

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

Technical Working Group Cox's Bazar

1. BACKGROUND

Since 25th of August 2017, around 850,000 Myanmar Rohingya population entered Bangladesh following insecurity in Northern Rakhine State of Myanmar. The forcibly displaced population have taken shelter in existing registered camps, makeshift settlements, host communities and in new spontaneous settlements. The sudden increase in population numbers to a rural district of Bangladesh resulted in a humanitarian emergency and the need to rapidly scale up MHPSS services for the affected population.

An MHPSS WG was created in Cox's Bazar in February 2016 upon the request of the Inter-Sector Working Group. This ToR now reflects the expanded MHPSS technical WG membership and objectives.

2. OBJECTIVES

The general objective is to reduce suffering and improve the mental health and psychosocial well-being of the affected population through an effective and coordinated MHPSS response.

Specific Objectives:

- a. In line with the IASC MHPSS Guidelines facilitate an effective inter-agency response to the MHPSS needs of the affected population.
- b. Strengthen the knowledge and evidence of MHPSS needs, priorities and activities pertaining to MHPSS services.
- c. Provide ongoing strategic direction and input regarding MHPSS within the emergency response, promote adherence to standards of best practice and global inter-agency recommendations.
- d. To mainstream MHPSS into other sectors so that it is an integrated part of the overall emergency response.
- e. To identify key areas of knowledge and skill building in the MHPSS sector, and promote inter-agency capacity building initiatives of technical WG member partners.

3. MEMBERSHIP and LEADS

All agencies, national and international organizations and Government Line Ministries conducting MHPSS activities as part of the emergency response are invited and strongly encouraged to participate. Leads from other relevant sectors or sub-sectors are also warmly invited. Agency focal points should be technical staff who will represent their respective organizations and be knowledgeable about their MHPSS programmes and priorities.

Participating members will be responsible for:

- a. Briefing their organization on the orientation, recommendations, and decisions of the MHPSS technical WG, and ensure that appropriate mechanisms of information sharing in their own agency enable communication of information back to the technical WG;
- b. Active contribution of experiences, perspectives and inputs to the technical WG, including proactive engagement in assuming responsibilities in the distribution of tasks and initiatives.
- c. Serve as an advocate in representing MHPSS when participating in other inter-agency and inter-sectoral forums (e.g., protection, child protection, GBV, nutrition, CWC and health sector meetings etc.).

4. GROUP STRUCTURE

The group is led by 2 agencies. The group is currently chaired by Action Against Hunger (ACF) and co-chaired by BRAC. Agencies may join smaller time-bound task forces/ task teams to work on specific inter-agency technical documents or deliverables, for example to draft the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, to roll out inter-agency trainings or develop inter-agency IEC materials. The smaller Task Teams will report back to the wider MHPSS WG, who will also review documents before their finalisation.

The co-chairing of the group should be reviewed on an annual basis, or upon request by group members.

The MHPSS technical WG is an independent group that works across the inter-sectoral coordination (ISG) mechanism. It is thus not directly associated with any specific sector as a sub-group, but rather works to integrate MHPSS within the overall emergency response.

5. MEETING

- a. The MHPSS Working Group will meet on a bi-weekly (every two weeks) basis in Cox's Bazar. Meeting venues and hosting can be by rotation among group members.
- b. Ad hoc meetings may be called by the co/chair to discuss specific issues or to develop specific technical documents.
- c. A draft agenda will be circulated to members of the MHPSS Working Group in advance of the meeting. Members are encouraged to review and input into the agenda. Draft minutes will be circulated within one week after the meeting date for feedback and necessary revision.
- d. Time-bound task force (s)/ task teams may meet outside of the usual fortnightly meetings.

6. AMENDMENTS

The ToR will be discussed and reviewed annually or upon request from the group members.