



Spanish Red Cross Health Emergency Response Unit nurse comforts and speaks with two Ukrainian women at a temporary collective centre supported by the Red Cross. © IFRC

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Ukraine and Impacted Countries Emergency Appeal (28/02/2022 - 31/12/2025)

The large-scale humanitarian emergency caused by the conflict in Ukraine has had a devastating human cost, internally displacing millions of people in Ukraine and causing millions more to flee to neighboring countries. Experiencing war, displacement, family separation, witnessing atrocities and other life-threatening events can have immense and often long-lasting negative consequences for people's mental health. As the armed conflict continues and winter approaches, more people may be forced to flee, while others may struggle to meet

even their most basic needs. It will take years to recover from its impact on people, communities, cities and the environment, even if the conflict ended tomorrow.

The delivery of effective mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) interventions early on in humanitarian emergency situations is one of the most important means of mitigating lasting suffering due to mental ill health. IFRC recognizes MHPSS as a crucial, cross-cutting area of lifesaving emergency response.

HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS?

- Advocating for the affected population to have early access to basic MHPSS services.
- Creating awareness and providing information on the common signs, symptoms and reactions to stress and distress.
- Sitting down with someone and listening to their story and linking them to further support.
- Referring those who are in need of more specialized mental health support.
- Organizing social and recreational activities for displaced population and host communities.
- Organizing child-friendly spaces and activities, as well as activities targeting caregivers.
- Caring for staff and volunteers, including first line responders.
- Hosting sports and recreational activities, which can help promote inclusivity and integration.



IFRC'S MHPSS STRATEGIC PILLARS AND OUTCOMES:

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1

Institutional Strengthening and anchoring of MHPSS in National Societies:

- National Societies' MHPSS capacity and needs assessed and individual National Societies capacity building plans developed
- National Societies management prioritize and demonstrate commitment to MHPSS roll-out
- National Societies have adequate resources available, including HR, tools and approaches, for MHPSS scale-up
- Peer-to-peer National Society support established through cluster-based MHPSS fora
- Sustainability of MHPSS capacity is ensured

STRATEGIC PILLAR 2

Service delivery of National Societies in response to identified MHPSS needs:

- Identification and mapping of needs of affected population
- Provision of PFA to affected population groups
- PFA mainstreamed across all National Societies sectors
- Caring for Staff and Volunteers structures and procedures in place across all impacted National Societies
- Community-based activities established in selected countries
- Emergency roster of National Society MHPSS in Emergencies capacities developed

STRATEGIC PILLAR 3

IFRC successfully secures partner support for MHPSS needs in the region:

- IFRC Regional Office for Europe capacity in place to lead effective coordination
- Effective and efficient coordination on the MHPSS file ensured across Europe region, including multi-sectoral coordination
- MHPSS network of MHPSS delegates and National Societies focal points for impacted countries established
- Close coordination with IFRC Psychosocial Center to ensure coordinated support to National Societies
- IFRC positioned and recognized as a key provider of MHPSS capacity building and service delivery across the region
- IFRC successfully secured partner support for MHPSS needs in the region beyond 2023

STRATEGIC PILLAR 4

IFRC promotes evidence-based programming and ensures quality MHPSS interventions:

- National societies provide quality PFA and basic MHPSS services
- Quality assurance of training curricula and materials
- Impact of approaches and MHPSS interventions documented and disseminated
- Evidence-based operations programming promoted
- Research study conducted to establish impact of the MHPSS approach adopted in Ukraine crisis intervention



CARING FOR THE CAREGIVERS

To be able to take care of others, we need to take care of ourselves too. This principle applies to humanitarian work as well, including frontline responders, to avoid burn-out.

Through this MHPSS Strategy, IFRC seeks to ensure Caring for Staff and Volunteers systems, including the design and roll-out of trainings, tools, and guidance, are put in place across all impacted National Societies as well as our own IFRC country, sub-regional and regional offices.

Valentina Mitrovsij, the chairman of the Ukrainian Red Cross branch in Uzhhorod, gets a hug from Red Cross volunteer Antonina Romanenko. After distributing several hundred hygiene kits to displaced families, each volunteer at the distribution centre received an official letter of gratitude for their efforts. © Finnish Red Cross



CALL FOR SUPPORT

While the ongoing crisis in Ukraine has drawn extraordinary levels of support from inside and outside the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, additional capacity and resources are necessary to ensure that the National Societies and the communities will receive the needed support. The operational budget will facilitate the establishment of the necessary HR structure at national, sub-regional and regional levels to provide the services and support, including development of protocols, tools and activities, described above.

Contact us

For more information on country plans, operational timeframes, and budget, please contact:

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While this strategy is intended to guide IFRC's sectoral response throughout the duration of the Ukraine and Impacted Countries operation, we will remain flexible and adaptable, which means adjustments to the strategy may be made if deemed necessary to best meet changing and evolving needs in this protracted crisis.