





Mission

SIG develops and implements evidence-based sustainable solutions to emerging health and social issues affecting diverse populations domestically and globally and is training the next generation of scientists from underrepresented affected communities to address these issues.

History

The Social Intervention Group (SIG) was officially established in 1990 by Dr. Nabila El-Bassel to address the growing need for research on HIV and relapse prevention with vulnerable populations. The heart and soul of SIG's work is to reduce health disparities using both social work approaches and the best available science. Currently, SIG conducts local and global research to address health disparities.

The goal of SIG research is to develop innovative, contextually appropriate interventions to address the overlapping issues of substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, and intimate partner violence among at-risk individuals in urban communities.



Leadership

Dr. El-Bassel grew up multi-lingual, reading stories from different cultures, fostering an early interest in multiple perspectives and scientific discovery. Since she began at Columbia three decades ago, Dr. El-Bassel has used science to bring evidence-based solutions to social and health problems. She has designed and tested a number of multi-level Intervention and prevention models



Dr. Nabila El-Bassel, **Director**

addressing substance-use, the opioid epidemic, HIV, and gender-based violence among multiple populations including individuals and couples in different settings such as drug treatment and harm reduction programs, primary care, refugee camps, and the criminal justice system. Nabila's extensive research has been published in hundreds of scientific journals. She is also the Willma and Albert Musher Professor of Social Work. Read her professional bio here.

Dr. El-Bassel convened a strong leadership team to accomplish SIG's mission.

Dr. Louisa Gilbert, Co-Director

Dr. Elwin Wu, Co-Director



Dr. Gilbert has been the co-director since 1999. Read her bio.



Dr. Wu has worked with SIG for 19 years. Read his bio.





SIG Global Impact



Together, the SIG team:

- Conducted and evaluated almost 20 research projects and led two training programs
- Published over 50 papers
- Hosted a World AIDS Day event

 Shared work in The Ink, an article featured by Columbia News, and presented research at several domestic and global conferences and events





Learn more about the SIG team here



Panelists L-R, Drs.
Sherman, Auerbach,
Blankenship, Wingood,
and El-Bassel at World
AIDS Day Conference
November 30th.

Photo Credit: Dr. Anindita Dasgupta



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ASPIRE responds to the Syrian refugee crisis through three main activities:

- 1. Collaborative research projects
- 2. Consortium comprised of Columbia University schools
- 3. Student Engagement

Established a Partnership with Istanbul Aydin University



The ASPIRE team in Turkey is led by Dr. Uğur Tekin, Chair of the Social Work Department, with support from Dr. Hatice Deniz Yükseker, Chair of the Political Science and International Relations Department.



As part of this partnership, ASPIRE scoped out field research entitled "**Providers ASPIRE**" to examine secondary trauma experienced by providers of direct services for Syrian refugees.

Research findings will be used to develop a **training program for service providers to cope** with their secondary trauma and to improve service provision to refugees.



Built Jordan Research Infrastructure and Implemented the Women ASPIRE Study

- **Trained** the newly hired Research Coordinator and **built the** research infrastructure together with the in-country principal investigator **Dr. Maysa' Khadra** of the University of Jordan School of Medicine
- Visited and **assessed NGO clinics** serving Syrian refugees in Amman with representatives from the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
- Trained 13 medical students to implement the Women ASPIRE survey in the field



Dr. Anindita Dasgupta and Thaddaeus DiCaprio traveled to Amman to work with the Women ASPIRE team



Kept Columbia at the Forefront of the Syrian Refugee Crisis by Hosting Three Events



- Hosted the Tripodi lecture on gender-based violence featuring Liz
 Pender and Drs. Nabila El-Bassel and Anindita Dasgupta
 - Syrian refugees with the School of Social Work graduate student Mr.

 Hani Omar



 Hosted a webinar led by Dr. Jeremy Sugarman "Ethics in the Design and Conduct of Social and Behavioral Research" with the School of Social Work MSW students and the Women ASPIRE team in Jordan



Strengthened and Expanded Solutions for Refugees, Hosting Three Consortium Meetings



The Consortium is comprised of a **multi-disciplinary team** of senior faulty from **across Columbia's professional schools** to address the multi-faceted needs of Syrian refugees.





Shared Field Experiences to Promote Collaborations

BLOG

December 2017

CONNECTING WITH WOMEN ASPIRE BY DR. MAYSA' KHADRA AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

"Our goal for the Women ASPIRE study is to comfact rigorean scientific measurable to undenstude the gendered physical and mestal health concesses of Sprins relegaes women bring in Justice. Find below some links from our in-custry principal resoultspates—Dr. Meyor Bholiss, frestly at the University of Jeden School of Medicine. and our Beaused Assistants for the study. This visious are foun July 2012 fellow our hum." Jest door both.



November 2017

REFLECTIONS FROM AMMAN BY

"White numbring the slope of discontraces Assume for a encounties primed medicine for my mother, I startified upon a solver slope called "Mapper Gold". I startified upon a solver slope called "Mapper Gold". I lowed it summad that a silver slope would have the worst 'publ' in its name, as I discided to obsets it out. After a list of becoming our languing. I marrisonal to the slope owner that my mother was Sprine, seed has family singuisply from Aluppa. The overar looked up at my with generican surprise, the explained that up until memory his sology owner. I would moth here in up until memory his slope owner. I would moth here



October 2017

OCTORAL STUDENT BY ADAM.

The has have nie weeks sinced attested the PhD program at Columbia University School of Social Wark (CSSW) and on a statemen the AZPHII project — a project had by Dr. Nabida El-Bassad & Dr. Naming Earnath Churring this time, I hose worked adongsida sovenal master and PhD students, post-docs and fearings attended the ASPHE team's coupled Signs calls with hursten and budge debod onto the Signs calls with hursten and budge debod onto the Signs calls with hursten and budge debod onto the Signs calls with a Signs and Signs calls with a Signs and Signs calls with a Signs and Signs calls with signs and sig



September 2017

INAUGURAL BLOG POST BY DR. NABILA EL-BASSEL AND DR. NEERAJ KAUSHAL

blog will provide regular insights and updates fror project staff on our work on refugee issues in the

For those of you new to ASPSIE (Advancing Solutions in Policy Implementation, Research and Engagement for Refugees), ASPIRE began with the south ment for a multifaceted. * Tolid more bare



ASPIRE launched a blog to regularly connect with community members and highlight individual members of their growing team.

Blogs included **informative discussions** and videos from Women ASPIRE's students and collaborators in Amman, Jordan.



Sign up to <u>ASPIRE's Listserve</u> to receive updates on the blog and other ASPIRE activities.

https://www.aspirerefugees.columbia.edu/blog



GHRCCA

Received two American Chamber of Commerce Awards

- Women's Leadership Award (to Assel Terlikbayeva)
- Health Protection Award (to GHRCCA)



GHRCCA leadership Sholpan
Primbetova and Assel
Terlikbayeva, with Dr. Tamara
Duissenova, Minister of Labor
and Social Protection of the
Republic of Kazakhstan

Recognized by the School of Social Work and SIG for over 10 Years of Service

Presented by Dr. Allen
Zweben, Associate Dean of
Academic Affairs





GHRCCA

Served more than...

1000 People who inject drugs

800 Sexual workers and women experiencing violence

Men who have sex with men

250 People living with HIV

2500 Other vulnerable groups



To conduct their work, GHRCCA collaborated with community groups, Advisory and Scientific Boards, and 90-90-90 working groups.

GHRCCA manages several projects with SIG out of their Center, including:







The BRIDGE study aims to evaluate the implementation, effectiveness, and sustainability of an integrated HIV service model in 24 needle syringe programs located in four Kazakhstani cities. The BRIDGE model leverages the power of social networks through peer-driven recruitment of people who inject drugs in needle syringe programs, and integrates rapid HIV testing within these programs (with harm reduction clinic nurses), and links these individuals to HIV care.



BRIDGE launches 7-day implementation training in Almaty

BRIDGE uses a stepped wedge and mixed methods, Hybrid Type 1 design

BRIDGE uses the ARTAS* case management model

*Anti-Retroviral Treatment + Access to Services







Launched and Conducted Training for 159 Nurses, Doctors, Outreach Workers, and Peer Recruiters

- AIDS Center training on HIV Treatment Adherence and Family Engagement in Almaty for 14 participants
- New recruitment strategy training for 92 peer recruiters





- 7-day implementation training for 22 participants
- Additional training for 11 participants
- Booster training for 20 participants





Launched SIG's First Use of a Community of Practice (CoP) Implementation Strategy



- Analyzed qualitative data from mapping of three cities
- First to use the Google Appsheet application to track patient service utilization and implementation of quality assurance







Received Positive Feedback from Trainees

I understood now that in order to send a client with a HIV positive test result for confirmatory tests one must be on his side, and let him feel that he is not alone. I liked learning how to communicate with the clients; learning more about them, their merits, strengths and skills.



I've gained now a clear understanding of my role in the project.

New for me - knowledge of a client's CD4 and HIV viral load - very important for HIV successful treatment. work [in the training], thinking differently, and acting really appropriately towards a client.





Nova



NOVA

NOVA is a **structural HIV program** (HIV and micro finance) with female sex workers in Kazakhstan.

Women in the NOVA study receive:

- Six financial literacy training sessions
- Matched savings
- 24 vocational training sessions













NOVA

Screened 143 Women

- 40 were enrolled in control cohorts
- 32 were enrolled in experimental cohorts



Enrolled 354 women by the end of 2017



Nova



NOVA

Provided Opportunities for Students

As an intern, Tattianna:

- Participated in Community Advisory Board and management meetings
- Visited field sites, trust points, health care clinics, and recruitment sites to collect data
- Helped write a grant proposal
- Lectured at Kazakhstan National University
 (Department of Social Work) on social work





Tattianna Unique Wilks is an Advanced Generalist Practice and Programming (AGPP) student interested in gender, women, violence, public health and management projects.

She spent a semester in Kazakhstan interning for NOVA.

Tattianna lecturing at Kazakhstan National University







NOVA

Received Positive Feedback from Study Participants

I got friends with whom we could talk openly. Teachers also provided us their attention and understanding, supported us, brought us together. NOVA taught me to come to conclusions, I began to wonder: what will THIS STEP lead me to? I was able to get away from a needle and think this is my most important achievement.







Prior to NOVA I earned as a prostitute. [NOVA] taught me a lot. First, I saw our teachers' attitude, they **treated me as an equal** rather than a social garbage. **My self-esteem increased**. I left all my clients and started working. Some saving appeared and I became more confident.

Nova



NOVA

Received Positive Feedback from Study Participants

I thank NOVA because it has changed my life, and I do not use drugs now. I live with my both husband and child, and lead a healthy lifestyle. Thanks to NOVA and vocational courses I've learnt to cut hair.



The financial program taught me to plan my budget and spend money correctly.

Professional course improved my qualification. And what was most important - this project gave me the opportunity to change my life.

I'm grateful to NOVA Project. The key thing is that you help us in terms of finance — you paid for our education, and it is the first time in my life that somebody pays me, but not myself!!! And the most important thing - I realized that condoms are the main means against infection with HIV. I learned to communicate with men in different way - imposing my own opinion.

Nova





Wallet sewn by NOVA participant

NOVA

Received Positive Feedback from Study Participants

NOVA opened a **new and confident life** for me. Thanks to Nova, I saved my husband's life by making a naloxone injection. Now much has changed in our life, my husband quitted drug! I sew at home for us. And we are planning a baby! We plan to buy land and build a house! Thank you NOVA Project!

My life changed due to my participation in NOVA. Thanks to NOVA I got a qualification of "seamstress." Due to my savings and NOVA's help I bought a sewing machine, which gave me a small source of income for today. NOVA helped me to decide on what my life would look like. If I were asked to rate NOVA based on a five-point scale, I would put a solid five.

Thanks to educational talks at the sessions, I learned how without any problems to persuade a man to put on a condom. I completely quit drinking alcohol. The project taught me how to make money by my own hands - I gained a good profession of seamstress. I've learned to save and put off money for all occasions. Thank you NOVA Project! You are very necessary for lost women. Your kind attitude gave us confidence in the future.





UNI

UNI is a **social network-based** intervention designed to allow men who have sex with men (MSM) to **share and promote health** within their personal social networks. UNI is deploying a Stepped-Wedge trial in **3 cities in Kazakhstan** (Almaty, Astana, and Shymkent) testing the efficacy of this peer-driven intervention designed to **increase the number of MSM in the HIV continuum of care**.

UNI will engage over 1,000 MSM in three largest cities of the country. The **international organizations** and the LGBT community in Kazakhstan are expressing their hopes for the project to **become a milestone to the support and development of the LGBT rights** in the country and in the Central Asian region overall.

The UNI intervention will be **the first science-based program** in Kazakhstan to specifically and systematically include social media as a tool for HIV prevention and care.

"I believe UNI's **new and modern approach** is taking a major step to change the unfortunate HIV [situation] in Kazakhstan and will have **a significant impact** on human lives."





UNI

Hired Study Staff and Secured and Set Up Research Office Space in all Three Study

Cities



- Collected data on initial pool of 187 potential recruitment sites
- Completed the first full wave of recruitment site characterization "mapping" covering all three study cities and national venues







UNI

Established a Community Advisory Board (locally called a "UNI Working Group") for the Main Study and City of Almaty



The group has established a formal charter outlining roles, responsibilities, expectations, and rules for membership, governance, and decision-making, and has met 3 times in the past year.

Held a Centralized, Week-long Training for all Study Staff in Preparation for Starting the Stepped Wedge Clinical Trial



The centralized training presented all formal study policies and procedures related to conducting the stepped wedge clinical trial.

Staff are in the process of attaining criterion performance levels in anticipation of the impending start of the trial.







Connect HIP

Connect^{HIP} is a **national dissemination project** of couples-based **HIV prevention with men who have sex with men** (MSM), **transgender** and **HIV discordant** couples.

The Connect^{HIP} Intervention was Adapted and Disseminated in Several States (US)

Building on over two decades of couples work by the SIG research and CDC diffusion teams, Connect^{HIP} was launched for national implementation.



Launch included:

- Two pilot trainings
- A train-the-trainer with national capacity-building for providers
- A summit promoting couplesbased HIV/STI prevention



<u>Learn more: sig.columbia.edu/2016/10/17/national-implementation-high-impact-couples-based-hiv-prevention/</u>





Criminal Justice Initiative

The Criminal Justice Initiative was established in 2009 to address the societal impacts of the unprecedented numbers of people incarcerated during the past three decades.



Presented the Justice and Education Project, a Weekly Course for Incarcerated Individuals

- Celebrated the associate degrees of six women who graduated from the Hudson Link Program, for which Columbia University provides professors
- Marked the achievement of Beyond the Bars alumna Topeka Sam, who co-launched the Hope House safe housing space for formerly incarcerated women and also helps lead the Dignity Campaign



Geraldine Downey, Cheryl
Wilkins, and Kathy Boudin at the
College and Community
Fellowship (CCF) Institutional
Vision Award ceremony,
accepting the award on behalf of
the Center for Justice.



eWorth

eWorth is a multi-media study that **evaluates the effectiveness** of an **HIV risk reduction intervention** for **drug-involved African American women on probation** in New York City. eWorth conducts a randomized clinical trial to **test the efficacy** of the multimedia intervention and streamlined **HIV testing to prevent HIV and other STIs.**

284 Women are Currently Enrolled



- 132 of these women received training by a Fortune Society facilitator
- 80 women have already completed eWorth

The Columbia School of Social Work trained seven Fortune Society staff to facilitate eWorth sessions

- Facilitators completed Columbia's IRB process
- Facilitators completed HIV test and counseling training



From the date women enroll it takes a year to complete all the training.





The Global Health and Mental Health Unit

Under the umbrella of the Global Health and Mental Health Unit, the Zambia Project is a quantitative study examining trauma experiences, trauma outcomes (mental health, substance use and other psychosocial problems) and HIV risk behavior and relationship between these co-occurring issues. The project evolved from the pilot led by HISTP scholar Dr. Lynn Michalopoulos.

Continued research on the Zambia Project





The Global Health and Mental Health Unit

- Completed a validation study of the post-trauma symptom scale Dr. Michalopoulos developed -- the Global Post
 Trauma Symptom Scale -- in Uganda and South Africa
- Interviewed 230 truckers from Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to develop culturally relevant HIV prevention programs
- Awarded NIMH grant as a co-investigator with Milton Wainberg (PI), a mental health capacity building and sustainability project in sub-Saharan Africa



Study team interviewers who recruited truckers from Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and the DRC; study partners at the IOM and CSSW student Karen Rester

Next steps: Leading a project to **adapt and test** an **evidence-based trauma informed HIV intervention** with the Ubuntu Education Fund in Port Elizabeth, South Africa







HISTP

HISTP aims to increase the number of highly trained multidisciplinary HIV scientists from groups underrepresented among NIH Principal Investigators by providing training, mentorship, and other research and professional development activities that will enable scholars to conduct implementation research focused on the HIV continuum of care.

Since Inception, HISTP:









HISTP

In Just Six Months into 2017, HISTP Scholars

- Were primary investigators on 14 federal-level grants totaling almost \$6 million
- Published 29 first-author papers
- Actively supported seven scholar pilots, including the launch of three new pilot proposals with two forthcoming













Current HISTP Scholars

[HISTP provided] the

opportunity to develop and
further my research
program through this
award. It was a great
experience and put me in
the right direction to
progress as a grant funded
researcher.



Dr. Larry Keen, HISTP scholar



histp.org



LASH

Lash is an observational community study using a Self-Regulation Model.

The LAtino Sleep and Health (LASH) project studies the relationship between sleep, stress, and self-control within the Latino population. LASH identifies novel behavioral targets for improving sleep, aiming to examine whether sleep is associated with self-regulation in Latino adults, and if this association is the same across socioeconomic status groups.

Screened, Recruited, and Monitored 449 People for Sleep Studies

- Screened 342 people
- Recruited 82 Latino adults
- Monitored the sleep of 25 people for 40 days

Worked on Culturally
Adapting a Cognitive
Behavioral
Treatment for
Insomnia for Latinos



Sleep, Mind, and Health team at a recruitment event. L-R: Carmela Alcantara (PI), Irene Perez Ibarra (coordinator), Hannah Binder (former research assistant), Luciana Giorgio (research assistant, and doctoral student at CSSW)





PACT

PACT used a randomized clinical trial to test the implementation, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness of the program.

PACT was a couples-based STI/HIV Prevention for **drug involved** males within the **criminal justice system** in New York City, In collaboration with the **Center for Court Innovation** and the **New York City Department of Probation**.

Screened and Interviewed Participants





- (Cumulative): Screened 993 people, randomized 230 couples (N=460)
- Conducted in-depth interviews with 42 participants

Completed the Project with 230 Couples from Community Supervision Programs

PACT was the **first study** to evaluate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of an HIV and drug abuse prevention intervention for men in Criminal/Community Court and Probation settings and their female partners.

Stay tuned for publications from PACT







SAFELab

The SAFElab is a **research initiative** focused on examining the ways **youth of color navigate violence on and offline**. The SAFElab uses **qualitative and natural language processing methods** to understand and **prevent violence** that occurs in neighborhoods and social media environments.

Received Two Grants

- Precision Medicine grant from Columbia Medicine to adapt an emotionally intelligent chat bot for online violence intervention in Chicago and NYC
- DARPA grant to analyze Twitter data for offline indicators of interpersonal conflict and gang recruitment

Conducted the First Digital Scholars Lab





SAFELab

Partnered with:

- Columbia Engineering to develop a machine learning detection tool for analyzing aggression, grief, and substance use in images on Twitter
- The Digital Storytelling Lab in the School of the Arts to Create the "(De)escalation Room" and ran prototype at Microsoft, New York Film Festival



Dr. Desmond Patton at the New York Film Festival

Published Two Papers

- Published new paper in
 Social Media and Society on
 digital racism in the criminal
 justice system (late 2016)
- Had paper accepted for publication in

Pediatrics: Youth Violence Prevention in a Digital Age







T32 is a training program for the next generation of pre- and post-doctoral scholars in the prevention, treatment, and care of HIV and drug abuse among individuals in the criminal justice system with a strong emphasis on individuals involved in alternatives to incarceration and community supervision who are affected by health disparities.

T32 Trainees Had

- **14** first author publications
- K-01 grant applications
- F31 grant awarded

COLUMBIA School of SOCIAL WORK

Make waves. Move mountains. Change lives.



Trainees receive mentoring from 32 faculty from the Columbia School of Social Work and the Mailman School of Public Health.









T32

Trainee Opportunities



T32 scholars also receive opportunities to collaborate on research, lead and participate in SIG programs, and present their work in related events.

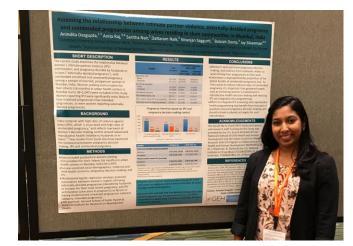
Hani Omar Alhomsh and Anindita Dasgupta host an in-depth discussion on the

needs of Syrian refugees



Dr. Anindita
Dasgupta
published an
article with SIG
collaborators

Reproductive Health Concerns among
Substance-Using Women in Community
Corrections in New York City: Understanding the
Role of Environmental Influences



T32 trainee Dr. Anindita Dasgupta, coinvestigator of ASPIRE, presented her research in several online and in-person events. Here, at the National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence.



Blog: Reproductive Health Behind Bars: New Findings





WINGS

WINGS identifies women at risk of IPV and GBV, enables social support and safety planning, and also links women to both substance use treatment and HIV prevention and treatment

WINGS is an evidence-based screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment tool designed to identify different types of intimate partner and gender-based violence among women who use drugs.



Trained over 100
Providers from Five
Countries: India,
Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine,
Georgia and the USA

- Adapted and developed new versions of WINGS for women who use drugs, sex workers and female partners of men who use drugs in India.
- Conducted a pilot trial of WINGS with HIV testing and counseling for 50 women in India.

Initial results

WINGS significantly reduced rates of physical and emotional abuse among women over a 3-month follow up period.





WINGS



Since 2014, Six NGOs in Kyrgyzstan have Implemented WINGS with HIV Testing and Counseling with Over 200 Women Who Use Drugs or Who Engage in Sex Work

Initial results

This intervention
trial found that women
who completed WINGS
significantly reduced rates
of drug use, IPV and GBV
as well as increased rates
of linkage to HIV services.





WINGS was Featured by the International AIDS Alliance.

Next steps: with the successful result of the trial in India, **WINGS** is expanding implementation sites in India and integrating PrEP for HIV prevention.



Read more about WINGS and download the intervention on the newly launched website: http://projectwings.org/



WORTH TRANSITIONS

Women on the Road to Safety (WORTH) Transitions provides social support and access to medical services for women returning from incarceration. WORTH is an e-book application intervention decreasing HIV risk, intimate partner violence (IPV) and linking to substance abuse treatment among women in high-risk populations.

Adapted Trauma-Informed HIV/STI/HCV and IPV Risk Reduction Model as an E-Book



Above left: Shooting content for WORTH Transitions video with Columbia's Center for Teaching and Learning team



WORTH TRANSITIONS

Trained Five Community Health Workers and Research Staff from Yale University and the University of Rochester Transitions Clinics



Dr. Karen
Johnson
(pictured) and
Dr. Timothy
Hunt
conducting
the training on
implementing
the WORTH
Transitions
Intervention
with research
staff

WORTH Transitions is SIG's first partnership with Rochester and Yale, providing access to the Transitions Clinic national network and implementing trauma-informed, HIV, STI, HCV, substance misuse and IPV risk reduction for formerly incarcerated women.

Thank you to...



Our funders









...for making our work possible!





Dur community partners

ASPIRE Partners (link)

Clinical Trials Network

CIRA: Yale center for HIV

Columbia University and the Columbia

School of Social Work

Community Collaborative Research Network

HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN)

Fortune Society **GHRCCA Partners** (link) **Hudson Link** University of Rochester

...and many more.

Danya