

**Terms of Reference - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)
Technical Working Group
YEMEN**

A) INTRODUCTION and RATIONALE

Within the context of the current humanitarian needs in Yemen, the Health and Protection Clusters set up a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Working Group (MHPSS TWG). The overall purpose of the TWG is to bring together stakeholders working on MHPSS and enhance the response and access to MHPSS services for displaced and affected host population in Yemen. The TWG will achieve this goal by providing timely and efficient leadership for members and promoting good practice, joint advocacy and capacity building for members. The TWG adheres to the general framework of the global Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on MHPSS. All agencies and organizations working in MHPSS are therefore invited and strongly encouraged to be members of this TWG. The MHPSS TWG will operate under the coordination framework of the Health and Protection Clusters under the leadership of Ministry of Public Health & Population and Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour with technical support from WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR.

B) OBJECTIVES

- Ensure an effective, coordinated and focused inter-agency response to the MHPSS needs of populations of concern in Yemen, with an aim to bridge emergency and development programming.
- Provide ongoing strategic direction, promote adherence to standards of best practice and global interagency recommendations, and develop relevant guidelines or tools for MHPSS sectors when needed.
- Strengthen the safe and ethical collation, analysis and transparent sharing of data and information pertaining to MHPSS needs, priorities and activities in Yemen, including gap identification.
- Inform inter-agency efforts and planning by highlighting key MHPSS issues, collectively representing the TWG interests and perspectives, and advocating for MHPSS needs and priorities.
- Ensure that quality standards are upheld by actors working in the MHPSS sector, maintaining equity and coverage.
- Coordinate the planning and implementation of joint initiatives, including training and capacity building activities.
- Promote the engagement and leadership of the relevant Ministries and encourage the representation of diverse MHPSS partners and stakeholders within the TWG, including the relevant Ministries, UN agencies, international and local NGOs.

C) SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

1. General Coordination:

- Conduct regular inter-agency meetings with all MHPSS actors to disseminate information, update progress on the agreed upon work plans. Maintain contact with sector focal points and government institutions promoting MHPSS as a cross-cutting issue.
- Ensure the active participation and involvement of Ministry of Public Health & Population and Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in the TWG.
- Maintain an updated 4Ws matrix on MHPSS and tracking geographic coverage and gaps in order to better allocate resources and avoid duplication.
- Lead the setup of an efficient and functional interagency coordination and referral mechanism at both national and subnational levels.
- Ensure that the MHPSS response is guided by relevant national and international policies and standards, including reference to the Yemen National Strategy for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support.
- Provide input to policies and plans as required, including referral systems, standard operating procedures, and advocacy and resource mobilization documents.

2. Needs assessment, analysis and information sharing: -

- Establish a collectively coordinated inter-agency committee headed by relevant Ministries with the active involvement of all active MHPSS among the UN Agencies, INGOs and NNGOs.
- Participate in inter-agency service mappings to gain a better understanding of the service landscape and identify gaps and duplication.
- Manage a unified platform to collate, document and share lessons learned among the actors in MHPSS.
- Encourage all MHPSS actors to join the global platform at www.mhpss.net

3. Advocacy, Monitoring & Reporting:

- Create and promote an advocacy brochure on MHPSS needs and actions for all stakeholders.
- Share information on best practices with all stakeholders and advocate for better quality care access to MHPSS services.
- Advocate with the donor community to secure additional funding for MHPSS interventions.
- Develop/improve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms focusing on outcome and impact indicators.
- Identify and prioritise the scale-up of key mental health and psychosocial evidence-based interventions.
- Advocate for welfare of staff as one of the principles of good practice.

4. Technical Support and Capacity building:

- Ensure all actors in MHPSS in Yemen undertake the minimum training package to deliver quality mental services.
- Ensure a training curriculum is established for MHPSS actors on the IASC MHPSS guidelines.
- Develop a capacity building plan based on interagency capacity assessments and organise training workshops to build the technical and institutional capacity of humanitarian agencies and government institutions working in MHPSS.
- Conducted interagency training on MHPSS targeting key stakeholders staff such as psychiatrists, psychologists, outreach workers and community mobilizers, with a focus on mental health care, psychological first aid (PFA), basic PSS, and psycho-education.
- Promote self-care and staff care through a systemic and integrated approach that involves direct support to staff and provision of orientation sessions on stress management and self-care.

5. Strategy development

- Spearhead the development/review of the Yemen National MHPSS strategy with relevant authorities and stakeholders, to reflect the humanitarian context in Yemen in relation to the national Health strategy.

D) GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All the members of the MHPSS TWG shall adhere to the following basic principles:

- Confidentiality of personal information shared with the members of the working group
- Do no harm
- Human rights
- Participatory approach
- Impartiality and non-discrimination
- Respect for cultural context
- Neutrality and equality between members
- Transparency and information-sharing
- Multi-layered support

E) ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES and MEMBERSHIP

1. Leadership

The MHPSS TWG will be jointly coordinated by the Health and Protection Clusters under the overall leadership of Ministry of Public Health & Population and Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. The TWG will be Chaired by WHO and Co-Chaired by CYPO whilst Handicap International and Relief International shall rotate the rapporteur role.

The Chair and Co-chair will share tasks in an equal and collaborative manner, and will be responsible for: -

- Represent the MHPSS TWG as focal points in inter-agency, inter-sectoral and other coordination forums.
- Act as the link between the MHPSS TWG and other coordination groups, communicating and reporting back to the Health and Protection Clusters.
- Facilitate the regular MHPSS TWG meetings, including the preparation of agenda and required documents.
- Facilitate the collaborative development and implementation of the multi-sector work plan.

2. Membership and Participation

Members of the MHPSS TWG will be individuals with technical expertise representing their respective Agencies/Organisations and not in an individual capacity in the area of MHPSS. They will commit to participate regularly in all the meetings, activities and initiatives of the TWG. The members shall be knowledgeable about their respective Agency/Actors' mandate, capacities, priorities and activities.

Participating members will be responsible for:

- Briefing their organization on the activities, recommendations, and decisions of the MHPSS TWG, and ensure that appropriate mechanisms of information sharing in their own agency enable communication of information back to the TWG.
- Effectively coordinate programs and activities, avoiding duplication while working towards good practice standards within their own organizations.
- Active contribution of experiences, perspectives and inputs to the TWG, including proactive engagement in assuming responsibilities in the distribution of sectoral tasks and initiatives.

- Serve as advocates in representing the MHPSS TWG perspectives when participating in inter-agency and inter-sectoral activities.
- Ensuring reporting in a timely manner.
- Continuously update information from all new Actors to include geographic coverage and case load which shall be used to evaluate membership to the TWG.

F) MEETINGS

The MHPSS TWG shall be hold regular meetings on the first Tuesday of every month. The Chair may, in consultation with Co-Chair and the Health and Protection Clusters may call for adhoc meetings to discuss emerging issues.

An agenda shall be shared a minimum of one week before the next meeting and meeting minutes, including all relevant documents, shall be circulated within one week after the meeting is held.