



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

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE IN THE
INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM**

**PROJECT: PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE FOR TORTURE VICTIMS IN THE INTER-AMERICAN
SYSTEM**

1. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

The main activity during this period was the meeting of professionals from the team-network, held in San José from August 2–4, 2003. By meeting together, members formed a more consolidated team, a process that had begun this year, and suggested strategic lines to guide the methodological design for comprehensive psychological care of torture victims.

In September 2003, the IIHR set up an electronic discussion list for the team-network. Through this medium, the team is able to further its process of consolidation and strengthen the methodological strategy.

Also under consideration is the design of a specialized section for litigation of new torture cases under the Inter-American system and for training CEJIL staff.

No torture cases were under litigation during this period, and therefore, no victims received psychological care. During its two sessions (July and September 2003), the Court granted no hearings for new cases, and the Commission will hold its second regular session in October 2003.

The project moved ahead in areas of inter-institutional coordination through meetings between the IIHR and CEJIL coordinating teams. These meetings took place prior to the gathering of the team-network and the September 22nd meeting, both in Costa Rica. In all these meetings, discussion revolved around project management under the current budget and the 2004 budget, as well as the plan of action for 2004.

To give the project greater visibility, the 2003 plan of action calls for a specialized section to be added to the IIHR web site on the specific subject of torture, publication of the CEJIL newsletter, and introduction of the self-taught Internet course. Despite efforts made so far, both CEJIL and the IIHR expect to transfer most of these publicity activities to the 2004 plan of action. Implementation of the planned activities started very slowly in the first half of the year because USAID did not give its approval of the plan of action until May 23, 2003. As a result, none of the scheduled actions was undertaken during the quarter under report.

2. ANNUAL GOALS

1. Create a team-network of professionals specialized in comprehensive psychological care for torture victims taking their cases before the protection bodies of the Inter-American System.
2. Design a methodology for providing comprehensive psychological care to victims of torture who take their cases before the protection agencies of the Inter-American System.
3. Guide the Inter-American Commission and Court in developing case law for psychosocial reparations.

3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

3.1. Setting up a team-network of specialized professionals

3.1.1 Description

The team-network will design, apply and validate the methodology for comprehensive psychological care of torture victims. It consists of professionals with lengthy specialized experience in treating torture victims, most of whom are members of well-known organizations for the defense of human rights and care of victims. The members, as listed in the January-June 2003 six-month report, are:

Jorge Enrique Buitrago (AVRE, Colombia), Ana Deutsch (PTV, USA), Nieves Gómez (ECAP, Guatemala), Graciela Guilis (CELS, Argentina), María Isabel Castillo (ILAS, Chile), Pilar Raffo (CAPS, Peru), Carlos Portillo (ATYHA, Paraguay), Alicia Neuburger (independent expert, Costa Rica), Cristina Botinelli (independent expert, Mexico) and Debora Munczek (independent expert, USA).

In July 2003, project staff maintained close contact with the team-network in preparation for the meeting scheduled for August 2–4, 2003 in San José, Costa Rica. This meeting consolidated the formation of the team-network and developed strategies for maintaining communication, exchanging information and coordinating actions. The main strategy, which went into operation in September 2003, was the electronic discussion list that keeps the members of the team-network in close communication with one another. The project also fosters individual contact with team members, both electronically and by telephone, when necessary.

3.1.2 Method

The team was selected at the beginning of this year, and telephone and electronic contact with the members has been ongoing.

In September 2003, a closed electronic discussion list was designed and set up with the participation of 16 members of the team-network and the IIHR and CEJIL technical teams responsible for the project. The list is moderated by the IIHR project assistant; and three to five messages are posted every week.

3.1.3 Background / justification

The final goal of the project is to provide comprehensive psychological care for torture victims. This will be done by consolidating a team-network of professionals with solid training and broad

experience in the field of human rights, from the psychosocial perspective. The team-network will be responsible for providing comprehensive psychological care, according to the model proposed by the IIHR (from the experience of the first two cases of the project in the **Sánchez and the Bulacio case**) and a preliminary study held in 2002.

It is critically important to create and consolidate this team-network so that professionals involved in cases under the project can use a coordinated strategy of intervention based on the proposed methodology. As part of a team, they will be able to share their experiences, enrich their work, and provide torture victims with better-quality psychological care.

3.1.4 Lead organizations and coordination

The IIHR is responsible for coordinating the project team-network, planning its actions and lending strategic orientation. It also moderates and guides the discussion list.

3.1.5 Intermediate steps

- Set up team-network.
- Maintain telephone and electronic contact with members of the team-network.
- Create the discussion list.
- Convene the meeting for August 2003.
- Create a working agenda for the meeting in August 2003.

3.1.6 Results or products

- Agreements from the August 2003 meeting.
- Strategies for communication and exchange within the team-network.
- Strategic lines for methodological design of comprehensive psychological care for torture victims.
- Operation of the electronic discussion list.
- Consolidation of the team-network of specialized professionals.

3.1.7 Impact indicators

Specialized professionals with improved skills for comprehensive psychological care of torture victims in the Inter-American System.

A growing pool of methodological experience among specialized professionals on the team-network.

A consolidated regional network of specialists and organizations able to provide support for torture victims.

The project has been consolidating the regional network of specialists and organizations able to provide support for torture victims whose cases come before the Inter-American System. The meeting in August 2003 that brought together individual members of the team-network and the IIHR and CEJIL technical teams, followed up by discussions on the electronic list, started the process of improving professional specialized skills for treating the types of cases targeted by the project. Methodological experiences described by team members were also documented.

3.1.8 Verification

- List of specialized professionals participating on the team-network.

- Resumes of specialized professionals who are members of the team-network.
- Books and articles written by specialized professionals on the team-network.
- Messages posted to the discussion list.
- Proceedings and agreements of the August 2003 meeting.

3.2 Training and support for CEJIL staff

3.2.1 Description

The project first contacted Ana Deutsch, a member of the team-network, in September 2003 and asked her to lend her professional support by working closely with the IIHR technical team. Their task was to design and carry out a training program to help CEJIL staff understand and better manage the psychosocial condition of torture victims. This training process will begin in October 2003, with follow-up in 2004.

3.2.2 Method

During the quarter under report, general methodological guidelines were drafted and are currently under discussion. They will provide the centerpiece for the workshop in October 2003.

The Executive Director of CEJIL shared materials from the meeting of the team-network with the entire staff. She urged them to read the documents as part of their regular job duties, and to take part in group discussion of the materials enlightened by their own concrete working experiences.

A memorandum was drafted and circulated internally, describing specific project characteristics and offering specialized psychological support for the staff. It will be introduced in a meeting that will coincide with the regular session of the Inter-American Commission in October 2003.

3.2.3 Background / justification

CEJIL representatives played a very useful role in the meeting of the team-network of specialists. They shared the perceptions that this institution has acquired during its 10 years of working with the Inter-American System. They appreciated the opportunity to make direct contact with the specialists and progressed to begin developing the training proposal for the staff.

With the ideas it had picked up in the meeting, CEJIL concluded that the in-house training proposal should be understood as a process and not as a one-time activity in a single isolated event. To begin with, the workshop scheduled would be replaced with two workshops during 2003.

This training for CEJIL, the institution that processes 90% of all litigious cases before the System, will bring great benefit for torture victims.

3.2.4 Lead organizations and coordination

The CEJIL technical team is responsible for selecting and contacting specialists on the team-network and inviting them to participate in training the staff of legal professionals. They will report to the IIHR on their choice of training professionals.

3.2.5 Intermediate steps

- Select and contact a professional to give the training.

- Draft the memo for CEJIL staff.
- Distribute materials to be studied by CEJIL staff.

3.2.6 Results or products

- No concrete products have been achieved yet, but results will be available following the October 2003 workshop.

3.2.7 Impact indicators

Improved ability by the CEJIL team for handling psychological factors in cases of torture.

Greater visibility for this issue among the entities of the Inter-American System.

The impact indicator has not yet been achieved because training will take place subsequent to the report period (in October 2003).

3.3 Litigation of torture cases before the Inter-American System

3.3.1 Description

One of the activities called for in the 2003 plan of action is to prepare cases that may have the potential for inclusion in the project. From August 27 through September 3, 2003, attorney María Clara Galvis was in Lima, Perú to begin preparations for the **La Cantuta** case currently working its way through the final stages of the process with the Inter-American Commission.

In the second half of August 2003, project staff identified several cases that seemed likely to come before the Inter-American Commission, so as to set higher priorities on these applications. The resulting list was submitted to the Inter-American Commission from August 21-25, 2003. CEJIL then began monitoring their progress, preparing itself to raise awareness on the Commission as to the critical role of these hearings for the work of the project.

On September 18, 2003 CEJIL learned that the Commission had set October 14, 2003 for a hearing on **Wagner dos Santos vs. Brazil**, one of the pending cases that qualify for project attention. The notification immediately activated various measures to introduce the case into the project. CEJIL staffers made contact with the victim, the petitioning attorneys, and psychology professionals, who have maintained contact with Wagner. They also contacted the IHR to explain specific details of this case and assign a specialist from the team-network.

3.3.2 Method

The **La Cantuta** case has major implications for the respondent State (Perú). It is emblematic of human rights violations committed under direct orders of former President Alberto Fujimori and his advisor Vladimiro Montesinos, and carried out by the "Colina" Group, a division of the National Intelligence System (SIN for its Spanish acronym).

During the mission to Perú, meetings were held with the co-petitioners, human rights organizations, specialists from the *Centro de Atención Psicosocial*, and family members of victims. Project staff also accompanied family members to receive case reports from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC for its Spanish acronym). The project coordinated with the *Centro de Atención Psicosocial* and specialist Pilar Raffo, a member of the project team-network, for psychological assistance with this potential project case.

Another project goal for 2003 was to work with three emblematic torture cases from countries of the region, requesting hearings from the human rights protection agencies of the Inter-American System. The hearings were requested under established deadlines to be considered in the regular session of the Inter-American Commission in October 2003.

3.3.3 Background / justification

It is important to begin exposing the impact that torture experiences have on victims, within the framework of the Inter-American System. This will draw attention to the great complexity of the phenomenon and lead the system's human rights bodies to begin developing appropriate responses. If CEJIL litigates these cases more appropriately, backed by new comprehensive treatment approaches promoted by the IIHR, the Commission and the Court will begin to develop more progressive recommendations and case law in torture cases.

3.3.4 Lead organizations and coordination

CEJIL technical team. Coordination with the IIHR.

3.3.5 Intermediate steps

- Organize the CEJIL mission to Perú.
- Submit requests for hearings by the Inter-American Commission, and follow up on them.
- Logistical and legal coordination for litigation of the Wagner dos Santos case.

3.3.6 Results or products

- Mission to Perú to coordinate the **La Cantuta** case.
- Approval of a hearing on the **Wagner dos Santos case against Brazil**.

3.3.7 Impact indicators

Increase in the number of torture cases coming before the bodies of the Inter-American System.

By granting a hearing on the **Wagner dos Santos case**, the Commission brought the number of cases scheduled for hearings in 2003 to three, the goal for the year. This marks an increase in the number of torture cases brought before the System. In its 23 years of operation, the Court has handled or is handling 44 contentious cases, of which 20 alleged components of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. This averages out to at least one torture case per year, so that the project is in fact doubling current figures.

3.3.8 Verification

- Travel report on the mission to Perú. August 2003.
- Notification of hearing by the Inter-American Commission of the **Wagner dos Santos case**: September 18, 2003.

3.4 Working meeting of specialized professionals

3.4.1 Description

The specialized professional members of the project team-network met together in San José, Costa Rica from August 2–4, 2003. IIHR representatives in the meeting were Gilda Pacheco,

director of the Civil Society Department and project coordinator; Maylin Cordero, project assistant; and Víctor Rodríguez, consulting attorney for the project technical team, in charge of logistical and academic support. Present for CEJIL were Viviana Krsticevic, Executive Director, and Juan Carlos Gutiérrez, director of the program for Central America and Mexico. Also present was USAID Officer Maria Barron, and 10 psychology specialists from the team-network.

The purpose of the meeting was to set out strategic lines for implementing a comprehensive program for torture victims who have cases pending before the human rights protection bodies of the Inter-American System. The meeting also served to consolidate the team-network of specialists and discuss strategies for coordinating the team.

A plenary session was held on the second day to review the CEJIL presentation on difficulties and expectations for providing legal services to torture victims. Legal professionals from the CEJIL office in Costa Rica were invited to join the session to facilitate discussion with members of the team-network and enrich both the psychological and legal perspectives.

3.4.2 Method

In July 2003, project staff prepared an information sheet for the meeting of the team-network. They sent out invitations to the meeting via e-mail and fax, and made logistical preparations for lodging, air and land transport, and per diem for people attending the meeting (see Appendix: Information Sheet).

The meeting schedule was planned, an agenda was outlined according to objectives set in advance, and a methodology was designed for the meeting. A participatory approach seemed most likely to encourage an exchange of know-how and experiences among participants, and would include formal talks, plenary sessions and working groups. Lecture-style presentations in the plenary session were supported with graphic resources like *Power Point* to facilitate understanding of the concepts and clarify the main points. Following each presentation, time was scheduled for questions and comments, giving participants an opportunity to discuss the topics and exchange opinions.

The IIHR produced three basic documents that were presented and discussed in the meeting:

- A legal study of psychological reports submitted to the Inter-American Court in cases heard since the Court first began operations in 1980 through 2002 inclusive, especially those involving torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. The study covers: details of reparations granted for torture victims or their family members, classifying damages according to Inter-American case law; the impact these reparations had or should have had on addressing the merits of the cases, above and beyond merely quantifying psychological damage to calculate compensation for victims or their families; how the Inter-American Court used psychological reports as a tool for its decisions in torture cases; the use of psychological reports as supporting evidence for determining the admissibility of torture cases; and recommendations for the Inter-American Commission and Court to make better use of psychological reports as evidence for deciding on the merits of cases.
- An analysis of the psychosocial content of expert psychological reports submitted in various cases heard by the Inter-American Court since 1980, when it began operations, through 2002 inclusive, involving cases of torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. The analysis focuses on: the emphasis given by the expert witness; conceptual theoretical approach; comparison of different types of expert witness; comments about cross-examination; importance of emphasizing compensatory,

subjective and social implications of mechanisms such as the Commission and the Court; methodology and strategies of approach; relationship between expert testimony and judgment on reparations; and reactions of the judges to psychological expert witnesses.

- Psychological analysis of the judgment in the **María Elena Loayza Tamayo** case, stressing the importance of a combined legal and psychological approach. This case was selected as emblematic because the victim is still alive, and because of the types of considerations and reparations ordered in the judgment.

The meeting included an expository presentation on the meaning of the project, conceptual relationships and case law, the proposed comprehensive approach to torture victims, and unmet challenges.

As agreed in advance, CEJIL prepared two presentations for the meeting:

- The critical route by which alleged human rights violations gain access to the Inter American protection system and become a “case;” and the implications of having entered the system. The presentation included an explanation of the different procedural stages of a case and the real and potential role of experts at each stage. The presentation was designed to provide specialists from the team-network with a basic understanding of the System and help them understand what it can mean for victims to take a case before the Inter-American System.
- The perspective of CEJIL, as an organization that provides free legal assistance, on the difficulties and expectations of victims and petitioners. The purpose of the presentation to the team-network was to identify the most common psychosocial problems encountered in litigating torture cases. It emphasized such matters as the difficulties of managing emotional issues of victims or their family members, especially during hearings, and to trigger discussion on the scope and significance of reparations granted as part of case litigation and the role of psychological expert witnesses as part of the legal strategy.

Participants received a compact disc containing information for use in working groups and to support specialized training of professionals on the team-network. The CD contains:

- Introduction to the project, information sheet, program and list of participants.
- Review and analysis of psychological testimonies given before the Inter-American Court during reparations hearings.
- Torture in the Inter-American System. Psychological expert witness as evidence.
- Analysis of **María Elena Loayza Tamayo vs. Perú**.
- CEJIL document for the meeting of specialized professionals on providing psychological services to torture victims.
- International instruments on torture in the United Nations System and the Inter-American System (eight instruments in total) and the Protocol of Istanbul.

All sessions were fully taped and transcribed to provide material for documenting and drafting a methodological proposal for the project. The rapporteur’s notes will also be used for this purpose, along with the output of the team-network, including index cards with proposals, flip charts, and matrix charts produced by working groups.

In September 2003, project staff began the job of cataloguing methods for comprehensive care. They read session transcripts and reviewed the notes of the rapporteur. This process will be stepped up in October 2003.

At the end of each working day, the IIHR technical team responsible for academic leadership of the event met to evaluate the day's work and confirm or rethink methodological strategies and instructions for the following day to meet the objectives of the meeting.

As one of its most important contributions, the meeting outlined strategies for comprehensive psychological care of torture victims. It also recognized the need for stronger interdisciplinary work combining the legal and psychological perspectives. The result will be a more sound legal strategy for handling these cases, and at the same time, more supportive conditions to benefit victims whose petitions come before the protection agencies of the Inter-American System.

Participants in the meeting recognized the importance of creating a common language accessible to both legal professionals and psychological professionals to help both gain a better understanding of the situation of these victims. The final goal is to obtain comprehensive reparations that benefit not only direct victims, but also society as a whole.

3.4.3 Background / justification

Comprehensive psychological care requires a methodology that is well founded, carefully planned, and consistent with the specific conditions of the System. Because no such methodology exists as yet, the challenge of this project is to develop it, put it into practice and improve it through use. This is the task of the project's team-network of specialized professionals.

The team-network of specialized professionals needed to begin by learning about the experiences and contributions of CEJIL. As the organization with the most experience in representing victims in litigation before the Inter-American System, this center has much to share concerning the real problems of torture victims and petitioners working with the bodies of the Inter-American System.

The studies prepared by the IIHR were also instrumental. They covered such topics as the role of psychological expert witness in the Inter-American System, development of case law on reparations, and future challenges for a comprehensive approach to torture cases brought before the system. The studies sparked discussions that established a very important point of departure and general guidelines for the work that will take place in the future.

This meeting also equipped members of the team-network with more specialized knowledge of the specific themes addressed by the project. The result will be higher quality care for torture victims in the Inter-American System.

3.4.4 Lead organizations and coordination

The IIHR technical team provided logistical and academic leadership for the event. CEJIL gave presentations and took an active part in discussions. Maria Barron of USAID was also involved.

3.4.5 Intermediate steps

- Convene the meeting.
- Design the objectives, content and agenda.
- Prepare informational material.
- Plan and organize the logistics and operation of the meeting.
- Academic coordination of the meeting.
- Prepare base documents to be discussed in the meeting.
- Develop the methodology and guides for the work.

- Design content and select materials for the compact disc.
- Identify and collect academic qualifications expected of team-network members.

3.4.6 Results or products

As a result of the working meeting, specialized technical know-how is now available for use in cases that come before the human rights protection bodies of the Inter-American System. This know-how will be catalogued and processed to serve as a basis for preparing, implementing and gathering feedback on methodologies of psychological care for torture victims, and for developing psychological / legal strategies.

Additional products include: three basic documents produced by the IHR; two presentations by CEJIL and a compact disc with information and international instruments regarding torture.

3.4.7 Impact indicators

Progress in designing a methodology for comprehensive psychological care of torture victims and /or their family members.

Increased documentation on specialized topics involving care for torture victims in the Inter-American System.

The meeting marked a step forward in designing and consolidating a methodology for comprehensive psychological care of torture victims. It also allowed members of the team-network to develop more advanced professional skills for working with such cases.

The base documents prepared for the meeting comprise a rich new body of literature now available on this theme, and they will be useful for dissemination in the future. The documentation covers jurisprudence on torture cases and the role of psychological expert witness in hearings before the human rights protection bodies, as well as the difficulties of litigating such cases. Documents of this kind are a novelty in this field.

3.4.8 Verification

- Five base documents for analysis and discussion.
- List of participants in the meeting.
- Edited transcriptions of working sessions.
- Page of general information for the meeting.
- Rapporteur notes from the meeting.
- Compact disc with specialized materials on torture in the Inter-American System.
- Books supplied by the team-network.

3.5 Creating awareness in the Inter-American System

3.5.1 Description

In September 2003, the IHR prepared a report on the most important outcome of project implementation up to that point, to be shared with judges and commissioners. A joint meeting had been set for the 16th of that month during the Sixtieth Regular Session of the Inter-American Court, from September 8–20, 2003. In the end, however, it was canceled because the commissioners had problems traveling to Costa Rica. Project coordinators at the IHR decided instead to meet with the commissioners and share the report during the regular session of the Inter-American Commission, to take place in October 2003 in Washington DC.

CEJIL approached the Inter-American Commission to request a general hearing for a formal presentation of the project. It also held informal meetings with representatives of the Commission to raise their awareness on the importance of granting hearings to cases that could potentially become part of the project.

3.5.2 Method

Project staff selected topics to be covered in the report that the IIHR will submit to the Inter-American System. The main idea is to communicate high-priority themes relevant to the concerns of judges and commissioners.

CEJIL made telephone and written contact to request a general hearing and, once topics had been selected and in coordination with the IIHR, began to prepare for the hearing.

3.5.3 Background / justification

The IIHR and CEJIL began to raise awareness within the Inter-American System during the first quarter of project implementation in 2003 by meeting with members of the protection agencies and outlining the objectives of the project. The process has continued during the remainder of the year. The purpose is to sensitize judges and commissioners about the need to hold hearings on cases covered by the project, helping them understand the particular psychological and social problems faced by torture victims, and the need to grant comprehensive psychological and social reparations.

In addition to the central purpose of the project –providing comprehensive care for victims– the work is expected to produce conceptual materials for referral by the bodies for international human rights protection. These two outcomes will be simultaneous and complementary: accompanying victims with psychological care, and developing case law on psychosocial reparations in these cases.

3.5.4 Lead organizations and coordination

IIHR and CEJIL technical teams.

3.5.5 Intermediate steps

- Coordinate and hold informal meetings with representatives of the Inter-American Commission.
- Set agendas and topics for informal meetings.
- Identify content and prepare the technical report for judges and commissioners.

3.5.6 Results or products

- Systematic meetings with representatives of the Court and the Commission.
- A technical report to be presented to members of the Inter-American System.

3.5.7 Impact indicators

More advanced case law on torture in the Inter-American Commission and Court.

Greater awareness by the Commission and the Court on the psychological impact of torture.

Inclusion of psychosocial reparations for victims or their families in recommendations and judgments given by entities of the Inter-American System.

These bodies now have a greater understanding of the objectives of the project and the importance of granting hearings in cases of torture. In meetings over the course of the year, representatives of both bodies demonstrated openness to the project and interest in handling project cases. As a direct result, hearings were granted in September for **Wagner dos Santos vs. Brazil**. Both the judges and the commissioners expressed interest in receiving the project technical report that will be submitted by the IIHR.

On June 7, 2003, the Inter-American Court, during its Fifty-ninth Regular Session, handed down a judgment on the **Juan Humberto Sánchez case** (the first one under the project), convicting the State of Honduras of illegal arrest, forced disappearance and extrajudicial execution. The judgment includes a chapter on reparations including measures to indemnify and compensate victims for non-material damage, based on considerations of the psychosocial impact of impunity. The judgment calls for other forms of reparation as well, requiring the State to recognize publicly the facts of the case, surrender the victim's remains to the family for burial, and conduct a serious investigation of the incident. These orders demonstrate the Court's openness to this problem. On September 18, the Court gave judgment on Walter Bulacio, the second case under the project, ordering indemnification for the family group and symbolic reparations to recognize the magnitude of damages suffered by the Bulacio family.

3.5.8 Verification

- Appointments scheduled with members of the Inter-American Commission.
- Technical report for judges and commissioners.
- Judgments in the **J.H. Sánchez and Walter Bulacio cases**.

3.6 Dissemination and information on the project

3.6.1 Description

Work began in September 2003 to design the project's specialized area of the Institute's Web site. The team selected content and identified the objectives and target population.

In the first stage, from the beginning of 2003 through the first six months of 2004, the specialized area of the Web site will be used to strengthen the team-network and the methodological proposal that the team will be implementing. Access to the section will therefore be password protected, limited to members of the electronic discussion list. The discussion list, in turn, will help build the specialized section as members of the team-network send in their contributions.

The specialized area will include: introduction to the project; information capsules on activities associated with project implementation; brief introduction of team-network members; inbox with messages from the discussion list; psychological expert witness; reports on comprehensive psychological care; glossary of psychosocial terms in this field; directory of organizations; and a

digital library including articles of interest, case law and international instruments on torture and forced disappearance.

A bibliography was compiled from contributions by the team-network in the August 2003 meeting, and was processed for inclusion in the digital library of the specialized section.

As an additional vehicle for project dissemination, a summary of the team-network meeting was printed in IIHR Newsletter number 77, a print and digital publication distributed worldwide.

3.6.2 Method

The project's specialized web area will be designed by IIHR technical staff and will be ready by November 15, 2003.

The bibliography contributed by the team-network had to be processed by typing up a complete listing of bibliographic references, writing a synopsis of each item, and compiling tables of contents of books, journals and compact discs.

The item published in the IIHR Newsletter outlined the objectives and general conclusions of project events. Project staff wrote the piece and sent it to the editor of the bulletin, along with photographs, and it was published in September 2003.

3.6.3 Background / justification

Although this was not part of the original 2003 plan of action, the IIHR decided during the course of the year to design a specialized area on the project for inclusion on the Institute's web site, for use by the team-network. In this first phase, the purpose of this section is to support the process of consolidating and strengthening the team-network and serve as a means to disseminate, validate and enrich the project's working methodology. It will also provide support material to help team members become specialized in this specific field.

3.6.4 Lead organizations and coordination

The IIHR technical team has been responsible for project work during this quarter.

3.6.5 Intermediate steps

- Compile the specialized bibliography to produce materials for dissemination and awareness raising.
- Type up the specialized bibliography, tables of contents and synopses.
- Write and submit information for the IIHR Newsletter.
- Identify the structure and content of the specialized web section.

3.6.6 Results or products

Dissemination of the project through issue 77 of the IIHR Newsletter. This was the only concrete product under this activity, but work is already in progress for coming quarters.

3.6.7 Impact indicators

More people informed about the psychological impact of torture, and methods for treatment.

As the project receives publicity through IIHR Newsletter No. 77, more people will become aware of its existence and objectives. The new methods for treatment proposed by the project and its team-network will start to receive public attention in October and November 2003.

3.6.7 Verification

- Bibliography, tables of contents and synopses.
- IIHR Newsletter.

3.7 Updating the Directory of Organizations

3.7.1 Description

During this quarter, project staff decided to transfer the data base of organizations specialized in psychosocial treatment of torture victims from File Maker Pro to a database available over the IIHR web site. Under the new format, the data base will be accessible through links in the specialized section, the self-taught course to be introduced in 2004, and the CEJIL file folder. However, the information will all have to be retyped before it can be put online.

During this quarter, thanks to input from members of the team-network, more information on organizations became available.

3.7.2 Method

As part of the academic requirements for taking part in the meeting of specialists, members of the team-network were asked to provide a list of at least 10 organizations in their countries that are working with problems of torture. This was stated in the information sheet sent beforehand.

The reports on new organizations, contributed by the team-network, were filed digitally and electronically for inclusion in the on-line directory.

3.7.3 Background / justification

An e-mail message was sent out in 2002 with general information on the project; it introduced the idea of building a database of organizations offering psychosocial post-torture care. This led to contact with several organizations and individuals interested in the subject.

Once it is available, this directory will demonstrate to the judges responsible for adjudicating reparations that local resources are available to work with victims and their families for emotional recovery.

During the first half of 2003, the information was entered into a File Maker Pro data base, but a later decision to make it available on line requires a change of software. With a password obtained from the IIHR Information Unit, project staff will be entering data in October, November and December of 2003.

3.7.4 Lead organizations and coordination

The IIHR technical team.

3.7.5 Intermediate steps

- Electronic and personal contact with organizations.
- Collect and archive information contributed by the team-network.
- Work with the IIHR Information Unit to enter data onto the web site.

3.7.6 Results or products

- 40 data sheets on organizations specialized in psychosocial treatment of torture victims.

3.7.7 Impact indicators

Greater access by users to up-to-date information on organizations.

Users still do not have easy access to up-to-date information on organizations working with problems of torture because the on-line directory is not yet available to the public. Steps have already been taken to meet this goal in the next quarter of 2003.

4. LESSONS LEARNED

Project activities during this quarter clearly demonstrated the complexity of having two institutions whose areas of experience are dissimilar (IIHR and CEJIL) co-implement a project, especially when smooth coordination is further impeded by geographic distance (time differences, limitations of e-mail communication, high cost of long-distance telephone calls, etc.). Because of the very nature of the project, practically all activities need to be coordinated by both institutions, even if the central responsibility falls to only one. The meeting of the team-network and a later visit to Costa Rica by the Executive Director of CEJIL were therefore critically important for coordinating the central items for the 2004 plan of action and necessary budgetary adjustments, as well as project methodology and logistics. Because the project deals with topics that are so complex and so important, it requires personal communication and considerable time commitments. Coordination proved complex, but clearly, both institutions are fully willing to make every effort to abide by their agreements for project implementation and logistics.

Several items that arose during the meeting of the team-network merit further comment:

- The personal meeting of the team-network of specialized professionals with technical teams implementing the project was very useful in forging a single vision on the meaning and objectives of the project, developing proposals collectively, and laying the groundwork for smooth communication in the future.
- The meeting reaffirmed the vision of a team-network that needs to function in close coordination and whose proposals arise from joint cooperation. This meant a new language had to be developed. The project will no longer refer to specialized professionals as individuals, but instead will regard them collectively as the team-network per se. This team-network, with its work and its specialized knowledge, will move the project closer to its stated objective: to improve the quality of psychological care received by torture victims in the Inter-American System using a sound methodological approach.

- Project activities demonstrated the importance of coordinating not only the work of members of the team-network, but also interactions between these professionals and the legal team litigating cases in the system. It became clear that legal jargon needs to be more accessible to psychology professionals, while the language of psychology needs to be more comprehensible to legal professionals. This was the inspiration for creating a glossary of psychological and legal terms in the framework of the project. It also became clear that law professionals need to work in close coordination with psychology professionals offering expert witness throughout the process of psychological care and litigation of cases, in a strategy dubbed “psycho-legal.” This is a new concept that arose through project implementation. Such a need had remained unrecognized in the past, and no one was aware of how important it could be, both for victims and for developing case law under the human rights protection entities.
- The meeting with the team-network clearly demonstrated how important the project is because of its potential impact on the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court, one of its strategic objectives. If the entities created for the protection of human rights become fully cognizant of the problems, impact and consequences of torture on victims and on their social environment, national public policy developments will be enriched as they draw on Inter-American legal precedent.

