



**SRI LANKAN WOMEN ASYLUM SEEKERS IN
BANGKOK, THAILAND: A CASE STUDY**

Zarah Kateleen T. Alih-jul

Abstract

This action research is a study of my job and myself as I seek understanding of and consciousness on my performance of accompanying asylum seekers in Metropolitan Bangkok, Thailand. Throughout the course of my study, I built up and practiced reflexivity to realize suitable conducts which are helpful in the context of urban asylum seekers in the Thai capital. With the optimism of constructing a system in delivering the services, we, at the Urban Refugee Program (URP), particularly provide the psychosocial accompaniment and motivated that they will be institutionalized. It improved my resourcefulness and critical thinking which are definitely required to maintain the pace and efficiency of my work in an unstable setting. In this light, I reflected on the questions: (1) 'How effective is the psychosocial accompaniment service provided to the women EVI caseloads by the URP? And (2) how can I improve my job?'. A major component of my research highlights the approach of providing psychosocial services, which I carried out based on the main values for psychologists which are: confidentiality, respect and service. The feedback from my clients, interpreters, co-workers, classmates and tutors at the Applied Conflict Transformation Studies (ACTS) programme guided me as I obtain significant knowledge, learning and wisdom during my studies. In the same way, I occupied myself in numerous calm and quiet self-encounters to sketch an existing enlightening and learning theory that aims to contribute to the body of knowledge about psychosocial interventions for women in extremely vulnerable situations. The study's end results reflect the necessity for modification in the way the URP staff provides psychosocial accompaniment.

Keywords: Psychosocial Accompaniment, Sri Lankan Women, Asylum Seekers

INTRODUCTION

This action research project paper documented the progress of my action research project, which looked at methods of improving my work as a psychosocial counselor in serving the urban refugees and asylum seekers in Bangkok. Particularly, my study looked into how to best provide psychosocial accompaniment to the women who represent the greatest number of extremely vulnerable individual (EVI) caseloads that the Urban Refugee Program (URP) is handling. This is for myself as the psychosocial counselor, as well as my organization. In presenting the paper of my action research, I will carry on with a depiction of the context in which I work and the basis why I chose this specific feature of my job to be the center of my study. I will follow this with the conceptual framework of my research, continuing with the methodology and analysis of the outcome of my actions and commencing it with recommendations drawn from the findings and reflections.

Context

Thailand is situated at the center of South East Asian region. It is the only country in the region not to have been colonized by any European power. In terms of total area, it is the 50th largest country with a surface area of 198 sq.mi and the 21st most populous country with a population of approximately 64 million people. It is surrounded by countries in a conflict or post-conflict state like Burma, Laos, and Cambodia which produced refugees.

It is one of the few countries in Southeast Asia hosting a huge number of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people, migrants and other itinerant people, and internally displaced peoples. The two major types of refugees in Thailand are: (1) those in camps along the Thai-Burma border consisting of ethnic minorities from Burma, and (2) those found outside camps and in the urban centres. The urban refugees and asylum seekers are mostly from Southeast Asia and South Asia, Middle East, China, and Africa regions.

Thailand is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention. However, for the last three decades, it provided asylum to some 1.2 million refugees (UNHCR Global Appeal 2008 – 2009). Hence, it has no government mechanism to respond to registration and refugee claims for urban refugees. The urban refugees and asylum seekers are from more than 40 countries, considered illegal under Thai law, unable to engage in gainful employment, and lack access to public welfare services.

During the last quarter of 2009, the number of new arrivals increased two-fold (2009 JRS URP Annual Report, JRS Thailand). The process of registering asylum seekers and determining their refugee status in Bangkok and other urban centers rests with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The waiting period for Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview and decision takes between six to twelve months. During the waiting period, the majority are unable to meet their daily basic survival needs consisting of housing, food, hygiene supplies, and other essential personal necessities (URP 2010 Annual Report, JRS Thailand). Asylum seekers often arrive penniless, exhausted, bewildered and helpless. Several Sri Lankan Tamils and African women suffer mental health problem as a result of the traumas that they have fled including sexual and gender-based violence. They have no or little knowledge about UNHCR and RSD process, scarce resources for their survival, and have high expectation on the UNHCR which, in reality, has very limited capacity to support their survival in Thailand.

Aside from the challenges of obtaining the UNHCR certification, refugees and asylum seekers continue to face risk under Thai immigration law which considers any person without a valid passport and Thai visa as illegal aliens and can be arrested, detained and deported. They also have no access to gainful employment and are subjected to social and racial discrimination (URP 2010 Annual Report, JRS Thailand). In addition to the adverse affects in meeting their basic needs and security, these circumstances also contribute to an increase in psychological and mental illness among the asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers are only partially “protected” and can only avail basic and emergency medical care and treatment from a UNHCR’s implementing partner, Bangkok Refugee Center (BRC). According to the recent release of UNHCR urban policy (UNHCR, 2009), the

UN refugee agency will only operate as a provider of last resort for material assistance to asylum seekers. UNHCR Thailand does not usually provide cash allowance to vulnerable urban asylum seekers for their housing, food and other basic daily survival needs, or education for children. A majority of the asylum seekers after registering to UNHCR are referred to JRS, as the sole Non Government Organization (NGO) addressing their needs for assistance.

Work Context

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is one of the major non-governmental agent's working in Thailand to support refugees and asylum seekers. In recognizing the psychological and emotional as well as material needs of refugees, the Urban Refugee Program of JRS has just recently developed a position intended to provide psychosocial support for asylum seekers. The position is especially targeted to support those people on the program considered Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs) and with a focus on women. The URP recently formulated guidelines and vulnerability criteria to prioritize the asylums seekers who register with the UNHCR. Indeed, since developing the EVI category, most are women. Vulnerable and indigent asylum seekers are individuals who have no financial and material resources and unable to afford daily survival needs, and receive no support from family, relatives, and friends or other NGO. An individual or asylum seeker who has financial/ material resources and is able to afford daily survival needs, supported by relatives and friends, and/or by an NGO or welfare agency may fall in one or two of the checklist of vulnerabilities.

These are the EVI criteria: (1) Female head of household (with children/minor dependents), (2) Single parents (female/male) with minor dependents, (3) HIV/AIDS and/or medical cases, (4) SGBV (Sexual and Gender-based Violence) victims/survivors, (5) Victims of torture, (6) Individuals at risk (with serious protection and safety concerns), (7) People with serious physical disabilities, (8) Individual with psychological and mental disabilities, (9) Elderly without family support, (11) Single women with no job and support, (12) Pregnant women and (13), (14) Indigent individual (male/female). Most of the Sri Lankan women match one or multiple EVI criteria.

JRS only consider to provide assistance if JRS is the only agency present or available to assist. JRS also explore and find other ways to assist through referrals and networking.

In my role as psychosocial counselor, I have explored what was the nature of support/ accompaniment provided before this position was created and how best JRS can enhance its accompaniment and psychosocial support with a focus on extremely vulnerable women. The team is made up of five staff only which includes the URP Director, caseworker, psychosocial counselor and two interpreters for Urdu (Pakistanis) and Tamil (Sri Lankans). There is no other psychosocial counselor available. Other groups that are part of URP caseload are those from the following countries: Afghanistan, Burma, Burundi, China, Cambodia, Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guinea, Iran, Ivory, Kenya, Lao, Liberia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lankan and Vietnam. The highest among these caseloads are Sri Lankans. Most of the women at present are Sri Lankan women, forming the largest caseload of JRS-URP team who meet the EVI criteria mentioned above, and as such form the main caseload of my work.

Refugees have temporarily lost control of their lives and this must be regained - to the extent possible, wherever they are; in camps or resettlement, in urban or rural settings. The dignity, value and the right to influence their own situation is important. Providing psychosocial support is important as well as responding to basic needs such as housing, food and security. Promoting community participation is an important aspect of how we work to accompany and support refugees; it means that you believe that refugees are creative and

have the capacity to take action in order to improve and develop their own situation. This is valid even though the refugee is going through a crisis, such as the experience itself of being a refugee.

Providing psychosocial accompaniment as well as basic needs for people in the URP is the central role of my work. I think there is still a need to enhance psychosocial accompaniment to those I work with in the program who includes the caseworker and the Urban Refugee Program project director. Likewise, acknowledging the fact that I am not a trained psychosocial counselor, but needing to develop best approach for such assistance given there is little organizational understanding of how we can best do this as well as limited resources about how to best provide such support under these conditions more widely. This case study could be a guide to understand better what is needed to work on these aims for JRS Thailand and those I work with and for.

Research Problem

My research problem is the enhancement of psychosocial accompaniment provided to the Sri Lankan women who are considered EVIs before I was hired and during the first year that I have been providing support myself. The initial motivation comes from the fact that I am the only female (and am a young educated Muslim from Philippines) in the Urban Refugee team that consists of our caseworker and project director. I want to see if factors like gender, language, education and professional background are factors that affect the psychosocial accompaniment provided to Sri Lankan women. Psychosocial accompaniment integrated in the urban refugee program services but it was not focused on women who are EVIs and this was not a priority. There are other important factors for consideration such as the socio-political environment in which we work and from which the people we work with relate to.

Review of Related Literature

Conflict and the Refugee Experience

Globally, the landscape of conflict has transformed over a period of time due to advance technology development, patriotism and the approach to use influence or dominance, not so much to overthrow but more to scare people and cause grief (Rourke and Boyer, 2000). Following the end of the Cold War, the character of conflict changed typically from inter-state to intra-state (Ogata, 2002) with shifts to civilians rather than combatants being the most affected by conflict. Ogata (2002), describes how “the sources of insecurity became largely internal, with ethnic, religious and political groups fighting over contested rights and resources with vengeance”(p.2). In the meantime interstate conflict diminishing in majority of the countries in the world, the nature of the conflict was also shifting. Nevertheless, domestic conflict appear to develop due to violent actions or even the subsequent result of interstate wars. This type of conflicts is much more dangerous and life-threatening where societies are threatened (Art and Jervis, 2005).

Psychosocial Issues

Present day conflicts intentionally involve civilian populations (WHO, 1994). Massive human rights violations impose serious risks on millions of people. The cognitive, emotional and socioeconomic burden imposed on individuals, the family and the community are enormous. It is established that an average of more than 50 per cent of refugees present mental health problems ranging from chronic mental disorders to trauma, distress and a great

deal of suffering.

Until recently, traditional emergency response was limited to food, water and shelter. Health and other priority needs are often delayed. Recognition of the mental health needs of refugees is emerging but remain poorly addressed as allocation of resources does not follow. Despite scientific evidence to the fact that conflict has a devastating impact on health and on mental health, the latter is not seen as a priority by many decision-makers.

The World Health Organization (1994) cited countries like Angola, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Chechnya are a few examples of human destabilization and psychosocial dysfunctioning caused by traumatic events. Their consequences remain in the personal and collective memory even long after peace agreements and repatriation have been accomplished. Traumatic experiences such as killings, material losses, torture and sexual violence, harsh detention and uprooting, all affect people's behavior for generations. Life in overcrowded camps, deprivations, uncertainty over the future, disruption of community and social support networks lead to psychosocial dysfunctioning.

Psychosocial problems and social determinants

To address the needs of the refugees and the care providers, it is also important to look at psychological stress not only from the 'medical' perspective, but to take a broader perspective with attention for contextual aspects. The use of the term 'psychosocial' has become preferred when referring to the broader conception of mental and emotional wellbeing as well as for understanding the stresses giving rise to psychological problems and social determinants of such distress.

As mentioned, refugees in the camps are vulnerable: on a political, social and cultural level. This vulnerability is caused by their status as a refugee, by the situation in the refugee camps, and it is also related to humanitarian aid. However, not all problems are caused by the refugee situation. Psychosocial and mental problems can be pre-existing for refugees related to disaster, violence, loss of relatives, status, or belongings (HealthNet TPO, 2011).

Social factors are known to be major determinants of mental health problems. Three key social determinants are risk factors for mental disorders: poverty, social exclusion and gender violence (HealthNet TPO, 2011). Changing gender roles, due to refugee status and of the structure of the camp (the lack of income-generating activities for men) cause significant stress in marriages. Violence is not limited to refugee settings, but the specific dynamics of the refugee setting together with dysfunctional or broken extended family support systems increase the incidence of violence. There exists evidence that domestic violence has a significantly negative impact on women's mental health (HealthNet TPO).

Apparently, reacting to internal conflicts which are currently being given attention to specifically on important matters for instance the use of power against the people is being contested by the authorities. This denial is triggered by the intense circumstances presented by these civil wars or conflicts internally: community trauma, dislocation of families, uncontrolled small weapon, use of force or violence, abuses (Art and Jervis, 2005). These internal conflicts also produce internally displaced peoples, asylum seekers and refugees mostly women whose husbands died or missing and now becomes the head of the family. Civil war causes people to flee their countries and many of them are internally displaced like in Sri Lanka and Somalia. Persecution due to religious belief have become a cause for some Pakistanis to leave as refugees and seek asylum to countries like Thailand who have a UNHCR office.

There are civil society members and NGO actors that try to respond to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers around the world. Specifically in Bangkok, urban refugees and asylum seekers are being addressed by the following NGOs: (1) Asylum Access Thailand (AAT), (2) Maryknoll (MK), (3) Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN), Bangkok Refugee Center (BRC) and (4) JRS. However, only JRS provides assistance to asylum seekers.

The NGOs like JRS play an important role in these internal conflicts, at different levels and at various consequences. One of the mission of JRS is to accompany which means to provide holistic human services to forcibly displaced persons. All the aid in the world will never be able to replace the warmth of assistance rendered by one individual human being to another. Through accompaniment, JRS acknowledges human dignity in refugees.

It is this direct and personal approach of individual interaction and cooperation with refugees which mutually empowers refugees and JRS personnel alike. It is through providing accompaniment to refugees, touched by their reality in camps, conflict zones, detention centres or wherever else they may be, that JRS staff understand how best to serve and advocate on their behalf.

Accompaniment

Accompaniment as a concept and a practice is significant because it gives the asylum seekers and refugees the feeling of security and hope. It is important for me to discuss here the meaning of accompaniment and the importance in the way JRS accompany the asylum seekers and refugees. Then it would help me to identify their approaches and for me to suggest the best approach for accompaniment provided to women JRs work with.

For JRS, to accompany means to be a companion. It is a practical and effective action. Not infrequently, accompaniment is a way of offering protection, and 'internationalising' a situation. As JRS' mission is to offer holistic human services to forcibly displaced persons, it is through providing accompaniment to refugees, touched by their reality in camps, conflict zones, detention centres or wherever else they may be, that JRS staff can understand how best to serve and advocate on their behalf. The kind of accompaniment provided by the Urban Refugee Program of JRS is of psychosocial support in a range of ways. We have a pool of volunteers that we screened to meet the needs of the urban refugees that we address. Some of the volunteers are teachers and art therapist so they teach English to Sri Lankan and Pakistani communities that we organized as a support group.

Rodriguez and colleagues (2009) defined psychosocial accompaniment as an encounter between the community and the social psychologist with the goal of constructing liberating knowledge. The primary bases of these are Zabala (1974), Paulo Freire (1969), Orlando FalsBorda (1979), and Ignation Martin-Baro (1990) for their efforts impart their commitment with public and significant freedom from leading arrangements with the coerced. In the context of the JRS-URP team, we conduct psychosocial accompaniment with the goal of making the asylum seekers resilient enough to survive in the harsh situation that they are in.

In relation to my work context, I believe that it suggests the establishment of a certain kind of relationship to build the well being of the community in this case the urban refugees of Metropolitan Bangkok. Castro, Largo & Sacipa (2005) stated that the procedure must be positioned concerning the society to provide shared and personal considerations. In this framework, it is significant to have a principled dedication to be the link among the person and their values and beliefs in such a way as to allocate equally to build a latest command in which communications and feasible discourses can exist (Castro Largo & Sacipa, 1998).

Accompanying Women

The psychosocial accompaniment methods was categorized by sexual roles and age group by Nensthiel and Saenz (2003). Women were accompanied in the course of recuperating from the sensitive injuries caused instigated by the dislocation from their countries. I attempted to improve the relations of trust amongst them and other women of the community in the same predicament as them. This was made possible by making them conscious of their abilities as persons and therefore acknowledge that they can have an honorable future and are ready to enthusiastically reinforce each other.

With the women we utilize two diverse informal dialogue spaces (Nensthiel & Saenz, 2003). Foremost is the home visits which provide space for talks which are more reflective, cozier and intense in specifics. This made it likely for them to provide fresh meaning to their hurt and their emotions of low self-worth. Another dialogue space takes place in support groups for single mothers and single female Sri Lankan asylum seekers. This group meeting space is considered a safe and inspiring place where dialogues are the instrument to overthrow quieting and paralyzing anxiety. Once the anxiety is reduced, asylum seekers improve their skill to express and relate with their surroundings. This form of dialogue can support empowerment and re-conceptualising their experiences and stories and integrating past experiences into more positive orientations. Such a process can permit them to modify their story in connection to the people and organizations around them (Pardo, 2003). Shifting their accounts permitted them to involve fresh sensations about themselves and the world (Pearce, 1994). In this process, bias turns into an intersubjective occurrence since by sharing their stories the women turn out to be cowriters of their individualities.

Conceptual Framework

The Psychosocial Working Group of the Center for Health Studies (2003) pointed out several values of conceptual framework for psychosocial programming. One of this is that the field of psychosocial intervention in complex emergencies is currently characterized by a

lack of consensus on goals, strategy and practice (Ahearn & Loughry in TPWG, 2003). Nevertheless, the need for such intervention is now rarely objected. Whether expressed in terms of children's psychological morbidity, the disruption of children's developmental progress, or the violation of human rights and dignity, such human dimensions of suffering are seen as an appropriate focus for humanitarian assistance.

Mollica and Smith (2003) stated that the principles that should guide implementation, however, remain a focus of considerable debate. For many agencies the conceptualization of suffering through the idiom of psychopathology, and particularly post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), has been dominant. This has been supported by an increasing body of evidence establishing elevated rates of symptom reportage associated with potential PTSD diagnosis in war affected populations.

Other agencies, however, have been influenced by critiques of the validity of the trauma model on the basis of its assumptions regarding the cultural expression of suffering (Bracken et.al. in TPWG, 2003) and/or the importance of the wider social and cultural (as opposed to predominantly individual) impacts of conflict on affected communities (Wessels in TPWG, 2003). Such agencies' work has tended, in consequence, to conceptualize activity more in relation to community resources and the re-establishment of pre-existing coping strategies/

The situation is frequently complicated further by a lack of clear linkage between the conceptualization of need as outlined above, and the strategies then implemented in response. For instance, while some programs utilizing the concept of trauma in documenting the needs of impacted populations do adopt a clinical treatment model in their intervention, others place community mobilization strategies at the core of their response.

With such divergence of conceptual approach and lack of clear linkage between the idiom of assessment and means of intervention, the prospects for establishing a clear evidence-base to inform developments in the field are poor. A common framework is required with respect to which alternative formulations, strategies and ultimately, outcomes can be shared and contested.

JRS continues to develop their own understanding as to their role in accompaniment and what is the best way to accompany asylum seekers who are Sri Lankan women. Diana Francis wrote that "...if we are to move beyond war, violence and injustice, fundamental change is needed in our understanding of our own identity and in our attitude to collective responsibility." (2004,p.142). To assist me in looking at the process that JRS must experience in turn to provide the best accompaniment, I have chosen the following peacebuilding frameworks that portrayed processes and approaches in promoting positive change in the psychosocial accompaniment and structures as a way to support those we work with and for.

Levels of Change / Transformation

I have reflected on John Paul Lederach's level of transformation for the psychosocial accompaniment provided by JRS. According to Lederach, there are four levels of change, that is to say the personal, relational, cultural and structural stages of change (Lederach, 2003). The personal stage consist of changes in attitudes, behavior and knowledge whereas the relational stage comprises the formation and development of relationships. The following stage affects the cultural change which involves the standards that aid in maintaining peace though the final stage, the structural change hold progress of latest traditions, guidelines, methods and even people or leaders (cited in Schirch, 2004).

This framework of Lederach connects to the experiences that I had as the psychosocial counselor of JRS-URP. I realize by myself the changes that are occurring within me. In one way or another, I will have to experience or bear or value all the progress from the personal stage to the next levels to enhance and understand how to best approach psychosocial accompaniment.

However, Lederach thinks these stages promote change, he has more emphasis on structural stage. By changing at this stage, he is more hopeful to achieve constructive change in the society: violence reduced, justice increase, creative responses and societal constructive conflicts (Lederach, 2003)

I believe that this happened during the whole 3 cycles when I began to acknowledge my lack of training in psychosocial counseling as one of the weakness in the accompaniment JRS-URP provides.

Most of the clients – Sri Lankan clients, the EVIs have the same priority of needs – not just the money – they need also capacity building in terms of language because its one of the tools necessary to survive in Thailand. Giving them more capacity in terms of their own livelihood not to be reliant in longer-term. These needs are more of being self-reliant and to be more economically independent. It also builds their own self-esteem. Being helpless in a country is so hard to cope in terms of culture and adjustment, constraints. They need capacity to have a livelihood and as a coping mechanism to them while they are waiting.

I believe we need more to create a support system. We can find ways to facilitate activities for them to organize themselves to help each other. They need to feel they are not alone in this situation – more collective orientation than individual. How they can come together and match each other's needs. For example, with the Pakistani community centre – we make use of those people who were teachers before to teach their own children. They became more confident in themselves to have a role – someone or a group to build on. This is especially relevant for the single mothers facing difficulty in taking care of their children – learning English, going to school, etc. Making them feel also there are other mothers who can help them out and have the capacity to help them in terms of their own. They realized that during the support group sessions we had. They may live in the same building but they're afraid to go out of their rooms and so the groups provided space to share this.

Whilst assumed it matters that there is a woman that works within the URP team – it matters to them that the interpreter is also a woman. I thought it was okay that the interpreter was a man. Or they try to bring the interpreter themselves. They like that I visit them in their houses and it matters for them that I ask about their health, English classes, etc. When they shared with me that this mattered, they felt I am more like a friend than an officer. I want them to feel they can tell me all that they need to tell me, especially the single women, who are more vulnerable.

Psychosocial accompaniment is not just the physical presence of accompanying a person but I think it is more than that. I don't give my numbers to all my refugees, but for single mothers and other EVIs, they may need more attention so I give my number in case of emergency.

But also making them feel though I am afar – they can contact me for consultation during emergencies.

For me, when I go for home visits, I try to identify if they have skills to make use of their time – utilising their skills as a means of livelihood – I ask about their skills and float the idea if they can make use of these as a source of income and a coping mechanism too.

I try to create activities for people not coping with the difficult situation they are facing – if there are volunteers who come to the office, I try to match their capacity to the needs of the clients like teaching English etc.

I believe even though I already know the needs – there are limited resources and capacity I am in. I tried to explore other resources from outside as well as within JRS – but if there is no administrative support in trying to implement the changes to be incorporated into the program. There are more creative ways and more time for people to know how significant it is. Key people in the office are significant in making this happen.

I did not expect that the organizational aspect would be so significant in the problem analysis which then meant that the ways to enhance the role extend below and above the role.

I significantly learned from the clients that it also matters the kind of network we have in JRS. There are other networks that can help in terms of psychosocial accompaniment. This is not to just expect JRS but we need to strengthen our networks to extend how we are supporting psychosocial wellbeing. It does not have to come directly from JRS.

I wasn't confident initially that I could do this job given my background – which was not as a psychosocial counselor. My eagerness and commitment to learn allowed me to be selected. I don't think it was enough. I may need specific training and education to work specifically with refugees for staff development. I believe I need more capacity professionally speaking although the feedback is good.

I also learnt from the process, in coping with emergencies. But I think I was able to look for creative mechanisms myself to cope. It has been a long and stressful journey – sharing my experiences with peers – establishing my own networks of support and encouragement and with my co-workers who are very supportive and advises me. So in the one year and two months in this role – the way that I have been able to take care and look after myself has helped a lot in reflecting more on self-care. I didn't know it was that significant for my work too to be effective.

The Big Picture of Conflict Transformation

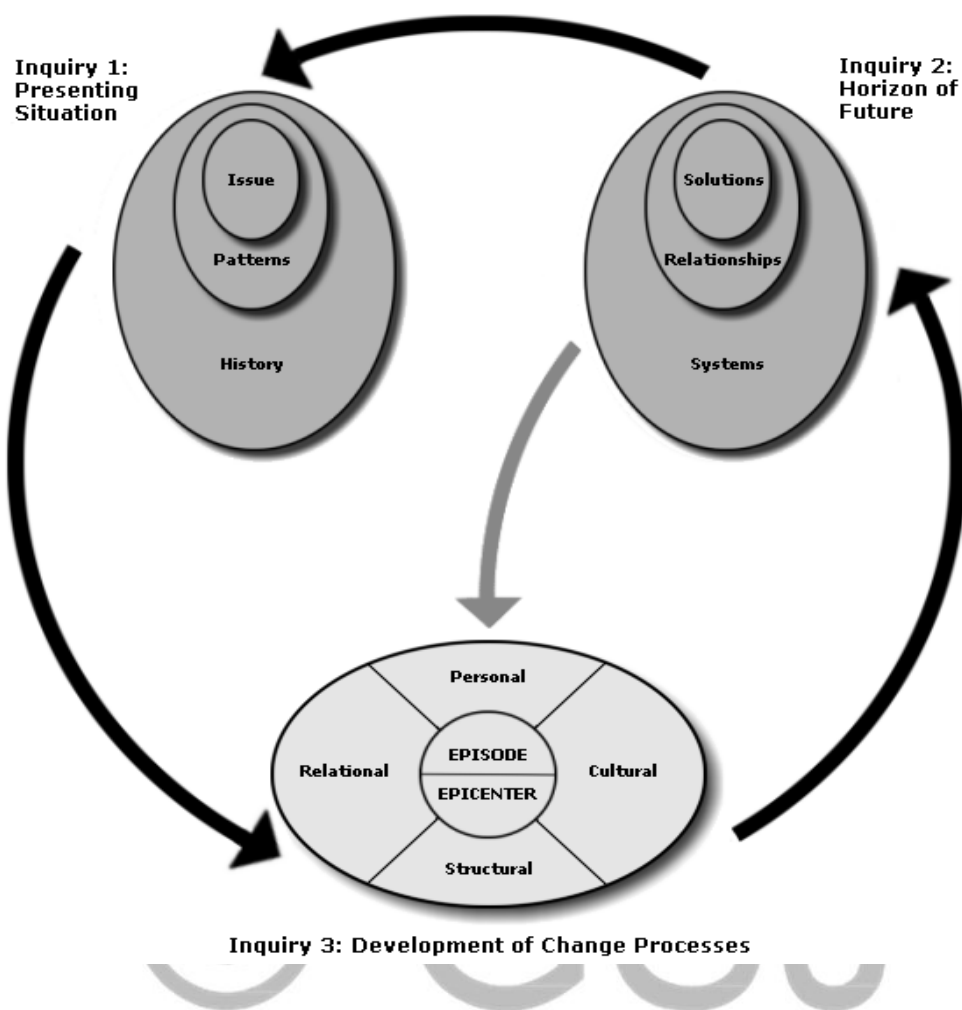


Figure 1: Levels of Transformation(ACTS, 2005)

Theory of Change

By way of examining carefully the assumption that enhanced psychosocial accompaniment, which encourage helpful relationship can lessen anxiety, help resolve conflict, reduce violence and sustain peace. I comprehend that it was reasonable to start practices in the JRS-URP team as well as the psychosocial support group in order to influence constructive change. The improved relationship of the women asylum seekers towards the psychosocial counselor, the more improve the ambiance of functioning for human security.

Hence, I thought the theory of change as one of the frameworks which is important in exploring the objective of this action research project. The theory of change discusses the contributory means through which change came as the outcome of the program's approach and action. A theory of change is the expression of the primary principles and expectations that influence an approach and is considered to be important for creating change and enhancement... [It] creates a well-defined connection between a system's missions and goals, desired and actual outcomes. (Shapiro, I. 2005pg.1). My JRS' theory of change is the assumption guiding my role and JRS in providing accompaniment according to our mission.

Based on this theory of change I seek to better understand how best to provide accompaniment. Likewise, to be open in thinking about this more critically prioritizing the well-being of the asylum seekers.

Key People-More People Approach

Building relationships involves different factors and levels of approaches in the processes of developing the relationship, much more in strengthening the already established relationship so that it will sustain and have significant impact in reducing violence or resolving conflict (Anderson & Olson, 2003). There are two basic stages of this method: (1) the individual/personal stage, and (2) the socio-political stage. Programmes that function at the individual/personal stage are also grounded on the trust that peace needs improvement in socio-political or institutional systems.

Programmes that concerning individual/ personal level pursue to change the attitudes, values, perceptions or conditions of individuals, on the faith that peace is likely only if the hearts, minds and behavior of individuals, of people are reformed. These programs purpose is to reinforce formulation or improvement of institutions that tackle the complaints and injustices that increase conflict and non-violent approaches of managing conflict within society is through institutionalization (CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2004,pg.8)

The psychosocial accompaniment activities of the URP team may have involved both levels but have not actually had an effect at the political and structural level. URP team still maintain the home visits, support group meetings and community outreach in metropolitan Bangkok. This is in order to have practical and effective action. There must be community involvement and participation.

For interventions to have an effect or bearing, key people and more people must be involved. Moreover, these interventions are more likely to accomplish efficiency if they are being dealt with at the socio-political level (ACTS, 2005). Looking at different peace programs worldwide, Reflecting Peace Practice (RPP) concludes that “it will always be important to have an impact at the level of political and structural change.” (ACTS, 2005,p.48).

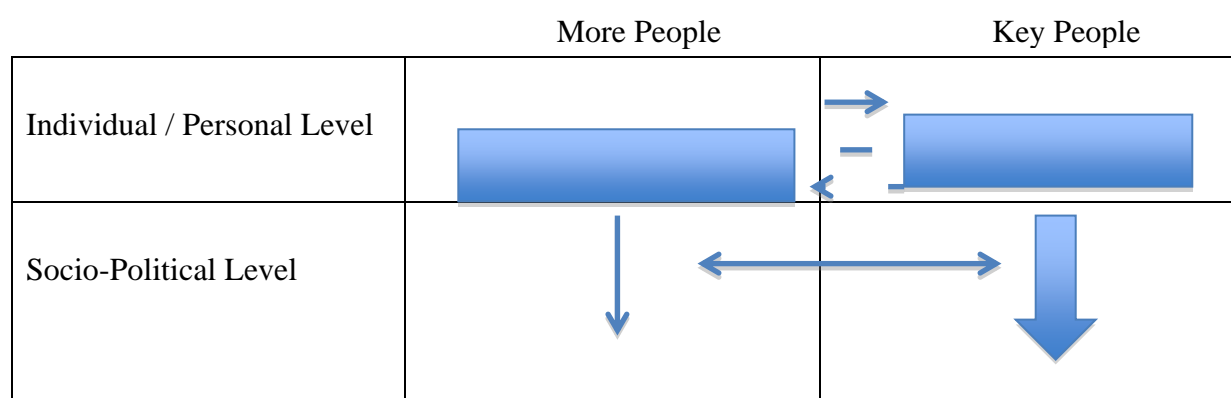


Figure 2. Four-cell matrix of Key People-More People Approach (ACTS, 2005)

Figure 2 shows a concept where interventions can make an effect for them to be more efficient. There are examples where key people requires more people at the level of individual or personal (broken arrow). But in the long run, the key people approach will always be effective if it will impact the socio-political level so that it will attain a transformation structurally (RTC, 2005).

I tried to apply this framework by constantly consulting with my project director and sharing with him the progress of the asylum seekers. Likewise the caseworker is also updated thru e-mail and case reports which are indicated in the files of each clients. However, I realized that key people in the higher management level must be also targeted in order that policies will be formulated that will affect change and improved rights of more people. This is because the key people which is in this case the Regional Office have the socio-political influence within the institution.

I work for change in the clients by trying to identify their strength and weaknesses thru the consultation and home visits I conducted. Change can occur including within the organization by constantly giving feedback to the management and administrative personnel. In this case, I am referring to our Project Director and Regional Project Director.

1. Psychosocial Accompaniment within a Causal Loop Diagram

One example of a work problem arising from this is was shared by my former Tamil interpreter who started with JRS-URP almost at the same time as me. She was a psychosocial counselor in Sri Lanka before coming to Thailand to apply for refugee status. Last February 2011, she gave feedback to me that most of the women clients that we handle are keeping information from me cause by the change in my work responsibility which includes deciding the financial assistance to be given to them. Hence, due to the fact that they now see me as a key decision maker, they kept from me relevant information that might affect the decision I will make in terms of granting them financial assistance.

At that time, I realized that the psychosocial counseling will not be effective unless I have the trust of my clients. This will not happen though if the system and structure of the JRS-URP team will not change its strategies and policies in casework and social services that we provide.

Systems dynamics is the foundation of Systems thinking and developed by Jay Forrester in the 1950s (Pegasus Communication, Inc. 2008). It concentrates on the course of feedback (information that is communicated and revisited) that happens throughout the parts of the system--- and the systems response that cause these flows. For instance, system dynamicists study reinforcing processes--- feedback course through rapid development or failure --- and equalizing processes --- feedbacks moves to enhance the system preserve stability (Pegasus Communications, Inc. 2008)

A useful tool for analyzing is the Causal Loop Diagram (CLD). CLD is a type of scheme intellectual tool. These diagrams composed of arrows linking variables (things that change over time) in a way that conveys how one variable affects another (Pegasus Communications, 2008). Besides, a causal loop signifies a structure in feedback, which “in very many cases changing one issue will impact on another, which will then affect the first. Feedback will either reduce the impact of the change or amplify it.” (Mind Tools, n.d.).

Connecting these components together are the loops that indicates that they are interconnected in a way that they affect each other (Mind Tools,n.d.). In the end, these

components, reinforce (R) conflict and supporting (s) the variable “peace”, the violence which caused by the hatred, armed groups, opposes (O) or upsets the total intention of promoting peace and order, thus influencing intensely the “peace”.

It is like stimulus-response --- if there's an action, for example, introducing a psychosocial component in the URP must have a reason for it. So what is the cause behind it? There was more of dole out financial assistance given in the previous years with the JRS-URP which created dependency according to the current URP-PD (Research Journal, April 2011). These are interconnected to each other. For example, feedback from one client and the interpreter in terms of the change in the kind of services provided by the psychosocial counselor which affects the counseling wherein deciding for financial assistance was also included. Hence, CLD is a useful tool for analysis of the events and their linkages to each other.

METHODOLOGY

This action research project uses action research methodology that follow a process of diagnosing the problem being researched, planning, actions, reflection and further cycles of planning, action and reflection. At one level of research attention, I have my personal involvement in the conduct of my action research, at the level of interaction between myself and my work, I also involved others in undertaking my action research, analyzing outcomes, and understanding findings.

Research Questions

1. How will I in my own abilities assist the psychosocial accompaniment? What is my understanding of my role? What are my skills and behavior? What do I need to change? How?
2. How can JRS-URP and EVI women asylum seekers work together as a team to initiate processes? What are our tasks? What is our approach in building relationships with EVI women asylum seekers?
3. How do they (project director and caseworker) see their role and mine in psychosocial accompaniment for JRS –URP? What are they doing to enhance the psychosocial accompaniment to EVI women? How can they support improved changes? (i.e., make policy change in the JRS URP system)

Research Assumption

An important assumption underlying the action research focus of my work is that in addition to the counseling services, the creation of a space allowing the Sri Lankan EVI women to listen, share, and understand their collective issues and problems will lead to a more tactical discerning in considering the psychosocial accompaniment approach of JRS-URP and eventually reducing their anxiety and emotional stress.

1. Levels of Attention

In reinforcing this cyclical process, I also did a number of contemplations that assisted me more in conducting my research-in-action. I recorded my observations and took notice of the levels of attention, in details: my own actions and emotions (first layer), my relations and communications with others, my relational behaviors (second layer) and my perception about the whole action and dynamic forces at work that were occurring as a result of my action research (outer layer).

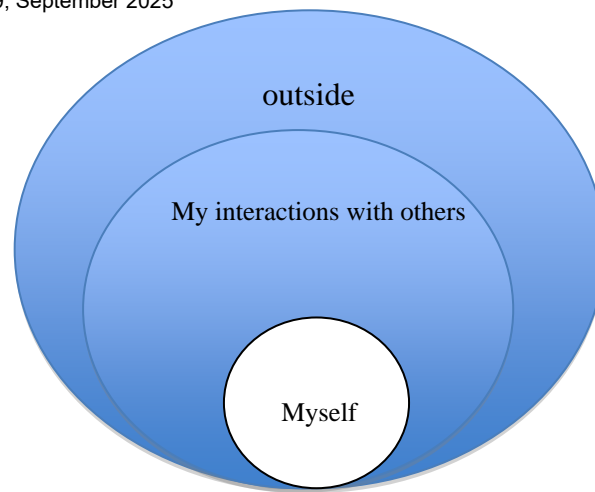


Figure 3. Levels of Attention (ACTS, 2005)

I have based my actions on my own work activities and with consideration cycles of action and reflection, with the components that came in between them: the planning of my action I have been engaged and the recording of significant information required as data. My primary technique of recording of what occurred as the outcome of my action was through journaling. Writing in my research diary captured my personal responses and reflections, the reactions of others and their reflections also. I also shared my thinking with my co-workers for their feedback.

My main action was the organizing of the support group for EVI women, single mothers and single, indigent female, involving my co-workers to take part in my actions, documenting them and taking part in the evaluations of my approach. My reflection phase comprised of the period that I have stop for a time from my actions, wrote my insights, specific perceptions and minor encounters in my diary as I remembered like a memory, my earlier actions. It was also a period for me to take down notes on the gaps of my actions, on what should have been appropriately done, and on what would be the next step. I was able to make 3 cycles of Action-Reflection which had brought together essential outcomes and substantial findings.

4. Cycles

The first consultation to start my action research involved my own team regarding my action research plan. As soon as I got back from my fourth module (March, 2011), I presented to our URP team my plan regarding my research and conducted a meeting with them before our annual meeting on April 2011. With support from my team nad for a focus on the EVI caseload, I then selected who will be part of the Sri Lankan single women and

single mother support group for its formation based on the EVI category. After which I reflected on the notes that I took as well as my interpreter's feedback. This constitutes Cycle One of my research.

Cycle 2 started with planning to have the first meeting with the support group by May 6, 2011 to listen to their feedback regarding the services provided by the JRS-URP Team. I took notes as well as my interpreter during the 2 sessions conducted as we separated the meeting with the 2 groups since they might have different concerns.

Cycle 3 was conducted during the World Refugee Day which was June 20, 2011. I tried to hear out their feedback regarding the changes that was implemented in the psychosocial services that JRS-URP team provides for them like the hiring of a woman as a psychosocial counselor.

Sample

My sample was composed of Sri Lankan women asylum seekers: 7 of them are single mothers and the 6 are single females. These 13 represent half the Sri Lankan caseloads of 26 are considered to be EVIs as they met the criteria of at least one of the EVI categories. Other nationalities were left out since this group is the highest among the urban refugees. During the duration of this AR project a total of 59 females were part of my caseload from 17 countries (See Appendix A). Twenty-eight are Sri Lankans, twenty-one are Pakistanis and twelve are Somalis which composed the highest number among the nationalities registered with JRS Thailand.

My co-workers who are included are: URP Director, caseworker and Tamil interpreter. Twenty-eight are Sri Lankan followed by 21 Pakistanis and 12 Somalis make the largest nationality groups.

Data Collection

For collecting data I have used three different methods. First is I maintained a research diary. Second, I conducted in-depth interviews and third I facilitated focus group discussions. My research diary was maintained throughout the time of the conduct of research. I documented all the events and experiences of every cycle of the three phases.

My colleagues gave me significant information during the process. The process of the research was based on the action and reflection approach.

Frequent e-mail exchanges took place between me and my colleagues. Hence, my data were taken from various resources. They were the data gathered from myself, my colleagues and the women asylum seekers.

For the Focus Group Discussion, I selected the chosen the Sri Lankan women as the focus group of my research since the Sri Lankans are the highest number of urban refugees in Bangkok. Likewise, most of them met the EVI guideline.

The subsequent chapter considered case study in the support group and my particular responsibility around them, which signified my specific actions in the 3 cycles I have carried

out. In linking the process that came about, I tried to implement my research project and the theories I had chosen that had reinforced my actions.

Data Analysis

Interpreting the data after collecting it is an important part of the Action Research. The qualitative data were analyzed making use of the narrative methods, using thematic analysis emerging from the data. The stories and reflections from the women and colleagues were used as both data and to validate my own findings.

Reflection

Reflections helped me understand about myself as well as others. The reflections made me not only understand the condition but also be mindful and concern with the changing conditions and plan for enhancement in the future. All my Action Research activities were always followed by reflections. After each significant event and activity I wrote down my reflections in my research diary. Occasionally, I revisited my earlier reflections and arrived to newer reflections. Likewise, I shared my own reflections, analysis and findings to my colleagues to get their feedback during formal and informal meetings. The reflections from other JRS staff supported to determine the findings of each activity. The reflective and reflexive habit empowered me to be confident in my comprehension, analysis and findings.

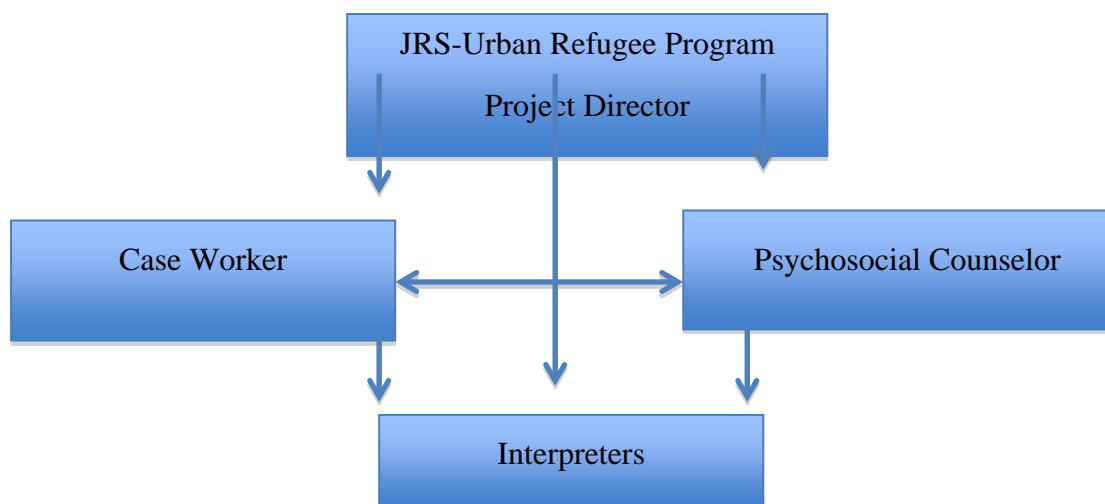
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As I carried out my research, I went on to emphasize on validating my project and attempted to relate the theories from the literature which I was reviewing. My early actions focused on my involvement in bringing together the Sri Lankan EVI women asylum seekers in a support group meeting. In close coordination with the JRS-URP team with the help of my new Tamil interpreter. In this chapter, my actions built-in the series of steps or stages, categorized into 3 cycles of my action research, utilized to bring about the validity of my project: that a venue allowing the Sri Lankan EVI women to listen, share, and understand their collective issues and problems will lead to a more tactical discerning in considering the psychosocial accompaniment approach of JRS-URP and eventually reducing their anxiety and emotional stress.

The objective of the support group meeting was to contribute to the creation of a venue for Sri Lankan EVI asylum seekers towards ensuring that asylum seekers have the access to counseling, psychosocial support and adequate referral services. It had 3 supplementary purposes which are the following:

- a. To respond to their collective needs;
- b. To strengthen their capacity to manage their psychosocial and safety concerns; and
- c. To engage them in self-help livelihood activities

Figure 4: Organizational Structure of JRS-URP



1. First Cycle

This building up activities comprised the groundwork for the 1st support group meeting, specifically: meeting with colleagues, brainstorming, evaluation of the services that the JRS-URP team offered before, consultations, self-analysis, budgeting, preparation on logistics as well as planning-designing the actual conduct of the 1st support group meeting.

In a number of planning-meeting with Yonip, Wan (not their real name) and other colleagues in JRS, the need to enhance the psychosocial accompaniment was considered. An evaluation of these was also conducted wherein I was able to participate. Consultations with Yonip and Wan were also done that time by me and I got both positive and negative feedback from them.

The formation of the support group was highly praised by my team and by the Sri Lankan EVI women who participated in the initial consultation meeting. This was manifested when the URP Director sighted it during our Annual Meeting, “I am glad that support groups for the EVI Sri Lankan women have been initiated already and group sessions are being conducted to have a collective analysis and active involvement of the members.” (Research Journal, April 2011). One of the members of the support group, Thaba (not her real name) expressed “how happy she is that there is a group like this being formed for them.”

A significant reflection from this process was that involving the rest of the colleagues in planning the psychosocial activity will make them more aware of the purpose of this approach and give them a deeper understanding of the significance of this approach. The involvement of the asylum seekers in the consultation too regarding the formation of a support group gave them a feeling of importance, that their consent and opinion matters.

My learning from this cycle is that there must not only be involvement and participation in the program level but all of the stakeholders involved which will be used in the second cycle.

2. Second Cycle

In the conduct of the first support group meeting, I requested our Tamil interpreter to inform and remind the women who are identified EVIs. I facilitated the meeting and asked them first if they understood the reason why I called them for this and what is the purpose of the support group. All of them just smiled sheepishly at me. I encouraged them to answer the question as they are no wrong answers at all. One of them replied that our interpreter just informed them that I called for a meeting and did not elaborate further. I was completely surprised with this since I specifically explained to her the purpose of the meeting. Then I explained to them the purpose of the meeting was to organize them into support group of single mothers and single females. The reason was that they are having the same experience and facing similar problems. Hence, they must try to help each other in coping with all the difficulties they are facing.

As it began to sink in on them my reason to them, they asked me how I can be of help to solve their problems if I do not anymore give them money for their rent and food.

With this, I asked them that we first identify the common problems that they face and prioritize them. The following pressing issues were raised: (1) financial problem regarding their rent, (2) rejected cases – long waiting period to get the result which causes anxiety and stress tremendously, (3) transportation, (4) limited skills, (5) language problem, and (6) security problem.

Most of them identified that their pressing concern is the time duration of the RSD process that takes longer than they expected which disturbs them a lot especially the single mothers. This makes them so stress that their release is to beat their children, one of the rejected cases shared.

My suggestion to them was to act as a group and not as individuals. For their voices to be heard they must act on their collective concerns which they have identified themselves. I made them understand that JRS have limited resources to assist them but we can facilitate and guide them on what to do.

I could see in their faces how excited they are upon hearing this. One of them suggested that they write a petition letter and let Sathya translate it. My suggestion was to write it instead in their local language in order to give the impression of authenticity.

I realized that as long as a venue is provided for them to share their experiences and listen to each others grievances, they feel relieve that they are not alone in this kind of predicament. It gave them a sense of community and belongingness as a support system.

My learning from this cycle that influenced my last cycle was that a suitable environment is a prerequisite in conducting a psychosocial activity like a support group meeting.

Third Cycle

The third cycle was the second support group meeting. I requested them to recall the previous meeting and what they have learned from it. As they informed my interpreter and me, they gained positive lessons which they learned. They were able to apply the approaches and skills in dealing with their fears, anxiety and stress. They came to understand the root

cause of their common problems in their present situation as asylum seekers in Thailand. One of the single mothers emotionally raised the issue of long waiting period for RSD (Refugee Status Determinations Process) and the rejection that they get after waiting for so long like this particular woman who waited for 19 months and then being rejected. This caused her extreme anxiety and stress. Another single mother also shared that she is already waiting for 10-months since she filed her appeal. I suggested to them that since there are a number of them who have the same experience then they should write a letter or petition to raise this particular concern. My argument was it is better for them to act as a group than as individuals so that their voices will be heard more loudly. They realized that it was a sound suggestion so they agreed that they will draft it together with Sathya, our Tamil interpreter in their local language in order to express its authenticity. I was stimulated in facilitating the meeting relieving these women with their hatred, emotions particularly their anger. Moreover, I was challenged on how we can develop to carry on this awareness in order to influence change. Likewise, I was also inspired by the fact that some of the EVI Sri Lankan women who became participants of the support group meeting are willing to help each other and JRS-URP. These are the single, indigent women. Those who are single mothers have more responsibilities. One of them shared that how can they learn English if they have lots of problems. Yet, I still had this question in my mind: why? In my opinion, I considered the thought that every individual, innately wanted freedom from strife, to be calm and to be an instrument of peace. It's just that every now and then when faced with vulnerable situations, an individual's negative feelings arise before even discerning or questioning what is happening and why. However, I was gladly open to the learnings of the support group meeting, being given the chance to listen and increase my understanding. I took notes and reflected upon the recommendations of one to arrange a teacher to come to their neighborhood and teach them English instead of them coming to the office due to security problem which cause anxiety and stress on them and to provide for them handicraft making and sewing classes. The challenge was for me to find volunteers who are willing to go to their neighborhood to conduct this activities and the resources needed.

The evaluation of the support group meeting reflected the theory on the levels of change by Lederach that comprises the personal, relational levels. Then for change to give an impression meaningfully, support group meetings should be sustained in order to reach the cultural and structural levels --- affecting the systems, policies and guidelines of JRS.

Driven by this need, in several discussions with my colleague, I suggested to have another meeting and activity on World Refugee Day itself. I proposed that after the 2nd support group meeting, the support group will join both the regional and country office staff in our regular lunch together. I presented this proposal during a meeting with the Regional Office of JRS in June 16, 2011. I put emphasis on its rationale and specific purpose as it deals with another level of intervention, psychosocial accompaniment with others.

Since there was an arrest that occurred on June 15, 2011, the planned World Refugee Day Celebration was conducted in a low profile way. JRS-URP decided to have lunch with the Sri Lankan female support group. This was more meaningful for them since they felt the sincerity of the whole JRS staff including the Regional Office. One of the members of the support group shared to me how honored she is to be treated like a normal human being.

In this narrative section I would also like to describe some of the ongoing challenges I faced. I faced time constraints during my research. I had to discipline myself to manage my time of studies with my other responsibilities in the office.

There was a feeling of doubt for me after listening to some feedback from the office that gave me the feeling of not being supportive in my endeavor. This situation did not change that much. I manage though to be more understanding on the system and be more creative on my approach. I learned that it is difficult to work in an environment that is male dominated. There is an obviously power relations that affects the delivery of services.

Summary and Findings:

The sequence of actions I was able to perform and their outcomes were important in examining my action research project and evaluating it. I also highlighted how I was or was not able to achieve fully my research goal.

I will begin with some general findings that relate to my findings on the three layers of research attention:

Self: I have learned to be more reflective and reflexive due to my Action Research process specifically when I started to record my reflections in my research diary. I have enhanced my capacity and also critiqued myself in being sensitive in certain issues and occasions. This was realized by the comments I received from my colleagues. The Project Director commented on the changes in me (Diary, April 2011) saying that, “You became more efficient in making case reports and dealing with clients.”

Hence, I will assist the psychosocial accompaniment by being more consultative in the approach with my clients and listen earnestly to their suggestions and take it into consideration. My understanding of my role is not only conducting counseling but at the same time design activities for them to serve as a coping mechanism and enhance their skills and abilities. I believe I also need to create support mechanisms for them like the support group. I need to change the environment of the consultations as it is not conducive for activities nor counseling by trying to raise it to our new assistant country director who is more open to the idea and understands the need for an exclusive room to do counseling. My skills are I am innovative and resourceful. My behavior is I am an aggressive person and fights for what i think is right in protecting my clients. I need to change and tone down my aggressiveness as I believe this is misinterpreted by trying to be more reflexive and think about effective and appropriate actions to convince the key persons in our office to change the policy in the office.

Us: The head of the organization was not that supportive towards me on my research which indicated the need to further explore the relational problems that may exist within the organizational team. My team members though are much more supportive.

On the other hand, JRS-URP and EVI women asylum seekers can work together as a team to initiate processes if there is a regular meeting with the whole team of JRS-URP and EVI women asylum seekers. This will create and establish more camaraderie and support mechanism. Our task is to be more facilitative and to be more vigilant in trying to lobby or advocate for changes that needs to be undertaken in the system that has been established so that it will facilitate policy changes for the enhancement of the services provided by URP team. Our approach in building relationships with EVI women asylum seekers is more participatory and inclusive. This is so they feel the ownership and sincerity.

They: If the team members are not decision makers and are not given enough creativity in enhancing the program, it is difficult to change the system. The Project director and caseworker see their role and mine in psychosocial accompaniment for JRS-URP as complementary to each other. The project director usually gives relevant advice in terms of enhancing the psychosocial accompaniment to EVI women while the caseworker provides

relevant information. They can support improved changes by being more vocal as a team in terms of the significance of policy changes in the JRS-URP system.

During the Action Research process and analysis there were several other findings which are summarized as follows:

1. The importance of a supportive team with capacity to really act out the vision:

I began my Action Research from the conflict transformation aspect based on the importance of my work responsibility. During the process, I have to consult my team and asked permission from the Regional head of the office.

2. Institutionalizing the concept for more acceptance

Working in an unstable environment, it requires flexibility and common sense, rather than just following regulations. There is no one right way or time for it. This depends on the particular context of the conflict and the innovativeness, comprehension and initiation of the facilitator. However, to be more accepting and put it into regular practice, there is a need to institutionalize it by integrating it in the organization's policies and guidelines and inculcating it in the mentality of the staff.

3. Psychosocial Accompaniment requires a holistic approach

My experience showed that working towards enhancement of the psychosocial accompaniment is not only a one shot deal. It is an on going process. It requires a holistic approach at all levels of the decisionmakers. Initially, my thinking was on my specific role but this has now become broader to include other aspects of the context such as the environment and other actors.

Given the research assumption underlying the action research focus of my work is that in addition to the counseling services, the creation of a space allowing the Sri Lankan EVI women to listen, share, and understand their collective issues and problems will lead to a more tactical discerning in considering the psychosocial accompaniment approach of JRS-URP and eventually reducing their anxiety and emotional stress; I still believe it is the same. However, I believe the space does not mean that it should be within JRS but we can make use of other facilities available within the network or even their own living space

I think self-realization was useful for me about the research as i began to discover my weaknesses as a professional providing this kind of service and acknowledge it. What is useful for my organization is the relevant findings to be a basis for policy changes. In terms of others doing similar work, they can make use of the significant recommendations as they are in similar situations and providing psychosocial accompaniment with similar vulnerable group of people.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This Action Research showed the limitations that staff may bring particularly when they do not have the proper training in conducting the approach. Good training and mindfulness alongside a willingness to think out of the box or being flexible is a major advantage in assessing and redesigning the program, work or plan. No two conditions will ever be the same as even the actors involved will have their own specific personality, purpose and interest.

I would like to conclude that psychosocial accompaniment is not only a one time program but a continuously developing process. It is a key strategy of URP. A good training, awareness, and willingness to support the initiative is important for making it effective.

Psychosocial accompaniment should not only be at the material or financial mode but more at the emotional recovery and healing process. It is not only at the individual or clients group level but also in the actions of the organization. It needs to be inculcated in the minds and the hearts of the development and social workers. It should be owned and applied in all levels of the organization and in all decision maker levels and system.

There will always be conflict existing in a constructive or destructive manner in our everyday life. This conflict can be in any form: personal, social, cultural, economical, legal or relational.

Motivating the staff, teamwork and the culture in the organization is important in psychosocial accompaniment to own the technique and apply at all levels of the institution.

In conclusion, psychosocial accompaniment is context specific. Organizations should contextualize the method according to its working condition, especially in the context of refugee camps and in working with extremely vulnerable individuals. Other organizations can learn from JRS experiences but they need to formulate their own model of psychosocial accompaniment depending on the context of their work and by analyzing their organizations' system and structure.

Recommendations that I can make therefore are the following:

1. Employing staff in a position with the necessary professional experience and background as it is significant in the kind of services being provided and its efficiency.
2. Provide staff development for staff who needs it as it is necessary to equipped the staff with the required skills and abilities to deal and cope with the task at hand.
3. Initiate change by using creative ways in proving points if other means did not work out.
4. Staff also needs self care and psychosocial support who are working in this field especially during emergencies which must be provided by the human resource department as well.

REFERENCES

Art, R. and Jervis, R. (2005). International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues. Seventh Edition. NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Dugan, M. 1996. 'A nested theory of conflict' *Women in Leadership* vol. 1, no. 1

Francis, D. (2002). *People, Peace and Power: Conflict Transformation in Action*. London: Pluto Press

HealthNet TPO Website. Last retrieved on 7th September 2011:
<http://www.healthnettpo.org/en/1130/refugee-care-project.html>

Kirkwood, C. (1998). *System Dynamics Methods: A Quick Introduction*. Retrieved July 24, 2

011 from the World Wide Web

<http://www.public.asu.edu/kirkwood/sysdyn/SDIntro/SDIntro.html>

Lederach, J. (2003). The Little Book of Conflict Transformation. Pennsylvania: Good Books.

Mind Tools. (n.d.). Systems Diagram: Understanding how factors affect one-another.

Retrieved July 24, 2011 from the World Wide Web: https://www.mindtools.com/cgi-bin/sgx2/shop.cgi?page=orderform_mindtools.html

Pegasus Communications, Inc. Causal Loop Diagrams. Retrieved July 25, 2011 from the World Wide Web <http://www.pegasuscom.com/cld/html>

Ogato, S. (2002). From State Security to Human Security. Retrieved July 24, 2011 from the World Wide Web http://humansecuritychs.org/activities/outreach/ogata_ogdem.html

Ogato, S. (2003). Human Security Now. Retrieved July 24, 2011 from the World Wide Web [www://humansecuritychs.org](http://www.humansecuritychs.org)

Rourke, J., & Boyer, M. (2000). World Politics: International Politics on the World Stage. Sluice Dock, Guilford: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

Schirch, L. (2004). The Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding. Pennsylvania: Good Books.

Shapiro, Ilana. (2005). Theories of Change. Retrieved July 25, 2011 from the World Wide Web: http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/theories_of_change