

Staff-care for women's rights organisations in post-conflict regions of the Middle East



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The Challenge

The need for support in Northern Iraq is enormous: Around 2.6 million Iraqis and over 200,000 Syrians are displaced within the country. Nearly a third of them are seeking refuge in the Kurdish Autonomous Region. Many of the displaced women and girls have survived extreme violence.

Professionals and activists who offer support to survivors of gender-based violence in the Kurdish Autonomous Region are exposed to trauma dynamics on

a day-to-day basis. Often, their clients' experiences of violence resonate with their own experiences.

As a result, supporters may not only show individual stress and trauma exposure reactions. The collective experience of violence and chronic stress, resulting from political and economic instability and from discrimination because of gender, ethnicity or class, can translate into stress and trauma dynamics in teams or entire organisations.



PROJECT NAME

Development of a Contextualised Staff-Care Concept in a Conflict Region

DONOR

Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

LEADING EXECUTIVE AGENCY

medica mondiale e.V.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Emma Organisation for Human Development (Emma)

DURATION

October 2018 – December 2021

VOLUME

EUR 300,000

→ **The collective experience of violence and chronic stress can translate into stress and trauma dynamics in teams or entire organisations.**

Our Approach

The project focuses on the role and responsibility of organisations to care for the psychosocial wellbeing and stability of their staff, and to promote healthy workplace dynamics. Its goal is to enable the local women's rights organisation Emma to develop a context- and gender-specific staff care concept for the Kurdish Autonomous Region. Based on *medica mondiale's* Stress- and Trauma-sensitive Approach® (STA), Emma has developed a concept that responds to the specific local challenges.

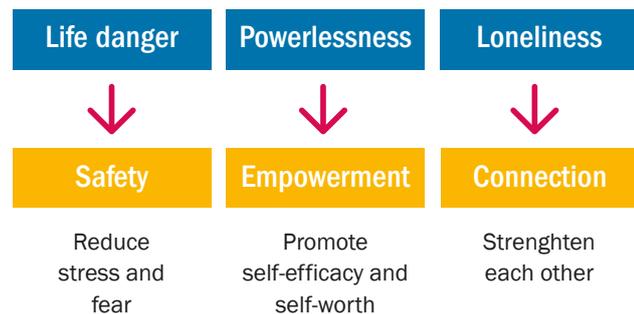
medica mondiale consults the partner organisation on the following areas:

- Increasing awareness of the negative impacts of cumulative exposure to trauma and stress.
- Establishing structures, processes and policies that increase safety, empowerment, and connection and solidarity for staff members.
- Establishing self-care practices in the teams.

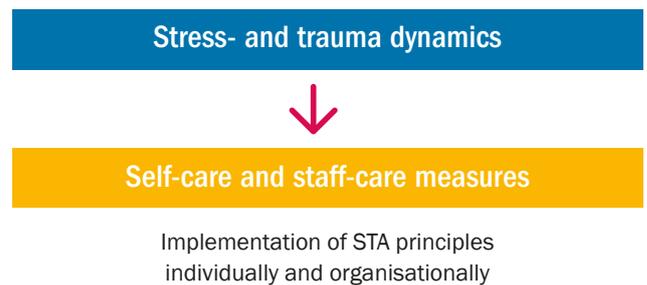
As a result of the project, *medica mondiale* and Emma will develop recommendations on replicating context- and gender specific staff care concepts in other crisis and post-conflict regions.

THE STA® PRINCIPLES

In support of survivors



For supporters and organisations



The blue fields indicate traumatic experiences. The yellow ones describe a stress- and trauma-sensitive approach in dealing with these.

Results

As of mid-2020, Emma and *medica mondiale* have:



identified the specific stressors leading to feelings of **unsafety**, **disempowerment** and **disconnection** in Emma's work.



highlighted **gender-specific stressors** and **dangers** that affect Emma's female staff.



developed holistic staff-care components to promote the STA principles of **safety**, **empowerment** and **connection** on an organisational level.