



**INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
USAID COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT EDG-A-00-02-00030-00**

**SEMIANNUAL REPORT
JANUARY - JUNE 2007**

**PROJECT: SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE
(AMENDMENT)**

I. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

The substantive activities carried out during the reporting period mostly involved the training processes and the dissemination of specialized information about torture prevention and comprehensive support for victims.

In addition to these substantive activities, the project made progress with other activities whose results will be seen in the **second half of 2007**: the implementation of the psycho-legal methodology for providing support to victims and expert testimony, psychological support for victims of torture, research and documentation.

The 2007 Work Plan called for the interdisciplinary teams in **Guatemala, Mexico and El Salvador** to take part in the **Subregional Workshop for Mesoamerica**. However, the Guatemalan team had to pull out due to the sensitive security situation and the threats made against human rights protection organizations in Guatemala.

The **cinema forums due to be held in 10 countries in the hemisphere in June 2007** were postponed because the audiovisual materials were still being compiled. Although the IIHR now has a large selection of materials, the decision was taken to allow more time to put together a really balanced sample. This activity was reprogrammed for **November 2007**.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

ACTIVITIES	RESULTS	IMPACT INDICATORS
<p>Application of the psycho-legal methodology for providing support to victims and expert testimony</p> <p>Objective: Working with organizations representing victims in cases brought before the Inter-American System, to provide torture victims with comprehensive support by means of a psycho-legal methodology</p>	<p>During its 74th Period of Regular Sessions (22 January - 3 February 2007), the Inter-American Court heard the case of “Cantoral Huamaní and García Santa Cruz v. Peru,” holding public hearings on 23 and 24 January. The project supported the implementation of the psycho-legal methodology in this case. Specifically, Rosa Lía Chauca provided psychological support to three victims who were on hand to give evidence to the Court. Two work plans were also drawn up, for the cases of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Joe Castillo v. Venezuela”, with the Human Rights Vicariate of Venezuela, for the implementation of a psycho-legal strategy during the process leading up to the Court hearings. • “La Cantuta v. Peru,” with the Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos (APRODEH) of Peru, for the implementation of a psycho-legal follow-up strategy following the judgment issued by the Inter-American Court in November 2006. 	<p>“The legal and psychological interdisciplinary work involved in handling torture cases that are being processed by the protection bodies of the Inter-American System is better integrated”</p> <p>“More knowledge is available to enhance the quality of the comprehensive psychological support provided to torture victims whose cases are considered by the protection bodies of the Inter-American System”</p> <p>Implementing a psycho-legal strategy in regard to three cases at different stages in the litigation process (before, during and after the hearings of the Court) will make it possible to gain a comprehensive overview of the entire process.</p> <p>These processes, promoted by the IHR to make use of the psycho-legal methodology created under the project, are fostering the integration of interdisciplinary work in aid of the victims. They are also enhancing the expertise that the teams of professionals need to possess to deal with torture cases and provide better support to victims.</p>

ACTIVITIES	RESULTS	IMPACT INDICATORS
<p>Training in the method of providing psychological support to victims of torture</p> <p>Objective: To provide psychological support to victims of torture who testify before the Inter-American Court</p>	<p>A heterogeneous group of 35 psychology professionals was set up that will receive training from the IIHR in how to provide support to torture victims involved in litigation. The training will begin on 27 July 2007, in San Jose, Costa Rica.</p> <p>Theoretical and methodological design of the training in the method of providing psychological support to victims of serious human rights violations during litigation processes.</p>	<p>“Increase in the capacity to provide psychological support to torture victims and their family members when they appear before the Inter-American Court”</p> <p>Originally, the intention was to train a group of 20 psychology professionals. However the response to the announcement made by the IIHR was so great that the project staff decided to increase the number to 35. After completing the training, in December 2007, the 35 psychology professionals will be better equipped to provide psychological support to torture victims and family members when they appear before the Inter-American Court, and in litigation processes at the national level.</p> <p>Another potential impact of the process is that the training program could be replicated in other countries where torture victims are actively seeking justice.</p>

ACTIVITIES	RESULTS	IMPACT INDICATORS
<p>Subregional workshops on method of providing comprehensive support to torture victims involved in litigation</p> <p>Objective: To foster the coordination of psycho-legal strategies for litigating cases at the national level that involve serious human rights violations</p>	<p>Subregional workshop involving 21 participants from El Salvador and Mexico held 22-25 May in Antigua Guatemala.</p> <p>10 interdisciplinary teams (21 people, 13 women and 8 men) from state-run and nongovernmental organizations trained in the use of a psycho-legal methodology that was evaluated and improved by a team of experts, in aid of torture victims involved in litigation.</p>	<p>“Institutions better equipped to propose and apply psycho-legal strategies in support of torture victims whose cases are the object of litigation”</p> <p>“Increased capacity for interdisciplinary coordination of comprehensive support for torture victims during the litigation of their cases”</p> <p>Training 21 representatives of civil society organizations and public institutions in the use of the psycho-legal methodology to litigate cases involving serious human rights violations enhances the institutional capacity for implementing this comprehensive approach on behalf of victims.</p>

ACTIVITIES	RESULTS	IMPACT INDICATORS
<p>National training workshops</p> <p>Objective: To train civil society and public organizations that provide psychosocial support, medical assistance and legal aid in the use of the psycho-legal methodology for supporting torture victims, to promote the victims' recovery and reintegration into society</p>	<p>Specialized workshop on comprehensive support for torture victims involved in litigation held in El Salvador, from 28 February - 2 March, with the participation of 40 people (25 women and 15 men).</p> <p>40 people, representing 10 NGOs and 9 government agencies, trained in the psycho-legal methodology for providing support to torture victims proposed by the project.</p> <p>Advantage was taken of the opportunity to hold a courtesy meeting with Jennifer Link, the head of the Democracy and Governance Office in USAID/El Salvador. At the meeting, the project officially informed Ms. Link of the USAID-sponsored workshop and asked her about the possibility of her office responding to civil society's requests for further training. Ms. Link said that human rights had not been established as a priority issue for the national offices.</p>	<p>“Organizations better equipped to provide comprehensive support to torture victims involved in litigation, using an interdisciplinary approach”</p> <p>The training provided by the IIHR to representatives of public institutions and civil society organizations in El Salvador enhanced their capacity to give comprehensive support to torture victims involved in litigation, using an interdisciplinary approach.</p> <p>The people who took part in the workshop were very interested in the proposed psycho-legal methodology presented by the IIHR, and requested more human rights training.</p> <p>Having learned about the jurisprudence of the Inter-American System dealing with reparations, the participants are equipped to provide follow-up to public policies related to this issue.</p>

ACTIVITIES	RESULTS	IMPACT INDICATORS
<p>Dissemination of the project and specialized information</p> <p>Objective: To use the IIHR's institutional mechanisms to disseminate specialized information about the prevention of torture and methodologies for providing support to victims, and information about the project and its accomplishments</p>	<p>The specialized section <i>Por una vida sin tortura</i> is updated continuously. It contains information related to truth, justice and reparations processes, the campaign for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture, and psychological support for victims of torture. It currently contains: 120 news items, details of 80 organizations involved in the prevention of torture and support for victims, 120 digital documents and 345 documents on rights protection.</p> <p>The self-taught course “Protection of the right to personal integrity and the prohibition of torture in the inter-American and Universal human rights protection systems” was uploaded to the Inter-American Virtual Classroom. Ninety people have so far signed up for the course.</p> <p>The user-friendly version of the jurisprudence of the Inter-American System related to torture cases and the book containing specialized articles targeted at the Inter-American System are both at the printers.</p> <p>The project coordinator and an assistant took part in the “First international congress on psychosocial work in relation to exhumations, forced disappearances and justice and truth processes,” held 20-23 February in Antigua Guatemala. The project was invited to take part in the event based on the experience it has acquired since 2002 in the area of psychosocial support for torture victims involved in litigation. Advantage was taken of the opportunity to disseminate information about the project and its main outputs.</p>	<p>“More specialized information disseminated about torture prevention and support for victims”</p> <p>“Jurisprudence of the Inter-American System dealing with reparations for torture victims disseminated more widely”</p> <p>The specialized section of the website, <i>Por una vida sin tortura</i>, is disseminating more widely specialized information about torture prevention and support for victims.</p> <p>The number of visitors to the specialized section rose by 50% in June (up from an average of 220 per month to 330) and, based on the report on the first ten days of July, after the section had been included in the Institute's portal, the upward trend looks set to continue. During those ten days, the number of visitors was 207. Over a full month, that would make for a total of 621 people - 88% more than in June and 182% more than in the previous months.</p> <p>The self-taught course available on the website has the potential to reach a large audience. It will make people interested in torture prevention more knowledgeable about international protection mechanisms.</p> <p>The user-friendly version of the jurisprudence of the Inter-American System related to torture cases will help disseminate it more widely, especially with regard to reparations for torture victims.</p>

ACTIVITIES	RESULTS	IMPACT INDICATORS
<p>Research and documentation</p> <p>Objective: To help enhance the quality of the psychological support that torture victims receive by documenting experiences involving comprehensive support</p>	<p>Selection and further development of 21 methodologies for providing psychological support to victims of torture and other serious human rights violations. The documents include the opinions of victims who received support under each type of methodology. The experiences described come from organizations in 13 countries in the Americas. They are being prepared for uploading to the project Web page.</p> <p>The project prepared the final proposal and format of a manual on the process of providing psychological support in litigation involving torture victims.</p>	<p>“Greater possibilities of improving the quality of the psychological support provided to torture victims, through the dissemination of useful experiences”</p> <p>The documents that the project will make available to the professionals who provide support to torture victims will help improve the quality of the comprehensive support they offer.</p>

PROJECT: SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE (AMENDMENT)
SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES FOR JANUARY-DECEMBER 2007, UPDATED IN JULY 2007

ACTIVITIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Application of the psycho-legal methodology for providing support to victims and expert testimony												
Contact NGOs that represent victims and identify cases												
Apply psycho-legal strategy in three cases involving torture												
Psychological support for torture victims												
Select the people for the support group												
Train the support group												
Subregional workshops on comprehensive support for torture victims involved in litigation												
Contact and coordinate with logistical counterpart and academic counterparts for the Mesoamerican subregional workshop												
Select the team for the Mesoamerican subregional workshop												
Hold Mesoamerican subregional workshop												
Contact and coordinate with logistical counterpart and academic counterparts for the South American subregional workshop												
Select the team for the South American subregional workshop												
Hold South American subregional workshop												
National training workshops												
Disseminate proposal and identify NGOs that will participate in national workshop in El Salvador												
Invite NGOs to national workshop in El Salvador.												
Make logistical and academic preparations for national workshop in El Salvador.												

ACTIVITIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
National workshop in El Salvador												
Disseminate proposal and identify NGOs that will participate in the national workshops in Uruguay and Paraguay												
Invite NGOs to take part in national workshops in Uruguay and Paraguay												
Make logistical and academic preparations for national workshops in Uruguay and Paraguay												
Hold national workshops in Uruguay and Paraguay												
Strategy for sensitizing civil society												
Provide follow-up to the preparation of the cinema-forum package and the users' manual												
Contact counterparts and experts who will participate in the cinema-forums												
Cinema-forums in 10 countries												
Dissemination of the project and specialized information												
Research and incorporate specialized materials into the section of the website												
Incorporate the self-taught course into the specialized section												
Research and documentation												
Select 20 proposals for the systematization of experiences involving support for torture victims												
Prepare, review, edit and publish experiences of providing support to torture victims on the Web page												
Present publications during a period of sessions of the Inter-American Commission												
Systematize results of the project and edit the final publication under the Amendment												
Send final publication to the printers												
Systematize contributions for a manual on the process of providing psychological support and produce the publication												

ACTIVITIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Revise, edit and publish the user-friendly version of the jurisprudence of the Inter-American System												
Activities pending from first phase of the project (2002-2006)												
Visit to Washington DC (meetings with USAID, Inter-American Commission, CEJIL)												
Revise, edit and publish book of specialized articles for the Inter-American System												
Revise, edit and send for printing final IIHR-CEJIL joint publication												
Prepare expert testimony for the cases of Febem S.P. v. Brazil and Marcelino Gómez v. Paraguay												