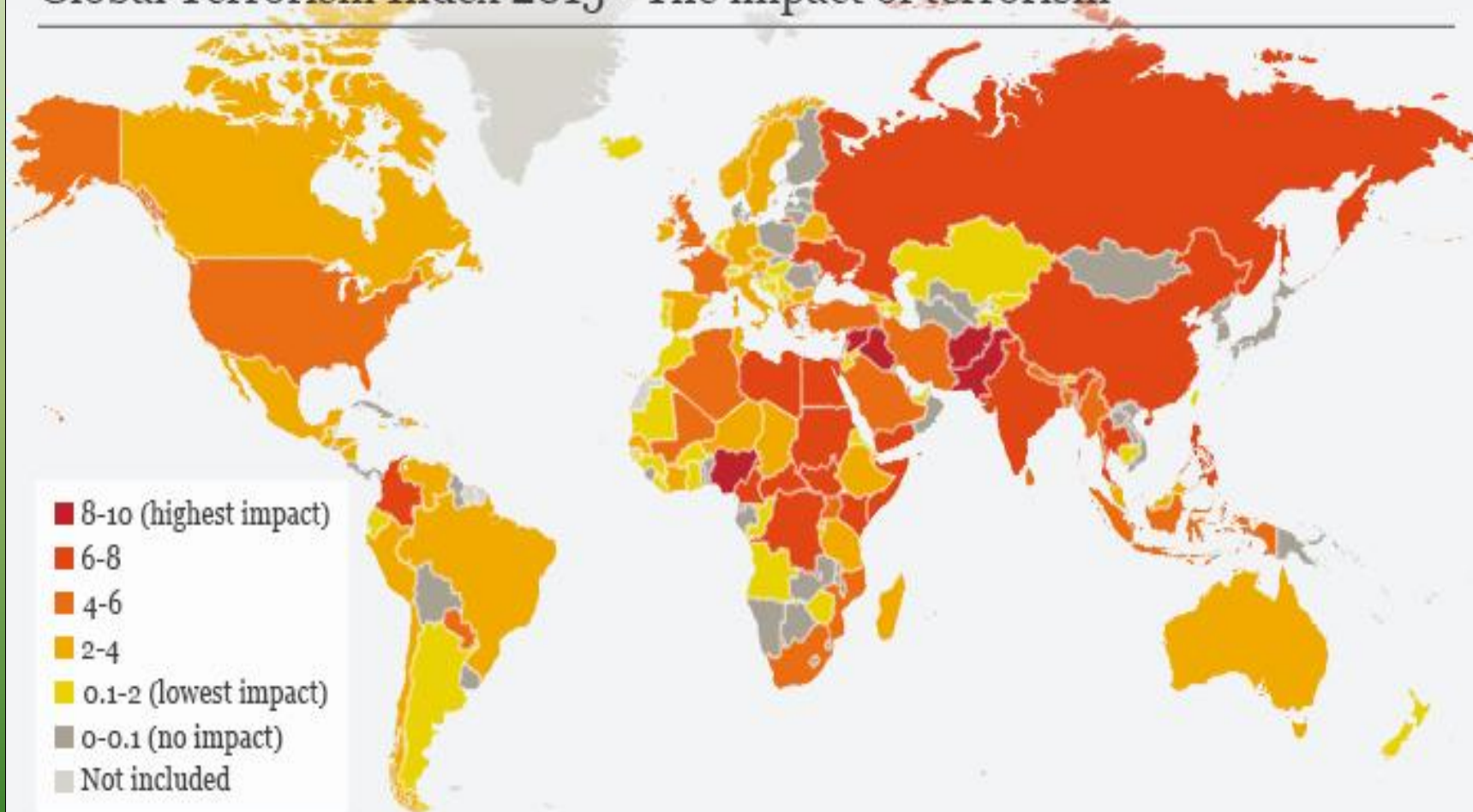


The need for trauma-based services in the Middle-East

Walid Abdul-Hamid (MRCPPsych, PhD,)
Jamie Hacker Hughes (FBPsS, PsychD,)
& Sian Morgan, President of the Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP.)

Global Terrorism Index 2015 - The impact of terrorism



Source: Institute for Economics and Peace - GTI 2015 is based on data from 2014

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18 October 2011 Last updated at 11:57

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War veterans mental health scheme set up in Colchester

A scheme aimed at improving mental health care for soldiers once they have left the army has been set up in Essex.

The North Essex Veterans Mental Health Network will see Colchester Garrison, the NHS and charity Combat Stress working closer together in future.

It is hoped the partnership will improve links between all three and result in more suitable treatment for former army personnel.

The network has received £130,000 of funding from the Department of Health.

The scheme was instigated by consultant psychiatrist Lt Col (Retd) Mike Srinivasan, from Colchester Garrison's Department of Community Mental Health.

He believed the partnership would make a "huge difference" to veterans.

He said: "We in the military need to get our colleagues in the NHS to understand the military



The scheme aims get mental health providers to work closer together

Related Stories

[Help for the mental wounds of war](#)

[War veterans 'don't need to](#)



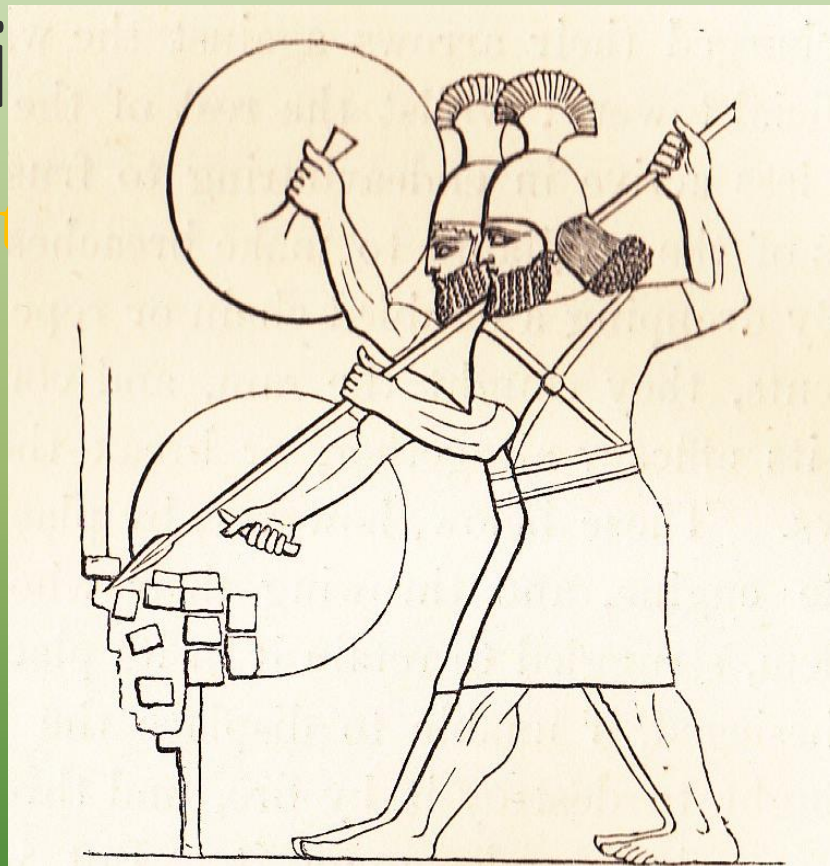
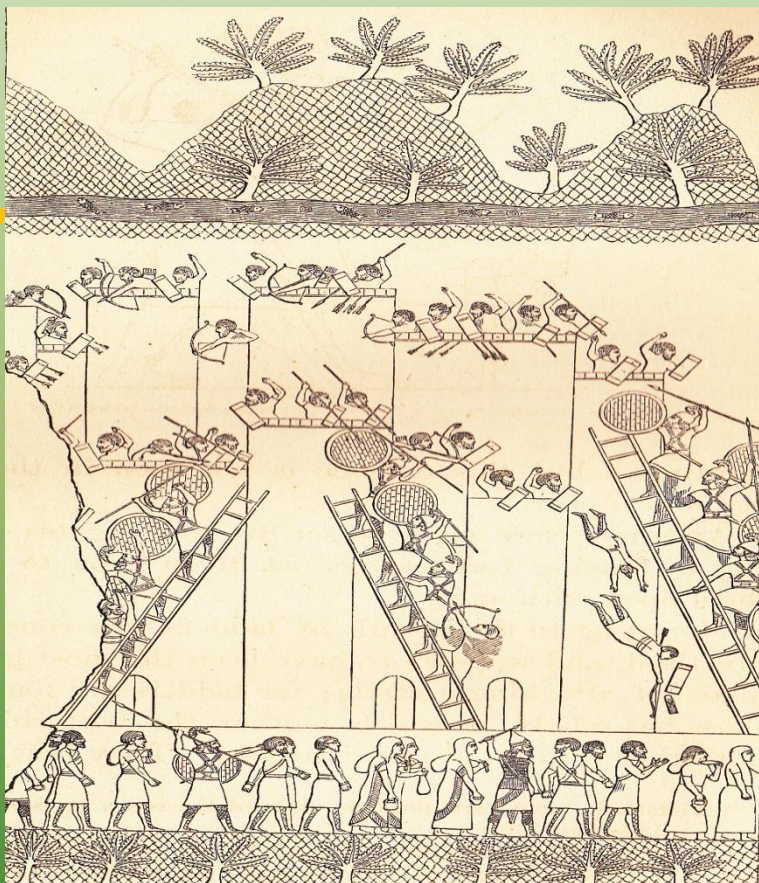
Lt Col Dr Mike Srinivasan and Professor Jamie Hacker Hughes



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Nothing New under the Sun: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders in the Ancient World

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Abstract

Herodotus' account of the Athenian spear carrier Epizelus' psychogenic mutism following the Marathon Wars is usually cited as the first documented account of post-traumatic stress disorders in historical literature. This paper describes much earlier accounts of post combat disorders that were recorded as occurring in Mesopotamia (present day Iraq) during the Assyrian dynasty (1300–609 BC). The descriptions in this paper include many symptoms of what we would now identify in current diagnostic classification systems as post-traumatic stress disorders, including flashbacks, sleep disturbance and low mood. The Mesopotamians explain the disorder in terms of spirit affliction; the spirit of those enemies whom the patient had killed during battle causing the symptoms.

Media coverage



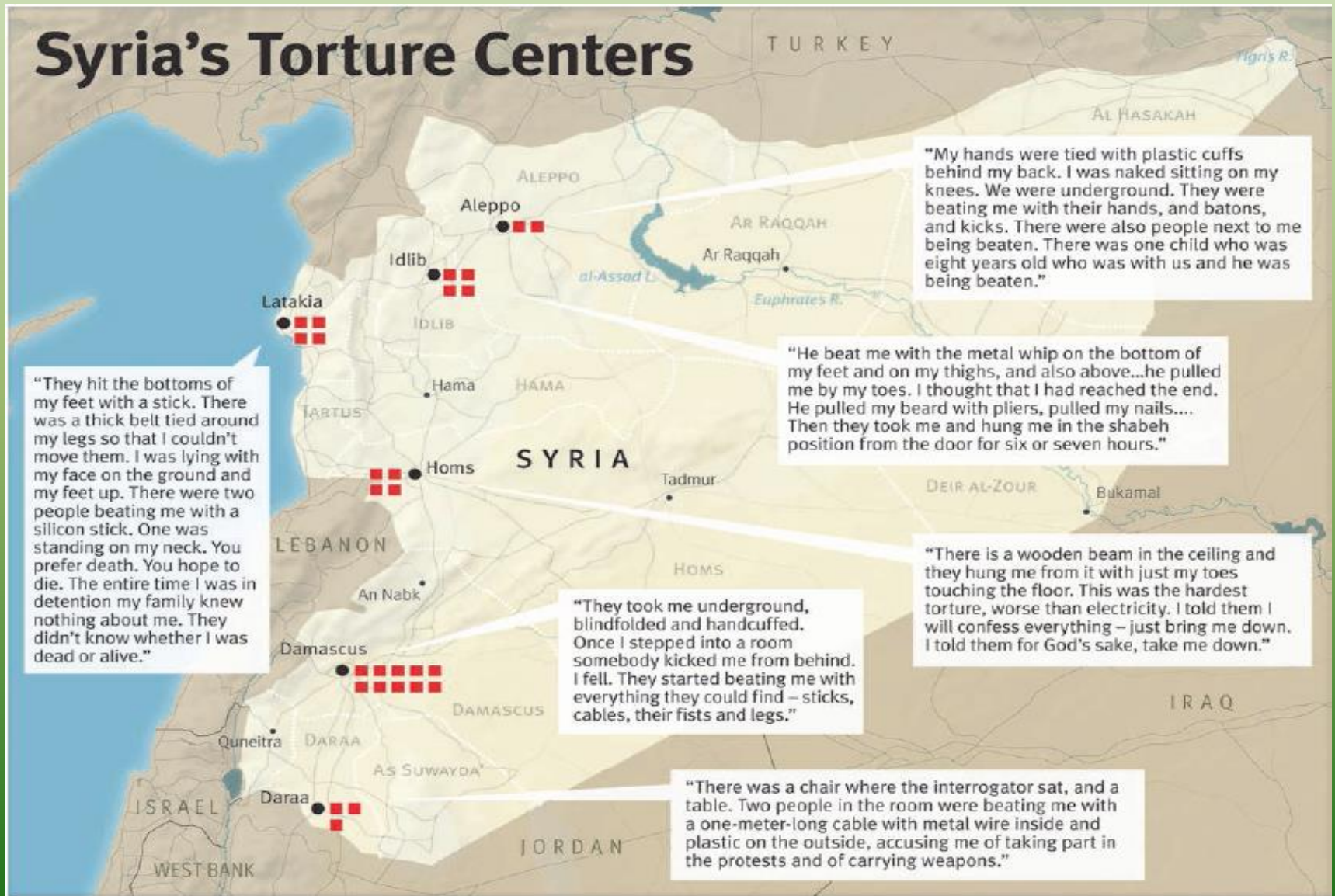
Norris, et al (2004) suggested that trauma is much more common in developing countries than the developed world though it is challenging to treat, and difficult to study. Most of trauma treatment and research resources are in Europe which constitute only 7% of world population.

The psychological impact of traumatic events outweigh the physical by an estimated 4:1 ratio (Everly, Barnett, Sperry, & Links, 2010). The psychological impact of man-made trauma is much more than that of natural disasters.

Study	Country	Sample	Sample size	PTSD Scale	PTSD%
de Jong et al., 2003	Alger Suburb	area exposed to a massacres.	653	CIDI	%37.4
Khamis V., 2005	Palestine	R School child 12-16 years old.	1000	SCI DSMIV	%34
Farhood,etal , 2006	Lebanon	South after the 2006 war. R	250	Harvard	%29.3
AbdelRahim, et al, 2009	West Sudan	18-10 years School child	200	PDS	%55

Study	Country	Sample	Sample size	PTSD Scale	PTSD%
Neuner et al., 2004	Uganda	Sudanese refugees	1,831	PDS	%44.6
Jamil, et al, .2007	USA	Iraqi refuge Psych pts	116	PDS	M 54% F 11.4%
Norris&Aroian, 2008	Detroit, US	Arab Mus immig Wom	546	PDS	%40
Sondergaard, et al, 2001	Sweden	Iraqi refugees	86	Harvard	%38.1

Syria's Torture Centers



"They hit the bottoms of my feet with a stick. There was a thick belt tied around my legs so that I couldn't move them. I was lying with my face on the ground and my feet up. There were two people beating me with a silicon stick. One was standing on my neck. You prefer death. You hope to die. The entire time I was in detention my family knew nothing about me. They didn't know whether I was dead or alive."

"My hands were tied with plastic cuffs behind my back. I was naked sitting on my knees. We were underground. They were beating me with their hands, and batons, and kicks. There were also people next to me being beaten. There was one child who was eight years old who was with us and he was being beaten."

"He beat me with the metal whip on the bottom of my feet and on my thighs, and also above...he pulled me by my toes. I thought that I had reached the end. He pulled my beard with pliers, pulled my nails.... Then they took me and hung me in the shabeh position from the door for six or seven hours."

"They took me underground, blindfolded and handcuffed. Once I stepped into a room somebody kicked me from behind. I fell. They started beating me with everything they could find – sticks, cables, their fists and legs."

"There is a wooden beam in the ceiling and they hung me from it with just my toes touching the floor. This was the hardest torture, worse than electricity. I told them I will confess everything – just bring me down. I told them for God's sake, take me down."

"There was a chair where the interrogator sat, and a table. Two people in the room were beating me with a one-meter-long cable with metal wire inside and plastic on the outside, accusing me of taking part in the protests and of carrying weapons."

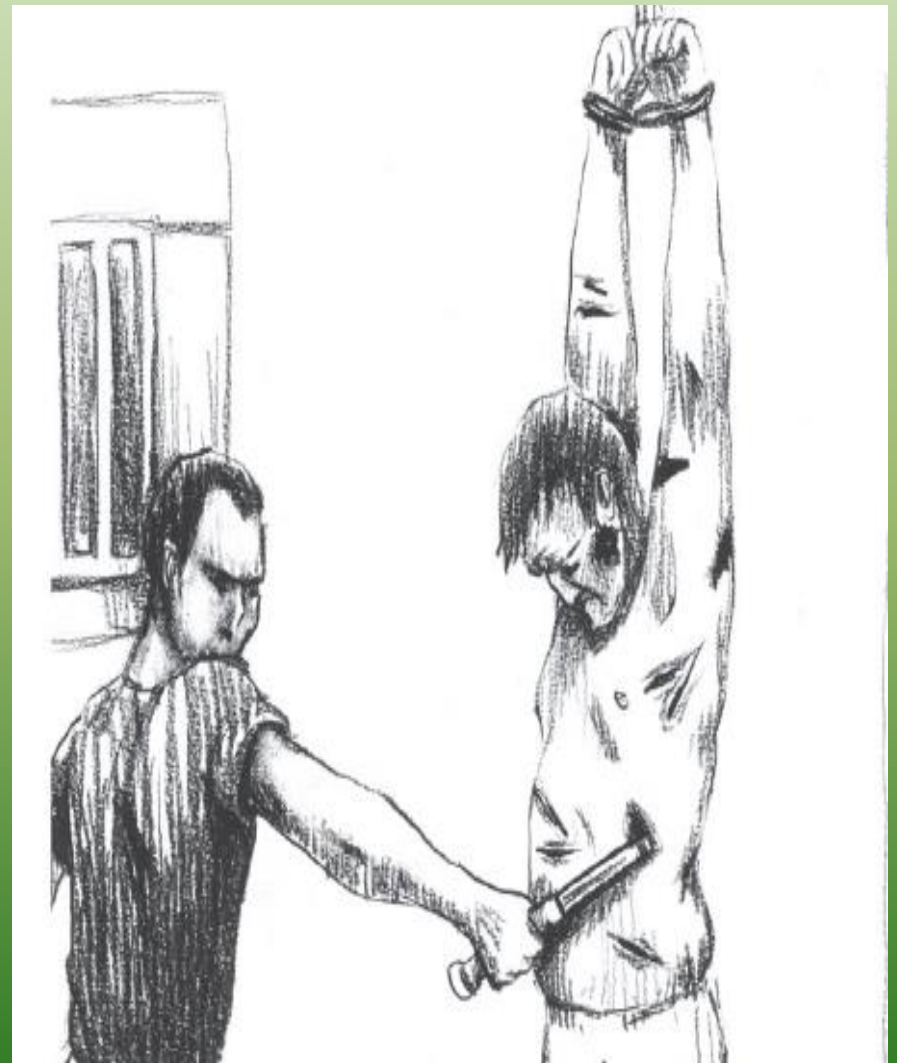
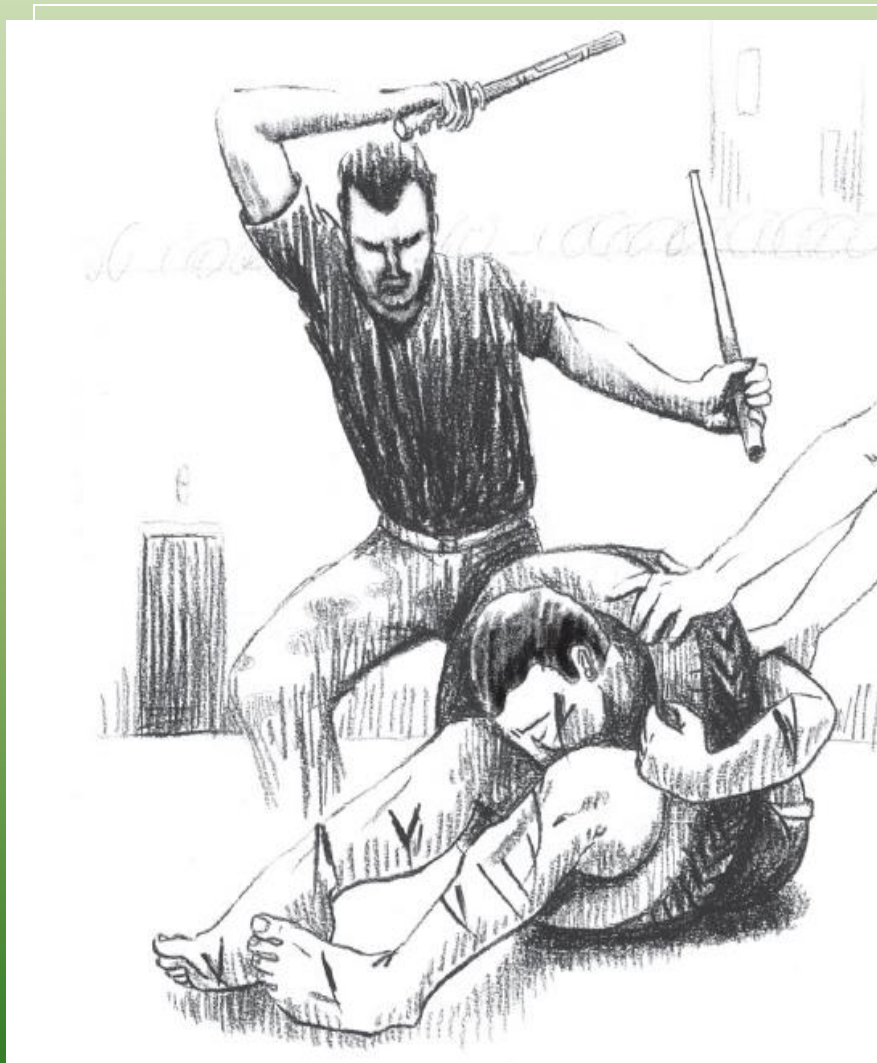
Torture is defined as inflicting severe physical or psychological pain for the purpose of punishment, fear, or coercion, and extraction of statements or information.

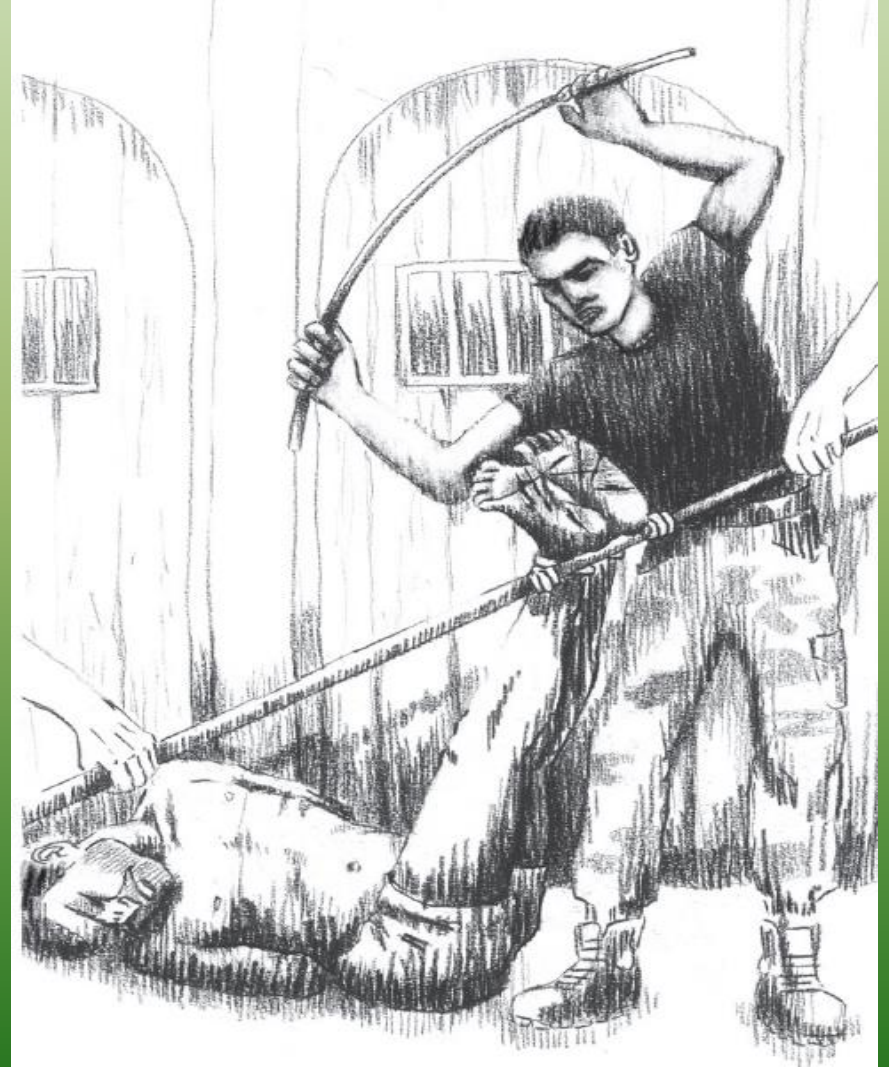
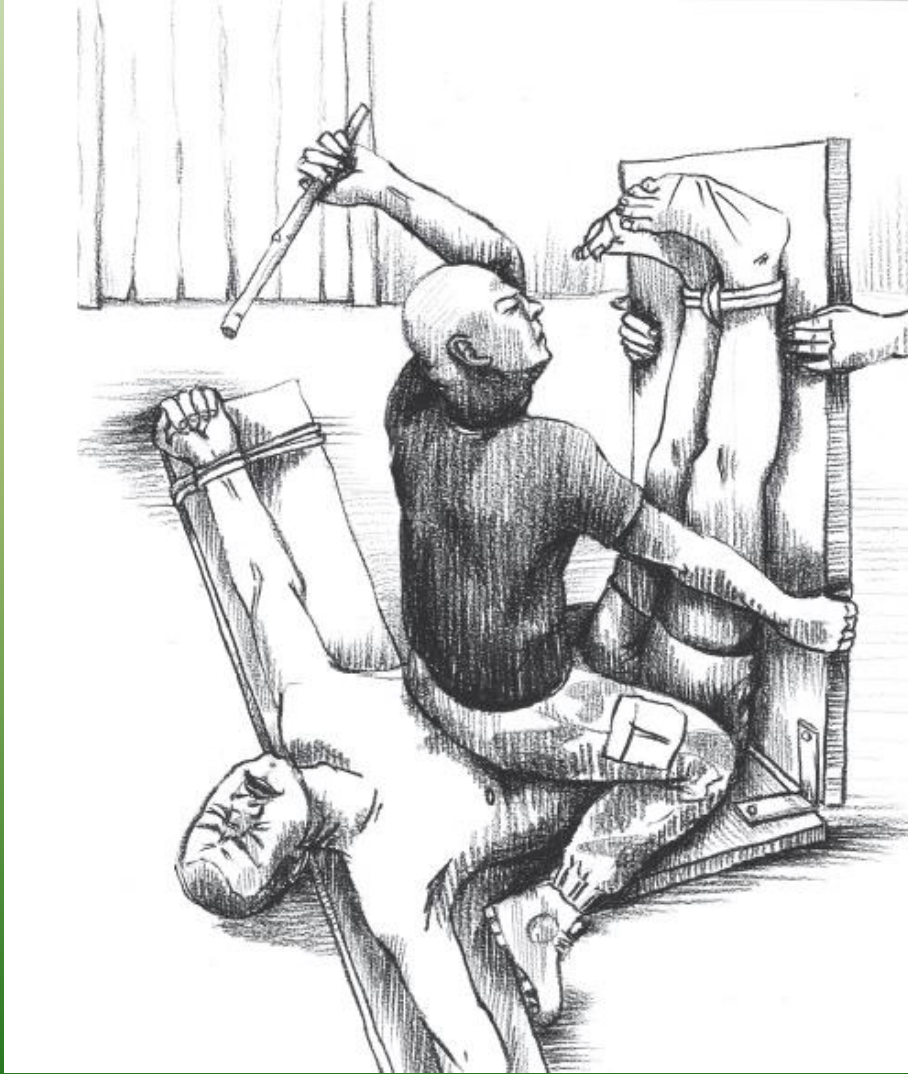
The psychological consequences of torture can be much worse than the physical in a way that makes it impossible for the victim to recover from these consequences and might lead in the end, as a result of the hopelessness and pain, to suicide if it is not treated effectively and supported adequately (Gerrity, 2001, p41).

Gerrity, Ellen T., Keane, Terence Martin and Tuma, Farris (2001) The Mental Health Consequences of Torture. New York: Plenum Publishers.

'The guards hung me by my wrists from the ceiling for eight days. After few days of hanging, being denied sleep, it felt like my brain stopped working. I was imagining things. My feet got swollen on the third day. I felt pain that I have never felt in my entire life.I screamed that I needed to go to a hospital, but the guards just laughed at me.' (Solvang, et al 2012)

Solvang, Ole, Neistat, Anna, et al (2012) Torture Archipelago Arbitrary Arrests, Torture, and Enforced Disappearances in Syria's Underground Prisons since March 2011. USA; Human Rights Watch.







First Video.



“Peaceful, Peaceful, Muslims and Christians want freedom” (Filiu , 2011, p88).



“Peaceful, Peaceful, Muslims and Christians want freedom” (Filiu , 2011, p88).



The Ghouta chemical attack August 2013





The Refugee Crisis



- ✗ Since the start of the Syrian Revolution in March 2011, nearly half of Syria population has been displaced. This constitute about eight million people in Syria and more than four million registered refugees who have fled to adjacent countries (UN, 2015).
- ✗ It has been estimated that more than 210,000 people have been killed and 840,000 injured since 2011.
- ✗ Many Syrian refugees were exposed to massacres, murder, execution without legal process, torture, hostage-taking, enforced disappearance, rape and sexual violence, as well as recruiting and using children in hostile situations.

- ✗ Exposure to this level of violence have resulted in long-term physical and mental disabilities in the survivors.
- ✗ Even those who were spared violence and trauma continue to be concerned about the fate of relatives they lost touch with, especially those relatives who classified as missing, in addition to worry for relatives left behind in Syria as a result of the deteriorating security situation in the different parts of Syria resulted in looting and/or destruction of their houses and belongings (Almoshmosh, 2013).

The Arab Spring has resulted in public uprising against the Arab regimes who for years tortured and oppressed the population (Filiu, 2011, p64). With the lack of support from the International Community to the revolution (compared to the European revolution that followed the fall of Berlin Wall). The regimes reacted violently to the Spring uprising involving the police and the army. Much more support from oil rich countries went to the anti-revolutionary forces. The despair that resulted caused radical and fanatic organizations like ISIS to flourish and take control.

In the words of Moaz el Khatib, the National Syrian Coalition president, 'the international community is obsessed with the length of beards and ignores the images of children dying' (Shehadi, 2013) .

The Ghouta chemical attack occurred on 21 August 2013 (**the red line**). Several opposition-controlled areas in the suburbs around Damascus, Syria were struck by rockets containing the chemical agent sarin. Estimates of the death toll range from at least 281 people to 1,729 (Entous, et al. 2013).

Shehadi, N. (2013) Revolution or civil war? The battle of narratives in Syria. 29 March 2013. Open Security on: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/nadim-shehadi/revolution-or-civil-war-battle-of-narratives-in-syria>

Entous, Adam; Malas, Nour; Abushakra, Rima (22 November 2013). "As Syrian Chemical Attack Loomed, Missteps Doomed Civilians". Wall Street Journal. Retrieved 15 April 2015.

The need for trauma-based services in the Middle-East



The Berlin Wall Falls 1989

The need for trauma-based services in the Middle-East



Centre for Psychiatry
Cultural Consultation Club

Winter Term

Culture, Trauma and Healing

Wednesday 25th February 2015

Programme

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 2.00- 2.45pm | Trauma, Fragmentation and Healing - an ex-journalist's therapeutic take on the Fall of the Berlin Wall
Mark Brayne UKCP MA
Psychotherapist & EMDR Europe Consultant Regional Coordinator of the East Anglia EMDR Association |
| 2.45-3.00pm | Coffee Break |
| 3.00-3.45pm | Nothing new under the sun: Post Traumatic Stress Disorders in the Ancient World
Dr Walid Abdul Hamid |

The translation of Trauma in Arabic is Sadma which means a sudden blow used professionally. In Gaza, it was found that faji'ah which means tragedy, and musiba which means calamity are also used to described traumatic events. Sadma is used in lay terms to describe painful events that happen suddenly. Faji'ah describes reaction to an extraordinary event, that mainly associates with the loss of a loved one. Musiba describes traumatic events that are persistent and that have long-term consequences (Afana, 2012).

Afana, Abdelhamid (2012) Problems in Applying Diagnostic Concepts of PTSD and Trauma in the Middle East. The Arab Journal of Psychiatry (2012) Vol. 23 supplement Page (28-34).

The symptomology of PTSD in Arabic patients was also found to be different. They were found to have increased arousal followed by the re-experiencing of the traumatic events with the least common symptoms those in the domain of avoidance and numbing (Abdel-Rahim, et al, 2009). Other investigations showed that avoidance symptoms were reported less frequently, with the exception of trying not to think, talk, or have feelings about the traumatic event. Re-experiencing symptoms were generally reported more frequently than avoidance and arousal symptoms(Norris,& Aroian, 2008).

Even if the conflict had ended then (2013) ‘the mental health services (in Syria) will be grossly insufficient to meet the predicted care needs.’ This is make it necessary for the international community to work hard to train more Syrian mental health professionals who could meet such needs. Currently the situation is too dire and a plan to ‘reconstruction of health services and to assist in providing skilled human resources for the suffering people of Syria’ should be considered as priority (Abou-Saleh, & Mobayed, 2013).

× **Psychiatric institutions in countries like Lebanon have seen increasing number of admissions of Syrians refugees in the last few years, with significant increase of severe psychiatric disorders like Schizophrenia or with significant increase in suicidal ideation amongst these refugees (Lama et al. 2016). Moreover, drug abuse and trade in illicit drugs is becoming an increasing problem amongst the Syrian refugees (Arslan, et al. 2015). The older Syrian refugees in Lebanon have been found to have high levels of anxiety (41%), depression (25%), feeling unsafe (24%) or lonely (23%) (Strong, et al. 2015).**

- A recent study by Gokay et al. (2015) of a random sample of 352 (aged 18 to 65 years) from the 4125 Syrian refugees who live in the Refugee Camp in Gaziantep, Turkey. The study found that 33.5% of the sample had PTSD.
- EMDR is an evidence-based psychotherapy for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with more than 38 controlled studies (15 randomized clinical trials) demonstrating its effectiveness in reducing and curing PTSD symptoms. It has been shown to provide outcomes similar to those achieved by cognitive behavioural approaches.

Dec
10
2013

Middle East Training gets going

 Events

 Add comments

Sian Morgan reports:

As our very successful EMDR training for therapists in post-war Bosnia settles into its second phase, HAPUK&I is delighted that, at last, we have been able to start an EMDR training programme for clinicians working around the Middle East.

At the end of November 2013, 30 mental health practitioners, a most gratifying half of them men, from Iraq, Syria (including Damascus and Aleppo) from Libya, Egypt and from Jordan Turkey's refugee camps attended a HAP UK & Ireland Part 1 EMDR Training in Istanbul delivered by [Mona Zagroul](#), an EMDR Trainer from Palestine and [Emre Konuk](#), EMDR Trainer in Turkey who generously provided his premises for training.

Four Palestinian Facilitators also contributed, and the training was coordinated in the UK by Dr Walid Abdulhamid, a psychiatrist and EMDR Accredited Practitioner. Walid made an enormous contribution to the course, liaising with participants in Arabic.



Participants were very enthusiastic about EMDR and pleased to have a tool that they feel confident they can use immediately to help relieve the suffering of refugees and compatriots.

It was a humbling experience to work with people whose daily lives are at the coal face of trauma. Their gratitude was enormous.

We hope this will be the beginning of a larger HAP project in response to the



Welcome

Welcome to the HAP UK & IRELAND (Humanitarian Assistance Programme) website.

We're a charity affiliated to, though independent from, the EMDR UK & Ireland Association, set up to provide training in traumatology and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing) to local mental health professionals working with people in traumatised communities worldwide.

Do browse around the website to find out who we are, what we do and how you might be able to support us - financially or with experience and expertise.

Follow Me

Latest News



November 2013



November 2013



October 2015

Methods:

The Humanitarian Assistance Programmes (HAP) UK & Ireland conducted two EMDR TRAINING in Istanbul, Turkey the first time was on 28th November 2013. Since then 2 groups completed 3 parts EMDR training. A second Cohort was trained during 2015

A survey was conducted at each Istanbul course. Participants were asked to consent to participate in the study and, if they did, they will be given the Arabic translation of ‘The Need for Trauma-based Services Questionnaire’ with both quantitative and qualitative questions to complete.

62 participants of the Istanbul EMDR training were asked to fill the Arabic translation of ‘The Need for Trauma-based Services Questionnaire’. All the trainees completed both the quantitative and the qualitative questions and the following are the results:

Demographic Variables	All Participants	Syrian Participants
Gender Male	40 (65%)	21 (64%)
Female	22 (35%)	12 (36 %)
Profession:		
psychologists	33 (53%)	16 (48.5%)
psychotherapists	19 (31%)	4 (12.1%)
Psychiatrists	10 (16%)	4 (12.1%)
Country:		
Syria	33 (53%)	
Iraq	11 (17%)	
Egypt	4 (7%)	
Jordan	10 (16%)	
Other	4 (7%)	

Mental health problems	All Participants	Syrian Participants
Trauma is the Major problem in country.	60%	72%
Trauma is the Major problem in your practice.	50%	69%
Precentage of trauma cases you see per month	56% (SD=23.1)	55% (SD=23.3)

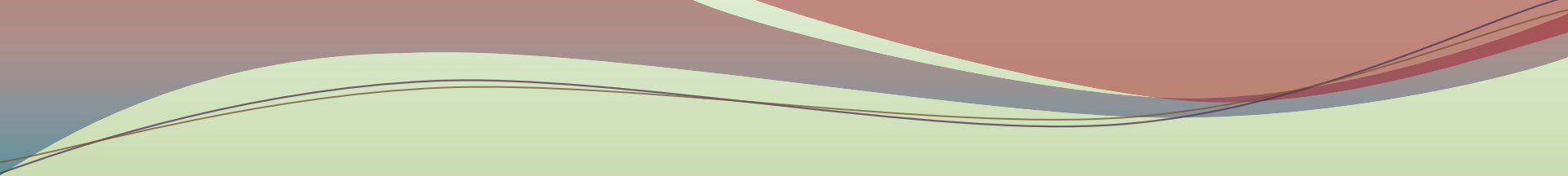
Unmet needs in trauma management	All Participants	Syrian Participants
able to meet trauma patients' needs	37% (SD=19).	34% (SD=17.1)
unmet need for trauma psychotherapy	97%	100%
Professional needs :		
Psychotherapists	27%	38%
psychiatric medication	15%	13%
occupational therapy	15%	19%



The Way forward: main themes;

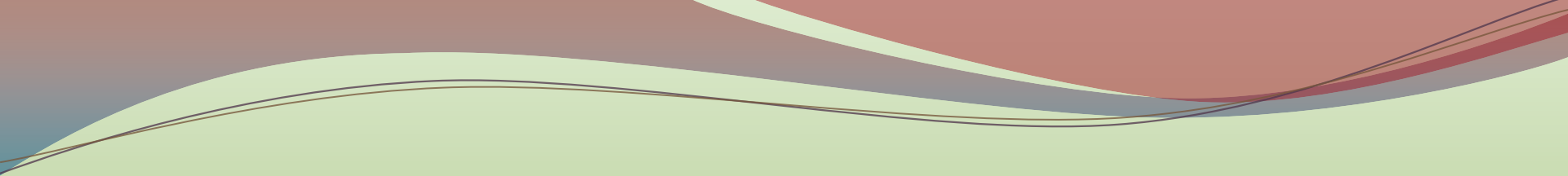
This is by improving the Trauma services by:

- 1. Training and supervision.**
- 2. creating trauma services and psychological service for refugee camps.**
- 3. creating trauma first aid programs in Arabic.**
- 4. Addressing the lack of qualified staff.**
- 5. Telemedicine.**



The Training was well received by the trainees to summarise the comments that participants raised heart warming comments in the last day feedback session of the training which were:

- For the first time we have been given a new complete approach of therapy, and not a disorganised approach that added to our disorganisation.
- The Arabic examples and experiences (cases) given by lecturers and facilitators enriched the course. The course has given us the motivation for change and cooperation with others.

- 
- I came from Iraq where I have experienced a lot of stress, but this course has made me able to feel happy that I will be able to help my fellow Iraqis. I liked being in this group.
 - I felt for the first time that we (Arabs) are O.K. In spite of our differences, we managed to work together.
 - This course's scientific rather than the emotional dialogue might help us overcome crises in the same way (i.e. being enabled to use scientific rather than emotional methods).

- ✘ In relation to the Syrian refugees arriving to Britain, many of them will need psychological trauma services, it has been suggested that neither veterans nor non-veteran trauma sufferers are getting adequate help in the NHS. Improving trauma services in the NHS will benefit all trauma patients whether they are veterans or not (Woodhead, et al. 2007).
- ✘ The Royal College of Psychiatrists has recently created the Syrian Taskforce headed by consultant psychiatrist and EMDR Practitioner Dr. Nadim alMoshmash.
- ✘ HAP UK & Ireland is taking a lead in that regard by offering training to members of British Arab Psychiatric Association.

- ✘ Back in the Middle East to help the largest refugee population of Syrian who are located in Syria and the surrounding countries, The international community needs to start thinking of the mental health needs of these refugees. Otherwise these refugees will come to Europe to seek better life.
- ✘ More importantly UN and world politicians need to put their act together and help stop the syrian conflict and deal with the causes of this war.
- ✘ Last Video.

!

عندما يصيبك الإحساس بالفشل والإحباط
تذكر أن هذا الالهبل أصبح رئيس امريكا



When you have the feelings of failure and frustration Remember that this moron
became president of America

Conclusions:

- 1.lack of security and the deteriorating situation have had great impact on the mental health of the population.**
- 2. extreme theme of trauma with ‘loss of relative after explosions or assassinations’ the presence of ‘victims of political imprisonment’ in addition to ‘terrorism and kidnapping’ that continue to go on.**
- 3. increased number of mental health problems with a corresponding reduction of the professionals or facilities .**

One participant wrote that ‘psychologists in the whole of Iraq are less than 10’.

4. Many of the mental health staff are unqualified with lack of both pharmacological and psychotherapeutic treatments and non-existence of specialist mental health centres and mental health assessment tools.

5. The Syrian refugee crisis has created massive mental health problems but those therapists who try to help find major problem as: ‘Lack of appropriate place to hold psychotherapy sessions’.

6. Another Syrian participant suggested that: 'We need all the specialties in mental health'. However the main immediate need suggested by most participants is 'to train more psychotherapists who can help trauma victims' and this need was suggested to be for EMDR training in the Arabic Language.