12 years old who have been imprisoned and tortured....

This Matching Gift campaign provides an extra \$100,000 in urgent funding for healing survivors, training others and advocating for an end to torture.

Please give as generously as you can before August 31, and know that your gift will be matched, dollar-for-dollar. For more information, please contact Steven at 1-877-265-8775 or by e-mail at cvt@cvt.org.

Make a Difference in the Life of a Survivor

Your generous support brings healing to torture survivors worldwide. CVT welcomes all types of donations.

- **Monthly Sustainers** allow for ongoing planning and delivery of healing services.
- **Planned Giving** continues your legacy of support.
- **Gifts of Stock** support survivors while offering tax benefits to donors.
- **In-Kind Donations** of specific items improve the lives of survivors.
- **Tribute Gifts** celebrate events or memorialize loved ones.

Donate online at www.cvt.org, send a check to 649 Dayton Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, or call 1-877-265-8775 for other ways to give. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to healing the wounds of torture.



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