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**The “Centre for Child Protection” of the Gregorian University/Rome.
First experiences, results and reflections in setting up a global e-learning-
program for the prevention of sexual abuse of minors**

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Resumen

El Centro para la Protección Infantil ha sido fundado en cooperación con el Instituto de Psicología de la Universidad Gregoriana (Roma, Italia), el Departamento para la Psiquiatría/Psicoterapia Infantil y Adolescente del Hospital de la Universidad de Ulm (Alemania) y la Arquidiócesis de Múnich (Alemania). Su tarea principal es la creación de un centro global de entrenamiento e-learning para profesiones de pastoral que respondan al abuso sexual de los menores, tomando en consideración asuntos multilingüísticos e interculturales. Dentro de tres años el Centro desarrollado e implementado un programa e-learning en cuatro lenguas. Ocho socios del proyecto internacional asumen un papel en el reclutamiento de participantes y en la evaluación en curso del programa. En esta fase, personas-test son incluidas en el desarrollo y la evaluación del programa, como

parte de la formación (en curso) de sacerdotes y de otros coagentes de pastoral.

Palabras clave: Iglesia Católica, protección de menores, e-learning, prevención, abuso sexual.

Abstract

The Centre for Child Protection has been founded in cooperation between the Institute of Psychology of the Gregorian University (Rome, Italy), the Department for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry/Psychotherapy of Ulm University Hospital (Germany), and the Archdiocese of Munich (Germany). Its main task is the creation of a global e-learning training centre for pastoral professions responding to the sexual abuse of minors, taking

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into account multilingual and intercultural issues. Within three years the Centre develops and implements an e-learning program in four languages. Eight international project partners take a role in participant recruitment and the ongoing evaluation of the program. In this phase, test-persons are included in the development and evaluation of the program, as part of the (ongoing) formation of priests and other pastoral co-workers.

Keywords: Catholic Church, child protection, e-learning, prevention, sexual abuse.

The Centre for Child Protection (CCP) pursues two main objectives. The first one is the creation of a "Global e-learning training and qualification centre for pastoral professions with multilingual and intercultural issues responding to the sexual abuse of children", for example the development of a web-based, certified education and training modules individualized for systematic and case-based learning on sexual abuse for pastoral professions, for the moment in four languages (English, Italian, German and Spanish). The second objective is to provide learning modules which can be adapted by Catholic Church communities to meet regional needs. The qualification of professionals should help to prevent sexual abuse of children.

The enterprise is closely linked to the project initiated by the Round Table on Sexual Abuse in Germany for the development of an e-learning curriculum for teaching and care professions

on how to deal with the sexual abuse of children.

The goal of the Centre is to provide one piece of a prevention strategy in the Church. First, awareness building inside the institution Catholic Church and their members and ministries for child sexual abuse, the need of child protection services and the need of preparation and training of clergy, religious, educators and teachers. Secondly, capacity building of church members to be able to protect children, to identify children's needs, and to be able to help abused children.

The approach of the Centre of Child Protection is that pastoral care givers are first contact persons for victims. Therefore the Church should be a place of shelter and help for victimized children. To train clergy, religious and other pastoral care givers are a first resource to improve the environment of catholic parishes, schools, homes, etc.

The curriculum consists of six modules with about 30 learning units, which have a knowledge-based content (texts, graphics and pictures) and also encourage in-depth, practice-oriented exercises through interactive as well as visual and audio elements. The learning units will include different matters regarding the understanding and preventing of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. The project follows didactic and pedagogical approaches that will allow individualized, systematic and case-based learning on sexual child abuse, as a stand-alone

solution (self-study) as well as a blended-learning solution (self-study; classroom-learning; optional face-to-face courses).

The present article will explain the Centre and give an idea about first results and reflections from the experiences in the field.

Long-Term Benefits of the Centre

The greatest benefit of an e-learning training Centre on dealing with sexual abuse for the Catholic Church is primarily that they may have a resource and instrument that can be used at anytime and anywhere in the world. The curriculum as well as the project materials will be edited, validated and finally released by an international and interdisciplinary team of experts in the field of abuse and child and adolescent protection. Church organizations, dioceses and communities can adapt the e-learning modules according to their own regional needs and requirements.

The urgency of the assessment of training needs and the expected long-term call for comprehensive further training in the area of the sexual abuse of children justify the costs invested. Face-to-face courses, in comparison, would be associated with considerably higher costs, non-quality assured and standardized contents, and with reaching a considerably smaller target group. In addition, the web-based solution makes

a rapid updating of the contents with the knowledge gained through additional funding measures easier.

Organizational Aspects

The Centre has been founded jointly by the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising, and the Department for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy of the University Clinic of Ulm. The Centre of the Institute of Psychology of the Pontifical Gregorian University is based in Munich, Germany.

Centre for Child Protection at the Institute of Psychology of the Gregorian University, Rome, Italy

The Centre for Child Protection at the Institute of Psychology of the Gregorian University (Rome), based in the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising in cooperation with the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University of Ulm, is responsible for the project management. The Pontifical Gregorian University will supervise the project with Prof. Dr. Hubert Liebhardt – Professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University (Invited Professor), deacon, educationalist and research group leader in child and adolescent psychiatry and psychology at the University Clinic Ulm as director of the Centre.

*Archdiocese Munich and Freising,
Germany.*

The Archdioceses Munich and Freising is facilitating the infrastructure for the working group and providing the execution of financial cash-flow.

*Department for Child and
Adolescent Psychiatry/
Psychotherapy Ulm University
Clinic, Germany.*

The Department for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University Clinic in Ulm is primarily responsible for the project supervision and coordination. The Department is responsible for recruitment and management of resources of the service provider of the University Clinic Ulm, directed by their administration. The contents are compiled by an interdisciplinary development team within the Department for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the University Clinic in Ulm in cooperation with Soon-Systems Ltd. and the Dreiländerinstitut Ltd.

Steering Committee

The project, which runs from January 1st, 2012 to December 31st, 2014, is directed by a Steering Committee. The task of the Steering Committee is the qualitative monitoring of the development team in content development. The Steering Committee consists of Prof. Dr.

Hans Zollner (Chair), Mons. Klaus Peter Franzl (Archdiocese of Munich and Freising) and Prof. Dr. Jörg M. Fegert (University Hospital Ulm).

Advisory Board

The practice advisory board accompanies the development team in the integration of the e-learning service in education and training structures specific to specialist groups, and consists of six to eight international representatives from the Church, research and practice. Sessions will be held once a year.

The scientific advisory board consists of international experts from various disciplines:

- Prof. Peter Beer (Munich)
- Avv. Maria Pia Capozza (Rome)
- Prof. Delphine Colline-Vézina (Montreal)
- Prof. Sheila Hollins (London)
- Rev. Robert W. Oliver (Rome)
- Prof. Stephen J. Rossetti (Washington D.C.)
- Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Charles Scicluna (Malta)

International cooperation partners

The eight main project-partners (see figure 1) from the Catholic Church recruit participants for the core modules the recruitment of trial participants, and concept development for the institutional integration of e-learning educational



Figure 1. The international cooperation partners.

service into the different training structures of the professional groups.

Chile, Chile; Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow, Poland).

The partners for the pilot phase are:

- Archdiocese of Munich and Freising (Germany)
- Archdiocese of Fermo (Italy)
- Archdiocese of Tamale (Ghana)
- Diocese of Malindi (Kenya)
- Archdiocese of Cordoba (Argentina)
- Archdiocese of Portoviejo (Ecuador)
- Jamshedpur Province plus 16 more Provinces of the Jesuits (India)
- Indonesian Province of the Jesuits (Indonesia)

Since 2013 there are also three associated partners (Diocese of Freiburg, Germany; Archdiocese Santiago di

Description of the various roles and structure of the project

There are different roles, which have different tasks and different degrees of interaction with each other (direct or indirect) (see figure 2).

The *developers* –for example the teams in Munich and Rome– are in direct contact with the development partners. The development partners assume different roles (content-knowledge, technology) and only stay in direct contact to the developers. The developers also maintain contact with project managers and trainers.

Project managers are in contact

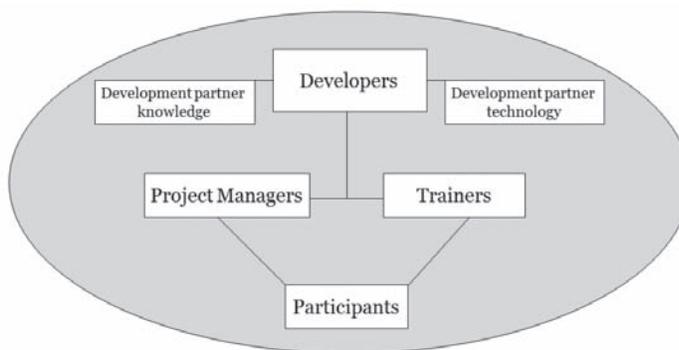


Figure 2. The various roles and their relation with each other.

with the developers, the coaches and the participants. By analogy, *trainers* are in contact with the developers, project managers and students. The students/participants have direct contact with project managers and trainers. For this purpose, a common example: let us imagine that a participant has a technical or substantive question. For this he turns to the trainer. The trainer is the 1st level support for the participant and answers the question. If the trainer can not answer the question, he refers to the developers (2nd level support). After he received the answer from the developers, he forwards it to the participants. If the developers can not answer the question directly, they can consult the Development Partners (3rd level support), forward the response to the trainer, who offers the answer to the participant.

The structure just described, and the channels of communication should be maintained. This structure is useful, because it is better to have few but fixed

contact persons who can answer most of the questions on their own. If they cannot answer them, they can sort out the questions and forward them to the right instances.

The learning objectives of the program are:

- Empowerment approach
- Sensitization in relationship work with children and adolescents
- Knowledge of warning signals of sexual abuse
- Skills development in dealing with affected children, families and institutions
- Knowledge of legal basis, standards of documentation and obligations of notification

Curriculum overview

Figure 3 gives an overview of the curriculum of the e-learning program. There

1 General	2 Theological aspects	3 Risks	4 Identification and Reaction	5 Intervention and Rehabilitation	6 Specific contexts
1.1 Historical overview	2.1 Adaption of the learning approach to diverse cultural and theological aspects	3.1 Development processes in children	4.1 Conspicuity and indications	5.1 Dealing with affected children	6.1 Sexual assaults among peers
1.2. Basic concepts		3.2 Risk factors for delinquency and victimisation	4.2 Dealing with situations where sexual abuse is suspected	5.2 Dealing with parents and contact persons of the children	6.2 Intercultural aspects
1.3 Legal basis	2.2 Sexuality in the context of the Catholic Church	3.3 Risk factors in families and institutions	4.3 Conversation techniques and statements	5.3 Network and knowledge of further assistance	6.3 Sexual abuse of children and adolescents with a disability
1.4 Ethics and internal attitude	2.3 Pastoral aspects		4.4 Supporting measures	5.4 Quality management in institutions	
	2.4 Canon Law		4.5 Documentation	5.5 Prevention measures, sexual education and sexualised contents in the media	
	2.5 Confessional Secret				

Self-Reflection

Idea of shelter, boundary-transgressing behaviour, cognisance, mental hygiene, partiality

Legal Rights in Practice

Children's rights, principles of the psychology of testimonies, data protection and professional discretion, means of labour and service law related response, confession

Figure 3. Curriculum of the e-learning program.

are six modules with three to five learning units each (see figure 3). Moreover, two on-going modules complete our curriculum. Our program is conceived in the way that allows you to start the curriculum with any learning unit of your interest. However, we recommend starting with the first one as it provides familiarity with some important concepts. The following modules go over the basic process which happens in a case of child sexual abuse –from prior risks over measures taken by professionals to long-term consequences–. Module number 5 contains some optional further information, with the learner able to choose one of the learning units on offer. Interviews with experts for theological and canonical aspects have been done.

Teaching method: Blended-Learning as favourite concept

We offer two different learning settings to the participants. One is e-learning online via internet. The curriculum consists of 30 hours of self-regulated online learning. The second learning, setting is called blended learning and includes 22 hours of self-regulated online learning. The other setting includes 22 hours or self-regulated online learning. Participants, however have the opportunity to get assistance from an E-tutor if they have specific questions. Furthermore, they can take part in 8 hours face-to-face workshops. The second learning setting is called blended learning. Participants who complete the curriculum receive a certification by the Pontifical Gregorian University.

Visits to Project Partners

As table 1 shows, from June to November 2012 visits of all our eight project partners were held to get a deeper con-

tact with each of them and to get a better knowledge of the circumstances, problems and questions in single countries, dioceses and provinces.

Table 1

Overview over the visits of the project partners in 2012

Date	Visited project partner
February 2012	International Workshop/Seminar in Italy (Rome)
June 2012	Visit of the Italian project partners (Fermo)
June 2012	Visit of the Indian project partners (Delhi)
July 2012	Visit of the Indonesian project partners (Yogyakarta)
August 2012	Visit of the Kenyan project partners (Malindi)
September 2012	Visit of the Ghanaian project partners (Tamale)
November 2012	Visit of the Argentinian (Cordoba) and Ecuadorian (Porto Viejo) project partners

Cultural issues

We started the project with the idea to adapt cultural specific issues. There is a framework of different subsystems on a micro, meso and macro level. In our visits we learned, that in this short time of producing an online-training we will not be able to adapt all cultural characteristics of each of our partner countries.

We will not have the time and capacity to do research a cultural issue. In some countries we have interesting contacts to research institutes and we are looking forward to collaborate with them. But for now in the online-course we are providing a country-specific sub-folder

so that participants find downloads and articles for their needs.

For our perspective the child is the individual, which has contact to different persons in his or her life, like his father, mother, other children at school, peers, etc. Bronfenbrenner, named the relationship and interactions with each of the persons microsystems. Hence, a child has more than one microsystem. The total of the microsystems is called mesosystem. It includes all the experiences a child makes with persons in his environment, to whom he has personal contact.

Yet, there are areas of life where a child does not have direct contact, but is

also influenced by them. For example, this is the work place of his/her father and his/her mother. If the parents have a lot to do at work, this kind of spills over to the child, though he or she does not go to work. Bronfenbrenner named those systems exosystems. But all these are imbedded in the cultural background and the society of each country, the so called macrosystem, This is named the macrosystem. They include the economic system, the educational system, the health system, public media, political system, legal system as well as norms and values hold by a society.

Discussion

In the field of child sexual abuse research is done in many disciplines. For example sociology, medicine, psychology, pedagogy and many more. All disciplines try to answer specific questions. Sometimes one research topic cannot be answered by one single discipline. And as you have proven by the many questions you asked today, there is a lot to get to know about child sexual research.

On this sheet we want to present some of the research interests in the field of child sexual abuse. Mainly in clinical psychology and psychiatry researchers are interested in the symptoms of survivors of child sexual abuse. But even more in whether you can help these children by offering psychotherapy to them.

Although we now know that some victimized children benefit from psychotherapy, we don't know if there are enough therapists willing to work with victimized children or their families. This question would be of interest in the field of health service provision.

Characteristics of perpetrators are the main research interests in forensic psychology.

Family psychology takes a wider look at the context of child sexual abuse by considering the characteristics and dynamics of the families of victimized children. How society and the media report and deal with child sexual abuse cases is one part of sociological research.

Besides there are those research areas which do scientifically investigate how child sexual abuse can be prevented. They assess effects of prevention programs or sex education at school. And that's what we do with this program: scientifically based qualification for professionals dealing with child sexual abuse, with a special interest in the context of pastoral care.

The conclusion after the first visits is that our program is integrated or must be integrated in a complex system of activities for child protection in church and in collaboration with partners. The online-trainings helps in the section of prevention in awareness and capacity building in child protection. Staff training and reflexion on attitudes and sexuality is needed, followed by child and family education.

A next step is the intervention level: How to deal with cases? What is to do when pastoral care givers are asked for help? Or can be done when in an institution a case of child sexual abuse through clergy, religious, teachers or educators are occurred? This questions need to be reflected on emergency management, collaboration strategies. And at least the rehabilitation indicates guidelines for dealing with victims, with perpetrators, with false accused persons and with institutional faults.

Overall we can say that our online-course is one part of a broad approach needed to improve child protection and prevention of child sexual abuse in church and the church in societies. But it is still a long way a further research and work –in an international and interdisciplinary context– has to be done.

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