

INTERVENTION

Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Areas

Call for papers on suicide prevention and response

Deadline for submissions: 30th November 2020

Intervention plans to devote a special section on suicide prevention and response in the September 2021 issue, accompanied by webinars for practitioners. It will be dedicated largely to insights into suicide prevention efforts in the Middle East, but will include contributions from other regions to share relevant lessons learned and emerging perspectives regarding suicide prevention. The proposal for the special section has been developed in collaboration with GIZ's regional project, 'Psychosocial Support for Syrian/Iraqi Refugees and IDPs.'

Suicide represents a significant global challenge, with close to 800,000 deaths every year, 79% of which occur in low- and middle-income countries (WHO, 2018)¹. The levels of profound despair that can lead someone to take their own life can rarely be attributed to a single cause. Conflict, forced displacement, migration, limited access to healthcare, economic crises, unemployment, and consequences of global health emergencies such as the current COVID 19 pandemic may make personal challenges even more difficult to deal with in relation to conflicts with partners and families, or individual sources of stress.

Many Middle Eastern countries, including Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Palestine, are attempting to cope with decades of protracted crises, re-erupting wars and economic hardships. The resultant 'lethal hopelessness' in the region has translated to rising rates of suicide and self-harm. However, as the act of suicide is highly stigmatised – even condemned by religious authorities and

¹ World Health Organization (2018). Global Health Estimates 2016: Deaths by cause, age, sex, by country and by region, 2000-2016. World Health Organization, Geneva.

criminalised in several countries – the quality of available data remains poor and targeted prevention is rare. There is also a lack of capacity development for health providers, gatekeeper trainings and awareness-raising among communities. Against this highly challenging backdrop, stakeholders such as governmental bodies, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) actors and a diverse array of local and international initiatives have developed a number of services for individuals in acute crisis.

GIZ's regional project, 'Psychosocial Support for Syrian/Iraqi Refugees and IDPs', and *Intervention* are working together in an initiative to document suicide prevention efforts in humanitarian settings. We aim to share relevant good practices and lessons learned with practitioners and policymakers and others and identify emerging perspectives regarding suicide prevention and response.

We would like to collect a wide range of contributions for the special section in *Intervention*. *Intervention* publishes different types of articles, including more formal 'academic-style' papers presenting, for example, research findings or aspects of practice or systematic reviews; field reports featuring case studies or evaluations of projects or training approaches; and personal reflections providing space for authors to share their thoughts on aspects of their work or experience in the humanitarian field. For example, a personal reflection could be based on an interview between two people discussing the impact of a certain aspect of suicide prevention in the course of their work or in their lived experience.

If you are involved in any suicide prevention activities or programmes and/or have lived experience in this area, we would welcome your contributions. For this special section, we are inviting short **papers** (maximum word count of 5000 words, excluding the abstract and references), **field reports** (maximum word count of 4000 words) and **personal reflections** (maximum word count of 3000 words). Papers will be selected on criteria such as their relevance to the field, the holistic approaches they represent, methodological rigour and level of innovation.

We particularly welcome those who may wish to publish their work for the first time and in these circumstances, we offer support in revising submitted manuscripts for publication. The articles of the special section will be published in English and Arabic. A group of guest editors will be invited to join Wendy Ager, editor in chief, *Intervention*, in reviewing the submissions.

Intervention, the Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Settings, is an open access journal which is published twice a year. It is hosted by Arq International. We publish peer-reviewed articles that are relevant to individuals working in conflict affected areas and to those working with refugees from areas of conflict around the world. We also welcome papers on mental health and psychosocial support in settings with limited formal resources of chronic adversity that are not directly related to war or violence, as well as papers situated within complex humanitarian emergencies. We encourage submissions from a wide range of practitioners, researchers, academics and policymakers involved in mental health and psychosocial support.

Please submit your article to <http://www.journalonweb.com/intv/>

Information for authors on preparing a manuscript is available here:

<http://www.interventionjournal.org/contributors.asp>

For this special section, the publishing fee will be waived.

For more information or discussion of potential ideas, please contact Wendy Ager, editor in chief, *Intervention*, at w.ager@arq.org