

## THIS ISSUE: Psychosocial Support

### How Can You Help?

*Provide financial support for psychosocial services and/or the counseling course*

*Volunteer your time with the Psychosocial Support Team*

*Provide continued prayerful support for the Psychosocial Support Program and the work taking place.*

### How to give?

Refuge-Egypt accepts cheques and bank transfers from all corners of the world. For specific details on how to give from where you are, please visit our website:

[www.refuge-egypt.org/](http://www.refuge-egypt.org/)

\* see "support us"



\* The Psychosocial Institute of Cairo is part of the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies at The American University in Cairo



## Psychosocial Support Program

In addition to the challenges of daily life, financial insecurities, and livelihood issues in Egypt, many asylum seekers and refugees may face additional stresses, including disaster or war-induced trauma. Refuge Egypt recognizes that there are a range of social and psychological impacts of disaster and displacement. Supporting mental health and wellness is thus an important part of our holistic programming.

In 2010 Refuge Egypt staff member Shadow Woli, graduated from the Psychosocial Training Institute of Cairo\* and has recently designed the new Psychosocial Support Program at Refuge Egypt. The new department will work with all Refuge Egypt programs to promote the psychosocial well being of

every person we interact with.

"Basically," Shadow Woli explains, "we want to make sure that people are living life as it is meant to be lived." This is about more than the absence of feeling bad. It's about feeling good, thriving, and living a fulfilling life.

The new department will help refugees adjust back into normal life after traumatic experiences, provide counseling and activities to promote psychological well-being, resilience and self-reliance, and provide educational seminars on psychosocial theory as well as relevant social topics.

For individual counseling, the Refuge Egypt medical and emergency teams refer people in need of

psychosocial help to our psychosocial worker. Individuals are also welcome to request counseling themselves. In addition to this work, the psychosocial team will periodically spend time in each department observing and learning about the issues being dealt with, in order to provide comprehensive support and relevant programming.

The psychosocial department also continues the previous work of the counseling department by facilitating support groups for young people, holding individual counseling sessions, and running the lay Christian counseling course for community leaders.

*(Continued on p2)*

## A Look at . . . Spiritual Ministries

- During 2009, 92 individual counseling sessions were held, primarily referred from our medical clinics. Support groups for youth were also held monthly throughout the year in different neighborhoods around Cairo.

- In 2009, 41 students completed the Basic Lay Counseling Training Program, and 35 students continued through the Intermediate level 1 and 2.

In 2009, we offered an Intermediate level 2 to increase the instruction time and practical experience of the participants in preparation for the Advanced course. In the Advanced course, which began in February 2010, lectures have been complimented with case studies and role play to further develop their skills.

- The Inner Healing Retreat, held in December 2009,

provided participants with a place, tools and the support to address trauma and wounds from their pasts. In 2009, we also offered two marriage seminars; one for counseling students and other community members and one for church leaders and community leaders and their spouses. A seminar was also held for staff and counseling students on trauma and counseling.



Shadow Woli, psychosocial worker

"We are seeing the counseling training turning into action as counselors are doing the work in the community. In that way it is effective – we train people from the community and then send them out there to do the work. That's something we hope for and it's happening. And it's something that's very encouraging for us."

–Shadow Woli,  
psychosocial worker

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**

We regret that in the February issue we used the term "high risk" in error in the article about HIV/AIDS treatment programs. While, due to many factors associated with flight, some asylum seekers and refugees may be vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, this is not to say that refugees are a high risk group.

Refuge-Egypt would also like to thank all of the people who worked in the effort to gain support from the Global Fund for the ARV treatment project.

## Psychosocial Support (cont. from page 1)

Support groups for young people have been held in different neighborhoods throughout Cairo for about 10-15 people per session. These groups provide the opportunity to discuss various relevant social topics, including: responsibility, respect, supporting and contributing to the community and setting an example, youth and sexuality, future deliberations, and marriage.

The lay Christian counseling course, which has recently been expanded to include more practical skills training, trains selected community members in a Western-style

approach to counseling. This is a "new thing for the refugee population of Cairo," Woli said. Many people are struggling to eat enough, let alone set aside time to uncover and deal with emotional trauma. But people are doing it.

Something about the need for emotional stability transcends societal bounds. And the idea is being exported beyond Cairo, too. Woli recently received a call from a graduate of the counseling classes. He was in southern Sudan, offering counseling to the residents of his home

community.

"We are seeing the counseling training turning into action as counselors are doing the work in the community. In that way it is effective," says Woli.

Still, help is needed on an ever-increasing scale. People must participate; people who have hearts of service. And so, Woli issues a call to all those who have the means to do so: "Just come and see. Come and serve."

## So Far in 2010 . . . A General Update

**During the first quarter of 2010, the following achievements have been made:**

- 219 new asylum seekers have been registered with the Emergency Team; 82% of them Sudanese.
- The Employment Office has placed 116 people in jobs.
- 986 consultations have taken place at the Arba wa Nus medical clinic.
- Needed clothing has been distributed to 768 people.
- 692 consultations have taken place in the Well Baby Clinic. 719 consultations have taken place in the Well Child Clinic.
- 47 students are enrolled in the Happy Child Preschool in Maadi.
- 2,300 food packages have been distributed.
- 369 blankets were distributed to those in need.
- 50 people have completed the domestic cleaning training program.
- 2,572 consultations have taken place at the Zamalek medical clinic.
- 37 new employers registered with the Employment Office.

