

## **Training of Trainers on Psychological First Aid (PFA) for Crisis Events in Sri Lanka**

### **Call for Applicants**

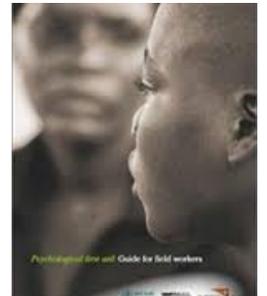
**NEW DATES: 14 – 17 June (Sinhala medium) & 7-10 July (Tamil medium) 2012**

**Applications are invited for a Training of Trainers programme on “Psychological First Aid (PFA) for Crisis Events in Sri Lanka”. This training is designed to equip participants to deliver training in Psychological First Aid in Sinhala or Tamil to a wide spectrum of potential responders to large and small scale crisis events in community settings. This training is relevant for trainers of emergency workers, humanitarian personnel, health and education staff, community workers and community members. Note that the training session dates have been changed to 14 – 17 June (Sinhala) & 7-10 July (Tamil).**

### **Background**

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-supported approach for immediate post-crisis psychosocial care, recommended by the IASC Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (2007), the current Sphere Guidelines (2011) and the WHO Mental Health GAP Intervention Guide (2010). PFA covers both social and psychological support and involves the provision of humane, supportive and practical help to people suffering from serious crisis events. It is the expert-recommended alternative to immediate psychological therapies - which are not supported by available evidence to be appropriate in an acute crisis.

In August 2011, "Psychological First Aid: A Guide for Fieldworkers" was launched by WHO, War Trauma Foundation and World Vision International. This guide was developed to address a gap in PFA materials for use in low and middle-income countries, and includes content that can be delivered to responders within 1 day, for immediate use. The guide reflects the emerging science and international consensus on how to provide basic support to people in the immediate aftermath of extremely stressful events. It offers simple, practical guidance for supporting people in ways that respect their dignity, culture and abilities. It enables responders to provide basic but vital psychosocial support to people in acute distress, including helping distressed relief or emergency workers themselves.



Since October 2011, World Vision Australia, War Trauma Foundation and The Good Practice Group have collaborated on a process of adapting and translating this PFA guide for use in Sri Lanka. PFA as an approach has great potential value in Sri Lanka as an initial response to a range of crisis events, including natural disasters, community violence, road traffic accidents or personal tragedies. An important element of applying this approach in Sri Lanka is training and reflective learning from the use of the PFA guide in context.

### **Training**

30 experienced trainers already active in relevant fields will be selected to participate in a training process on the delivery of the adapted PFA materials in Sri Lanka. The process will begin with an initial 4 day programme on PFA, training content and delivery of training, to be held on **14 – 17 June (Sinhala medium) & 7-10 July (Tamil medium)** 2012. Following this, participants will be expected to deliver training on PFA in the course of their regular work, and will receive technical support and on-site mentoring to plan and learn from their initial efforts. In early 2013, there will be another 2 day learning event to incorporate and share the experience of implementation, and to finalize the Sri Lankan versions of the PFA Guide.

## **Content to be covered in the 4 day Training of PFA Trainers programme**

- The scientific evidence base and expert support for PFA
- PFA guide content
- Socio-cultural considerations for PFA training and application in Sri Lanka
- Delivery of training and pedagogical approaches
- Practical community-based application of training received

## **Profile of participants:** *Successful applicants will have the following characteristics:*

- Track record of training on a) MHPSS, b) emergency response, c) disaster-preparedness / disaster management related topics
- Experience as crisis responder, or psychosocial support provider
- Credible current (past 12 months) and future role as trainer
- Good fit between current/future training role and delivery of PFA content
- Access to an adequate number of potential participants for future PFA training (ie. first responders, volunteer groups, emergency services personnel, health or education workers, psychosocial personnel, etc.).

## **Commitment:**

### From GPG:

- Effective, practical training on PFA by experienced Sri Lankan and international trainers.
- Support and mentoring during practical implementation period
- Access to online community of Sri Lankan and international PFA trainers beyond training period
- Certification of training received, following successful completion of training process

### From the participant/organization:

- Candidate/s will commit to participate in all steps of the training process
- The respective organizations provide candidates with opportunities to train staff and others in PFA
- Candidates will take responsibility for their own application of the training received and reflective learning.
- The candidate / organization will meet the estimated Rs. 4000 costs for accommodation and food during the training; and will cover the cost of transport to and from training venue. Subsidies may be available to successful applicants who are unable to pay these costs, on request.

## **Application procedure**

- **The deadline for receipt of applications is Friday 18th May 2012.** Applications will be processed on a 'rolling' basis, so please apply soon to avoid disappointment.
- Apply by sending the completed application form (attached) to [gayathri@goodpracticegroup.org](mailto:gayathri@goodpracticegroup.org) or by mail to Gayathri Jayasooriya, The Good Practice Group, 160 1/1 Kirulapone Avenue, Colombo 05.

## **For Further Information**

Contact Gayathri Jayasooriya via email or telephone (0777574826)

[www.goodpracticegroup.org](http://www.goodpracticegroup.org)

## **Trainers' Biographies**

### **Evangeline Ekanayake (S)**

Evangeline Ekanayake, MSc is a psychologist with experience of work in emergencies and diverse community settings. She has worked as a technical advisor and specialist in the area of psychosocial care for the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, and local and international non-government organizations. Ms. Ekanayake has a special interest in services for people affected by war, migrants and young people. She has worked as a therapist in a mental health community in the UK, and managed and provided counselling services for the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh. She taught at the University of Peradeniya, and is a visiting lecturer at the University of Colombo.

### **Nilanga Abeysinghe (S)**

Nilanga Abeysinghe, MSc is a psychologist with experience of work within the mental health and humanitarian sector in Sri Lanka. He is currently programme officer for mental health at Voluntary Services Overseas. Mr. Abeysinghe is also a visiting lecturer on the Masters and Post-Graduate Diploma programmes in Counselling and Psychosocial Support at the University of Colombo. He has taught on counselling courses for the University of Peradeniya and the Nivahana Society / Kandy Teaching Hospital. Mr. Abeysinghe has also been involved in research and analysis, including the evaluation of mental health and community psychosocial services. For several years, he has been the Sinhala language translator for the international journal *Intervention*.

### **Felician Francis (T)**

Felician Francis, BPh is a psychosocial practitioner with experience in the fields of development, humanitarian and voluntary social work for over 10 years. He has experience in working with children, youth and migrant workers on behalf of voluntary groups, faith-based organisations, inter-agency forums and government collaborative initiatives. Mr. Francis's interests and work have been in relation to facilitation, coordination, networking, training and supervision, research, evaluation and teaching related to psychosocial work in Sri Lanka's post-emergency contexts. He was until recently a visiting lecturer in relation to psychosocial care at the Centre for Social Research & Development, Eastern University. He is a founding Associate of The Good Practice Group. Mr. Francis has been a volunteer with the YMCA for over 10 years, and is currently President of the National Council of the YMCAs of Sri Lanka.

### **Ananda Galappatti (T)**

Ananda Galappatti, MSc is a medical anthropologist and a practitioner in the field of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in situations of conflict, disaster and poverty. His work in this field over the past 15 years has been mostly in Sri Lanka, supporting government, non-government and UN agencies in the provision of MHPSS emergency responses, care and protection of vulnerable children, responses to gender-based violence, and services for people with serious mental illness. Mr. Galappatti is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Intervention* and is a co-founding Steward of the global MHPSS Network ([www.mhpss.net](http://www.mhpss.net)). He is an affiliated fellow of the Social Policy Analysis & Research Centre (SPARC) at the University of Colombo, and also a visiting lecturer at the Faculty of Graduate Studies there. He is also currently a co-chair of the MHPSS Working Group at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, and serves as the honorary Director for Strategy at The Good Practice Group.

### **Leslie Snider (T)**

Leslie Snider, MD, MPH is a psychiatrist with international experience in psychosocial programs and research. She has worked with numerous international agencies (UN and NGO) in psychosocial support to vulnerable children and families impacted by disasters, conflict, exploitation, HIV/AIDS and poverty in Africa, the Balkans, South and Central Asia, the Middle East, South America and USA. Dr. Snider was a faculty member at the International Health Department of Tulane Public Health School, where she directed Mental Health and Medical Anthropology studies for eight years, She is currently Senior Programme Advisor for War Trauma Foundation, Netherlands. She is lead author of the WHO publication, *Psychological First Aid: Guide for Field Workers* (WHO, WTF, WVI 2011) and an international trainer in PFA.