

Libya: Red Crescent scales-up psycho social support to vulnerable populations

Tunisia/Libya, 28 September, 2017 – In the framework of a European Union funded project for support to protection of vulnerable groups, internally displaced people in Libya will receive psychosocial support from Red Crescent volunteers to tackle the distress, loss and grief they have suffered from the on-going violence and conflict that has left more than 1.3 million people in need of emergency humanitarian assistance.

Twenty-two Libyan Red Crescent volunteers gathered in Tunis this week to attend a five-day training of trainers in community-based psychosocial support. The training will equip the volunteers with skills to assist people who have suffered emotional and psychological trauma as well as to establish safe and supportive activities for children.

“Too often, we forget the invisible, psychological wounds of conflict and insecurity,” said the Secretary General of the Libyan Red Crescent Society, Mr. Omar Agouda. “This training of trainers is a very important milestone for the Libyan Red Crescent Society, and it will enable us to significantly scale up our psychosocial support activities in Libya. We expect that more than 300 volunteers will be able to assist migrants and vulnerable families after this training,” he said.

The training of trainers is supported by the European Union and brings together the Libyan Red Crescent Society, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and its Reference Centre on Psychosocial Support, as part of a wider project on mental health, psychosocial rehabilitation and socio-economic integration for vulnerable people and at-risk groups in Libya.

“The humanitarian needs in Libya are immense. Internally displaced people, refugees and migrants are particularly vulnerable due to limited coping capacity and loss of assets, especially displaced women, children, the elderly and those with low economic means”, said Ambassador Bettina Muscheidt, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Libya. “With limited humanitarian access to many parts of Libya, it is very important that volunteers of Libyan Red Crescent Society are on the ground to provide psychosocial support to people in distress,” she said.

The overall objective of the €3 million project implemented by the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) in partnership with the Libyan Red Crescent Society (LRCS) is to promote resilience among vulnerable and at-risk populations through a community-based approach. In particular, the project aims to address the protection needs of vulnerable, internally displaced, marginalised and at-risk groups by broadening access to psychosocial rehabilitation leading to behavioural changes and promoting a culture of peace and tolerance.

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Media contacts

Stefano Cordella

IFRC Head of Country Office for Libya

Mob: +216 58 51 08 01

E-mail: Stefano.Cordella@ifrc.org

Rana Cassou

IFRC Regional Communications Manager

Mob.: +961 71 80 27 79

E-mail: Rana.Cassou@ifrc.org

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