INTRODUCTION

Aim
The aim of the Interim Mental Health & Psychosocial Support Emergency Toolkit is to provide MHPSS practitioners, policy and decision-makers easily-accessible information on resources and tools related to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) that are useful in the case of an emergency.

What Does this MHPSS Emergency Toolkit Contain?
- General Technical Guidelines and Resources: MHPSS and non MHPSS
- Assessment resources, tools, and examples; mapping tools
- Program Implementation: includes core packages/resources for different areas of intervention:
  - Psychological First Aid
  - Cultural Adaptation and Desk Reviews
  - Mental Health Integration into Primary HealthCare
  - Community Mobilisation and Support
  - Protection and Human Rights Standards
  - Integrated MHPSS and Gender Based Violence Programmes
  - MHPSS in Camp Management and Camp Coordination
  - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants on the Move
  - MHPSS and Education
  - MHPSS and Persons with Disabilities
  - Staff care and Support

Your Feedback is Essential
This MHPSS Emergency Toolkit is a working document and will be continuously reviewed as newer and more up to date resources and tools become available, but equally important is the feedback we receive from field users. Please share your experience in using the toolkit, and let us know what you think. Your considerations for improvement and overall feedback are welcome and can be received by the MHPSS.net Emergency Host Marcio Gagliato (marcio@mhpss.net).
Humanitarian Response in General

The Sphere handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response

The aim of the Handbook is to improve the quality of humanitarian response in situations of disaster and conflict, and to enhance the accountability of the humanitarian system to disaster-affected people. It is the product of the collective experience of many people and agencies. Started in the late 1990s as an initiative of a group of humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Sphere standards can now be seen as the minimum standards in humanitarian response. Sphere is available in 29 languages.

MHPSS Coordination in emergencies - Establishing coordination of intersectoral mental health and psychosocial support

Coordinating relief efforts entails minimizing the duplication of humanitarian services, whether by filling gaps or preventing overlap, and ensuring various organizations are synchronized to work together to achieve a common objective, thereby enabling a more coherent, effective, and efficient response (Gillmann 2010: 326; James 2008: 351-2). Particularly to MHPSS Coordination Mechanisms, please refer to IASC MHPSS Guidelines action sheet 1.1 (page 33-37), and the IASC MHPSS Reference Group.

General MHPSS Guidelines

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC, 2007) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Emergency Settings

This document is endorsed by more than 35 organizations involved in humanitarian assistance. It provides essential guidance for multi-sector responses to protect and improve people’s mental health and psychosocial well-being in the midst of an emergency, offering an overall framework for MHPSS integration, activities and services in humanitarian settings across different sectors such as health, protection and education. The guidelines call for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services and activities to be implemented in a way that is coordinated, evidence-based, participatory, integrated, avoids harm and builds on existing resources and capacities, and to organizing a multi-layered system of complementary supports that meets the needs of different groups. The guidelines are available in: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Nepali, Portuguese, Spanish, Tajik and Korean. A summary version of the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings is also available in English and Arabic.
MHPSS Guidelines for non-MHPSS Actors

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Emergencies: What Should Humanitarian Health Actors Know?
Based on the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC, 2007), this document gives an overview of essential knowledge that humanitarian health actors should have about mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in humanitarian emergencies.

Based on the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC, 2007), this document gives an overview of essential knowledge that protection programme managers should know about mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in humanitarian emergencies.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings, What should Camp Coordinators and Camp Manager Actors Know?
Based on the Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (IASC, 2007), this document provides an overview of essential knowledge that humanitarian actors within the CCCM cluster/sector should have about mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in humanitarian emergencies.
General and Cross-Sectoral Assessments

Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)
The Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) is designed to identify strategic humanitarian priorities during the first weeks following an emergency.

MIRA should be carried out under the auspices of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator (link to: While the primary responsibility for coordinating humanitarian assistance rests with national authorities, if international humanitarian assistance is required a Humanitarian Coordinator-HC or Resident Coordinator-RC is responsible for leading and coordinating the efforts of humanitarian organizations (both UN and non-UN)) and wherever possible, led by the government.

It is not specifically designed for MHPSS, but it does provide important information on the needs perceived by the affected community. It consists of:

- Secondary data analysis (SDA) to determine the extent of the disaster and the number of affected people and to sketch out the strategic humanitarian priorities.

- Community level assessment (CLA)

  The MIRA Framework to align intra- and inter-sectoral information and to support humanitarian actors reach a common understanding on strategic humanitarian priorities.

  The assessment normally comes with 2 products:

  A Preliminary Scenario Definition, is issued 72 hours after the disaster’s onset

  A MIRA Report, released after 2 weeks.

Guidance on MHPSS Assessments

IASC Reference Group Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Assessment Guide
The purpose of this document is to provide agencies with a guide with three tools containing key assessment questions that are of common relevance to all actors involved in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) independent of the phase of the emergency. This guide will be useful for rapid assessments of MHPSS issues in humanitarian emergencies across sectors.
Assessing mental health and psychosocial needs and resources. Toolkit for humanitarian settings. WHO UNHCR – Essential

This document offers an approach that should help assessors review information that is already available and only collect new data that will be of practical use.

Further Reading and examples of application:

Assessment of MHPSS Needs and Resources in the Context of Ebola - **Sierra Leone**

Rapid MHPSS Needs Assessment in **Serbia** – Services, Perceived Needs, and Recommendations following the Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants on the move in Europe

Rapid MHPSS Situational Assessment: Services, Identified Needs and Recommendations following the April and May 2015 Earthquakes in **Nepal**

**UNHCR/WHO Rapid Assessment of Substance and Alcohol Use**

An increase in alcohol and other substance use is amongst the many health and social issues associated with conflict and displacement. Problems with substance use are prevalent in a variety of conflict-affected situations, including camps for refugees and internally displaced people. Psychoactive substances are also often used by combatants.

This guide is written for those who plan to include in their work rapid assessments of alcohol and other substance use among conflict-affected and displaced populations.

**Rapid Assessment Guide for Psychosocial Support and Violence Prevention in Emergencies and Recovery (IFRC 2015)**

This guide provides standards and directions on how to carry out rapid needs assessment for Psychosocial Support (PSS) and Violence Prevention (VP) initiatives including child protection and sexual and gender-based violence. In particular, this rapid assessment tool is designed to help gather data in an efficient and effective way to help inform integration of PSS and VP issues, as minimum standards, into the broader disaster management action plans in response to an emergency.
## MHPSS Mapping tools

### Basic 4 W’s table

In the initial phase of an emergency many agencies are still assessing, planning and applying for funding. A simple table that provides an overview of Who is Where, When & doing What is often very useful to get an overview of MHPSS response and initiate coordination between implementing agencies.

**Who is Where, When, doing What (4Ws) in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support: Manual with Activity Codes**

The IASC Reference group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support 4Ws tool is developed to map MHPSS activities in humanitarian settings across sectors. It is envisioned that this tool will be used by groups with MHPSS coordination responsibilities in emergencies with numerous MHPSS actors. The tool exists of 2 parts:

(a) A manual, which describes how to collect the data.
(b) A 4Ws Data Collection Spreadsheet application (in Excel).

Further Reading and examples of application:

Psychological First Aid Guides

**Psychological First Aid (WHO, War Trauma Foundation, World Vision)**
This guide covers psychological first aid which involves humane, supportive and practical help to fellow human beings suffering serious crisis events. It is written for people in a position to help others who have experienced an extremely distressing event. It gives a framework for supporting people in ways that respect their dignity, culture and abilities. Despite its name, psychological first aid covers both social and psychological support.

**Psychological First Aid Training Manual for Child Practitioners (Save the Children)**
The manual to facilitate training in psychological first aid with a focus on children. The training programme develops skills for providing physical and emotional comfort by modelling calmness and enables a constructive format through active listening that allows survivors to voice their concerns and needs. It also helps to connect survivors to practical assistance through referral networks and information on positive coping strategies.

Further reading:

- Psychological First Aid for Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak

Materials and experiences related to training on Psychological First Aid and adaptation of resources and training approaches to different cultural contexts

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Resources

- **PFA Guide** available in Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, English, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Japanese, Kiswahili, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Sinhala, Slovenian, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish and Urdu
- **PFA Training Manual for Child Practitioners**
- **PFA for Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak**

Other Resources:
- **Materials and experiences related to training**
MHPSS Cultural Adaptation and Desk Reviews

Cultural review and adaptation that includes a rigorous review of the literature on pre-existing information relevant to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in specific emergency affected context, using an integrated psychological and anthropological framework that potentially can be instrumental in understanding MHPSS needs, and how to devise culturally-appropriate MHPSS interventions in that particular emergency/humanitarian affected areas.

Examples from the field:

- Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Guinea-Conakry – a literature review
- Ecuador Earthquake - Desk Review of Existing Information with Relevance to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)
- ‘Culture, context and the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Syrians’ (UNHCR, 2015) - a review for mental health and psychosocial support staff working with Syrians affected by armed conflict
- Nepal Earthquakes 2015: Desk Review of Existing Information with Relevance to Mental Health & Psychosocial Support
- Culture and Mental Health in Haiti: A Literature Review
- Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing in Congolese refugee survivors of gender-based violence
- Culture, context and mental health of Somali refugees: a primer for staff working in mental health and psychosocial support programmes.
Mental Health Integration into Primary Health Care

Clinical Management of Mental, Neurological and Substance Use Conditions in Humanitarian Emergencies - mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide (mhGAP-HIG)

The mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide contains first-line management recommendations for mental, neurological and substance use conditions for non-specialist health-care providers in humanitarian emergencies where access to specialists and treatment options is limited.

For planning a mental health response in PHC, please refer to Tool 5: Checklist for integrating mental health in primary health care (PHC) in humanitarian settings (page 47-52) in the UNHCR/WHO Assessing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs and Resources Toolkit for Humanitarian Settings.

Further reading and other related resources:

- WHO Model List of Essential Medicines
- UNHCR Health Information System: Emergency Mental Illness Report
- mhGAP module Assessment Management of Conditions Specifically Related to Stress. Available in Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish & Ukrainian
- Building back better - Sustainable mental health care after emergencies
- Problem Management Plus (PM+) - Individual psychological help for adults impaired by distress in communities exposed to adversity
- Thinking Healthy - A manual for psychological management of perinatal depression
- Group Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) for Depression
Community Mobilisation and Support

Child Friendly Spaces

**UNICEF Inter-Agency Guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies**

Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) are widely used in emergencies as a first response to children’s needs and an entry point for working with affected communities. Because CFSs can be established quickly and respond to children’s rights to protection, psychosocial well-being, and non-formal education, CFSs are typically used as temporary supports that contribute to the care and protection of children in emergencies. These guidelines include guiding principles for field teams in establishing CFSs in different types of emergencies and contexts. They are also intended to guide advocacy efforts and donor practices in emergency settings where protection and well-being ought to be high priorities.

**Inter-Agency Child Protection Working Group: Training Package on Child Friendly Spaces**

A training package to be delivered to child workers with no experience running a child safe space, enabling them to establish a quality program in an emergency setting. Participants learn the theory behind CFSs, how to set up and run them, and what kind of resources are needed to support the psychosocial wellbeing and protection of children in emergencies.
**Women and Girls Friendly Spaces**

The creation of “friendly spaces” for women and girls has been a key strategy in the protection and empowerment of women and girls. This document provides useful guidance on the aims of these spaces, and how they can best be established and managed, using the conflict context of South Sudan. The intention is to assist collaboration among agencies by building a consensus around the key aims, functions and guiding principles for Women and Girls Friendly Spaces.

**Baby Friendly Spaces**

The Baby Friendly Spaces (BFS) is a model of intervention for a holistic program to support pregnant, lactating women and their children in emergency situations.

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## Protection and Human Rights Standards

*The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*

The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS) are intended to:

1. Establish common principles amongst those working in child protection, and to strengthen coordination between them.
2. Improve the quality of child protection programming, and its impact for children.
3. Improve accountability within child protection work.
4. Provide a synthesis of good practice and learning to date.
5. Enable better advocacy and communication on child protection risks, needs and responses.

A summary version of the CPMS is also available.

Further reading and resources:

- CPMS roll out pack that contains the essential information and support material.
- Inter-agency guiding principles on unaccompanied and separated children – ICRC
- Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit
Integrated MHPSS and GBV Programmes

Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action. Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery (IASC, Global Protection Cluster)
These guidelines provide practical guidance and effective tools for humanitarians and communities to coordinate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate essential actions for the prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence, throughout all stages of emergency response, from preparedness to recovery. MHPSS is integrated throughout the guidelines.
Further reading:

- Sexual and gender based violence - A two-day psychosocial training

MHPSS in Camp Management and Camp Coordination

Camp Management Toolkit
Applicable to both IDP and refugee scenarios, the Toolkit incorporates a wide range of relevant information on managing displaced populations living in communal settings (collective centres, spontaneous sites, established camps, etc.).

MHPSS for Camp Coordination and Camp Management
This document is for humanitarian actors within the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster, at national and subnational levels, in countries facing emergencies and crises. This document provides an overview of essential knowledge that humanitarian actors within the CCCM cluster/sector should have about MHPSS in humanitarian emergencies

MHPSS for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants on the Move

This brief guidance note seeks to provide advice on protecting and supporting the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in Europe. It describes key principles and appropriate interventions to guide all those who are designing and organizing emergency services and/or providing direct assistance to the affected people.
MHPSS and Education

Psychosocial Support and Social and Emotional Learning for Children and Youth in Emergency Settings

This document clarifies relevant terminologies and approaches relating to psychosocial well-being and social and emotional learning (SEL) in education in crisis affected contexts, and to explore how psychosocial support (PSS) and social and emotional learning relate to one another.

MHPSS and Persons with Disabilities

Inclusion of people with psychosocial disability in low and middle income contexts: A Literature and Practice Review –

The purpose of this review is to explore literature and the experiences of three organisations that are working with people with psychosocial disability living in low- and middle-income countries.

Staff Care and Support

Based on years of experience supporting the health & wellbeing of people working in some of the most difficult & dangerous parts of the world, what follows is a suggestion of learning and recommendations when thinking about staff care:

- Caring for Volunteers – A Psychosocial Support Toolkit
- UNHCR MHPSS for staff – This evaluation reports on how well the UNHCR considers and provides for the well-being and mental health of persons of concern to the agency. The finding, lessons learned and recommendation, makes this document a very useful resources for Staff Support field, and also includes a very rich list of references and bibliography (page 87-93).
- Interhealth Worldwide – Staff Care Guidelines
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