



Measured Impact Webinar
Leadership and Resilience Among Survivors of Violence and Torture

Léonce Byimana, TASSC
 Omar Bah, Refugee Dream Center

July 18, 2018

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 National Capacity Building Project

Presenters




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Objectives:

1. Articulate a deeper understanding of the role colleagues who are survivors of torture play in the torture treatment field.
2. Understand the importance and benefits of integrating survivors of torture into your organization's planning, governance, outreach, and development.
3. Learn how to integrate survivors of torture into your organization's planning, governance, outreach, and development.
4. Understand how the resilience, past experiences, and non-clinical sharing of survivors' stories can benefit both programs and survivors themselves.

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Leadership & Resilience Among Survivors of Violence & Torture

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Reaction to the Traumatic Experience

- Disruption of **protective factors**
 - individual factors, collective family values and identity, education status, community network, religion and culture
- Increase in **risk factors**
 - migration, loss, grief, economic insecurity, family separation

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Adjustment Challenges

Economic stressors	Acculturation stressors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing• Employment• Health insurance• Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language barriers• Isolation• Pressure from 'home'• Culture shock, culture clashes• Power differential

(Berthold, et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2009)

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Results of Challenges

- Loss of housing
- Loss of jobs
- Unnecessary visits to ER
- Domestic violence
- Overcrowding/over-dependent on friends or relatives
- Failure to turn up to appointments
- Substance Use/Misuse - alcohol, drugs
- New smoking habits
- Dangerous eating habits

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Stigma & Traditional Beliefs

- Transnational (traditional medicinal herbs, jujus etc.) medicine as alternative mental healthcare
- Unfamiliarity with western mental health system
- Religious or traditional religious and spiritual prayers
- Embarrassed by adjustment challenges & mental health needs
- Stigma of mental healthcare associated with shame – as 'stain' on the reputation of family
- Misconstrued notion of causes of mental illness

(Choi, 2013)

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Stigma & Traditional Beliefs (Cont'd)

- Not wanting others to know about their business
- Suspicion & mistrust due to past traumatic experiences
- Condescending attitude toward counseling/Western mental health system
- Macro & micro aggressions by providers
- Lack of enough culturally agile/aware health providers
- Lack of understanding of the Western health system (e.g. health insurance, regular appointments)

(Murguía, Peterson & Zea, 2003; Wyanden et al., 2005)

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Gender

- Challenges related to resettlement in a new country
- Women are often regarded as homemakers
- Women often have children thus making it harder to travel to service locations
- Includes insecure immigration status

(O'Mahony & Donnelly, 2013)

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Protection of The Self

- Yearning to regain one's humanity
- Need for liberation
- Facing challenges and overcoming stigmas calls for growth and resilience

“When people are oppressed, they struggle against those who made them so. In order for such struggle to have meaning, the victims seek to restore their humanity.”

Freire & Macedo (1998)

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Resilience – Healing as the ‘Deepening Phase’

Characteristics of resilient people

- Tolerant to stress
- Adaptable
- Optimistic
- View stress as an opportunity
- Recognize that there are limits to what they can control
- High in self-efficacy

(Connor & Davidson, 2003)

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Leadership & Resilience Among Survivors of Violence & Torture

Léonce Byimana
Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC)
July 18, 2018

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TASSC International Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition International

FY 2017 Highlights

2,950 Survivor Visits	121 Survivors Developed Wellness Plans	279 Survivors Received Clinical Case Management	103 Survivors Received Full Legal Services
23 Cultural Orientation Workshops & Lunches Offered	83 Survivors Received Individual Psychotherapy	27 Yoga Classes Offered	37 Survivors Received Peer-to-Peer Evaluations
100+ One-on-One Employment Counseling Sessions Provided	20 Survivors Received Message Therapy	75 Survivors Participated in 6370 Environmental Identifications	9,117 Pro Se Litigators Contributed to Legal Proceedings
6 Legal Consultations Offered	12 Trauma Screenings Events	80 Survivors Received Primary Medical Care	5 Education & Training Events Offered

TASSC International - 401 Herwood Rd NE, B, Washington, DC 20007 - (202) 529-2991 - www.tassc.org

TASSC International Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition International

Our Values

Mission: To end the practice of torture wherever it occurs and support survivors as they rebuild themselves, their families and communities wherever they are.

Vision: A better free world.

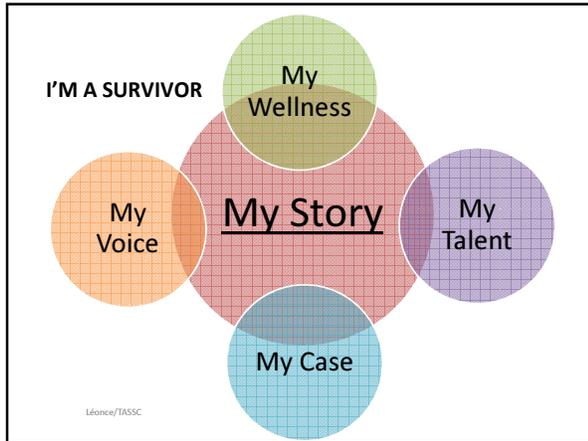
Our Model

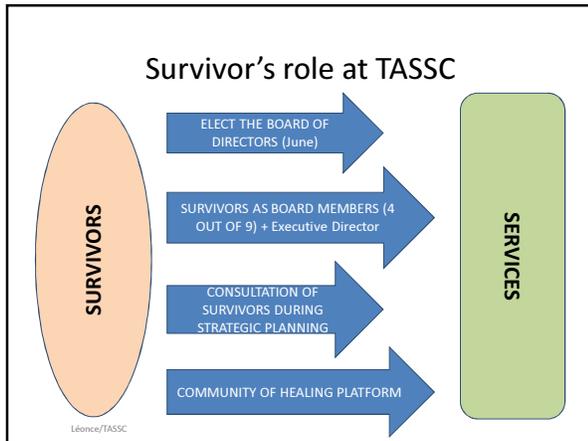
Survivor Led
Strengths Based
Trauma Informed

Our Programs

Social Services	Health & Psychological Wellness	Legal Services	Advocacy & Outreach
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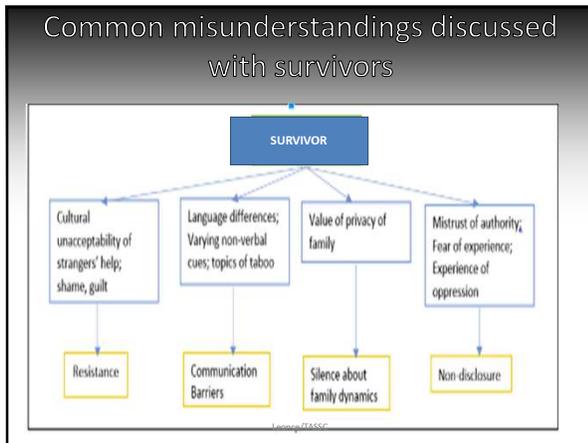
Application:
Community Of healing

- Once a month, Survivors meet and share experiences, challenges and solutions
- They also talk about services they receive at TASSC and at other facilities where we refer them when needed
- They make recommendations about what services they want and how those they receive can be improved

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Preferred response: Collaborate

- Establish an environment of meaningful sharing of power and decision-making as much as possible
- Diminish feelings of power differences between helper and client

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Preferred response: Empower

- Work with survivors to make progress towards autonomy and self-sufficiency (Victims vs Survivors)
- Create clarity around what will be done, by whom, under what circumstances, and at what cost

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Culturally-valid Amharic versions of Assessment questionnaires

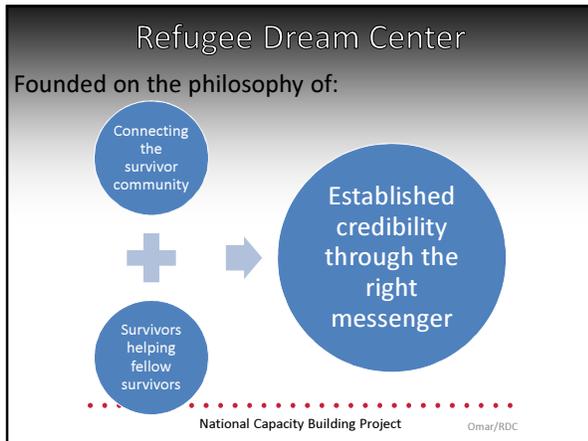
- Collaboration
 - Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI)
 - TASSC
 - Working with survivors and skilled interpreters
- Ask the right questions with the right wording

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Updated Questionnaires

- Know more about survivors' wellbeing
- Track changes in symptoms and experiences
- Tailor services to best meet the survivors' needs
- Provide a valuable resource for agencies working with Amharic-speaking survivors

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- ### Refugee Dream Center
- Founded & headed by former refugee & torture survivor
 - 60% of board are refugees and/or survivors (8 out of 13 board members)
 - 5 of the 8 fulltime staff are survivors
 - Both direct services & advocacy
 - Host to ethnic community groups
 - Host to college based associations
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ADULT EDUCATION METHODS

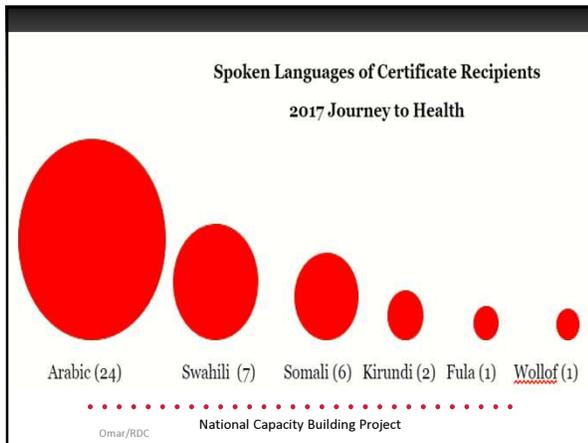
Goals	Assumptions	Inputs	Target Population	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Engage 50 refugees a year in continuing ESL	Access to ESL services provided via Refugee Dream Center programming	Refugee Dream Center (RDC) Staff	Refugees resettled between 6 month and 5 years	ESL classes; tutoring; workforce development training	Critical development in ESL skills	Successful integration into American society; employment;

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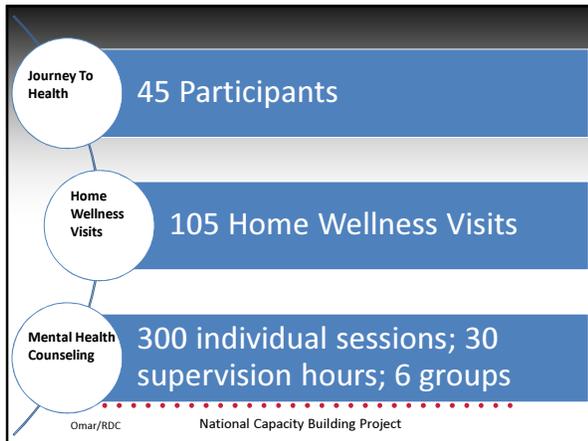
HEALTH PROGRAM METHODS

Goals	Assumptions	Inputs	Target Population	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Provide health literacy services to forty-five (45) refugees	Access to critical health literacy services provided via RDC programming	RDC Staff; partnering community organizations	Refugees resettled between 6 months and 5 years	<i>Journey to Health</i> sessions; In-Home Wellness visits; Mental Health counseling	Critical development in health literacy and skills, and posttraumatic growth	Successful integration into American society

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- ### Screening Instrument
- Refugee Health Screener – 15 (RHS-15)
 - Adapted by RDC
 - Changed the response options on the scale from 5 to 3
 - Changed the scoring numbers
 - Eliminated several words and phrases that are culturally confusing
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