

INTERIM MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT EMERGENCY-TOOLKIT

April 2017

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 1990-s 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.

Resources



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

➔ 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



IASC Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings

Basic outline of MHPSS Coordination Structure for Large Emergencies

➔ 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.



IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Emergency Settings

Available in:
Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Nepali, Portuguese, Spanish, Tajik, Korean .

Field Checklist: *IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Emergency Settings: Field Checklist*
Also available in 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.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Emergencies: What Should Protection Programme Managers 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 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.



What Should Humanitarian Health Actors Know?



What Should Protection Programme Managers Know?



What should Camp Coordinators and Camp Manager Actors Know?

➔ **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.

Resources



Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)

➔ **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.



IASC Reference Group Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Assessment Guide

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



Assessing mental health and psychosocial needs and resources. Toolkit for humanitarian settings. WHO UNHCR
Available in *Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish*

Case Studies & Examples
→ *Sierra Leone MHPSS Needs & Resources Assessment*

→ *Serbia MHPSS Needs Assessment*

→ *Nepal MHPSS Situational Assessment*



UNHCR/WHO Rapid Assessment of Substance and Alcohol Use



IFRC Rapid Assessment Guide for Psychosocial Support and Violence Prevention in Emergencies and Recovery

➔ 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:

The "4Ws" in Lebanon: Who's doing What, Where and Until When in MHPSS (2015)

The "4Ws" in Jordan: Who's doing What, Where and Until When in MHPSS and Protection Support in Jordan - 2015/2016 Interventions Mapping Exercise



IASC 4Ws Manual with Activity Codes

Data Collection:

- ➔ *4Ws Simple Matrix for Mapping MHPSS Services*
- ➔ *4Ws Data Collection Spreadsheet*

Application and Examples

- ➔ *The 2015 "4Ws" Mapping in Lebanon*
- ➔ *The 2015/2016 "4Ws" Mapping in Jordan*

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

→ 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](#)

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.



MHPSS in Guinea-Conakry – literature review



Ecuador Earthquake - Desk Review



‘Culture, context and the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Syrians’ (UNHCR, 2015)



Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing in Congolese refugee survivors of gender-based violence



Culture, context and mental health of Somali refugees

Other Resources:

→ *Nepal Earthquakes 2015: Desk Review*

→ *Culture and Mental Health in Haiti: Literature Review*

➔ 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



mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide available in Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian



UNHCR/WHO Assessing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs and Resources Toolkit for Humanitarian Settings.



Assessment Management of Conditions Specifically Related to Stress. Available in Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian



Building Back Better



Problem Management Plus (PM+)



Thinking Healthy



Group Interpersonal Therapy for Depression

Other Resources:

- *WHO Model List of Essential Medicines*
- *Health Information System: Emergency Mental Illness Report*

→ **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.



UNICEF Inter-Agency Guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies

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



Women and Girls Friendly Spaces

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



Baby Friendly Spaces

➔ 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 Improve accountability within child protection work
3. Provide a synthesis of good practice and learning to date
4. 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



The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS)

Summary Document & Roll out Package:

- ➔CPMS Summary Version
- ➔CPMS roll out pack



Inter-agency guiding principles on unaccompanied and separated children



Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit

Guidelines for Integrating

➔ 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](#)



Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action



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



Camp Management Toolkit



MHPSS for Camp Coordination and Camp Management

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

➔ 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



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

➔ 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.



Inclusion of people with psychosocial disability in low and middle income contexts

➔ 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

Managing stress in humanitarian workers (Antares Foundation, 2012) – guidelines for good practice

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



Caring for Volunteers – A Psychosocial Support Toolkit. Available in English, Arabic, French, Spanish and Albanian



Managing stress in humanitarian workers



UNHCR MHPSS for staff
Other Resources:
➔ *Interhealth Worldwide: Staff Care Guidelines*



The development of this toolkit was possible because of the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This document is the responsibility of MHPSS.net / Institute for Health Policy, Sri Lanka, and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government

