

Gaza Focusing Project



Annual Report - April 2016

1st May/2015 - 30th April/2016

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Implemented by
Palestine Trauma Centre for Victims' Welfare (PTC-Gaza)

Supervised by
Palestine Trauma Centre (UK) and the International Focusing Institute
(USA)

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1.Report Summary

Focusing is the process of recalling and welcoming of worm attitude towards feelings that are generated in our daily life. Focusing is listening to our feelings in a worm, kind, and accepting way in order to open an entrance to the human body's wisdom. This should be useful to create pathways to growth, development, wounds healing, and reinforcement of psychosocial resilience. The focusing program aims to enable the participants to develop their skills of using the focusing techniques with their selves in order to develop their abilities in improving the quality of their lives.

The project's activities were represented by implementing individual and group focusing sessions with families, children, and adults from the age group that varies between (10-65) at different places within the targeted project areas. During this period, 108 participants from Gaza Refugees Camps benefited from the project activities; (45) old women and (36) old men; (15) female university students; (10) male university students; (2) families.

All of the above clients were received 12 focusing session within three months, one session every week was taken place. The categories of clients were diverse to cover elderly men and women, female and male university students and two families. The format of focusing was combined between individual and group.

The team used various techniques; for instance, listening to ourselves skill, the quality of listening to others skill, distance at present time and partitioning skill, verbal reflections skill, psychological resilience activity, relaxation and tapping activity, safe place exercise, name expression exercise, thoughts and feelings differentiation, drawing of

feelings, expressing feelings by symbols and images, images embodiment, teddy bear exercise to express children's feelings, and a number of other open activities.

One of the most important events was the work team participation in the international focusing conference in Seattle-Washington, in which the focusing experience in Gaza, the top focusing activities that have been used, and the focusing short film (10 mins) were presented at the conference. Here below is the link for the film:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vu6mUJb9TCk&feature=youtu.be>

The focusing journey in Gaza was a huge success, in which the focusing techniques spread quickly due to the ease of extending them between the different target groups and the simplicity of the skills they are taught. These skills are easy to learn by everybody inside or outside the family regardless of their age or educational level. The safety element that the focusing program grants the participant increased the speed of spreading these skills, in which the participant is given the freedom to manage and lead the situation in expressing his feelings without any sort of blame, judgment, or enforcement.

By observing the participants during this period, there was a notable improvement in their daily performance and their ability to understand their selves and others. This provides a good indicator regarding accomplishing the general goal of the project.

2. Main goal of the project:

Contribute to enabling the participants to develop their skills in using the focusing techniques with their selves, and help in developing their ability to deal with their children, and their family members by adopting the focusing program techniques.

3. Executed activities

3.1. Preparing and developing the focusing session's manuals.

3.1.1 Preparing and developing the focusing manual for trainees

The supervisor -Dr. Mohamed Altawil- prepared and developed the focusing manual for trainees, which included the first, the second, and the third level of focusing sessions and executed activities with the trainees. He also trained the focal group on these three levels of focusing sessions throughout regular meetings and trainings that are conducted weekly over Skype.

3.1.2 Preparing the Focusing Manual for adult beneficiaries

The focusing project's coordinator Mrs. Ghadah Redwan prepared a manual for the focusing sessions for adult beneficiaries under supervision of Dr. Mohamed Altawil, the focusing trainers; Jerry Conway, Merry Jenings, and Renieh Fewgilarz. The manual included twelve sessions along with other supporting activities and evaluation forms. As well as; new sessions were developed as a result of the documented single and group sessions, and the manual is revised and improved on regular basis.

3.2. Implementing group focusing sessions

The project coordinator Ghada and the other facilitators (Nuha Abukarsh, Iman Matar, and Hadeel Budair) implement group focusing sessions as mentioned in the focusing manual, which consist of twelve sessions that vary in duration from one hour to one and a half hours, with (60) Female participants, and (46) Male participants, with ages that vary from (8 to 65). These sessions were delivered through partner associations: Beit Jdodna for males, Beit Jdodna for females, and gender based students from Alazhar University.

3.3. Implementing individual focusing sessions

Individual focusing sessions as mentioned in the focusing manual, which consisted of twelve sessions that varied in duration from one hour to one and a half hours, were implemented with two Female participants (ages varied from (8 to 65) at the Centre, houses, and some local partner NGOs in the Gaza strip.

3.4. Sessions implementation mechanism

The focusing program was implemented with individuals, groups, and families according to the following procedures:

The participants signed a consent form to the project activities, while keeping the center's rights in photographing and publishing.

1. The participants signed a consent form to participate in the focusing project's activities. All rights for documentation and publish are reserved for the Centre.
2. The facilitator applied the focusing program using a pre assessment before the session's commencement, which is represented in a group of questions that are asked by the facilitator through conducting an interview with the participant at the first session.

3. The facilitator used formative evaluation during the implementation of the sessions and a post assessment at the end of the sessions to identify the effects of the program.
4. A number of participants were transferred to receive specialized therapeutic sessions at the therapeutic unit of the centre. The follow up and referral system was implemented based on the facilitators' evaluation for the participant depending on continues observation for him/her during the sessions. This is observed by whether the participant is cooperative and expressing positive signs for improvement or not.

3.5. Program evaluation

- Assessment forms were filled in by all the participants of the individual and group sessions that were coordinated through associations.
- The written and verbal assessment results showed that the participants in the focusing sessions' activities and focusing exercises, who were numbered (108) participants, were benefited directly by reinforcing their psychosocial resilience during crises. Success signs were clearly visible in acquiring the focusing techniques, which will be shown in the success stories mentioned later in this report. Many participants successfully managed their emotions and accepted the hard feelings accompanied their deep buried memories.
- New participants indirectly benefited by the focusing sessions, since the direct beneficiaries extended their experience to their successfully Results have shown that the workers in PTC/Gaza clearly benefited by working with the cases. This reflected on their ability to care for their selves and in reinforcing their resilience while working with the cases.

3.6 Supervision and follow up mechanism:

Regular individual and group weekly sessions are conducted by the professional supervisor Dr. Mohamed Altawil with the project coordinator and the focusing team, to provide them with training and development on the focusing techniques updates.

3.7. Starting the procedures to implement a master study

The focusing project's coordinator applied a proposed counseling program based on the focusing program and its relations to developing the daily life skill for 400 students from Alazhar University in Gaza. A sample was chosen to implement the focusing sessions with (10-15) students, to identify the effects of the focusing program on developing their daily life skills and the extent to which it improved their psychological state. Indeed, group sessions were conducted from 17/01/2016 to 27/02/2016. After statistical processing, the results have shown an obvious psychological improvement and development of the daily life skills for those sample students.

4. Importance and benefits of the focusing sessions to the beneficiaries:

The verbal assessment through beneficiaries' comments showed the magnificent effect of the focusing sessions on them, and the extent to which the sessions have helped them locate their pain. They acquired the ability to partition and reduce their painful feelings, and to start a dialogue with those feelings in order to reach a moral inner peace. In addition, the comments showed the beneficiaries' ability to transfer their experience from the focusing sessions to their family surroundings, by practicing the focusing exercises that they have learned in the sessions. One beneficiary commented that she have created a vital atmosphere

within her family, and that the children used to wait for her to come back from the sessions in order to practice what she have learned in that session.

4.1. Benefits on the participants' level (Children and adults)

The participants benefited from the focusing sessions that were implemented with them at many centers and associations in the Gaza strip. This success appears clearly in the comments of the as follows:

A female participant (N.D 19 yrs) from Graduates association at Alnasser area said: "With every focusing session, my feelings refreshed to the better. I found relief through these sessions because I found someone who can listen to me and support me. I remembered all the beautiful days in my life and my safe place back in my little room while gathering with my brothers and family around my mother. I started looking at life with optimism, security, and belief that everything happens to us is a test from Allah who loves me".

A female participant (Z.N 62 yrs) from Beit Jdodna club at Alnasser area said: "Before the sessions, every time I passed by the doorstep where my husband died, I used to go through a phase of complicated feelings from anger, grief, to refraction. But after the Quran verses and cards session, feelings of content about destiny started to fill my heart, step by step, and listening to my life mates' experiences also helped me".

A female participant (N.K 56 yrs) from Beit Jdodna club at Alnasser area said: "All my life, I have been listening to my children and my husband and their problems, but I have never found someone to listen to me. Today I feel so relieved because I found someone to listen to me and help me listen to myself and my feelings. The edge of feelings' session affected me, it made me talk about all the life bumps that we have lived

through without ever expressing the pain that caused us, we used to cover it with a smile and keep it bleeding inside of us without ever bandaging it until life worn us down. But today, we found the chance to talk about those pains and bandage them".

A female participant (K.K 49 yrs) from Beit Jdodna club at Alnasser area said: "After my husband has passed away, I was afraid of living life. But now, I regained my self confidence, the focusing sessions made me understand myself, and my feelings. I also made new friends".

A female participant (A.M 20 yrs) from Graduates association at Alnasser area said: "Just mentioning my mother and her death was a forbidden area that I cannot dare approach. Drawing of feelings session affected me a lot, through which I felt that I have opened my deep inflamed wound by drawing on the papers and talking about losing my mother. Bust I started to bandage my wound and I started feeling content. During the safe place session, I recalled my mother and imagined her telling me to always feel good so she could rest in peace".

A female participant (Y.A 68 yrs) from Beit Jdodna club at Alnasser area said: "I grew the habit of giving by working in teaching for fifty years, and I created generations who became pride for their selves and for our country. Honestly, today in the focusing sessions, I found generations of feelings inside of me. I started to feel the need to care for myself, how much I need to feel containment and to be embraced by others".

A male participant (E.N 75 yrs) from Beit Jdodna club at Alshate area said: "I am a 75 years old man, through the feelings embodiment session, this group reminded me of memories from 69 years old, when we first left our country carrying nothing but pain and fear. During this session, I remembered how my father dug up a hole for us that looked

like a grave in order to sleep in it and protect ourselves from the cold nights. All of my family passed away now and rested in their graves waiting for me to follow them. Perhaps what I am feeling is the fear of death, or maybe it's the hope to see them. Mixed feelings that are not easy to be confronted But I managed to express them during these sessions"

A female participant (S.H 21 yrs) from Alazhar university of Gaza, Alnasser area said: "the focusing sessions changed me, especially after the psychological resilience session, in which t enabled me to list to my inner self telling me how strong I am regardless of my chronic disease, that I suffer from chronic breathing asthma. I used to be weak, but the focusing sessions revived the hope inside of me, it gave me the courage to pursue hopes and happiness".

A male participant (B.A 19 yrs) from Alazhar university of Gaza, Jabalia refugees camp said: "The focusing sessions opened new prospects for me, in which, the different focusing topics gave me a rich culture regarding the way of dealing with previous experiences. Also, my responses to different situations changed after the sessions"

A male participant (A.K), University professor from Alazhar university of Gaza, Khan-Yonus area said: " I followed up and recorded the positive opinions of the students and participants in the focusing sessions, I also recorded their advancement at the academic level and other day life skills, I hope that my colleagues and I would have an opportunity to join the focusing sessions in the near future".

4.2 Benefits on the family's level

Parents and families benefited greatly by the focusing activities implemented at the local associations for reinforcing psychological resilience during crisis.

4.3 Benefits on the local community's level

On the communal level, coordinating and networking was made with local NGOs to open new channels for cooperation in implementing the project's activities at different locations in the Gaza Strip.

4.4. Benefits for the work team on the career development level:

Through working in this project, and extending from the previous period, the project coordinator and the team acquired many experiences and skills in dealing with the participants and providing professional interventions. Greater skills in managing the focusing sessions were also acquired.

Focusing Project			Donor Name: IQFA & PTC (UK)															
BUDGET CONTROL REPORT (BCR)			Project Period		1st May 2015 till 30th April 2016													
			Amount of the grant		11383.5 \$													
			Project No		14 / 2015													
No	Description	Amount (\$)	2015								2016				Grand total	Remaining	Completion Rate %	
1	Essential operating staff in PTC-Gaza		M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M 10	M 11	M12	M1	M2	M3	M 4				
1.1	Focusing Project worker / coordinator [F.T] 1 Person *450*12	\$5,400.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$4,950.00	\$450.00	91.67%
1.2	Focusing Project worker / (PT) 1 person 333\$ *12	\$3,996.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$333.00	\$3,663.00	\$333.00	91.67%
1.3	Focusing Project worker / (PT) 1 person 133\$ *12 (33*7)	\$1,365.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$1,265.00	\$100.00	92.67%
1.4	Focusing Project worker / (PT) 1 person 133\$ *12 (33*7)	\$1,365.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$133.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,165.00	\$200.00	85.35%
Subtotal		\$12,126.00	\$1,049.00	\$1,049.00	\$1,049.00	\$1,049.00	\$1,049.00	\$983.00	\$983.00	\$983.00	\$983.00	\$983.00	\$883.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,043.00	\$1,083.00	91.07%
2	Running costs																	
2.1	Transportation [in PTC-Gaza].	\$1,509.75	\$17.76	\$8.53	\$7.51	\$18.30	\$12.40	\$11.23	\$4.16	\$0.00	\$11.88	\$13.29	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$105.06	\$1,404.69	6.96%	
2.2	Hospitality [in PTC-Gaza].	\$739.48	\$0.00	\$192.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$238.74	\$0.00	\$85.98	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$516.72	\$222.76	69.88%	
2.3	Stationary	\$565.70	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$465.70	17.68%	
2.4	Documentation, photo, video, film	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	100.00%	
2.5	Digital Camera	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$0.00	100.00%	
Subtotal		\$3,114.93	\$217.76	\$200.53	\$7.51	\$118.30	\$12.40	\$11.23	\$4.16	\$338.74	\$11.88	\$99.27	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,021.78	\$2,093.15	294.51%	
TOTAL		\$15,240.93	\$1,266.76	\$1,249.53	\$1,056.51	\$1,167.30	\$1,061.40	\$994.23	\$987.16	\$1,321.74	\$994.88	\$1,082.27	\$883.00	\$0.00	\$12,064.78	\$3,176.15	385.58%	