Georgia Armed Forces Psychological Program

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Background: Georgia is located at Geopolitically “Hot” spot.
Background

• Rich with history of struggle for independence
• War in Abkhazia (1992-1993)
• Russian Aggression - War in August 2008
• Veterans left without psychological care, requiring the need of structured psychological care
Current State

- Psychological Support Division is under the Ministry of Defence
- Division has two departments:
  - Selection:
    - Staff: 4 psychologists, 2 psychiatrists
    - In 2017, conducted 2800
  - Monitoring:
    - Staff: 3 psychologists, 3 psychiatrists
    - In 2017, provided 1900 services to GAF and 76 family members
Psychological: Selection

- Psychological testing of recruits; IQ test, Personality assessment and clinical interview
- Selection of Special Forces: In addition to basic assessment, assess memory, attention and other cognitive functions
- Selection for Sergeant Academy: assessment for leadership potential and self-representational skills
Psychological: Selection
Psychological Monitoring

• Psychological screening of units before and after deployment in international peacekeeping operations;
• Psychological counseling and psycho-therapy of soldiers with mental health problems;
• Training of NCOs on most urgent Psychological topics;
• Psychological Monitoring of Compulsory military personnel;
Psychological Monitoring

• Suicide rate in 2014-2017 years decreased 4 times in Armed Forces due to Cooperation of trained NCOs and mental health specialists.
Psychological Monitoring
Tserovani Rehabilitation Centre

The Center provides Wounded Soldiers with Physical, Social, and Psychological support.
Psychological support at Tserovani Rehabilitation Centre

- Initial interview and evaluation with psychiatrist
- Screening for symptoms of PTSD, Anxiety, Depression and Somatic complaints (PHQ-9, PCL-5)
- Collaboration between Psychologist and Psychiatrist to develop individualized treatment plan for wounded Soldiers
- Individual or group therapy
Challenges

- Limited funding, availability for more additional mental health specialists
- Software tools for selection process (pencil and paper)
- Sustainment staff training for psychologists and psychiatrists
- Mental health stigma in Georgia Armed Forces
Initiatives
French Model of “Human Factor Advisor”
Initiatives
Adopt “Give an Hour” Program
• Post traumatic growth, emotional intelligence and coping strategies in Georgian wounded soldiers
Family Readiness Group

• FRG program makes it easier to address various psycho-social issues of soldiers and their family Members.
Summary

• Small Structural unit with multiple challenges
• Looking ways to Do maximum considering Current limitations
QUESTIONS?
Thank You!