# Effects of Chronic Trauma on Internally Displaced Persons

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## GCRT - Who we are

- Founded in 2000 head office Tbilisi regional offices Gori, Batumi, Kutaisi
- Multidisciplinary team psychiatrists, psychologists, medical doctors, social workers, lawyers
- providing assistance to traumatized individuals and communities – internally displaced persons, refugees from Chechnya, persons tortured by the law enforcement bodies
- Work conducted in the center and through community outreach

#### **IDP Traumas**

Massive – entire communities affected

Multiple – war, displacement,

Chronic – permanent victimhood

## Dimensions of Damage After Trauma

- Intrapsychic (including personality changes)
- □ Family (closeness, intimacy, balance)
- Transgenerational/Historical
- Social (injustice, isolation, secondary victimisation)
- Physical
- Economic

## Intrapsychic Dimension

- Trauma related disorders PTSD, Depression, Anxiety Disorders, Somatoform Disorders, etc.
- Alterations in self perceptions (identity crisis, loosing dignity, fragmentation)
- Profound feelings of shame and guilt
- Shattering of basic assumptions (Personal invulnerability, view of oneself in positive light, being worthy & good, belief in a meaningful, orderly world
- Alterations in relations with others
- Somatic and psychosomatic diseases

#### Familial Dimension

- formation of new family structures; re-distribution of roles within families
- Fragmentation within the families
- Domestic violence
- Violence towards children

## Socio-Economic Dimension

- ☐ Victimized Communities

- Passivity/Dependency
  Fear/Mistrust/hostility
  Alienation, marginalization
  Sense of Worthlessness
- Poverty
- Unemployment

#### Historical

- □ Past and current traumas
- Idealization of the past
- New post trauma narratives victimhood
- Disrupted Timeline before and after the war
- Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma

#### Trauma can lead to

Post traumatic damage with severe implications that may result in disorders, developmental arrest core belief change

or

Post traumatic growth – personal development, positive personality transformation, appreciation of life, value based lifestyle, resource activation. Paradox: "I am vulnerable yet stronger"

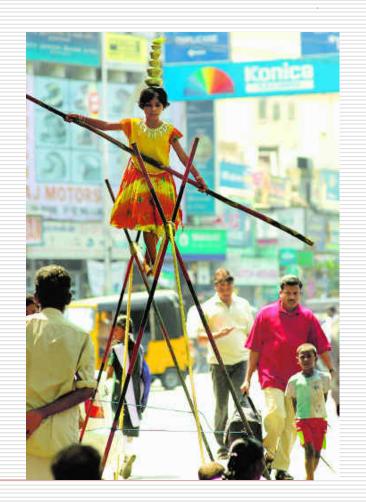
## Self-Healing/Resilience

- People have the capacity to heal themselves – these capacities should not be underestimated
- Resilience The ability to bounce back and successfully adapt to adversity and be better prepared

## A delicate balance:

Personal / socio-political Private / public Pain / resiliency

(Bala, 2004)



### Final Remarks

- Trauma is a complex phenomenon involving individual, communal, societal, legal, economic, political, historical dimensions
- trauma should be put in the broader context of mental health, public health, human rights and justice

Thank you for your attention