

# IASC Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

## DRAFT Progress Report January 2014-July 2015:

### Overall Goal

In the forthcoming IASC Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) common framework for monitoring and evaluation, the overall goal is stated as “Reduced suffering and improved mental health and psychosocial wellbeing”

### Tasks

1. To facilitate the integration of the core principles of the Guidelines into all sectors of emergency response;
2. To foster collaboration amongst agencies and diverse stakeholders (such as governments and communities);
3. To support interagency coordination for MHPSS in emergencies at global, regional and national levels;
4. To support interagency activities for MHPSS in emergencies at global, regional and national levels;
5. To develop relevant tools linked to the guidelines and share these with countries;
6. To encourage individual agencies to institutionalise the guidelines;
7. To promote and support on-going capacity building to enable effective use of the guidelines;
8. To share experiences of implementation among countries;
9. To interface with the UN Cluster System and IASC subsidiary bodies to include MHPSS into policies, tools, capacity building and budgets;
10. To facilitate printing, dissemination and language translations of the guidelines;

## TOP ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE EARLY 2014

### IASC Review of the Implementation of the IASC MHPSS Guidelines

The implementation of the IASC MHPSS Guidelines and activities of the Reference Group were reviewed by two independent consultants and published in the ‘IASC Review of the Implementation of the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings: How Are We Doing?’ (2015). <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/node/9056>

#### Key findings of the review

- The activities of the IASC Reference Group on MHPSS are seen as effective and important components of implementation of the Guidelines
- Reference Group members have taken significant efforts within their agencies to develop and disseminate policies, adapting the Guidelines to the specific mandates and activities of their agency
- The Guidelines have been particularly effective in empowering technical experts to improve quality of programmes, and key informants noted that the Guidelines have therefore reduced the number of inappropriate or harmful interventions

#### Key Advocacy achievements

- The US Department of State *Foreign Operations Bill*, 2016 directs the Department of State and USAID, in cooperation with relevant U.N. agencies and organizations, to include MHPSS as a core component in programs addressing the needs of Syrian refugees, to be implemented according to IASC MHPSS Guidelines
- A recent call for proposal by USAID on improving Psychosocial Support and Mental Health for people affected by the conflict in Ukraine, explicitly asks for capacity building on the IASC MHPSS Guidelines
- The Dutch Parliament adopted a resolution stating the importance of MHPSS in emergency settings. The Dutch Minister of Development has committed herself to lobby for the integration of MHPSS during the World Humanitarian Summit

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES UNTIL THE END OF 2015

- Development of a common MHPSS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework, with a well-defined and agreed upon goal, key outcomes and indicators (in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University)
- Forthcoming publication (2015): MHPSS and Ebola Virus Disease Outbreaks: What should Public Health Officers Know?
- Translation of the IASC MHPSS Guidelines into Russian and Ukrainian
- Continuation with main tasks as described above; including field support on MHPSS in emergencies
- Continuation of advocacy efforts on different levels (donors, Humanitarian System, in emergency-affected countries)
- Exploration of possibilities for MHPSS surge capacity

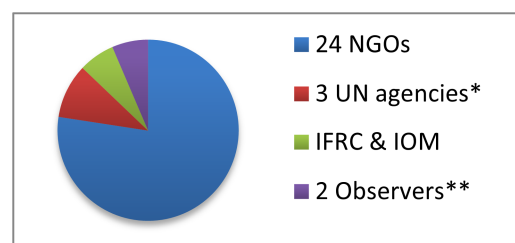
### Translations of the Guidelines

The Guidelines are available in many languages including Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Nepali, and Spanish. In 2014 a translation in Tajik became available.

### Development of tools linked to the Guidelines (since 2014)

- IASC Reference Group Mental Health and Psychosocial Support: Recommendations for Ethical MHPSS Research in Emergency settings (2014)
- IASC Review of the Implementation of the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings: *How Are We Doing?* (2015)
- Nepal Earthquakes 2015: Desk Review of Existing Information with Relevance to Mental Health & Psychosocial Support

## COMPOSITION /ACTIVE MEMBERS



\*UN: WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF

\*\* Observers: good collaboration with ICRC and MSF (MHPSS Experts at MSF Belgium, Holland, Spain and Switzerland)