Trauma informed approach to evaluations

WHAT EVALUATORS AND EVALUATION COMISSIONERS SHOULD BE AWARE AND TAKE CARE OF

WORKSHOP
FRÜHJAHRSTAGUNG AK–EPOL-HUHI
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Trauma sensitivity in development cooperation and in Humanitarian response:

- Trauma-sensitivity is on the political agenda
- Programs in fragile and conflicted affected settings
- Programs with a focus on Peace, Human Rights, Sexual violence, Trauma and psycho-social needs,
- International debates amongst institutions, organisations and experts
Stress- and traumasensitivity in development cooperation and humanitarian response

“The specific needs and characteristics of people (and organisations) who have experienced (potentially or actually) traumatising events are taken into account in a project's planning, implementation and evaluation. Efforts are made to prevent retraumatisation and avoid any increase in emotional distress”

**Development projects are planned, implemented, evaluated in such a way that they ...**

- Promote self-efficacy and self-esteem
- reduce stress and anxiety
- prevent the reactivation of trauma symptoms
- strengthen resilience
• Trauma is an emotional wound which can arise as a result of existential stress experiences when escape, fight or help of others are not available as coping options.
• Psychological trauma reactions are a normal response to abnormal extreme events
• Important to understand „trauma“ as a long term process
• Transmission of stress- and trauma dynamics
• Consequences on individual, community and societal level
Visualisation - Trauma - BASIC

Traumatic Events

Physiological reactions
FEAR

No escape possible
no one coming for help

Helplessness

Freeze
Dissociation

No fight possible
Powerlessness

TRAUMA

Lutz Besser, zptn
Fragmentation of memory because of “emergency programme”

Elements of the traumatic event are not integrated into a unitary whole, but organized as intense fragments.

TRAUMATIC EVENT

- Emotions
- Thoughts
- Taste
- Body sensations
- Images
- Sound
- Smells
Helplessness

Consequences

Powerlessness

Emotional stress

Loss of sense of security

I can not show love to my kids,
Everything died in me

Physical and psychological consequences

Isolation

I survived the war, but how I can survive peace?

I survived the war,
but how I can survive peace?
Triggers for flashbacks, retraumatisation

Traumatic event

- emotions
- thoughts
- taste
- Body sensations
- smells
- sounds
- Images
Key principles of a stress and trauma-sensitive approach:

Safety /security

Empowerment

Connection/solidarity

Selfcare/ staffcare/ organisational care
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequences of human rights violations as traumatic sequence</th>
<th>Basic principles in dealing with affected persons and for supporters as well as organizations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>threat</td>
<td>1.) SAFETY and SECURITY: reduce stress and fear</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fundamental insecurity</td>
<td>✓ Materially, psychologically and physically safe rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Shattered confidence in oneself, others and the world</td>
<td>✓ Influence and control</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Increased vigilance</td>
<td>✓ Transparency and reliability</td>
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<td>- Governmental responsibility to protect</td>
<td>✓ Governmental responsibility to protect</td>
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<tr>
<td>powerlessness</td>
<td>2.) EMPOWERMENT: strengthen self-efficacy and self-worth</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Helplessness</td>
<td>✓ Spaces for agency and initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Feeling of vulnerability</td>
<td>✓ Focus on resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Oppression</td>
<td>✓ Political participation and access to rights</td>
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<td>- Discrimination</td>
<td>✓ Power- and gender sensitivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>isolation</td>
<td>3.) CONNECTION: strengthen each other</td>
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<td>- Shame and guilt</td>
<td>✓ Solidarity and networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Polarization and marginalization</td>
<td>✓ Multiperspective view on everyone involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Denial</td>
<td>✓ Informed dealing with negative group dynamics</td>
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<td>- Group-focused enmity</td>
<td>✓ Political and individual acknowledgement of injustice and suffering</td>
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<td>stress- and trauma dynamics in the support system</td>
<td>4.) mindful organizational culture and self-care: implementation of STA-principles individually and organizationally</td>
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<td>- Increased exposition to stress</td>
<td>✓ Mindfulness, self-reflection, self-protection</td>
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<td>- Risk of indirect traumatization</td>
<td>✓ Supervision, Intervision, further qualification</td>
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<td>- Transmission of trauma to group dynamics</td>
<td>✓ Stress- and traumasensitive working conditions</td>
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<td>- Overload and boarder transgressions</td>
<td>✓ Political commitment to a responsibility to protect for employers</td>
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The STA - Stress- and Trauma Sensitive Approach® - Basic Principles
Strategies for Evaluation Commissioners

• Adding trauma sensitivity in TOR/Tender
• Prepare evaluators and their teams
• Check in inception report tools/instruments on avoiding re-traumatisation
• Regular supportive scheduled supervision and contact
• Offering debriefing support to evaluation teams
• Adapting Time plans and Budgets
Possible Strategies for Evaluators

- Reflect, consider entry level skills required
- Get basic knowledge
- Check your approach to data collection- Did you apply the key principles of a stress- and trauma sensitive approach?
- Keep workloads manageable
- Setup your support structure
- Recognise and respond to early vicarious trauma.
- Take time for selfcare + teamcare
Example Tools- Outlook

- Interview guidelines: „How to conduct an interview in a stress and trauma sensitive way“
- Draft of a „Checklist/Guidelines“ for evaluators and evaluation commissioners (Workshop)
Stress and Trauma-sensitivity in evaluation

- Avoid triggering memories
- No stigma
- Experienced evaluators
- Sensitivity reporting
- Psychological safety
- Local psychological support
- Solidarity & connection
- Amongst respondents
- Solidarity & connection
- Feedback of local organisations & respondents
- Strengthen respondents
- Promote sense of ownership
- Credit & affirm successes
- Promote sense of coping
- Empowerment
- Participation
- Psychological safety
- Support during the process
- (De)briefing
- Support during the process
- Relaxation activities
- Self-staff care
- Support during the process
- Of respondents
- Of evaluators
- Of respondents
Interested in further discussion and training? We are planning a follow-up with evaluators/researchers.  
contact: evaluation@medicamondiale.org

https://www.medicamondiale.org/fortbildungen.html  
contact: seminare@medicamondiale.org

Thank you for participation and your inputs