



Planning a Trauma Healing Ministry



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

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This document is for administrators and program staff looking to add Bible-based Trauma Healing to the work of their organization. Taking time now to consider your plans and goals will make long-term sustainability more likely. Think of a five-year plan to build a program of trauma healing that is rooted in church ministries. This document draws on our experience and lists some of the factors you should consider.

When the program is mature, what do you want to see?

- ❑ Trauma Healing facilitators leading healing groups in their churches and communities? Which churches and denominations?
- ❑ Children being helped to recover from trauma they have experienced?
- ❑ Bible schools and seminaries teaching a trauma healing course as part of pastoral training?
- ❑ Story-based trauma healing in place for oral communicators?

How will churches and organizations hear about Trauma Healing?

Church and organizational leaders need to learn enough about Trauma Healing to make an informed decision for their ministry. We recommend offering a brief experience of Trauma Healing and an overview of how the program model works, along with time to discuss and decide if their ministry would benefit from this model. This is usually done in a convening or awareness session and can take a full day. A training session (also called equipping session) should be planned around three or four months after the convening session for organizations who want to train their leaders.

How will facilitators be trained?

Facilitator training involves a five-day initial training session, a six-to-nine-month period for facilitators in training to lead at least two healing groups in their communities, and then an advanced five-day training session. Facilitators are certified when they and their mentors are confident that they are able to lead trauma healing sessions well. Yearly Community of Practice (COP) gatherings keep facilitators engaged and improving their skills, in addition to providing networking and problem-solving.

It is better to train fewer facilitators well than to train a large number poorly. You need competent people who have a vocation for trauma healing as well as available time for this ministry.

- ❑ Early on, identify a core group of people who can be trained to become master facilitators—those who can train others and mentor others. You may need expatriate staff to begin with, but having nationals lead the program as soon as possible lowers costs and generally increases effectiveness, as they are native speakers of the language(s) and members of the culture and society.
- ❑ In most cases, trauma healing facilitators are volunteers or serving on a church or organizational staff. Trauma healing can be a time-consuming ministry for master facilitators or training facilitators. Be clear about financial matters as you work with organizations and facilitator candidates.
- ❑ Most often, the first training session is held in the national capital, but plan for other key sites that can serve as “hubs” for trauma healing training and Community of Practice gatherings as the program expands. You will want to hold enough equipping sessions to develop a “critical mass”—enough people to carry trauma healing forward—at each hub. This means at least a few master facilitators and a corps of around ten training facilitators who can be called on at each hub. If you have these people in place, they can continue to train caregivers to respond to the needs of the community.
- ❑ Who will manage the training program? This may be a small role initially, but as the program expands, staff will be needed to manage the project: to coach facilitators, provide oversight, plan the program on a national level, organize the national-level Community of Practice, manage any funding projects and relationships with donors, and so on.

What materials are needed in which languages?

- ☑ *Healing the Wounds of Trauma* classic book; *Scripture Companion Booklet*; facilitator handbooks (for convening, healing, and equipping sessions)?
- ☑ Children's program facilitator's book? *Healing Hearts Club* activity books for children?
- ☑ *Trauma Healing Story Book* and Story-based Trauma Healing facilitator handbook?
- ☑ If the materials are published elsewhere, will you order copies or print them in your country?
- ☑ Do any of the materials need to be translated into the other languages in your country? If so, what materials and in which languages?

Translation and publication rights need to be licensed in advance through the Trauma Healing Institute.

How will the program be funded in an ongoing way?

Costs of the program include: minimal convening session costs; training facilitators at equipping sessions; annual COP gatherings; and initial costs for translation of materials and publication. Healing groups can usually be run in churches and communities using local resources, except in cases of extreme poverty. Income from the sale of publications can be put into an account and used for ongoing publication needs. This is often referred to as a revolving fund.

Trauma healing may need to be accompanied by other holistic relief and development programs such as Village Savings & Loans, food or water programs, micro-enterprise, and so on. These may be done by partner organizations with expertise in these areas. If the nBS wants to administer such programs, funding is needed.

Think about how you see the program going on in the churches over the long term. Work back from there to be sure the program will be sustainable. Some funding options include:

☑ For training and COP:

(1) *Registration fees*: Estimate the cost for trauma healing equipping sessions using the budget planning sheet below. Divide the total cost by the number of participants you expect to determine the registration fee per participant. In this way, equipping sessions can be self-funded. The participants can find ways to fund their participation, either through their church, organization, friends, or personally. If possible, have some scholarship funds available to help out those in special need.

(2) *Local sponsors*: Find churches or organizations that will agree to sponsor or co-sponsor trauma healing. For example, a church might agree to fund the participation of ten participants at an equipping session. Or different churches could take responsibility to provide the food each day of a session. Or a church may have a staff person designate their work time to managing Trauma Healing programs.

(3) *External funding*: Find an external donor to fund a three-to-five-year program, in part or in whole. Be sure to set up the funding in such a way that local churches and communities can continue with Trauma Healing after the external funding stops. The donor funds should serve as a catalyst. For example, external funding might cover international airfares to bring in expatriate staff while national staff are being trained, but local costs would be paid for locally.

☑ For materials translation and publication:

(1) use existing Bible Society translators and consultants who are already hired to do translation; (2) work with other translation organizations that are interested in trauma healing; or (3) develop a funding proposal for the translation of materials.

How will you predict impact?

ABS-funded programs require Bible Societies to predict the number of people impacted by the ministry each year. Even if you are securing funds internally or from another source, thinking through impact is useful.

- ☑ How many people do you expect to attend convening sessions? How many convening sessions do you plan to hold in the first year?
- ☑ How many people do you expect to be trained as facilitators in the first year? Each cohort can have a maximum of thirty-five facilitators.
- ☑ How many people do you expect to attend healing groups in the first year? A healing group can be one small group of around six people, or it can take place as a seminar with several 'table groups' of six. It is good to have one facilitator for every six people. Each healing group needs to meet *at least* ten hours, at a rhythm that suits their schedule (one evening per week, for example.)

Budget planning forms

The forms below reflect costs that are typical for a trauma healing ministry. You can adjust them to your context to help calculate your estimated costs.

CONVENING SESSION PLANNING (up to 50 participants)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Total</i>
Food (morning coffee break and noon meal)			
Materials			
Meeting hall			
Special guests (accommodation, meals, travel)			
Local transportation			
Facilitator travel & visa			
Preparation costs (phone cards, local transport, invitations, etc.)			
Administration			
Total			

EQUIPPING SESSION PLANNING (up to 35 participants)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Total</i>
Accommodation and food			
Materials: HWT book, Scripture companion booklet, handbooks, notebook, pen			
Meeting hall			
Trainee travel			
Staff travel and visas			
Local transportation			
Ministry funds for trainees (if applicable)			
Administration			
Contingency			
Total for the initial session			
Add the same total for the advanced session			
Total for training sequence			

For more information on Bible-based trauma healing, contact us at TraumaHealing@americanbible.org.



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The **Trauma Healing Institute** at American Bible Society equips local churches around the world in Bible-based trauma healing so they can care for people with deep emotional and spiritual injuries caused by war, domestic violence, natural disasters and other traumatic events. The Institute is a Mission Resource Centre for the United Bible Societies. Our programs serve the whole church: Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant.