

Trauma Support Ukraine (TSU) Supporting Ukrainian psychologists and teachers during the first year of the war

REPORT

Date : April 7th, 2023
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Time frame project : 4 March 2022 until 14 April 2023
Location : Online
Participants : Ukrainian psychologists, mental health professionals and teachers



Background

A few days after the start of the war in Ukraine, a number of psychologists asked for help and support. To meet their needs, Sounds of Change immediately started a collaboration with two partner organizations: Trauma International and Safe & Sound. Together we have a broad expertise in the field of trauma-sensitive support in acute crisis situations and the use of art, movement and music with trauma.

Trauma Support Ukraine (TSU) started its first webinar for Ukrainian psychologists, mental health professionals and educators on March 4 and has since delivered 65 webinars in the past 13 months.

“The support of coaches is unsurpassed. Atmosphere of humanity and kindness from strangers. I have never felt this way in training. Impressed by the use of music before the webinar. Such a simple element, but with what care for the listeners. We do not sit staring at the screen while everyone gathers, but enjoy the art. Bravo!”
(Webinar participant)

We received wonderful responses to our webinars through surveys. More quotes from participants can be found on page 7. These responses show the immediate impact of TSU’s ongoing webinars, which provide wartime support to Ukrainian professionals living and working in war-torn Ukraine. Indirectly, through these webinars we have reached many children, young adults and adults, by training the specialists who support them.

Output

Since the first webinar on March 4, we have hosted a total of 65 webinars for these psychologists, mental health professionals and educators.

(March 4, 2022 - April 14, 2023)

In 2022, TSU provided 55 webinars:

- 37 weekly webinars (psychologists)
- 8 (bi) weekly webinars (psychologists)
- 5 weekly webinars (teachers)
- 5 specialized webinars

In 2023, TSU provided 10 webinars (till April 7th)

- 5 bi-weekly webinars (psychologists)
- 4 specialized webinars
- An online New Year's concert on January 13, 2023
- 3 webinars are planned in April and May

**specialized webinars are extended webinars with a specific focus*

We will continue to deliver webinars for as long as the war lasts.

Medair supported us financially for the first year. We are currently looking for new financing.



Executive summary / timeline

24 February 2022 - Russian invasion in Ukraine



4 March 2022

Trauma Support Ukraine (TSU) starts with first webinar on trauma-sensitive support in acute and ongoing trauma for mental health professionals and psychologists

37

Between 4 March and 1 September 2022 TSU successfully provides 37 webinars to Ukrainian psychologists and mental health professionals who are (mainly) still living and working in Ukraine.

8 July 2022

TSU offered an online concert to all Ukrainian psychologists and mental health professionals, as a little "gift" from TSU to them. Lucas, Sander and the Ukrainian singer Maryana Golovchenko (resident of Amsterdam) provided this concert, filled with Ukrainian traditional and new songs.



280

1 September 2022

The total amount of professionals TSU has reached directly with this project

18

Between 1 September and 31 December 2022 TSU has provided a total of 13 webinars on trauma-sensitive support



28 September 2022

Starting September 2022 Trauma Support Ukraine organized 4 bi-weekly webinars for Ukrainian teachers. Because of the lack of attendance TSU decided to put these webinars temporarily on hold.

31 December 2022

The total amount of professionals TSU has reached directly with this project goes up to

420



13 January 2023

TSU offered an online New Years concert to all Ukrainian psychologists and mental health professionals. Lucas, Sander, Ukrainian singers Maryana Golovchenko and Oleksandra Lenyshyn and pianist Brian Fieldhouse provided this concert, filled with Ukrainian traditional and new songs.



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Between 1 January and 14 April 2024 TSU has provided a total of 9 webinars on trauma-sensitive support

24 February 2023 - a year has passed since the Russian invasion in Ukraine



May 2023

TSU will offer a concert to all Ukrainian psychologists and mental health professionals.



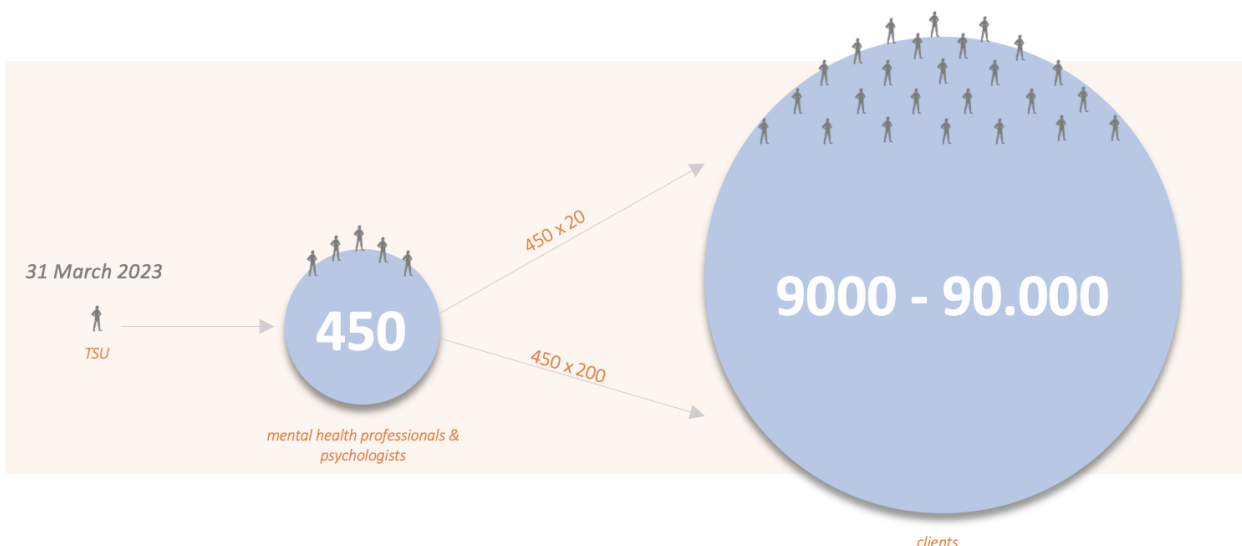
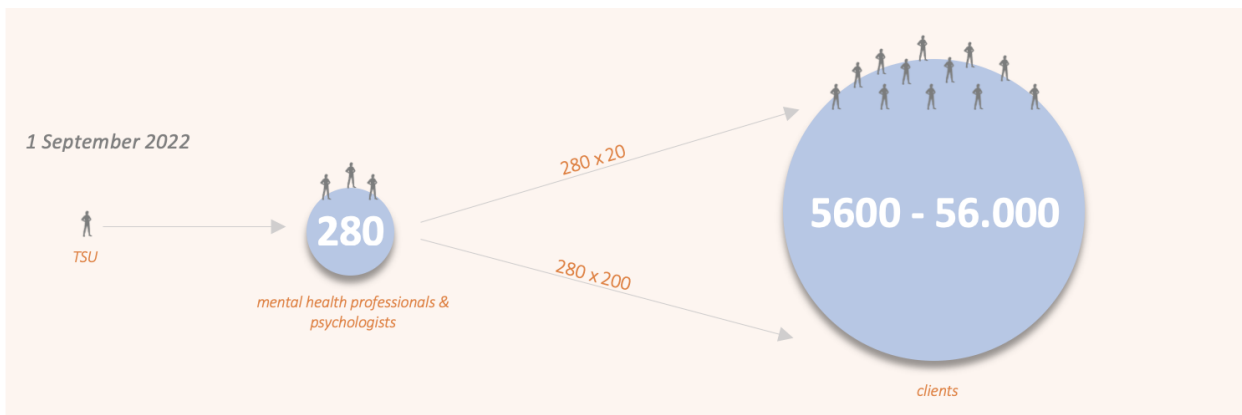
PARTICIPANTS LOCATION AND RANGE

Participants are based throughout Ukraine and abroad.



RANGE

The participants in our webinars indicate that they use the tools and knowledge from the webinars in their own work with 2 - 50 people, some even reaching a population of 100 - 400 people each. From this we can extrapolate that thousands of people have indirectly benefited from the webinars.



Survey

In December last year we sent out a survey to the participants of our webinars, a total of 48 participants responded. These respondents are located throughout Ukraine and abroad. Some live and work in Kiev, Lviv, Odessa and Kharkiv; others in Chernobyl, Vinnytsia, Lutsk, Poltava, Sumy, Kremenchuk and Zolochiv. Three participants are currently based abroad in the Netherlands, Poland and Germany.

- More than half of the respondents indicate with a 10 the relevance of the webinars for their own self-care.
- The relevance of the webinars to their work is rated as very good.
- Balance between theory and practice, activities, techniques and exercises in the webinars is good.

38% of people who completed the survey noted that learning about how to use protocols (for example: the protocol for working with traumatic grief) is most important, as they currently lack such protocols in their work. These protocols enable them to quickly navigate and respond to crisis relief efforts.

Many webinar participants shared that they were able to implement what they learned for their own self-care and in their work with clients and/or others in their communities. They apply the information immediately and can use it in every session when working with traumatized people.

We mainly define the topics of the (bi)weekly webinars together with the participants themselves, as guidance. We ask them about their questions and challenges, to provide them with training tailored to their needs and tools for their daily situations and experiences.

This was highly appreciated by the participants. They appreciate having a safe space in which to share their experiences and examples, their struggles and questions, doubts and problems, as well as their successes. So that other professionals can think along with them and learn together. New guidance questions arise from these guidance webinars, which we use as topics for subsequent webinars.

Topics of the (bi)weekly webinars

- co-regulation
- how to regulate panic attacks
- bilateral stimulation
- psycho-education
- breathing exercises
- the use of music and art in working with acute trauma
- checking methods and scores
- working with hate, anger and sadness
- working with perpetrators
- selfcare

Topics of the specialized webinars

- psycho-education using psycho education on acute trauma
- stress-reactions
- breathing techniques, tapping, co-regulation and other practical interventions
- stop-dissociation and reorientation techniques
- music and art in trauma interventions
- solution focused approach
- war trauma covering topics like torture, sexual violence and death
- working with feelings of (survivors)guilt and shame
- resource focused exercises
- different trauma-informed imagination exercises

All topics are related to trauma-sensitive working in wartime.

We have invited guest speakers with different expertise in the field of trauma: psychiatrist Dr. Lutz Besser, psychotrauma therapist Ulrike Held, psychologist and trainer Nadine Lyamouri and psychologist Barbara Pelkmann, among others.

RESULTS

The participants in the webinars were able to gain new knowledge in a very practical way and also gain new knowledge about a trauma-informed approach. This enables them to apply the tools in their work and community, with clients, children, students and for their own self-care. The survey respondents overwhelmingly indicate that the relevance of the webinars to their work and self-care is very high. The presentation and guidance of the trainers is also highly appreciated.

The total number of professionals TSU has reached with these webinars has passed 450. Most participants in our survey indicate that they have used the tools and knowledge from the webinars in their work with 2 - 50 people. Some say they reach larger groups, from 100 - 400 people. We can extrapolate from this that thousands of people indirectly benefited from the webinars.

Quotes from participants

"These meetings help me a lot to relieve tension and ease my well-being. I return to a resourceful state, I recover."

"These webinars really put my focus on self-care. The opportunity to try art therapy exercises on yourself and the support of the presenters are very helpful."

*"I feel the need for support and a trusting atmosphere. It is lonely to be in a foreign country. **The webinars and the support of the trainers are very important and dear to me.**"*

*"I feel **"I constantly use psychoeducation about mental health in simple symbols. I use breathing in all exercises. I even apply musical settings, although I can't play anything."***

*"**Interactivity** allows you to try out **practices** and feel their effect."*

"Almost every time after the webinar, I use the exercises that were presented."

*"The support of coaches is unsurpassed. **Atmosphere of humanity and kindness** from strangers. I have never felt this way in training."*

*"The combination of different techniques and the **presence of creativity and music** is very useful for me."*

*"Thank for all you help! Its really needed to all our people. **After 9 -12 months we wait for a big wave of PTSD** because end of war. This knowledge is like a brilliant to me!*