

Terms of Reference for the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Coordination Group (MHPSS CG)  
Juba, Republic of South Sudan

Overall purpose and rationale

The overall purpose of the MHPSS CG is to bring together in one forum all the stakeholders working in the area of MHPSS with the view to enhancing the response to MHPSS needs of affected persons in the Republic of South Sudan, and thus improving their access to quality services and support. It aims to achieve this goal through enhanced coordination among MHPSS agencies, conducting a detailed mapping of MHPSS activities, sharing best practice, building capacities of MHPSS actors and partners in other priority clusters, supporting the development of MHPSS policies and strengthening advocacy initiatives with the Government of South Sudan, the humanitarian community and donors.

The MHPSS CG adheres to the general framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and group members are expected to conduct programming that is in line with the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. The group is a technical body that reviews and advocates for projects and proposals that meet minimum IASC MHPSS guideline standards to be included in the Humanitarian Response Plan and other humanitarian documents. All agencies and organisations working in the MHPSS sector are invited and strongly encouraged to take part.

The MHPSS CG will report to the Inter-Cluster Working Group (ICWG). The group will be led by a full-time Coordinator housed within the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a Co-Coordinator (previously identified as Handicap International), alternate Co-Coordinators, and supported by the members of the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) members consisting of the leads of any active sub-groups/taskforces. The Coordinator, Co-Coordinators, alternate Co-Coordinators, and the SAB form the MHPSS coordination body. The coordination body will be responsible for liaising with the five (5) priority clusters – Protection, Health, Education, Nutrition, and CCCM - attending cluster/sub-cluster meetings and updating cluster partners on MHPSS needs, gaps and activities.

Associated Government Line Ministries

- Directorate of Mental Health, Ministry of Health and Environment
- Ministry of Gender, Social Development and Education

Objectives

1. To **coordinate** MHPSS activities in the Republic of South Sudan – the group shall be a forum for **information sharing** on MHPSS activities and particularly information dissemination on MHPSS activities, gaps and needs occurring in States and field locations outside of Juba
2. To determine **priority issues** and areas for MHPSS interventions, strategy and policy development and advocacy initiatives
3. Provide **technical support and capacity building initiatives** for the MHPSS WG members and partners, priority cluster members and partners, relevant government officials, teachers, health professionals, social workers and volunteers
4. Raise the **awareness** of MHPSS by ensuring inclusion of MHPSS in relevant priority clusters: Nutrition, Education, Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Protection (including Child Protection & GBV sub clusters) and Health, at the ICWG, INGOs, NNGOs and relevant Government Line Ministries
5. **Advocate** for the relevant Government Line Ministries to include MHPSS in their policies, strategies, capacity building of staff members and in budget allocation decisions
6. Support MHPSS partners, and partners within other priority clusters, to allocate **funding** for MHPSS interventions
7. Support **financial and human resource mobilisation** for under-funded MHPSS priority activities or projects

Activities will be conducted in the below 5 areas.

1. **Coordination and Information Management**
2. **Capacity building and technical support**
3. **Awareness raising**
4. **Strategy and policy development**
5. **Advocacy**

Priority Focus Groups for MHPSS interventions

- Children (boys and girls)
  - Infants (aged 0-5yrs)
  - Child (aged 6-10 yrs)
  - Adolescents (10-19 yrs)
- Young men and women (youth)
- Vulnerable males and females
  - Persons with disabilities
  - Persons with mental health conditions or suffering from psychosocial distress
  - Detainees/ Prisoners
  - Elderly
  - People with chronic illnesses/ Non-communicable diseases e.g., persons living with HIV/AIDS
  - Survivors of GBV
  - Caregivers
  - Adults
  - Humanitarian organisations' staff and volunteers

Priority Focus Groups for MHPSS capacity-building activities

- Government Line Ministries – policy and strategy development
- MHPSS service providers with a focus on building the capacity of national actors in quality programming and monitoring
- Teachers (in collaboration with the Education Cluster partners and the Ministry)
- Health care professionals – Hospital and PHC level Doctors, Nurses and Community Health Workers (in collaboration with the Health Cluster partners and the Ministry of Health)
- Social Workers (in collaboration with the Protection, Child Protection and GBV sub-clusters)
- Community Leaders and community groups (e.g., protection/ youth/ children's committees)
- Humanitarian actors from other clusters
- Volunteers

Sub-groups/ Taskforces

Sub-groups reporting to the main MHPSS coordination group, can be created for a period of time on an 'as needs basis', and should be weighed against the risk of splintering the overall MHPSS coordination. Sub-groups must be agreed upon by the wider MHPSS group membership and they must have a designated lead agency, and preferable a co-lead to convene meetings. Discussions at the sub-group level will be reported at the MHPSS CG meetings as standing items on the agenda. Sub-group leads and co-leads may also be invited onto the SAB of the MHPSS CG.

Examples of sub-groups/taskforces:

- **Child Protection – Psychosocial Support (CP-PSS)**
- **Mental Health services at Juba Central Prison and Juba Teaching Hospital**