

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE
IN THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM
USAID COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT EDG-A-00-02-00030-00**

QUARTERLY REPORT FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER 2005

1. General Framework

During the quarter under review (July-September 2005), the procedural formalities were carried out for cases to be included as part of the project, to advance toward the goal set. Constant communication was also maintained with the project's network-team of specialist professionals, both to provide psychological support to the next cases and expand the specialized articles, the first versions of which were presented in March 2005.

The specialized section was due to be launched in December 2005 but this virtual space became part of the activity "Dissemination of the project and specialized information via institutional mechanisms" under the amendment approved in September 2005 (which constitutes a continuation and an expansion of the current project and for which there is a separate work plan).

In September 2005, USAID also granted an extension to the current project, which was initially set to conclude in September 2005. As a result, the final outputs (two publications - one book systematizing the experience of the project and another containing psychological contributions to the Inter-American System-, the final report to the protection bodies and the definitive version of the manual for providing psychological support to torture victims) were rescheduled for 2006. This is why, although they were programmed in the schedule of activities for 2005, there is no reference to their implementation in the report for July-September 2005.

No activities were carried out during this quarter to sensitize the Inter-American System, nor did the protection bodies hold hearings for cases included in the project. Therefore, no comprehensive psychological support was provided to torture victims. Nor was the directory of organizations updated, since, as already mentioned, the entire specialized section will be a component of the new phase of the project (amendment). No training activities for the staff of CEJIL were planned.

An up-to-date schedule of activities is attached.

2. Annual Goals

2.1. To consolidate and disseminate a methodology for providing comprehensive psychological support to victims of torture whose cases are being considered by the bodies of the Inter-American System

2.2. To influence the development of the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the recommendations and resolutions of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, with regard to psychosocial reparations in cases involving torture

3. Implementation of the Project

3.1. Coordination of the Network-Team of Specialist Professionals

3.1.1. Description

The IIHR was in permanent contact with members of the network-team to field their questions about the articles that are being prepared, and encouraged information sharing among them. It also coordinated with Nieves Gómez and Graciela Guilis (members of the network-team) to finalize the arrangements for the psychological support they will be providing in two cases for which the Inter-American Commission has scheduled hearings in October 2005 (See activity: "Litigation of cases involving torture brought before the Inter-American System").

3.1.2. Method

The staff communicated electronically with the network-team members, mainly in relation to the preparation of the specialized articles for a book on psychosocial contributions to the Inter-American System. The IIHR encouraged the network-team to share information and experiences that would improve the specialized articles, which resulted in smooth communication among the team members.

3.1.3. Background / Rationale

Coordination and communication with the network-team is a key element in the project's implementation.

3.1.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR team is responsible for coordinating the work of the network-team of specialist professionals.

No visits were made to national USAID offices during this quarter.

3.1.5. Intermediate Steps

- Permanent communication with the network-team via the discussion list

3.1.6. Results or Outputs

- Coordination of the network-team
- Second, expanded and corrected version of specialized articles

3.1.7. Impact indicators

“The network-team is more knowledgeable about the methodology for providing comprehensive psychological support”

“The network-team is stronger”

“The network-team is producing and disseminating more knowledge”

“Stakeholders have greater access to the network-team’s theoretical-methodological contributions”

The network-team is better equipped to implement a psychological support methodology that integrates the legal aspects by having access to specialized documents containing systematized information about torture cases in the Inter-American System. Constant communication among the members of the network-team is also enabling them to improve the quality of their work by drawing on the experience and knowledge of their colleagues. This is one of the main advantages of creating a regional network of specialists to provide support for torture victims.

The publication that the network-team is preparing - a second, expanded and corrected version of it has already been received - will make it possible to disseminate widely the knowledge and experience acquired, and stakeholders will have access to the theoretical-methodological contributions produced during the implementation of the project.

Means of verification:

- Emails to individual members of the network-team

3.2. Litigation of cases involving torture brought before the Inter-American System

3.2.1. Description

Hearings granted by the Inter-American Commission

During the period under review (July-September 2005), the Inter-American Commission was asked to grant hearings in October 2005 for the cases *FEBEM SP vs. Brazil* and *Las Dos Erres vs. Guatemala*. Psychologists Paulo Endo and Graciela Guilis were assigned to provide psychological support to the victims in the first case and Nieves Gómez in the second.

Decisions of the Inter-American System

The Inter-American Court issued judgments in several cases linked to the project. In the *Case of the Mapiripán Massacre v. Colombia*, it found that the rights violated included the right to personal integrity of 50 people, many of whom were children. The *Gutiérrez Soler v. Colombia* case included, in addition to violations of personal integrity protected by the American Convention on Human Rights, specific violations of the Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture.

3.2.2 Method

CEJIL decides which cases have reached the point where the Inter-American Commission can be asked to grant a hearing and meet the conditions for inclusion in the project. In consultation with the IIHR, the specialists of the network-team are assigned to take charge of the psychological support in the cases and the coordination with the legal team.

3.2.3. Background / Rationale

The number of cases involving torture included in the project has risen steadily since 2003, and the goal of 17 is now within sight. The issue has thus achieved a high profile with the protection bodies of the Inter-American System, making it possible to inform and sensitize them to the complexity of this problem.

3.2.4. Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

CEJIL's team of specialists is in charge of litigating the cases. It coordinates the provision of psychological support for each case with the IIHR.

3.2.5. Intermediate Steps

- Identify and study new cases to be included in the project
- Send requests for hearings to the Inter-American Commission

3.2.6. Results or Outputs

- Possibility that cases involving torture victims will be granted hearings before the Inter-American Commission

3.2.7. Impact Indicators

“Progress in the cases involving torture brought before the bodies of the Inter-American System”

“The bodies of the Inter-American System are devoting more attention to the issue”

Between July and September, CEJIL continued to prepare and try to include new cases in the project. The cases are progressing and the Inter-American System is thus dealing with more cases involving torture and forced disappearance.

Means of verification:

- Documents requesting hearings

3.3. Dissemination of Information about the Project

3.3.1 Description

In August 2005, the second versions of the specialized articles were received, incorporating recommendations made at the March 2005 meeting of the network-team (see activity: "Coordination of the network-team of specialist professionals").

The IIHR held its *Twenty-third Interdisciplinary Course in Human Rights*, on democracy, political rights and citizen participation, from 18 to 29 July 2005 in San Jose, Costa Rica. During the course, an activity was organized to discuss the programs and activities of the IIHR's Department of Civil Society Entities. The staff presented details of the project and the specialized section, and announced that the latter would soon be opened up to the public.

3.3.2 Method

The specialized articles will form part of a publication targeted at the Inter-American System, on psychological contributions. They are currently being edited and revised by the IIHR.

3.3.3 Background / Rationale

The objective of the discussion on the project during the Interdisciplinary Course was to disseminate information about what has been achieved so far.

The specialized publication on psychological contributions to the Inter-American System will provide a means of disseminating the knowledge generated by the project from an innovative perspective.

3.3.4 Institution(s) Responsible and Coordination

The IIHR team organized the discussion, during which information about the project was disseminated, and is in charge of preparing the specialized articles for publication.

3.3.5 Intermediate Steps

- Logistical organization of the discussion on torture
- Coordination with authors of the specialized articles

3.3.6 Results or Outputs

- Dissemination of information about the project among the participants in the Twenty-third Interdisciplinary Course in Human Rights
- Second version of the specialized articles

3.3.7 Impact indicators

"More people are knowledgeable about the psychological impact of torture and methodologies for assisting the victims"

More people know about and were sensitized to the work of the IIHR and CEJIL in this field following the activities organized to disseminate information about it.

Means of verification:

- List of participants in the discussion on the Department of Civil Society Entities
- Digital file of the specialized articles

4. Lessons Learned

The discussion whereby the people participating in the Twenty-third Interdisciplinary Course in Human Rights were given information about the project highlighted the importance of stepping up actions to disseminate the project. Representatives of a number of organizations in the hemisphere expressed great interest.

The staff can confirm that the specialized articles on psychosocial contributions to the Inter-American System will present an innovative and enriching perspective, disseminating the project's theoretical and methodological contributions.

The progress of the judicial procedures required to present cases before the Inter-American System shows that the project has consolidated the mechanisms for facilitating the inclusion of new torture cases among those considered by the protection bodies.

| ACTIVITIES | J A N | F E B | M A R | A P R | M A Y | J U N | J U L | A U G | S E P | O C T | N O V | D E C |
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| Rica) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Systematization contributions of meeting network-team | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation and production of publications | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activities carried out by CEJIL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Coordination of the supply of psychological support for the CEJIL team | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation of visits to the region | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Visits to the region | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation of reports on visits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Analysis of cases for which hearings could be requested | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation and presentation of requests for hearings before the Commission | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Follow-up to requests for hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Identification of the specialist to provide the support and preparation of his/her report | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation for hearings granted | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| ACTIVITIES | J A N | F E B | M A R | A P R | M A Y | J U N | J U L | A U G | S E P | O C T | N O V | D E C |
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| Hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Informal meetings with representatives of the Commission and the Court (Washington DC, USA) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implementation of follow-up to training for CEJIL team | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Follow-up to training for CEJIL team: preparation of training in 2006 and materials | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preparation and publication of materials | | | | | | | | | | | | |