

Befrienders Worldwide

volunteer action to prevent suicide

Newsletter - January 2018

Introduction and note from the Board

Dear friends & colleagues

On behalf of Befrienders Worldwide I am delighted to introduce our latest newsletter.

Member Contributions

This time we have inspiring contributions from Kenya, Thailand, Malaysia, South Africa & Brazil which demonstrates the splendid mix of cultures and the sheer diversity of our organisation. We hope that you enjoy reading their news.

New Trustee and membership co-ordinator

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Maggie Galliano as Trustee of Befrienders Worldwide. As you will see from her profile Maggie has been associated with Samaritans Central London branch since 2004 and her latest position was Director of that branch.

In addition to her role as Trustee of BW Maggie has agreed to take on the position of volunteer membership

co-ordinator (and communications). Her primary objective will be to provide the link between the Board and the BW network and to improve communication both ways with our members. Maggie's email address is membership@befrienders.org.

Please join me in welcoming Maggie to the BW family.

BW Board and Role of Trustees

We thought it may be interesting to provide you with some information about the Befrienders Worldwide Board. The Board is made up of 8 Trustees from around the world plus one representative of the Regional Co-ordinators. We are all acting in a voluntary capacity. One Trustee takes the role of Treasurer and another the role of Secretary. Trustees serve for a period of 3 years which can be renewed a maximum of two times.

The main formal responsibilities of the Board are as follows;

- ensure that BW as a UK charity complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- ensure that BW pursues its charitable objects as defined in its governing document and uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects

- give firm strategic direction, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance.
- safeguard the good name and values of BW
- ensure the effective and efficient administration of BW and ensure financial stability
- grow the membership based on approved guiding principles
- interact with members and facilitate the exchange of information and best practice.

The Board meets on Skype every 2 months and we cover as best we can this list of responsibilities. Individual Trustees also take on additional tasks, for example Maggie Galliano will take on the role of membership communications and co-ordination.

We are always looking to appoint new Trustees either to join the Board now or when there is a vacancy in the future. If you think you may be interested please contact one of our Board members and we can provide you with more information

Future Newsletters and Contact

We would like our newsletters to be as dynamic and up to date as possible. Please do not wait to be asked for contributions - just send any articles of interest or details of special events as and when they arise to your Regional Co-ordinator with a copy to the BW secretary Peter Barker. We will then make sure these are included in the next edition.

Please also feel free to contact any Trustee or Regional co-ordinator if you have any other comments or requests for the BW Board.

With Best Wishes,

Martin Taylor, Chair

chair@befrienders.org

The Befrienders Worldwide Board

A pen portrait - Maggie Galliano

Maggie Galliano is from Gibraltar but has lived in London for the past 40 years. She has been a Personal Assistant to a well-known designer for many years. Previously, Maggie has worked as a Secretary/Personal Assistant in a Mexican bank in the City, helping to set it up from scratch, and for one of the owners of a renowned Sherry house, later moving with him as PA in a personal capacity when he sold the business. Having grown up bi-lingual (English/Spanish), Maggie has always tried to use her languages in her working life. In her thirties, Maggie took a degree in Hispanic Studies at Kings College London, as a mature student.

Maggie has been a Samaritan volunteer at Central London Branch since 2004. She started as a regular volunteer and slowly took on more and varying roles within the branch such as leading Information Hours, helping with Selection and Training, being a Shift Leader and, after being a Trustee for a year, Maggie was asked to become Chair, a role which she held for three years. After that, Maggie was selected to be Director of the branch for three years.

Maggie's involvement with BW began when she helped David Brodtman with the training of the first volunteers in Gibraltar as they took their initial steps in setting up a helpline.

New Member Centres

BW welcomes Centres from the following organisations as members of the network.

Befrienders Gibraltar – commenced operations in September 2017. They have provisional membership.

Lebanon – Commenced full operations in December 2017.

Philippines – InTouch Community Services. Has been operating in Manila and the Philippines since 1980.

Nepal - The School of Psychology, Kathmandu. Has been operating for 8 years. They have provisional membership.



Befrienders Worldwide European Region Conference Vilnius, Lithuania

14th-17th June, 2018

A reminder that you are invited to Vilnius, Lithuania on 14th-17th June, 2018. Although, the conference is intended primarily for European members of BW, friends from other regions are very welcome! Please mark the dates in your calendar and stay tuned for updates. The programme is looking good, and includes prof. Brian Mishara and Jonny Benjamin and Neil Laybourn (The Stranger on the Bridge) as key presenters.

Please do let us know if you would like to attend or would like more information.

Registrations open in February 2018. There will be early bird discounts on bookings before 1st April 2018!

For more details, please contact the conference team

bw.conference2018@gmail.com

Paulius Skruibis, Irma Skruibienė, Justina Butkutė, David Brodtman

International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) Conference

17th – 22nd July 2017 Kuching, State of Sarawak, Malaysia

Theme of Congress: ‘Preventing Suicide – A Global Commitment, from Communities to Continents.

The 29th World Congress of IASP was held in Kuching, Malaysia in July 2017. Thank you to our friends from Befrienders Malaysia who have included in this newsletter a summary of the events at the conference. Also some reflections on the Conference from Merab Mulindi – African Regional Co-ordinator who attended.



About 600 delegates from 55 countries participated in the congress.

39 delegates from Befrienders Malaysia, representing the eight Centres in Malaysia participated actively in the congress.

Befrienders Malaysia presented two sessions at the congress i.e., a

forum on ‘Developing volunteer action to prevent suicide - Looking Ahead’ and a workshop on ‘Reaching Out to Communities at High Risk to Suicide’.

Speakers at this forum were Brian Mishara, Vice-Chairman of Befrienders Worldwide, Lakshmi Vijayakumar of Befrienders India and Esther Teo, President of Befrienders Malaysia. Johan Amilin of Befrienders Malaysia chaired the forum.

Representatives of the Centres in Malaysia shared their experiences and challenges faced in their missions in reaching out to several different groups, from youths to plantation communities, at high risk to suicide.

Volunteers from several other Befrienders Centres across the globe participated in these events.

Ganga, past President of Befrienders Malaysia and current Hon Advisor, was a member of the organizing committee of the Congress. Befrienders Malaysia was listed as one of the five supporting organisations of the congress.

Befrienders Kenya at 29th IASP World Congress in Kuching, Malaysia

Through facilitation of IASP, Ms Merab Mulindi of Befrienders Kenya was privileged to be a part of the Congress. At the congress Ms Mulindi had a chance to be a part of the discussions touching on various aspects of suicide including neurobiology and genetics, social and psychodynamic aspects, epidemiology, the role of technology, hotlines, culture and religion and many others. She also had a chance to interact with some of the world re-known names in the study of suicide including Prof. Brian Mishara who is also a Trustee of Befrienders Worldwide.



As part of the conference there was a Symposium on community initiatives where Ms Mulindi had an opportunity to make a presentation *“Establishing a surveillance system in Nairobi – challenges and opportunities.”* This was largely based on the pilot community- based suicide prevention project initiated in Kikuyu area of Nairobi through a partnership between Befrienders Kenya and IASP working with the community. In a

country with limited resources, limited data and competing health and economic priorities, the community in Kenya is taking their own steps towards suicide prevention with initial mobilization having been done during the 2015 World Suicide Prevention Day activities. The project is still in its initial stages but in line with the project objectives, two Gate-keepers training sessions with a total of 88 participants and one Training of Trainers course of 33 participants have already been carried out as well as a full day surveillance training bringing together 35 participants. These are initial steps of setting up the community-based surveillance system which has a lot of potential as no such system exists in the country. In the symposium there were other speakers also discussing community initiatives from Suriname, India, China, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Implementation of this bottom-up approach to suicide prevention in a country where suicide is criminalized and is a taboo subject because of the stigma, setting up a community-based surveillance system has several challenges and opportunities ranging from dealing with the myths and cultural beliefs about suicide to legal status of suicide and its impact on reporting. In the midst of these



challenges, however, there are also numerous opportunities such a system provides both for the community and for the country where such a system is yet to be set up.

Befrienders Kenya continues to appreciate the recognition given by IASP to her humble initiatives in suicide prevention and the support given to her work. Invitation and facilitation of Ms Mulindi to the World Congress is indeed an honor and evidence of acknowledgement of Befrienders work in line with the acknowledgement by World Health

Organization in *Preventing Suicide – A global*

imperative (2014) that communities have a key role in suicide prevention. Ms Merab Mulindi through Befrienders Kenya is the IASP national representative for Kenya and the Africa Regional Coordinator of Befrienders Worldwide.

188 - Unique number in Brazil

Having a single number all over the country has always been CVV's dream. We got the number 141 that, although being local, represented the whole State. A new challenge emerged: A unique national number and free networking: A virtual PBX. A great design. Almost impossible to become reality, but due to the great effort of a team of volunteers committed to the cause today it is a reality in almost every country.

In September 2015, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, we began 188 project, the first number without connection costs for suicide prevention.

After signing the term of technical cooperation between CVV and the Ministry of Health, the National Telecommunication Agency (Anatel) authorized, from September 30th, 2017 the expansion of the coverage area of 188 to a great part of the national territory in phases, as shown on the map and table below.



Phases	States	Operation date
1 st	9	09/30/2017
2 nd	7	12/09/2017
3 rd	7	03/30/2017
4 th	4	06/30/2018

In the second half of December 2017, the Centers that answered the number 141 started to use the number 188 in their localities. Currently 9 states in Brazil are already contemplated: Acre, Amapá, Mato Grosso do Sul, Piauí, Santa Catarina, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, Rondônia and Roraima.

The second phase of expansion included the states of Amazonas, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Mato Grosso, São Paulo, Tocantins and the Federal District, and was completed on December 9th, 2017.

By June 30th, 2018 the entire national territory can count on the attendance of the number 188. Connections to CVV through number 188 are free from any fixed or cellular telephone line, coming from any city in the state contemplated, from the established dates.

We are living a new reality. On December 18th 2017 we talked to 5000 callers (giving emotional support) in a total of 5342 contacts.

CVV VoIP

Our virtual center has definitely a new name: CVV VoIP (voice over IP). It counts on the participation of a hundred volunteers from several parts of Brazil and our goal for 2018 is having three hundred volunteers. It has been an amazing experience. We have already developed training material for distance study and now we are improving it. Many volunteers are working hard for this. CVV VoIP is working on the 188 network in a technical adaptation phase.

CVV Community

The support service for suicide survivors and their family members is growing up and besides Nova Hamburgo in Rio Grande do Sul and Cuiaba in Mato Grosso do Sul, other Centers as the ones in Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais are developing this project.

New Branches

The expansion team has been working hard to open new Centers and fifteen new ones will be opened by the end of January totaling a hundred branches and so, reaching the goal for 2018.

Thailand



During October and November, Samaritans of Thailand focused on training, objective of which was to raise awareness among public and raising funds. In October, our training teams were dispatched to a private company for two days and to a government university one day. In November, a two-day workshop was organized, with minimal fees, for public where nearly 70 participants turned up.



South Africa

ISTANBUL: 4-5 NOVEMBER 2017

Imagine our surprise when we received an invitation to attend and participate in the establishment of a Suicide Helpline for the city of Gaziantep in Turkey. After the initial search to determine the veracity of the invitation and the people involved therein, the surprise gradually became an intense awareness of the wonderful opportunity that this would provide for BEFRIENDERS in South Africa to showcase the activities of the chapter in South Africa.

Stephanie Pretorius, Director of the Bloemfontein Branch, was delegated to represent the South African Befrienders at this auspicious occasion, which was jointly hosted by the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep and KULT.

Joined by iconic representatives from Befrienders Worldwide; Samaritans UK; Befrienders Malaysia; IFOTES and the Muslim Suicide Helpline; Germany, a wide range of representatives attended the two-day deliberation to unpack the various options available to render an equitable helpline service to Syrian refugees, displaced from Syria, in and around Gaziantep, Turkey.

Hosted at the classy Hotel Mercure Altunizade in the Anatolian region of the magical city of Istanbul, the basic structure, ethos and policies, as well as the required structures, were presented and discussed

– aided with state of the art translation services for those guests in attendance not fluent in Turkish. The overviews, which included a presentation by dr. Brian Mishra (Befrienders Worldwide) of the University of Quebec (Montreal, Canada) provided much food for thought and presented the organisers and hosts with a myriad of possibilities to plan the proposed service.

Our sincere appreciation is herewith expressed to the organisers for affording our service Centre to be represented at this auspicious occasion, as well as their generosity to host me for the full duration of my stay in the beautiful city of Istanbul.

Teshekuler!

(Stephanie Pretorius)