



«Working together for new
pathways in mental health»

Developing pathways for a comprehensive and culturally sensitive mental health care in Greece: Good practices and first evidence from the field

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Marit Borg, Bengt Karlsson, Trude Klevan (University of South Eastern Norway)

From sharing ideas in a common cause... (2014)



To Training together...(2014-2016)



To producing evidence... (2018)

- ▶ **Experienced experts** were part of the programme at every stage (planning, training sessions, evaluation, dissemination, public conferences) on a paid basis.
- ▶ **Self-help groups for mental health problems** such as depression are rare in Greece.
- ▶ **Structured group interventions** are not yet incorporated into **first-line mental health care**, although they have proved to be both effective and low-cost.
- ▶ The role of **social capital, the availability of social resources and the concept of personal recovery** are key elements in supporting people with mental health problems and understanding the effectiveness of self-help groups and self-help interventions in general
- ▶ The next step will be to organise a **strategic plan integrated into Greek national mental healthcare policy for supporting the setting-up of self-help groups across the country in a persisting period of socioeconomic crisis.**

Menediatou, A., Stylianidis, S., Chondros, P., Greacen, T., Jouet, E., Lavdas, M., & Dawson, I. (2018). The Citizens against Depression project. *Swiss Archives of Neurology, Psychiatry and Psychotherapy*, 169(02), 48-50.



What transpired after that...



KEY FIGURES 2015-2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Arrivals via the Mediterranean Sea to Europe	1,015,877	↓ 363,425	↓ 172,324	↓ 116,647
Deaths at sea	3,771	↑ 5,096	↓ 3,139	↓ 2,275
Number of arrivals by sea in Europe per death at sea	One death for every 269 arrivals	One death for every 71 arrivals	One death for every 55 arrivals	One death for every 51 arrivals
Number of deaths recorded along land routes at Europe's borders	144	↓ 72	↑ 75	↑ 136
Number resettled to Europe	11,175	↑ 18,175	↑ 27,450	24,885**
Number evacuated from Libya	-	-	↑ 389	↑ 2,404

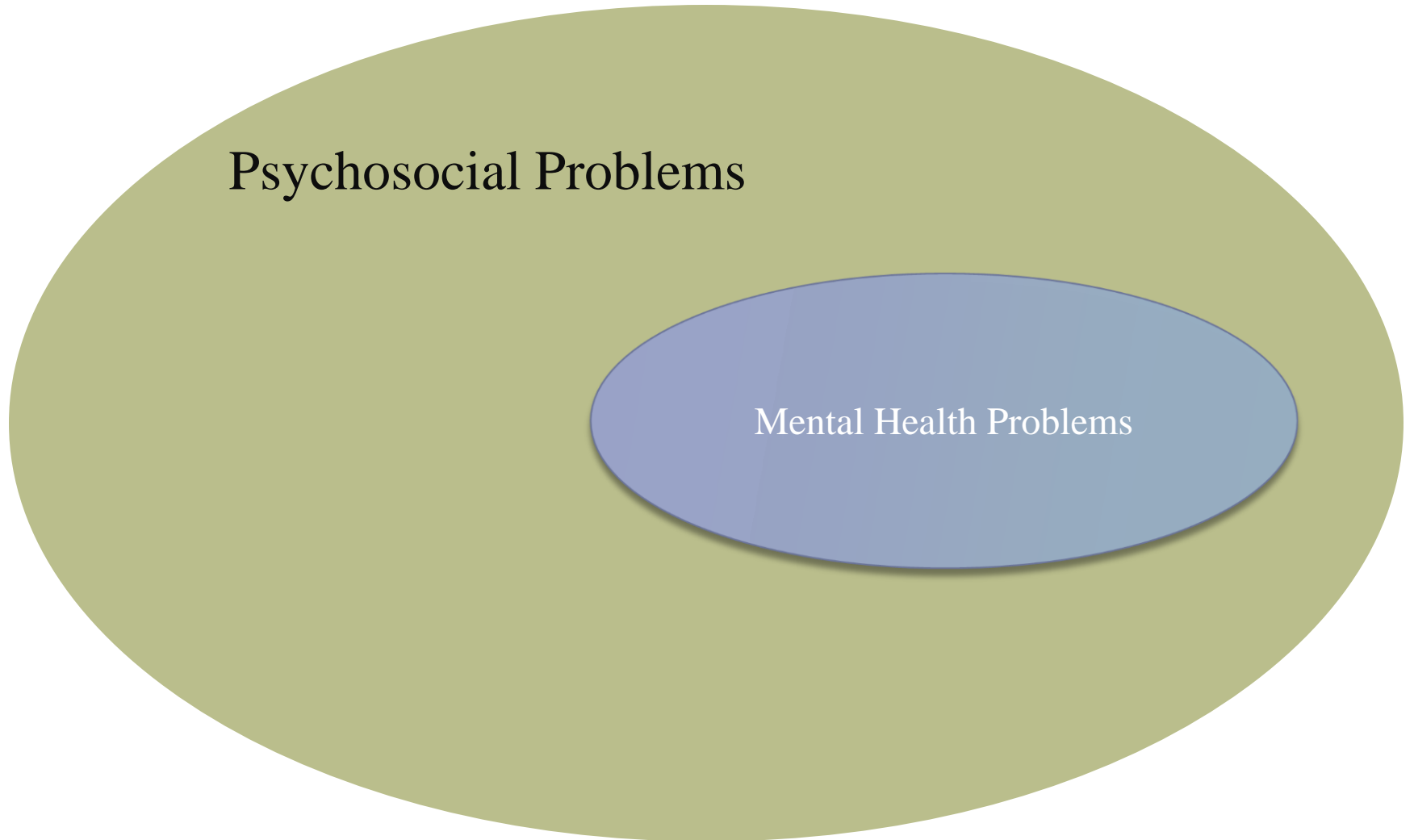


The pathway through.

- ▶ How to travel? Right for freedom and dignity. Refugees stranded in the islands, at the sea or within community settings.
- ▶ How to have access to care? Right for proper care.
- ▶ Where to stay?
 - ▶ Hot spots
 - ▶ Camps (more than 30.000 refugees)
 - ▶ Residential Spaces within the community (20.000 refugees and asylum seekers)
 - ▶ Within the community often without support
- ▶ What services for what needs? Social needs are often neglected and psychosocial problems arise.
- ▶ Even in high income countries, refugees and forced migrants are dealing with situations of “segregation” and “invisibility”.
- ▶ “Pathologization of the psychosocial suffering”



Understanding psychosocial dimensions in coping with adversity
(Ventevogel, 2019)



Developing a model of practice for refugee mental health care and integration (Borg, Karlsson, Klevan, Stylianidis, Tatsi & Lavdas, 2018) I

- ▶ **Pilot Project for Refugee Mental Health Care**
 - ▶ 68 individuals treated with a long term care plan
 - ▶ 179 non specialized professionals were trained in psychosocial care and mental health
 - ▶ 25 major stakeholder organizations were approached through different levels
- ▶ **Evaluation that showed the need to build resilience in working «with the big system» through «different alliances»**
 - ▶ *Quote «We work with refugees, but if you say that you're going work only with refugees you are going to fail. Because you have to work, with people who work with the refugees as well. Because it's very interconnected with each other.»*



Developing a model of practice for refugee mental health care and integration (Borg, Karlsson, Klevan, Stylianidis, Tatsi & Lavdas, 2018) II

- ▶ **Developing the model of outreach practice for refugees while linking up with the system, advocating both for transition-specific units as well as for integrated care.**
 - ▶ Expanded Refugee Outreach Mental Health Care Team in Attica integrating Peer Support Workers and development of one more team in Thessaloniki
 - ▶ Day Center for Refugees and Asylum Seekers
 - ▶ Transition Spaces for Refugees dealing with difficult psychosocial problems and mental health conditions
 - ▶ Mainstreaming care through training all stakeholders to work together, prioritize the needs and integrate refugees within the existing system.
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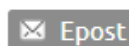
Mobile psykisk helse-team hjelper flyktninger

-Vi vil gjennom mobile psykisk helseteam vise at flyktninger med både lettere og alvorlige psykiske problemer hjelpes best ute i lokalsamfunnene, sier den greske psykologen Michail Lavdas.



Roald Lund Fleiner

Kommunikasjonsrådgiver



Med faglig støtte fra blant annet norske fagmiljøer leder Lavdas et FN-støttet prosjekt i Hellas, der det å integrere flyktninger med psykiske helseproblemer raskest mulig i lokalmiljøene er en sentral del av hjelpen.

-Rask vei inn

-Vårt mål er at flyktninger med psykiske helseproblemer får en rask vei inn i lokalsamfunnene, og nyttiggjør seg av de helsefremmende ressursene som er der, sier den greske psykologen.

Med over 51 000 flyktninger i Hellas, fordelt på et økende antall flyktingeleire, mener Lavdas at det er en fare for at både de som sliter psykisk og andre isoleres fra samfunnet.



Tekst: [Jan-Henrik Kulberg](#) og [Stian Kristoffer Sande](#)



VIS STUDIEVALG

Forskere ved [USNs Senter for psykisk helse og rus](#) er i Hellas' hovedstad Athen. Der samarbeider de om forskningsbasert evaluering av et ambulant psykiske helsetilbud for flyktninger og asylsøkere i en bydel.

Evaluerer et ambulant team

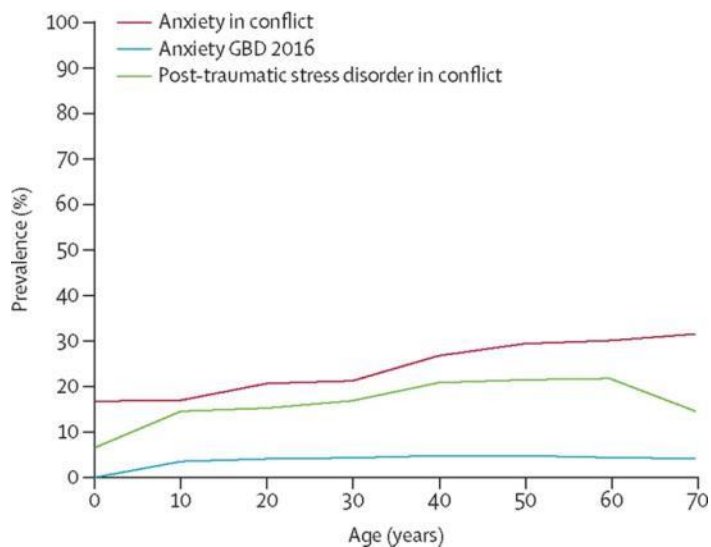
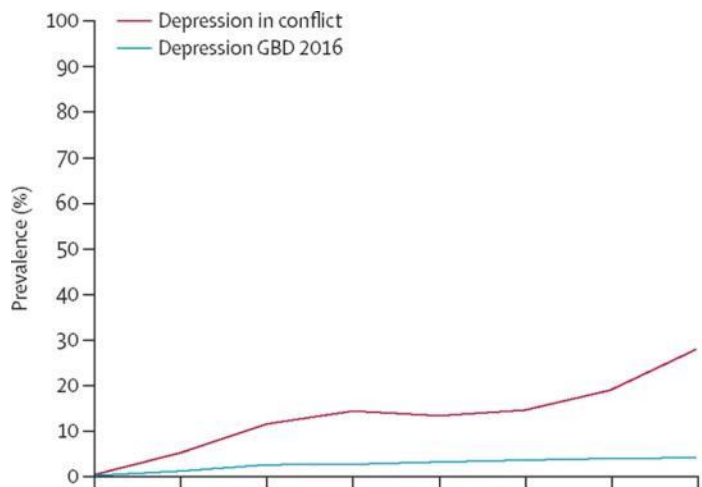
Karlsson er i Hellas sammen med professor Marit Borg og førsteamanuensis Trude Klevan. Bakgrunnen er deres kjennskap til den greske forskeren Michalis Lavdas.

- Michalis Lavdas har i mange år jobbet med et ambulant team som reiser rundt på øyene i Hellas for å arbeide med psykisk helse hos flyktninger og asylsøkere. Hans forskergruppe har fått midler av FNs høykommissær for flyktninger (UNCHR) for å drive pilotprosjektet i Athen. Det har til hensikt å utvikle tiltak for å hjelpe flyktninger og asylanter med deres utfordringer knyttet til psykisk helse, forklarer Karlsson.

De tre forskerne ble spurt av Michalis Lavdas om Senter for psykisk helse og rus ville delta i prosjektet og stå for den forskningsbaserte evalueringen i pilotperioden.



New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis (Charlson et al., 2019)



CONCLUSION: The burden of mental disorders is high in conflict-affected populations. Given the large numbers of people in need and the humanitarian imperative to reduce suffering, there is an urgent need to implement scalable mental health interventions to address this burden.

Scalable psychological interventions

(Singla et al., 2017)

- ▶ Brief (4 - 8 sessions)
- ▶ Manualized
- ▶ Evidence informed
- ▶ Often trans-diagnostic or a-diagnostic
- ▶ Can be done by non-specialists if trained and supervised

Psychological Treatments for the World: Lessons from Low- and Middle-Income Countries

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NSHWs in action (Araya, 2012)



Research

Pakistan

(Rahman 2016, JAMA)

JAMA | Original Investigation

Effect of a Multicomponent Behavioral Intervention in Adults Impaired by Psychological Distress in a Conflict-Affected Area of Pakistan A Randomized Clinical Trial

Atif Rahman, PhD; Syed Usman Hamdani, MBBS; Naila Riaz Awan, PhD; Richard A. Bryant, PhD; Katie S. Dawson, PhD; Muhammad Firaz Khan, MRCPsych; Mian Mulhtar-ul-Haq Azeemi, MBBS; Parveen Akhtar, MPhil; Huma Nazir, BS (Hons); Anna Chiumento, MSc; Marit Sijbrandij, PhD; Duolao Wang, PhD; Saeed Farooq, PhD; Mark van Ommeren, PhD

(Rahman 2019, Lancet)

Effectiveness of a brief group psychological intervention for women in a post-conflict setting in Pakistan: a single-blind, cluster, randomised controlled trial

Atif Rahman, Muhammad Naseem Khan, Syed Usman Hamdani, Anna Chiumento, Parveen Akhtar, Huma Nazir, Anum Nisar, Aqsa Masood, Iftikhar Ud Din, Nasir Ali Khan, Richard A Bryant, Katie S Dawson, Marit Sijbrandij, Duolao Wang, Mark van Ommeren

Kenya

Bryant, 2017, Plos Medicine)



RESEARCH ARTICLE

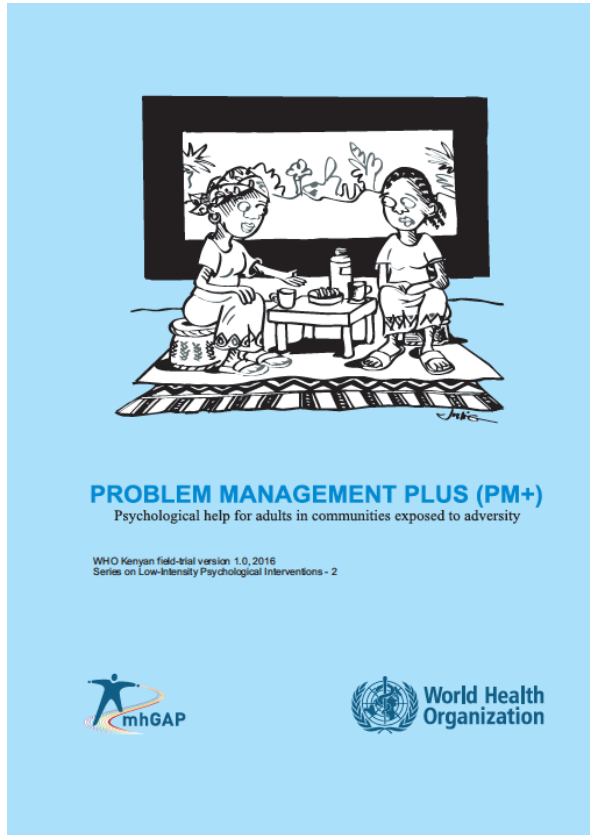
Effectiveness of a brief behavioural intervention on psychological distress among women with a history of gender-based violence in urban Kenya: A randomised clinical trial

Richard A. Bryant^{1,2*}, Alison Schafer³, Katie S. Dawson^{1,2}, Dorothy Anjuri⁴, Caroline Mullis⁴, Lincoln Ndogoni⁵, Phiona Koylet⁴, Marit Sijbrandij⁶, Jeannette Ulate⁷, Melissa Harper Shehadeh⁸, Dusan Hadzi-Pavlovic¹, Mark van Ommeren⁹



Problem Management Plus

http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/problem_management_plus/en/



- Scalable psychological intervention for adults impaired by distress in communities who are exposed to adversity.
- Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- 5 sessions of 90 minutes
- Feasible in communities that do not have many specialists.
- Can help people with depression, anxiety and stress.

Building up on competence and specialized support within the community; Empowerment practices

- ▶ Supporting a close community means that someone should work with the whole system in place.
- ▶ Training non-specialists in mental health care, prevention and dealing with emergencies
- ▶ Training and Empowering refugee communities with evidence-based practices in order to build up on the resilience and social support and facilitate access to mental health care in time reducing treatment gap



Introducing evidence-based psychosocial interventions in the community

- ▶ Psychological First Aid (World Health Organization) – 5 Trainings in 2019 for 100+ individuals
 - ▶ Problem Management+ for members of refugee communities and non-specialist professionals linking them up with proper supervision
 - ▶ Good Practices and Networks promoting involvement and recovery-oriented care
 - ▶ STRENGTHS project for syrian refugees in the EU
 - ▶ Experiences in Norway (Case Aid Workers in refugee care, Peer Support Workers, introducing lived experience and sharing of an attribute as a prerequisite for job posts)
 - ▶ PSTIC in urban Cairo with refugee communities
 - ▶ Open Dialogue as a way to work across the mental health system and the community
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PM+ Training Intervention in Greece

- ▶ Meetings with the Refugee Communities through the Greek Forum of Refugees and with professional organizations
- ▶ Adjustment of Tools and Handouts
- ▶ 10 Professionals learning cost-effective tools for intervention
- ▶ 10 Lay persons understanding mental health and working towards mental health promotion and psychosocial interventions
- ▶ 20 supervisors all over Greece trained
- ▶ Linking up with international organizations like UNHCR and WHO for technical expertise, monitoring and supervision



- ▶ Thank you all!
- ▶ Let's keep Networking and HAPPY 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY to ENTER MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK!
- ▶ ml@epapsy.gr

