



# House of Hope West-Africa

## Building Mental Health and Research Capacities in Senegal



„I hypothesize that a collective cross-cultural approach to trauma healing will not only open up new directions of treatment for us, but ultimately provide us with fundamental insights into the dynamic, two-way communication between body and mind.“ (Peter Levine)

### About the House of Hope

The *House of Hope (HoH)* in Dakar, Senegal, as a center for psychotraumatology and psychotrauma therapy, offers returnees from exile, intra-African refugees and locals a comprehensive, individualized, problem-centered and evidence-based treatment program that enables them to work through traumatic refugee experiences. The service offer for those affected includes a standardized diagnosis in line with guidelines, the treatment of trauma sequelae by means of trauma confrontation methods (Narrative Exposure Therapy, NET), comprehensive augmentative psychosocial care and support for reintegration into the community of origin.



Khady Ndiaye and Mamadou Diouma Ba have agreed to describe their traumatic experiences in a documentary about the HoH.

Through the cooperation with the Academy for Scientific Continuing Education in Constance (AWWK) and with the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the sponsor fka - Freundeskreis Asyl Karlsruhe e. V. succeeded in 2018 in establishing this long-awaited project in Africa, which meets the highest international standards. From the very beginning, the focus was on the use of scientifically based diagnostics and treatment standards, in order to not only provide treatment services, but also to establish a connection for scientific accompanying research. In this respect, the House of Hope benefits from its university

partners in Germany, who are committed to supporting the mission of establishing sustainable research structures in the field of psychotraumatology. After a successful evaluation of the first two-year development and consolidation phase, the HoH aims to expand its range of treatments and to provide targeted support for scientific projects.

For this purpose, the House of Hope is actively looking for strong research partners within the framework of the development of forward-looking and interdisciplinary research strategies, which sustainably strengthen the need-based further development of the care of our clients.



The lifeline - a basic building block of NET for weighting and classifying events in one's own biography.



f. l. t. r.: Coach Andres Otero, student Aminata Ndong and coach Martina Hinsberger

supported by



## About the sponsor fka – Freundeskreis Asyl Karlsruhe e. V. (<https://fka-ka.de/>)

The fka is an independent and non-profit association (NGO) that has been working for the rights of refugees and migrants since 1987.



The focus of its work is the task of integrating refugees and migrants into society as a whole. One focus is empowerment and help for self-determination, especially for refugee and immigrant women.

Employees of the fka, who themselves have a migration background, provide support in everyday matters. A small pool of cultural and language mediators as well as free legal advice is available to interested parties. Trans-cultural trauma treatment and a wide network in the field of refugees expand the portfolio of the fka.



right: Trainer Roland Weierstall-Pust and Jonas Batawila (r., Counsellor of the HoH) together with a student of the third training session  
left: Trainer Roland Weierstall-Pust together with Aminata Ndong (Counsellor of the HoH) and a student of the 3rd training session in August 2020.



Parallel to the therapeutic services offered at the *House of Hope*, local counselors are trained by an international team of experts. They, in turn, are empowered to treat trauma sequelae. Based on the principle of "train the trainer", the counselors train further supporters (cascade system), creating a widespread network that gives those affected the opportunity to regain access to the social system.

Open encounters, understanding and respect for each other as well as the striving for a cooperation at eye level are characteristic for the atmosphere in the HoH. There is a strong awareness among the employees that we are all learners and that the exchange with each other enriches us. The *integral principle* forms the basis of our work.



Presentation of certificates to the graduates of the second training unit

On site, the fka receives support from the internationally operating, well networked human rights NGO RADDHO (Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme).

## Das *House of Hope* as a partner for the implementation of research strategies in West Africa

The HoH offers potential research partners an established care structure, which fulfills all basic requirements to directly implement different scientific research projects in a qualified inter- and transcultural environment. This includes

- local therapists qualified in standardized diagnostics and evidence-based trauma therapy
- language mediators trained in diagnostics, trauma therapy and psychological/psychiatric concepts
- therapy and training rooms
- access to various patient populations with trauma sequelae
- patient management, research administration infrastructure and secretarial services
- psychosocial support services
- access to local mental health and social networks and institutions
- regulatory contacts; assistance with local project administration (research permits, etc.)

### For questions

*To the scientific supervision:*

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