



Caring for Volunteers


Training Manual

Caring for Volunteers

Training Manual

Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support
Blegdamsvej 27
DK-2100 Copenhagen
Denmark
Phone: +45 35 25 92 00
E-mail: psychosocial.centre@ifrc.org
Web: www.pscentre.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Psychosocial.Center
Twitter: @IFRC_PS_Centre

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Editor-in-chief: Nana Wiedemann
Author: Anne Lomholt Lei Hansen
Editors and peer reviewers: Louise Steen Kryger, Louise Vinther-Larsen, Simone von Burgwald, Despina Constandinides, Christina Bitar, Ea Suzanne Akasha, Wendy Ager
Coordination: Anne Lomholt Lei Hansen

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Please contact the PS Centre if you wish to translate or adapt any part of Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual. We welcome your comments, feedback and questions at psychosocial.centre@ifrc.org.

Please see the full list of materials available from the PS Centre at www.pscentre.org.
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Foreword

A number of National Societies spoke about their experiences and their work during a psychosocial support workshop at the IFRC General Assembly in Geneva in November 2011. In sharing stories and lessons learned from past catastrophes and crises, one message became clear: We in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement need to be better at training and preparing our staff and volunteers for the important work they do in helping beneficiaries. We also need to be better at taking care of ourselves – and of each other.

Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual was developed to answer these expressed needs. It is designed to complement the PS Centre's 2012 publication, *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit*, which focuses on volunteers' well-being in situations of crisis or catastrophe. It builds on the tools presented in the toolkit, by providing concrete activities and exercises for implementing psychosocial support for volunteers in various contexts.

The manual sets the context for psychosocial support for volunteers, including the key concepts and definitions needed by trainers in the field. It articulates the possible risks to volunteers' well-being in their role, and presents strategies for reducing those risks. It includes sessions on self-care, peer support and PFA and has guidance on how to set up a support system for volunteers and on monitoring and evaluation. The training also includes a valuable session on making an action plan to follow up the work done in the training. An appendix featuring a training of trainers accompanies this manual.

We very much hope that the range of materials provided in *Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual* will support Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff in their primary work of helping beneficiaries. Our goal in this endeavour is as always to assist National Societies in offering the most effective psychosocial support possible to the greatest possible number of people in need.

Nana Wiedemann

Head of IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support

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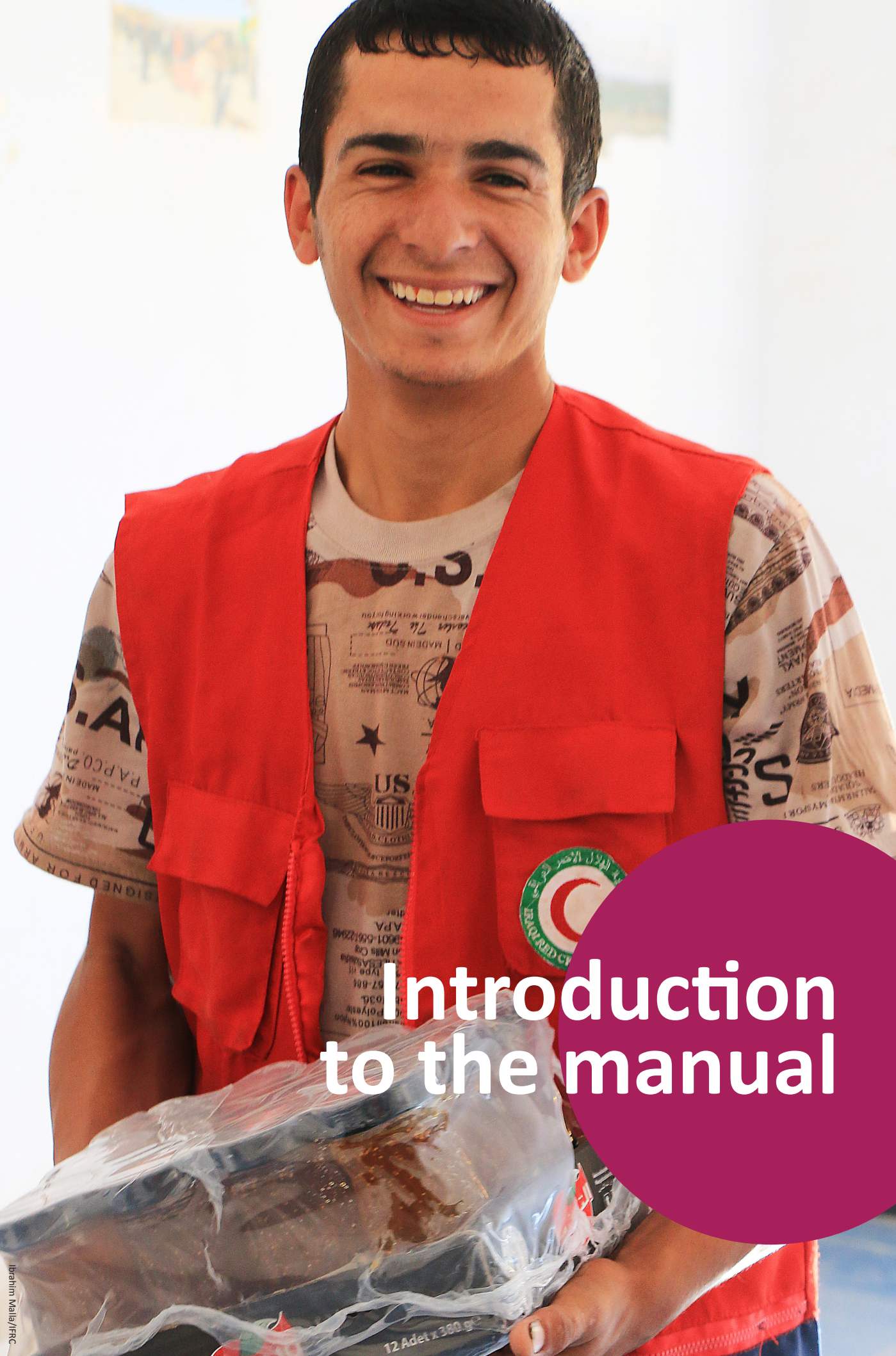
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Introduction to the manual

Background

Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual has been developed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support (the PS Centre) as a result of increasing requests for trainings on how to provide proper care and support for volunteers. It is based on *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit*. The toolkit contains practical tools for supporting volunteers before, during and after emergency responses, as well as for peer support and communication, and has monitoring and evaluation guidelines. It is available online at www.pscentre.org in English, Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish. Hard copies are also available in limited numbers upon request from the PS Centre.

Aim of the training manual

The overall aim of this manual is to strengthen the capacity of National Societies in responding to the psychosocial needs of volunteers. Please note, however, that many of the topics covered in the training also apply to Red Cross Red Crescent staff who are likely to experience similar situations to volunteers.

The training will enable participants to set up psychosocial support systems for volunteers in their National Societies. Participants will gain an understanding of core concepts concerning the psychological well-being of staff and volunteers and of their roles and responsibilities in this capacity. By the end of the training, they will have developed practical skills in self-care, peer support, and psychological first aid. They will also have been trained in management and planning tools such as setting up psychosocial support systems, monitoring and evaluation, and communication.

Participants in the training are encouraged to reflect on current psychosocial support mechanisms in their own National Society. They can then formulate an action plan for developing the volunteer psychosocial support system in their own context.

All the materials developed for this manual can be adapted to suit the particular needs of each National Society.

Audience: Who is this manual for?

The participants

Participants in this training may come from a variety of backgrounds; they may be either staff or volunteers who are responsible for other volunteers. Ideally, participants should have experience in managing staff and volunteers in their National Societies, e.g. as human resources staff, branch managers, volunteer managers or others working with volunteers.

It can be very rewarding to have staff and volunteers participating in the same training. This gives both groups the opportunity to share perspectives and to learn from each other.

The facilitator

The facilitator conducting this training should have completed the training of facilitators (ToT). (Please see the information on the next page about the ToT that accompanies this manual.) If a National Society is not able to identify a local facilitator, the PS Centre can provide assistance in finding a facilitator and give advice on training programmes.

The training programme

The manual sets out a basic training in the psychosocial support of volunteers. The manual is also used for the ToT together with a separate set of training notes called *Appendix: Training of Trainers (ToT)*.

The basic training

The basic training in the psychosocial support of volunteers has been designed as a two-day training programme (see annex 5 for details of the suggested workshop planner).

After completing this training, participants should be able to:

- understand the psychosocial needs of staff and volunteers
- understand the concept of self-care, peer support and psychological first aid
- plan, implement, and review staff and volunteer support in their National Society
- communicate the importance and availability of psychosocial support.

Training of Trainers (ToT)

The ToT has been designed as a three-day training programme. This training uses the same materials as the basic training, supplemented by half a day on facilitation techniques and half a day for preparing practice training activities. The notes for the ToT listed as *Appendix: Training of Trainers* are available online at www.pscentre.org together with the *Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual*.

After completing this training, participants should be able to:

- provide trainings in *Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual*
- communicate the importance of psychosocial support for volunteers and staff
- train others in the psychosocial needs of staff and volunteers
- train others in self-care, peer support and psychological first aid
- train others in planning, implementing, and reviewing staff and volunteer support in their National Society.

A ToT is recommended in situations where knowledge or implementation of psychosocial support for staff and volunteers is limited or lacking, and where a large number of people need to be trained.

Participants in a ToT should have opportunities to train others in their own National Society following the training. It is preferable that participants have a background in health, mental health, social welfare or human resources and have a good understanding of psychosocial support. It is also advisable that participants in ToTs have experience working with staff and/or volunteer management.

A ToT should always be carried out by a Master Trainer in psychosocial support. The PS Centre can help National Societies in finding a suitable Master Trainer.

How to use the manual

Icons

These icons are used throughout the manual:

	Learning points
	Facilitator notes
	Icebreakers, energizers and check-in and check-out exercises
	Activities
	Estimated time needed for an activity
	Aim of the activity
	Materials needed
	Procedure
	Facilitator speaks
	Checklist

**Learning points**

Each section has a set of learning points that are the objectives for the session. When adapting the materials to the specific needs of the training group, please keep the learning points the same.

**Facilitator notes**

Facilitator notes highlight any specific issues in the training process or in the materials in the section that follows.

**Facilitator speaks**

This icon indicates points in the programme when the facilitator is speaking directly to participants. This includes:

- ways of introducing the topic
- notes for short presentations and plenary discussions.

**Activities**

Activities are used in each section to reinforce learning. Each activity is described, with the purpose, timing, materials and the procedure clearly set out.

**Icebreakers, energizers and check-in and check-out exercises**

A list of icebreakers, check-in and check-out exercises and energizers is included in annex 1 at the back of the manual. Choose activities according to the group's composition and participants' needs:

- Icebreakers are often used at the beginning of a training workshop so that participants can get to know each other.
- Check-in and check-out exercises are used at the beginning and end of the day to start and end on a positive note.
- Energizers are most often used when participants seem to be getting a little tired and need to get up and move around, or to relieve tension after an activity that may have been emotionally challenging.

**Checklist**

Checklists summarize important points to include in discussions.

Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit

It is very important to familiarise yourself with *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit* in preparation for facilitating the training. Page references to *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit* are given in this manual to refer participants to additional information, if needed.

PowerPoint slides

A set of PowerPoint slides is available to accompany the training. Be sure to adapt the slides to the specific needs of the group. If you don't have access to a projector, you can print out the PowerPoint slides you want to use as handouts or copy the text onto flipchart paper.

Workshop planner

The workshop planner in annex 5 gives a suggested outline for a Caring for Volunteers training programme. Please note that the times indicated in the workshop planner and in the manual are advisory. You will need to plan your training programme to fit your schedule.

Knowing your participants

Before you begin the training, try to gather as much information as possible about your participants. You may already have this information from the recruitment and selection process. If not, consider sending a questionnaire to all participants in advance of the training to inquire about:

- age and gender
- language proficiency
- educational background
- experience with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement
- previous training experience
- experience working with volunteers or as a volunteer
- experience with and knowledge of psychosocial support to volunteers
- issues that participants would like to see addressed in the workshop.

Send out general information about the training, setting out the purpose of the workshop, location and any other relevant details, along with the questionnaire.

In preparing the training for a specific group of participants, it is also important to consider:

- what level of training is required
- what goals need to be met
- how knowledge and skills will be integrated in the field.

Evaluation and saying goodbye

An evaluation of the training programme provides the facilitator with important feedback to improve the quality of future trainings. There is a training evaluation questionnaire in annex 2. It can be supplemented by other evaluation methods, such as the one outlined on page 60.

After spending up to three days together, it is likely that participants will feel a bond with one another. Give time for everyone to say goodbye to one another and bring the training to a close with care.

All training resources including the manual, PowerPoint slides, handouts and Appendix: Training of Trainers are available online on the PS Centre website: www.pscentre.org.



Checklist of training materials

- copies of *Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual* for facilitator/s
- copies of *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit* for facilitators and participants
- copies of the training programme for participants OR make a PowerPoint slide to present this information to participants
- PowerPoint slides, projector and screen
- handouts
- a folder for the handouts
- name tags for facilitator/s and participants
- materials for the training activities including flipchart paper, markers, paper, pens, tape, scissors, a small ball, etc.



Day **1**

Welcome, introduction to the training programme and ground rules (1 hour)



The way the training starts is essential to its success. It is important to begin on a positive note. The participants need time to get to know each other and the facilitator and to settle into the space being used for the training. Take time to create a positive and safe environment, and don't be tempted to rush the introduction. Having established a safe training environment, participants will feel more comfortable sharing personal experiences during the training.

The introduction begins with a welcome and an icebreaker, followed by information about the training programme and an exercise to establish ground rules for the training.

Psychological Centre HE COMMUNITY CARE	
Welcome	
The opening activities include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an icebreaker • an introduction to the training programme • an exercise to agree ground rules for the training. 	

Welcome



Start by welcoming the participants to the training and briefly list the opening activities:

- an icebreaker to get to know one another
- an introduction to the training programme
- an exercise to agree on ground rules for the training.



One way to make the participants comfortable with each other is by

facilitating an icebreaker, for example, ball toss (annex 1).



Exercise: Icebreaker (25-30 minutes)

Purpose

To provide an opportunity for participants to get to know one another

Procedure

See annex 1 for a selection of icebreakers.

Introduction to the training programme



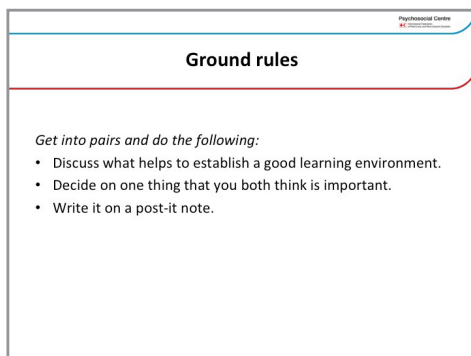
Get the group's attention by giving a personal introduction to the training, sharing your own background and why you believe this is an important topic. This will help you to gain trust among the group and may make it easier for participants to open up and share their own stories. You can choose to tell a personal story that shows why psychosocial support to staff and volunteers is important.

Give an overview of the training programme, using the PowerPoint slide or providing printed copies to participants.

Psychological Centre HE COMMUNITY CARE	
Training programme	
Caring for Volunteers: Basic training	
Day 1	
09:00-10:00	Introduction to the training programme and ground rules
10:00-10:30	1. Understanding psychosocial support
10:30-10:45	COSTELLA BREAK
10:45-11:00	2. Risk, resilience and protective factors
11:00-11:00	3. Self-care
11:00-11:30	LUNCH
11:30-12:00	4. Peer support
12:00-12:15	COSTELLA BREAK
12:15-12:45	5. Psychological first aid
12:45-13:00	Wrap up
Day 2	
09:00-09:15	Check in
09:15-10:00	6. Setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers
10:00-10:15	Support strategies at each phase of response
10:15-11:00	COSTELLA BREAK
11:00-11:00	• Analysing and understanding current support strategies
11:00-11:00	• Identifying support strategies
11:00-11:00	7. Monitoring and evaluation
11:00-11:00	LUNCH
11:00-11:15	8. Communicating the message
11:15-11:30	COSTELLA BREAK
11:30-11:30	9. Developing an action plan
11:30-11:45	10. Evaluation
11:45-12:00	Wrap up and goodbye

The training consists of ten sections:

- Section 1: Understanding psychosocial support
- Section 2: Risks, resilience and responsibility
- Section 3: Self-care
- Section 4: Peer support
- Section 5: Psychological first aid
- Section 6: Setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers
- Section 7: Monitoring and evaluation
- Section 8: Communicating the message
- Section 9: Developing an action plan
- Section 10: Evaluation.



Ground rules could include:

- Mobile phones should be on silent mode out of respect for each other.
- Punctuality is important. The training can start and end on time, as long as everyone returns promptly from breaks and lunch.
- Respect the person who is speaking and do not speak when someone else is speaking.
- Everybody is invited to share their experiences; in this way participants will feel they have a say in the process. However, no one is obliged to share.
- If others share experiences, show a non-judgemental attitude.
- Questions are encouraged. They help to clarify confusion and deepen understanding.

Activity 1: Ground rules (individually and in plenary)



To create a safe environment that fosters trust and increases confidence in sharing experiences during the training

Flipchart paper, pens, post-it notes

-
1. Ask the participants to pair up with someone with the same colour shoes (or shirt, hair, eye colour etc.)
 2. Ask each pair to interview each other about what helps to establish a good learning environment and then to decide together on one thing that they both think is important.
 3. Ask the participants to write the one thing that they both agree on a post-it note.
 4. Put the post-it notes on a flipchart.
 5. Read the post-it notes out loud.
 6. Ask the participants if they have anything to add to the list.
 7. Highlight the importance of confidentiality (see below).
 8. When the group has agreed on the ground rules, work out the consequences for breaking them. Try to identify constructive activities rather than harmful consequences (e.g. sing a song, bring snacks for the next day, do an energizer, etc.).
 9. Keep a copy of the ground rules visible for the entire period of the training.

Importance of confidentiality

Building trust is essential. It is therefore vital that the group agrees to keep information confidential within the group. Personal stories may be shared and participants may expose themselves emotionally. It is important to agree that everything that is shared within the group will remain confidential. Ask everyone to agree to this rule by raising their hand. If someone cannot agree, they should not take part in the training (you should of course ask why they cannot agree).

Buddy system



Tell the participants that their partner in the ground rule activity will be their buddy throughout the training. Being each other's buddies includes:

- keeping an eye on each other and making sure that their buddy is doing well
- being responsible for keeping the buddy informed about what is happening, if anyone has to leave the training for any reason.



After each break the facilitator can do a quick buddy check by asking everyone if they know where their buddy is. If someone is not present for some reason, the buddy is responsible for finding out why.



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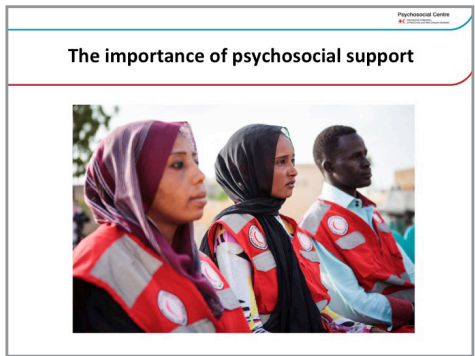
1. Understanding psychosocial support (30 minutes)

! This section looks at the definition of psychosocial support and why it is important to pay attention to the well-being of volunteers. It is the foundation for the rest of the training, and it is therefore very important that participants understand the material in this first section.

Learning points
 By the end of this section, participants should understand:

- the concept of psychosocial support.

1.1 The importance of psychosocial support



! Start by explaining the importance of psychosocial support to volunteers:

Across the globe, volunteers help other people in crisis. This may be in response to disasters, armed conflicts and mass shootings, or in social programmes for slum-dwellers, for example, or with victims of violence or accidents. Volunteers in the Movement also support older people or people who are isolated or stigmatized because of illness and prejudice. They assist refugees and asylum seekers and many more. In the course of their work, volunteers may be exposed to trauma, loss and devastation, injury and even death. They may find themselves in emergency situations, or comforting survivors in the initial phase of shock and grief, or in other challenging situations helping people in need.

We need to pay attention to the psychosocial well-being of volunteers to ensure that they can keep helping beneficiaries in crisis. Many volunteers working in challenging situations often put aside their own needs. At the end of the day, they often feel inadequate to help beneficiar-

ies with the tragedy they are facing. They may themselves also be members of affected communities and be working close to home. They may be experiencing the same losses and grief in their families and communities as the beneficiaries they are supporting.

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The importance of psychosocial support

Some of the consequences of not paying attention to the psychosocial well-being of volunteers include:

- high levels of absence and volunteer turnover
- lack of motivation and poor performance
- increased conflicts within the volunteer group
- increased ill-health
- increased accidents and incident reports.

If we do not pay attention to the psychosocial well-being of volunteers, this may have severe consequences for both the volunteers themselves and the National Society. Some of these consequences are:

- high levels of absence and volunteer turnover
- lack of motivation and poor performance
- increased conflicts within the volunteer group
- increased ill-health
- increased accidents and incident reports.

As a manager it is therefore important to understand what psychosocial support is and to be able to explain it to volunteers.

1.2 What is psychosocial support?

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What is psychosocial support?


Psychosocial support refers to the actions that address both the social and psychological needs of individuals, families and communities.

Psycho-
logical

Feelings
Emotions
Thoughts
Beliefs
Perceptions
Behaviour

Social/
Cultural

Traditions
Values
Upbringing
Relationships
Family
Community

 Explain to participants that psychosocial support refers to the actions that address both the social and psychological needs of individuals, families and communities. The psychological domain includes feelings, emotions, thoughts, beliefs, perceptions and behaviour. The social domain includes traditions, values, upbringing, relationships and family and community networks. The psychological and the social domains intersect and interact – our emotional well-being affects our social life and vice versa.

Activity 2: What is psychosocial support? (individually and in plenary)



To have participants think about the meaning of psychosocial support



Flipchart, markers, post-it notes, pens




1. On a flipchart paper, draw two circles that overlap in the middle. Write 'psychological' in one circle and 'social' in the other.
2. Ask participants to spend 5 minutes, writing examples of psychological and social aspects of life on post-it notes (one word per post-it note).
3. Invite participants to stick their post-it notes in the appropriate circle.
4. Now discuss in plenary the examples given and continue by defining psychosocial support.

Psychosocial activities may include practical and emotional assistance, helping people to make informed decisions, and helping to mobilise social support systems. Psychosocial support aims at enabling people to draw on their own psychological and social resources. In this way, psychosocial support enhances the ability of people to bounce back and restore normality after adverse experiences. It can prevent distress and suffering from developing into something more severe and helps people overcome difficult life situations.

Continue by pointing out some misunderstandings of the term ‘psychosocial support’. Some people confuse it with counselling, therapy or psychotherapy. Sometimes people believe it is only for people who are mentally ill. Some volunteers – and even some staff or managers – may incorrectly assume that psychosocial support is only for people who are weak or can’t handle the stress of the work. **None**

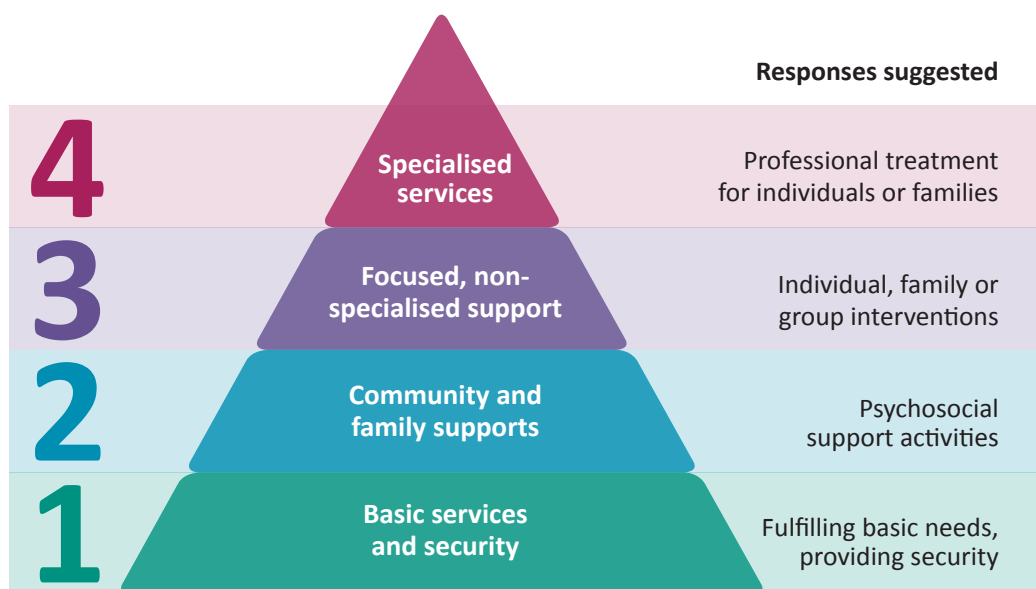
of these ideas is true. It is important to recognize that these kinds of misunderstandings are not intended negatively, but are often due to differences in language, culture and customs. They may also be influenced by an individual’s personal experience and history. As a manager, it is important to be aware of these misconceptions and to be able to communicate to volunteers what psychosocial support really means and why it is important.

1.3 Levels of psychosocial support

 Go on to explain that psychosocial support can be given at different levels, depending on the needs and resources of the volunteers:

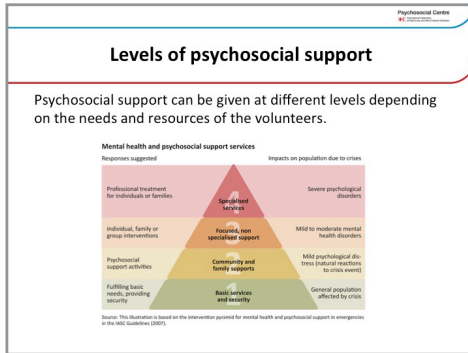
Volunteers react in different ways to crisis events, depending on how severely they are impacted, and what resources they have to cope. This may be influenced by their age, gender, physical and mental well-being, social support systems, etc. This means different psychosocial ac-

Mental health and psychosocial support services



SOURCE This illustration is based on the intervention pyramid for mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies in the IASC Guidelines (2007).

tivities are typically planned for different groups, tailored specifically to the particular needs and resources of the volunteers.



The layers in the pyramid represent the different kinds of supports volunteers may need, whether at times of crisis or in ongoing situations of distress.



Explain the support offered at these four levels:

1. Basic services and security

Volunteer well-being is protected through meeting their basic needs and rights for security and governance, and essential

services such as food, clean water, health care and shelter.

2. Community and family supports

Some volunteers may need to be helped in accessing key community and family supports.

3. Focused supports

Supports more directly focused on the psychosocial well-being of volunteers may be individual or group interventions, typically carried out by trained and supervised staff or volunteers.

4. Specialised services

At the top of the pyramid is additional support for the small percentage of volunteers who may have great difficulty in daily functioning and therefore need specialised services such as psychological or psychiatric support.



Ask participants to give examples of psychosocial support activities for volunteers in each layer.

You can add to the discussion from the list below.

Checklist

1. Basic services and security

- Provide volunteers with clear information on how to stay safe.
- Make sure volunteers can access essential services such as food, clean water, health care and shelter.
- Provide safe spaces for volunteers.
- Allocate time for breaks and recreation.
- Sensitize the public about the work of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers.
- Train managers in the management of volunteers.



2. Community and family supports

- Provide information in accessible formats to the volunteers' families regarding:
 - the type of experience the volunteer may be exposed to
 - the kind of support the organization provides to the volunteer
 - the way families can support volunteers during and after their assignments.
- Train families in psychological first aid and self-care.
- Ensure that volunteers can be in touch with their families on a regular basis. (If necessary, have an in-country/in-community liaison that keeps the family updated about the well-being of the volunteer).
- Facilitate volunteers' connections with other community resources (e.g. traditional/spiritual leaders, friends and peers, social support services).
- Facilitate group activities for volunteers to encourage a sense of belonging to the team and the Movement (e.g. by organizing 'A day of appreciation for volunteers').

3. Focused supports

- Train volunteers in peer support psychological first aid and self-care.
- Facilitate peer support sessions led by trained peer supporters.
- Provide volunteers with information on how to get support (e.g. leaflets with referral information and contact numbers).
- Provide volunteers with information on psychological first aid, peer support and self-care.
- Provide individual psychological first aid for volunteers.
- Organise team-building activities.
- Set up buddy systems for volunteers.

4. Specialised services

- Put in place a referral system for volunteers with severe psychological problems.
- Train managers and volunteers in using the referral system.
- Train managers and volunteers in how to identify severe psychological problems.
- Perform regular screenings to check if volunteers are showing signs of severe psychological problems.
- Provide volunteers with information on how to access specialised services through local services and organizations.



Tell the participants that later today and tomorrow you will go into more depth on the kind of support that can be offered to volunteers.



Ibrahim Masha/IFRC

2. Risks, resilience and protective factors (1 hour and 15 minutes)

Learning points

By the end of this section, participants should be able to:

- identify risks to volunteer well-being
- understand different types of stress
- understand the concept of resilience
- understand the concept of protective factors
- identify responsibility at different levels for volunteer well-being.



Say to participants:
We will now look at some core concepts in relation to the psychosocial well-being of volunteers. We will identify the risks to volunteer well-being and how to reduce the psychosocial impact of these risks. We will look at the concepts of resilience and protective factors. Finally we discuss who is responsible for volunteer well-being.

For more information on risk, resilience and protective factors, please see pages 10-19 in **Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit**.



2.1 Risks to volunteer well-being



Tell the participants that you are now going to look at potential risks to volunteer well-being.

Activity 3: Risks to volunteer well-being (individually and in plenary)



To make the participants aware of risks to volunteer well-being

Flipchart or PowerPoint slides listing the risks to volunteer well-being, paper, pens



1. Ask participants to spend five minutes individually, writing down the main risks to volunteer well-being. Tell the participants to note anything that comes to mind.
2. Be clear that you do not expect participants to share their notes in plenary unless they wish to.
3. Continue by presenting the sources of stress from the list below (using the PowerPoint slides or the flipchart).
4. Ask the participants if they agree and if they have anything to add to the list.

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Risks to volunteer well-being

Spend 5 minutes individually responding to the following question. Write down all the risks that come to mind:

- What are the main risks to volunteer well-being?

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Risks to volunteer well-being

Working conditions

- performing physically difficult, exhausting and sometimes dangerous tasks, or being expected (or expecting themselves) to work long hours in difficult circumstances
- becoming increasingly detached from their own family and home life
- feeling inadequate to deal with the task, or overwhelmed by the needs of the people they are trying to help
- being a witness to traumatic events – or hearing survivors’ stories of trauma and loss.

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Risks to volunteer well-being

Personal domain

- feeling guilty at the death of someone they were helping
- having idealistic/unrealistic expectations of what a volunteer can do to help others
- feeling one has to solve all the problems for someone they are helping
- feeling guilty about paying attention to one’s own need for rest or support
- facing moral and ethical dilemmas.

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Risks to volunteer well-being

Organizational issues

- having an unclear or non-existent job description or unclear role on the team
- being unprepared for facing the frustration and anger of beneficiaries who feel their needs are not being met
- lack of information-sharing
- being poorly prepared or briefed for the task
- lacking boundaries between work and rest
- having an atmosphere at the workplace where volunteer well-being is not valued and where their efforts are not being acknowledged or appreciated.

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Risks to volunteer well-being

Interpersonal domain

- feeling unsupported by one’s colleagues or supervisors
- having difficult dynamics within a team
- working with team members who are stressed or burned out.

Risks to volunteer well-being

Personal domain

- feeling guilty at the death of someone they were helping
- having idealistic/unrealistic expectations of what a volunteer can do to help others
- feeling they have to solve all the problems for the person they are helping
- feeling guilty about paying attention to their own need for rest or support
- facing moral and ethical dilemmas.

Interpersonal domain

- feeling unsupported by their colleagues or supervisors
- having difficult dynamics within a team
- working with team members who are stressed or burned out.

Working conditions

- performing physically difficult, exhausting and sometimes dangerous tasks, or being expected (or expecting themselves) to work long hours in difficult circumstances
- becoming increasingly detached from their own family and home life
- feeling inadequate to deal with the task, or overwhelmed by the needs of the people they are trying to help
- being a witness to traumatic events – or hearing survivors' stories of trauma and loss.

Organizational issues

- having an unclear or non-existent job description or unclear role on the team
- being unprepared for facing the frustration and anger of beneficiaries who feel their needs are not being met
- lack of information-sharing
- being poorly prepared or briefed for the task
- lacking boundaries between work and rest
- having an atmosphere at the workplace where volunteer well-being is not valued and where their efforts are not acknowledged or appreciated.

Wrap up by making the following point:

It is often not the crisis events themselves that cause stress for staff and volunteers. The most frequent kinds of stress come from interpersonal issues, working conditions and organizational issues. This is due to the fact that staff and volunteers often find meaning in their work and through this they are able to cope with the traumatic events and stories they are exposed to.

Continue to the next topic about the importance of being aware of the sources of stress and the risks connected to stress.

2.2 Stress


Get the attention of the group by asking:

So what is stress actually? Can you remember a time you were under stress? Keep this in mind for a moment and we will discuss experiences we have faced in a few minutes.

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Stress

Stress is a normal reaction to a physical or emotional challenge and occurs when demands are out of balance with resources for coping.



Continue by defining stress:

Stress is a normal reaction to a physical or emotional challenge and occurs when demands are out of balance with resources for coping.

Follow up by relating the definition to the experience of participants. Ask the group: Does the definition make sense to you and is it relevant for the time you were under stress?

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at the University of Hull

Stress

- **Day to day stress:** This represents those challenges in life which keep us alert and on our toes, and without which life for many people becomes dull and ultimately not worth living.
- **Cumulative stress:** This occurs when the sources of stress continue over time and interferes with regular patterns of functioning and daily life.
- **Critical stress:** This represents situations where individuals are unable to meet the demands upon them and suffer physically or psychologically.

There are different types of stress:


- **Day to day stress:** This represents those challenges in life that keep us alert and on our toes, and without which life for many people becomes dull and ultimately not worth living.
- **Cumulative stress:** This occurs when the sources of stress continue over time and interferes with regular patterns of functioning and daily life.
- **Critical stress:** This represents situations where individuals are unable to meet the demands upon them and suffer physically or psychologically.

If time allows, the facilitator can choose to do the multi-tasking energizer in annex 1 before the next activity. This activity is a good starting point for a discussion about signs of stress.

Common signs of stress

Signs of stress can show themselves in many different ways:

- Physical signs, e.g. stomach ache, tiredness
- Mental signs, e.g. difficulty in concentrating, losing track of time
- Emotional signs, e.g. anxiety, being sad, feeling useless
- Spiritual signs, e.g. life seems pointless
- Behavioural signs, e.g. alcohol abuse, trouble sleeping, recklessness
- Interpersonal signs, e.g. withdrawn, in conflict with others.

 Explain to participants: These signs of stress are common and usually disappear within a few weeks. However if these signs continue and worsen for an extended period of time, the level of stress may be intensifying.


Ask participants why it is important to be aware of the possible sources and signs of stress. Do not be put off if the participants do not answer immediately; allow some silence and time for reflection.

It is important both on an individual and an organizational level to be aware of the

Activity 4: Signs of stress (in plenary)



 To be able to recognize common signs of stress

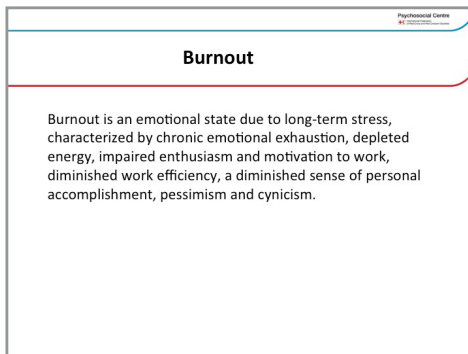
 Flipchart, markers




1. Ask in plenary: What common signs of stress are you likely to see in a colleague or peer?
2. Write responses on a flipchart.
3. Add to the list using the information above, if the examples given do not cover the full range of signs of stress.

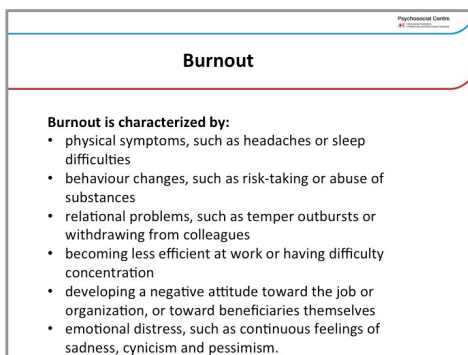
possible sources and signs of stress. This helps in setting up relevant policies and practices that create a supportive and healthy working environment. Volunteers who continuously experience sources of stress without receiving adequate support are at risk of developing the psychological condition called 'burnout.'

2.3 Burnout



 Explain what burnout is, beginning with the definition (using the PowerPoint slide or by writing the definition on a flipchart):

Burnout is an emotional state due to long-term stress, characterized by chronic emotional exhaustion, depleted energy, impaired enthusiasm and motivation to work, diminished work efficiency, a diminished sense of personal accomplishment, pessimism and cynicism.




Burnout is characterized by:

- physical symptoms, such as headaches or sleep difficulties
- behaviour changes, such as risk-taking or abuse of substances
- relational problems, such as temper outbursts or withdrawing from colleagues
- becoming less efficient at work or having difficulty concentrating
- developing a negative attitude toward the job or organization, or toward beneficiaries themselves
- emotional distress, such as continuous feelings of sadness, cynicism and pessimism.

Often the person with burnout is the last person to realize what is happening. For this reason, it is important for everyone – including other team members and supervisors – to recognize what is happening in order to support the affected person.

At times, staff and volunteers may show signs of serious stress reactions or other mental health problems. Each programme should have a referral mechanism for individuals in need of professional support. Section 5 covers when and how to refer volunteers who are in need of professional support.

2.4 Understanding resilience

 Go on to explain the concept of resilience:

It is important to understand the concept of resilience in order to support volunteers who may be experiencing stress. Strengthening a person's resilience helps prevent the development of cumulative and critical stress.

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Burnout


Burnout is an emotional state due to long-term stress, characterized by chronic emotional exhaustion, depleted energy, impaired enthusiasm and motivation to work, diminished work efficiency, a diminished sense of personal accomplishment, pessimism and cynicism.

Resilience is the ability to react or adapt positively to a difficult and challenging event or experience. It is often described as the ability to ‘bounce back’ after something difficult has happened, or to get through difficult experiences in a positive way.

Each person’s response to stress is influenced by many factors, including the nature and severity of the crisis event, their personality and personal history, and available support systems. Resilience does not mean that people do not experience distress from crisis events, but that they are able to cope with and recover from

stressful experiences using their resources. Resilience is not a fixed personality trait, which a person has or does not have. Resilience levels can differ from person to person, and in fact, everybody has coping abilities that can be strengthened.

2.5 Protective factors

 Go on to explain what protective factors are:

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Protective factors


Protective factors are the interacting social, psychological and biological factors that strengthen a person’s resilience.




Protective factors are social, psychological and biological factors that strengthen a person’s resilience. They reduce the likelihood that a person will develop severe or

Activity 5: Protective factors (Group work and plenary)



 To identify protective factors for volunteers working in emergency settings

 Handout 1 (in annex 3): “Volunteering in Norway after July 2011”, post-it notes, flipchart, markers



1. Ask the participants to form groups of maximum 4 persons.
2. Distribute handout 1.
3. Ask the participants to read the case study and identify the factors that might have protected the Norwegian volunteers from experiencing stress.
4. Ask the participants to share any other protective factors that could promote the volunteers’ resilience.
5. Follow up in plenary asking each group to share one or two factors in turn.
6. Summarise their comments on the flipchart.
7. Add to the discussion from the checklist below, if any of these factors are not mentioned.



Use a different case study, if necessary, depending on the work context of the training group.

long-term psychosocial effects when encountering hardship or suffering. Protective factors include belonging to a caring family or community, maintaining traditions and routines, and having a strong religious belief or political ideology. Psychosocial support activities aim at strengthening protective factors in volunteers.

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Protective factors

Read the handout 'Volunteering in Norway after July 2011' and discuss in groups:

- What factors might have protected the volunteers from experiencing stress?
- What other protective factors could also foster resilience among volunteers?

Protective factors in the case study

Regular meetings, which bring all staff and/or volunteers together and foster a feeling of belonging to a team

An organizational culture where people can talk openly and share problems, and respect the principle of confidentiality

Showing appreciation for the work of volunteers.

Other protective factors

Being motivated to help others

Finding work meaningful

Being able to leave work behind and take a rest

Being able to give support to and receive support from team members

Knowing there is support available, if and when it is needed

Reasonable working conditions through policies and strategies

Clear information about how to access available support

Maintaining daily routines and structures

Maintaining cultural practices and beliefs

Belonging to a caring family or community.

Case study: Volunteering in Norway after July 2011

In July 2011 in Norway, two sequential terrorist attacks claimed a total of 77 lives. The first attack was a car bomb explosion in Oslo killing eight people and injuring at least 209 people. The second attack occurred less than two hours later at a youth summer camp on the island of Utøya. A gunman dressed in a false police uniform gained access to the island and opened fire on participants, killing 69 of them.

Several hundred volunteers from Norwegian Red Cross participated in the search for those missing after the shooting in Utøya and in supporting relatives and youth across the country. The Red Cross encouraged volunteers to talk openly about their reactions to the tragic events, and regular meetings were organized where volunteers could share problems and experiences.

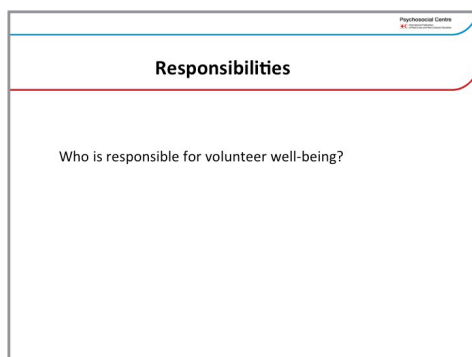
A special programme was implemented to train and assist staff and volunteers in local branches to provide support to affected young people and their relatives returning home after the tragedy. Volunteers afterwards reported experiencing that what they did for the young people and their relatives was highly appreciated.

2.6 Responsibilities



Wrap up the section by saying:

We have now looked at risks to volunteer well-being, how to identify stress and why it is important to prevent stress from accumulating. We have looked at the definition of resilience and identified a range of protective factors that might protect volunteers from experiencing stress. Protective factors also reduce the likelihood that volunteers will develop severe or long-term psychosocial effects when encountering hardship or suffering.



The crucial question is now: “Who is responsible for volunteer well-being?”



If time allows, ask participants to spend a few moments discussing this question with the person sitting next to them, or ask the question in plenary.



Make sure the following points are made:

National Societies have an obligation to support the well-being of their volunteers before, during and after an emergency response. However, everyone has a part to play in creating a supportive work environment. This includes being understanding about the demands of the job, and treating others and oneself with care and respect. Thus, volunteer well-being is everyone’s responsibility – managers, staff and the volunteers themselves.



Tell participants about the programme for the rest of the day and tomorrow:

The rest of the day will focus on practising self-care, peer support and psychological first aid. These tools help managers and volunteers to take care of themselves and of other people. They are important in terms of one’s own psychosocial well-being and in terms of training volunteers in using these tools. The second day of the training focuses on how to set up support systems for volunteers, how to monitor and evaluate the support systems and how to communicate that psychosocial support is important and available.



Ibrahim Malla/IFRC

3. Self-care (1 hour)

Learning points

By the end of this section, participants should understand:

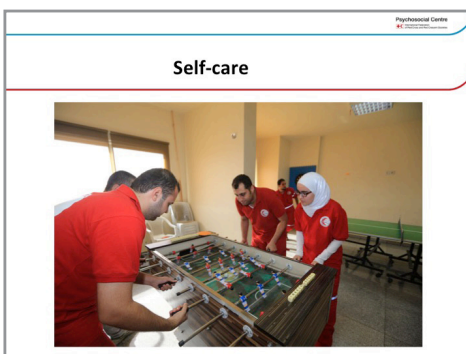
- their own resources for stress management
- self-care strategies
- self-care challenges.

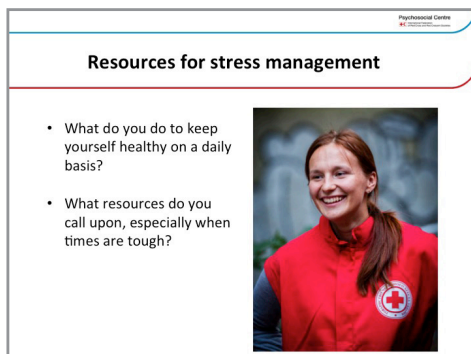


Tell the participants about the importance of self-care:

Volunteers need to be diligent in caring for themselves in order to be fully available for others in distress. This means committing to the things that keep them physically and mentally healthy on a daily basis. In addition, managers must understand the importance of supporting their staff and volunteers in practising self-care; if they do not pay attention to their own stress and know how to take care of their own psychosocial well-being, the system of support will eventually break down.

The following activities will therefore help participants to understand their own resources for stress management and will raise awareness about the importance of self-care and of the potential self-care challenges for volunteers.





3.1 Resources for stress management

Activity 6: Resources for stress management (individually and in plenary)



To raise awareness of participants' own resources for stress management

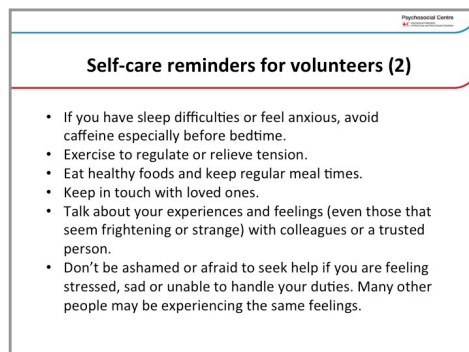
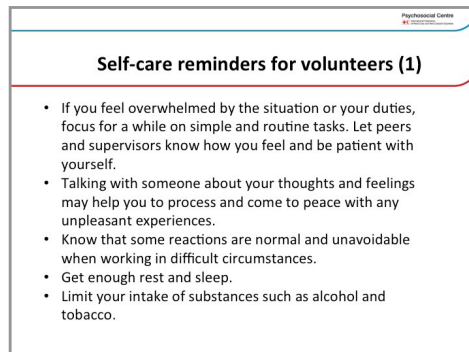
Paper and pens



1. Ask participants to find their buddy.
2. Ask the pairs to spend ten minutes interviewing each other, asking the following questions:
 - What do you do to keep yourself healthy on a daily basis?
 - What resources do you use, especially when times are tough?
3. In plenary, ask if participants listed something special or different for when times are tough. Ask them if they pay extra attention to how they care for themselves when things are difficult.
4. Wrap up by telling the participants that this is an exercise they can do with their peers in their National Societies. Knowing each other's resources for stress management is a good foundation for supporting each other when times are tough.

3.2 Self-care tips for volunteers

Go through the list of self-care tips (using the Power-Point slides or a flipchart). Explain that participants can use these in their work with volunteers (either by communicating them verbally or as a handout).



Self-care tips for volunteers

- If you feel overwhelmed by the situation or your duties, try focusing for a while on simple, routine tasks. Let peers and supervisors know how you feel and be patient with yourself.
- If you experience a critical event, talking with someone about your thoughts and feelings may help you to process and come to peace with any unpleasant experiences.
- Some reactions are normal and unavoidable when working in difficult circumstances.
- Get enough rest and sleep.
- Limit your intake of substances such as alcohol and tobacco.
- If you have sleep difficulties or feel anxious, avoid caffeine especially before bedtime.
- Exercise to regulate or relieve tension.
- Eat healthy foods and keep regular meal times.
- Keep in touch with loved ones.
- Talk about your experiences and feelings (even those that seem frightening or strange) with colleagues or a trusted person.
- Don't be ashamed or afraid to seek help if you are feeling stressed, sad or unable to handle your duties. Many other people may be experiencing the same feelings.
- Listen to what others say about how the event has affected them and how they cope. They may share useful insights.
- Express your feelings through creative activities, like drawing, painting, writing or playing music.
- Play games or sports and take time for fun.
- Consciously try to relax by doing things you enjoy, such as meditation or yoga.



Ask participants what challenges they might expect for volunteers in using any of these self-care tips. You can add to the discussion from the list below.



Self-care challenges

- Feeling guilty about paying attention to your own needs
- Being anxious about what supervisors and colleagues might think of you
- Finding a quiet place to relax without being disturbed
- Not realizing the negative impact of your own stress level
- Keeping regular routines in an unusual situation.

3.3 Preparing mentally for practising self-care



Explain the following to participants:

Volunteers may find themselves in a turbulent situation that they have never experienced before and for which they may not be prepared. It is impossible to be fully prepared for situations of crisis, but it can be helpful to try to prepare mentally, in order to be most effective as a volunteer. The next exercise will help prepare volunteers to take care of themselves in situations of crisis.



Facilitators should be sensitive to the fact that the following exercise may bring up memories for some participants who have had similar experiences, and that some people may become emotional. Explain that this is normal and OK, and that participants may choose not to share their experiences or may prefer not to take part in this exercise.

Activity 7: Preparing mentally for practising self-care (in plenary)



To mentally prepare the participants for taking care of themselves in situations of crisis



1. Choose a scenario from annex 4: “Self-care scenarios”. There are five scenarios to choose from:

- 1: Dealing with exhaustion and physical limitations
- 2: Dealing with events that are emotionally trying
- 3: Dealing with personal issues
- 4: Dealing with heroic aspirations and unrealistic expectations
- 5: Dealing with fear and stigma.

Choose the category that best applies to the participants and the situation at hand.

2. Write the list of possible answers (listed under ‘options’ in annex 4 after each scenario) on flipchart paper. Make sure participants don’t see the answers before they start the activity.



1. Ask the participants to sit in a circle – on chairs or on the floor – and make sure everyone is comfortable.
2. Explain to the group that you want them to imagine practising self-care as a volunteer in a crisis situation. Tell them that you will read a fictional description of a volunteer in a situation and that you would like everyone to close their eyes and imagine themselves in that person’s situation.
3. Read the scenario aloud and give everyone a few moments to reflect, and then read the options about what to do next. Then ask participants to respond – with a show of hands – as to how they think they might react in that situation. Then discuss briefly (5-10 minutes) their responses. Give participants the chance to offer other options for positive ways of reacting to the situation.



Wrap up the section by telling participants that there is no right or wrong answer, and that all of the actions discussed are acceptable self-care strategies. The most important thing is that the volunteers are aware of the importance of focusing on their own needs – even in crisis situations. It is also important to be aware of and to communicate to others what support systems are in place, when volunteers are in difficulty or distress. This is the focus of the next section.



Thorkell Thorkelsson/IFRC

4. Peer support (1 hour)

Learning points

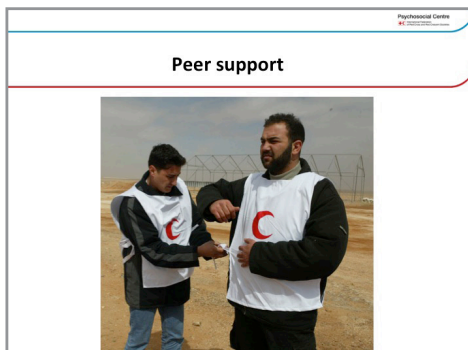
By the end of this section, participants should understand:

- key elements of peer support
- how to set up peer support systems



Tell the participants that you are now going to look at peer support, which is an effective approach for helping volunteers cope with stressful situations.

For more information on peer support, see pages 45-48 in *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit*.




4.1 What is peer support?

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Peer support

Peer support:

- means offering assistance to someone who is in the same position as the supporter.
- is a useful strategy for coping and managing stress.
- makes good use of the resources within the organization and among volunteers.
- is an active process and requires peers to be engaged in supporting each other and creating the time and space to talk together about reactions, feelings and coping mechanisms.

 As the name suggests, ‘peer support’ means offering assistance to someone who is a peer (i.e. someone who is in the same position as the supporter). Peer support is a useful strategy for coping and managing stress, and makes good use of the resources within an organization and among volunteers.

Peer support is an active process. It requires peers to be engaged in supporting each other and creating the time and space to talk together about reactions, feelings and coping mechanisms.

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Advantages of peer support

- It can often be implemented quickly, once systems are put in place.
- Often peer support prevents volunteers who are under stress from developing other problems.
- Sharing difficulties with peers reduces misunderstandings or misreading of behaviour, etc.
- Volunteers are able to learn ways of coping from each other, and thereby further develop their own coping skills.
- Meeting in groups can decrease any fear or stigma about expressing emotions and seeking help.

Peer support is helpful for the following reasons:

- Peer support can often be implemented quickly, once peer support systems are put in place.
- Often peer support prevents volunteers who are under stress from developing other problems.

- Sharing difficulties with peers reduces misunderstandings or misreading of behaviour, etc.
- Volunteers are able to learn ways of coping from each other, and thereby further develop their own coping skills.
- Meeting in groups can reduce any fear or stigma about expressing emotions and seeking help.

Peer supporters share experiences and provide each other with short-term assistance. It is important to emphasize that peer supporters are NOT counsellors and that the aim of peer support is not to replace professional help. Professional psychosocial support staff can play a role in training and supervising peer supporters. They can help peer supporters to troubleshoot and refer peers who may need additional professional support. There is more on making referrals in section 5.


4.2 Setting up peer support systems

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Setting up peer support systems

There are various ways of providing peer support, including:

- buddy systems
- group peer support meetings
- trained peer supporters.

 Explain that there are various ways of providing peer support, including:


- buddy systems
- group peer support meetings
- trained peer supporters.

Informal peer support includes buddy systems, where two volunteers or a volunteer and a staff member are paired together to support each other. They may

Activity 8: Setting up peer support systems



 To determine key factors in peer support

 Flipchart paper, markers



1. Divide the participants into three groups:
 - Ask group 1 to list five key elements in peer support.
 - Ask group 2 to list five things to consider when arranging peer support meetings.
 - Ask group 3 to list five topics for peer supporter training.
2. After 20 minutes ask the groups to briefly present their points in plenary, using flipcharts.
3. Add to each presentation from the box on the next page, if there are gaps in what the groups presented.

work side by side in the field, so that they can watch out for one another's safety and check in with each other through the day to see how the other person is coping. The buddy can suggest that the volunteer take a break, if he/she sees signs of stress emerging, or even recommend that the other stop working if the stress seems serious. A buddy can also be available after the emergency is over to reflect upon the experience together.

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Setting up peer support systems

Divide into three groups:

Group 1: List five key elements in peer support.

Group 2: List five things to consider when arranging peer support meetings.

Group 3: List five topics for peer support training.

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Tips for peer supporters

- Be available
- Manage the situation and locate resources
- Provide information
- Assist the person you are supporting to establish personal control
- Give encouragement
- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide follow-up.

**Key elements of peer support:**

- concern, empathy, respect and trust
- effective communication and good listening skills
- clearly defined roles
- teamwork, cooperation and problem-solving
- discussion of on-the-job experiences.

Peer support meetings:

- Make sure to have scheduled meetings on a regular basis.
- Try to schedule the meetings at a time where everyone is able to participate.
- Provide regular supervision for peer supporters with psychosocial support staff, wherever possible.
- Organize willing volunteers into a peer support team to reach out to other volunteers, particularly new recruits. This team can connect with peers to raise awareness of available support and provide assistance.
- Organize peer support groups, led by experienced and trained volunteer peer supporters or by psychosocial support staff.

Training topics:

- How to be an effective peer supporter
- Communication skills
- Psychological first aid
- How to make referrals when peers need additional help
- Self-care.

Activity 9: Buddy talk (in pairs)

To reflect on how participants can use buddy systems in their National Societies



None



1. Ask the participants to find their buddies.
2. Now ask the participants to spend 10 minutes talking about how they can use buddy systems in their National Societies.



Go through the following tips for peer supporters using the Power-Point or the flipchart:

- Be available
- Manage the situation and locate resources
- Provide information
- Assist the person you are supporting to establish personal control
- Give encouragement
- Maintain confidentiality
- Provide follow-up.



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5. Psychological first aid for volunteers (1 hour and 30 minutes)

Learning points

By the end of this section, participants should understand:

- the basic elements of PFA
- how to offer PFA
- when and how to refer a volunteer who needs extra support.



Introduce the section:

In a crisis event, volunteers and staff want to help those affected in the best way possible. At the same time, people often worry about saying or doing things in the right way and that they might even make things worse. In this section we will explore how staff and volunteers can use psychological first aid (PFA) to support each other. PFA is a cornerstone of the support offered by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to survivors of emergencies and people affected by conflicts. It is used in situations where people have experienced a critical event and are in acute stress.

Psychological first aid for volunteers
<p>Psychological first aid (PFA) is caring support, offered to volunteers who have experienced a very distressing event or situation. It involves showing them warmth and empathy and listening to them. It also involves making the surroundings safe for them and helping them to deal with practical needs and problems.</p>

For more information on psychological first aid, please see pages 49-55 in **Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit**

5.1 What is psychological first aid?



Ask the participants what they already know about PFA.

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Psychological first aid for volunteers

Psychological first aid (PFA) is caring support, offered to volunteers who have experienced a very distressing event or situation. It involves showing them warmth and empathy and listening to them. It also involves making the surroundings safe for them and helping them to deal with practical needs and problems.

Continue by defining PFA:

PFA is caring support, offered to volunteers who have experienced a very distressing event or situation. It involves showing them warmth and empathy and listening to them. It also involves making the surroundings safe for them and helping them to deal with practical needs and problems.

Volunteers who are in shock or crisis may have difficulty thinking clearly and knowing how to cope with the situation and how to help themselves. Their sense of time may be disturbed, and they may feel very vulnerable or misunderstand what is being said and done around them. Others may cope relatively well with a distressing event in the moment, but have disturbing thoughts and feelings about it later on. Knowing how to provide PFA will help fellow volunteers respond effectively in such situations.

5.2 Supportive communication

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Supportive communication

Supportive communication:

- includes showing empathy, care and concern; listening attentively and without judgment; and maintaining confidentiality.
- is a skill that requires special awareness of one's words and body language, as well as one's attitude and attention to the person in distress.



Tell participants about the elements of supportive communication:


Offering PFA effectively involves supportive communication. This includes showing empathy, care and concern; listening attentively and without judgment; and maintaining confidentiality.


Although we communicate and interact with each other every day, supportive communication is a skill that requires special awareness of one's words and body language, as well as one's attitude and attention to the person in distress.



In the next activity, make sure that the three groups are positioned as explained in the procedure, as this is important for the success of the exercise.

Activity 10: Supportive communication (in plenary)

 To raise awareness of the impact of attitude and attention on supportive communication.

 Prepared flipchart paper (with instructions to listeners, as shown in the procedure below)



1. Divide participants into three groups.
2. Ask participants in group 1 and 2 to take a seat opposite each other in two rows.
3. Ask participants in group 3 to stand behind the people in group 2.
4. Now ask the people in
 - group 1 to be listeners
 - group 2 to be talkers
 - group 3 to be observers.
5. Facilitators should stand behind group 2 (with the prepared flipchart, if it is to be used).
6. Explain that in a few minutes, you'd like the talkers to tell a short story about themselves. It could be about their journey to the training this morning, what they did last night, a story from their childhood, etc. Tell them they are not allowed to turn around to look at the facilitator during this exercise. This is very important.
7. Explain that you will be standing behind the talkers. Do not say what you are going to do.
8. Ask the observers to pay attention to any changes they see in the listeners and the talkers.
9. Ask the talkers to begin telling their stories.
10. Now either silently act out your instructions (one at a time) to the listeners OR hold up the instructions on the prepared flipchart paper. Here is a list of instructions (develop more if needed):
 - You are listening actively
 - You are looking bored
 - Interrupt and talk about yourself.
11. Ask everyone to stop when you feel there has been enough time to see changes in attention and attitude.
12. Ask the talkers for feedback. What it was like to tell the story over the course of the activity? Did they notice any differences in the listener and how did it affect their ability to tell their story?
13. Ask the observers what they noticed.
14. Ask the listeners what they noticed.
15. What did you all learn from this exercise?

5.3 The four key elements of PFA

The four key elements of PFA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay close • Listen attentively • Accept feelings • Provide general care and practical help.



Continue by talking about the four elements of psychological first aid:

It is important to keep these four things in mind when offering PFA:

1. Stay close
2. Listen attentively
3. Accept feelings
4. Provide general care and practical help.

Ask the participants what these four elements should include. Make sure that the points in the checklist are mentioned.



PFA for volunteers

1. STAY CLOSE

- Supervisors or peer supporters can help the volunteer to regain a sense of safety and trust by staying close and remaining calm, even if the volunteer is very anxious or emotional.
- Be prepared that some volunteers may express themselves emotionally in violent outbursts, such as shouting or rejecting help.
- Maintain contact calmly or stay nearby, in case the volunteer needs help or would like to talk about what has happened. Above all, be genuine and honest in order to help the affected volunteer rebuild a sense of trust and safety. Be yourself and show your natural warmth and caring for the volunteer in distress.

2. LISTEN ATTENTIVELY

- Take time to listen carefully to the volunteer's story. Telling their story often helps volunteers to understand and come to terms with what they have experienced.
- Let volunteers know you are listening by giving them your sincere attention. If you are supporting a volunteer at the scene of an accident, listen and talk with him/her calmly until other help arrives.
- Convey that you are listening attentively through both verbal and non-verbal affirmations. This includes responding with a sympathetic facial expression, by nodding, or with other signs of understanding, as well as through comments such as, "I see," "I'm listening," "Please continue," or "I would like to hear more about that." Don't force your reactions, but rather try to communicate in a way that feels natural to you. Each culture has its own particular ways of behaving appropriately, but generally the following are important to keep in mind:
 - Turn toward or face the volunteer when they are speaking.
 - Display an open posture by keeping your arms uncrossed.
 - Ask open-ended questions.
 - Keep an appropriate distance so you show interest without appearing too intimate or pushy.
 - Avoid distracting gestures or movements.

- Make appropriate eye contact.
- Appear calm and relaxed.
- Avoid asking too many questions or pushing for information.

3. ACCEPT FEELINGS

- Keep an open mind to what the volunteer is saying and accept their feelings and interpretation of events.
- Don't try to correct the facts or judge their perceptions of how things happened; accuracy of events is not important here, rather the person's feelings should be focused on.
- Don't probe the volunteer to recount any of the details of a traumatic experience they may have had.
- Having empathy and respect for the person will help you to accept their feelings. Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand another person's situation, feelings, and motives.
- No matter what reactions the affected volunteer may be having, demonstrate a sincere, positive regard for the welfare and worthiness of the affected volunteer.

4. PROVIDE GENERAL CARE AND PRACTICAL HELP

- When volunteers have experienced a crisis situation or are in shock, it is a great help if someone lends a hand with practical things. This can include contacting someone who can be with the volunteer, arranging for children to be picked up from school, driving the volunteer home, or helping the volunteer to get medical care or other support as needed.
- Be sure to follow the wishes of the volunteer and don't take over too much responsibility. Rather, support them to regain control of their own situation, to consider their options and make their own decisions. Although a volunteer who has been through a distressing event may feel confused or vulnerable in that moment, it is important to remember that they are still a person with skills and resources of their own.
- Encourage their ability to help themselves, and empower them to feel resilient and resourceful. Keep a practical focus and help volunteers begin meeting their own needs.

5.4 PFA role play

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PFA role play

Work in pairs and decide on which role to take:

- PFA helper
- help-seeker

Keep in mind the basic elements of PFA.

Activity 11: PFA role play (group work and plenary)



To practise PFA

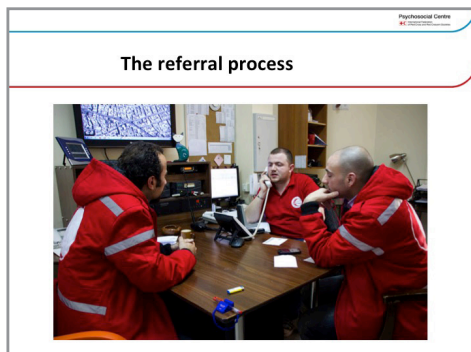


Handout 2 (annex 3): “Scenarios for PFA”



1. Ask participants to get into pairs for the role play.
2. Give each pair a scenario.
3. Ask each pair to decide on the roles for the first part of this activity – one person should be the PFA helper and the other the help-seeker.
4. Ask the PFA helpers to act out the steps they would take in offering PFA to the person affected in the scenario, keeping in mind the basic elements of PFA. Emphasize to participants that they do not have to act out the roles perfectly. The most important aspect of PFA is showing genuine care, warmth and concern for the person.
5. After 10 minutes ask the participants to switch roles and to take a new scenario.
6. Follow up in plenary by asking the following questions:
 - How was this different from an everyday conversation?
 - How was it to be the PFA helper?
 - How was it to be the help-seeker?
7. You may also want to ask:
 - What practical needs or concerns does the affected person have?
 - What information do helpers need to be able to assist people and link them with information, services and supports?
 - What aspects of help are beyond your role or ability in relation to the affected person/people?
8. Wrap up the exercise by asking participants what they feel is important when providing PFA. You can use the PowerPoint slide or copy the points on a flipchart for discussion. Emphasize the following key points in using PFA:
 - Be trustworthy and follow through on things you promise.
 - Never take advantage of the relationship with someone you are helping.
 - Respect the person’s right to make their own decisions, and be sensitive to their questions and needs
 - Never be intrusive or pushy, or force the person to tell their story if they do not want to.
 - Keep confidentiality. What someone tells you and the details of their experience should be kept private and not discussed with others. If you are having trouble processing what someone has told you, it may be best to contact a supervisor for guidance or referral.
 - Know the limits of your role as a volunteer and when to refer to someone for specialised support.

5.5 When and how to refer



- Begin by asking participants to raise their hands if they are familiar with the referral process in their National Society. Ask follow-up questions:
- Has anyone here referred someone before?
 - Has anyone here tried helping people who were in such severe distress that they were not able to function in their daily lives?

Explain the referral process to participants:
 Most volunteers will recover from a distressing situation with time, basic support and help from those around them. However, some volunteers may be severely distressed or their distress may last for a long time after the event has passed. In these circumstances, volunteers would need to be referred to more specialised care.

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When and how to refer

Distressed volunteers will probably need to be referred to a professional for more specialised care if:

- they are so severely distressed that they are unable to function in their daily lives
- they are in risk of harming themselves
- they are a danger to others.

Distressed volunteers will probably need to be referred to a professional for more specialized care if:

- they are so severely distressed that they are unable to function in their daily lives
- they are in risk of harming themselves
- they are a danger to others.

Referrals should always be made in consultation with a supervisor or programme manager. As a rule, the individuals concerned should always be informed about the intention of referring them to professional help. They need to know that they are being cared for, and to understand the reasons for the referral. If the volunteer objects to seeing a mental health specialist, for example, the helper might be able to refer the volunteer to the family doctor instead. In such situations, the helper should talk with their supervisor about the referral guidelines in the National Society.

It is recommended that every National Society has a referral mechanism for volunteers in need of professional support. If your National Society does not have sufficient resources to do this, it might be possible to set up a link with a local health care facility or a local NGO.



Moustapha Siallo/IFRC

Wrap up (15 minutes)

Activity 12: Find your buddy (in pairs)



To practise buddy systems



None



1. Ask the participants to find their buddy.
2. Ask the participants to ask their buddy the following questions:
 - How was your day?
 - What are your learning points from today?
 - What are you looking forward to about the training tomorrow?

Exercise: Check-out



If time allows, choose an activity for winding up the day from annex 1.



Day **2**



Cartelle Doe/IFRC

6. Setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers (2 hours and 30 minutes)

Learning points

By the end of this section, participants should be able to:

- identify support activities at each phase of a crisis
- understand and analyse current psychosocial support systems
- develop psychosocial support systems.



For more information on setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers, please see pages 32-44 in **Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit**.

Exercise: Check-in (15 minutes)

Purpose

To start the day on a positive note

Procedure

Choose a check-in exercise from annex 1.



Setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers

Ask participants to briefly recap the tools you covered yesterday. Make sure the following tools are mentioned:

- self-care
- peer support
- PFA.

Continue by explaining:

In this section we will talk about the importance of having psychosocial support activities for volunteers at each phase of a response. We will then go on to talk about and develop psychosocial support systems within your National Societies.

6.1 Support activities at each phase of a response (before, during and after)

Support activities at each phase of a response

Before the actual response, it is important to prepare the volunteers for the task at hand.

During the activity, it is important to provide the volunteers with on-going support.

After the response, it is time for recovery, reflection and improving future responses.

Tell the participants about the importance of psychosocial support activities at each phase of volunteer activities:

Whether you are responsible for volunteers in emergencies or on-going social programmes, be sure that your psychosocial support system for volunteers includes information and interventions at all three stages of a response, i.e. before, during and after:

- Before the actual response, it is important to prepare the volunteers for the task at hand.
- During the activity it is important to provide the volunteers with on-going support.
- After the response it is time for recovery, reflection and improving future responses.

Support activities at each phase of a response

Group 1: Before

- How can managers promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers before a crisis occurs, or before volunteers are sent to help?

Group 2: During

- How can managers promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers during the active response to a single event or in a prolonged crisis?

Group 3: After

- How can managers promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers after the crisis is over, or when the volunteers end their work?

Activity 13: Support activities at each phase of a response (before, during and after) (group work)



To reflect on what managers can do to promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers before, during and after a response



Flipchart paper and markers for the groups



1. Tell the participants that you are now going to work on what managers can do before, during and after an active response to support their volunteers.
2. Divide the participants into three groups, as follows:
 - Group 1: Before - How can managers promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers before a crisis occurs, or before volunteers are sent to help?
 - Group 2: During - How can managers promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers during the active response to a single event or in a prolonged crisis?
 - Group 3: After - How can managers promote the psychosocial well-being of volunteers after the crisis is over, or when the volunteers end their work?
3. Ask them to sit in their groups at three different tables. Give them about ten minutes to answer their question and to write their points on a flipchart paper.
4. Ask the participants to rotate tables, but ask them to leave their flipchart paper behind. (Group 1 moves to the group 2 table; group 2 moves to the group 3 table; and group 3 moves to the group 1 table.)
5. Ask the groups to spend five more minutes adding new points to the other group's flipchart list.
6. Repeat this procedure one more time.
7. Finally, ask all groups to rotate again so that they are back where they first started. Ask each group in turn to read all the points on their flipchart paper.
8. Wrap up in plenary by adding points from the the checklist on the next page, if there are gaps in how the groups responded.



Before: Inform and prepare

Recruitment and selection

- In the screening process, it is important to assess how potential volunteers understand and have dealt with their previous experiences. They should have some emotional distance from difficult experiences and be aware that work in emergencies can also trigger feelings from the past.
- Screening may help to identify those volunteers who may become overwhelmed by working in a crisis setting.

Orientation

- It is important that the managers have job descriptions which make it clear what is expected from volunteers.

Briefing and training

- It is important to train volunteers as well as other staff and managers in basic support techniques, such as psychological first aid and peer support.
- Adequate training for line managers is especially important, to be sure managers have the knowledge and tools to provide support for volunteers when needed.

Contingency planning

- Developing contingency plans in advance can help National Societies be prepared for particularly difficult or overwhelming emergency events.
- When plans are in place, ensure volunteers and managers know their roles and responsibilities regarding self- and team care, and how to access additional support when needed.
- It is also essential that contingency plans are included in the budget, and that the procedure for releasing the funds is clear and simple. In this way, support can then be provided quickly to help volunteers in acute crisis situations.

During: Monitor and support

Team meetings

- One of the most important support measures you can put in place as a manager is to create a supportive and open atmosphere for volunteers.
- As a line manager or supervisor, be proactive in creating a culture of mutual team support by:

- talking openly about stress and psychosocial support, so volunteers feel able to express their feelings and concerns without fearing consequences
- enhancing a sense of belonging and togetherness through regular team meetings
- making yourself available for supervision or private conversations with individual volunteers
- reaching out to volunteers whom you feel may be in distress or in need of support
- respecting confidentiality, thereby creating a safe environment for volunteers to seek support
- encouraging volunteers to use good self-care strategies as part of their responsibility to well-being.

Monitoring individual and team stress

- As a manager, give special attention to volunteers exposed to critical events in the line of duty. If you have support networks and referral resources in place, make sure they are prepared and available.
- Remember that managers and supervisors may also need extra support and supervision in the course of assisting those volunteers who are directly impacted by a critical event.
- Being deliberate and active about self-care not only helps volunteers withstand the rigours of emergency work, but also enables them to help beneficiaries more effectively.
- When a staff member, volunteer or response team is impacted by a critical event, consider providing information and support not only to those affected, but also to others involved in the response. Friends and colleagues of those directly impacted may also need reassurance and appropriate information. Providing some facts about the situation will help to dispel rumours.

Other important measures

- Supervision and additional training.
- Peer support and referral.



After: Reflect and refer

Team and individual reflection

- Encourage volunteers to take time to rest, re-connect with loved ones and move slowly back into routines, where possible.
- Assist volunteers in understanding and coming to terms with their experiences by providing space and time for reflection.

Appreciation of volunteers

- In individual and team meetings, volunteers can share feelings, give and receive feedback about the work and their role, and be recognized and appreciated for the work they have done.
- Investing time to listen to volunteers shows respect for their opinions and helps keep them motivated and engaged for possible actions in the future.
- This is also a time when the organization and volunteers can talk about lessons learned in the response and the support they received, so that improvements can be made in the future.

Peer support and referral

- In prolonged crisis situations, the personal situation of the volunteer may continue to be challenging. In addition, some may wrestle with the overwhelming demands they encountered and what they were and were not able to do to help others in terrible situations. Those exposed to particularly traumatic or difficult experiences may need additional support to recover and to come to terms with their experiences.
- Although professional help may not be available in every context, try to put in place referral resources for extra support when needed, including peer support, supervision and consultation with a professional or with psychosocial support staff.

Managers and volunteer resilience (1)

Managers can:

- Ensure reasonable working hours and conditions for volunteers
- Prepare job descriptions or make clear what is expected
- Prepare and train volunteers for their task in the field
- Check in with volunteers to see how they are coping during the emergency response
- Have regular team meetings during the emergency to check in with everyone and offer support.

Managers and volunteer resilience (2)

- Encourage volunteer work to be carried out in pairs
- Set up peer support or buddy systems
- Offer information about stress and its impacts
- Encourage good coping strategies
- Support volunteers who have experienced especially difficult events
- Show appreciation and let volunteers know they are valued members of the team.



Wrap up by presenting what managers in general can do to foster the resilience of their volunteers (use the PowerPoint or flipchart):

Managers and volunteer resilience


Managers play an important role in creating a supportive team dynamic by showing concern for the well-being of individual volunteers and the team as a whole.

Managers can:

- ensure reasonable working hours and conditions for volunteers
- prepare job descriptions or make clear what is expected
- prepare and train volunteers for their task in the field
- check in with volunteers to see how they are coping during the emergency response
- have regular team meetings during the emergency to check in with everyone and offer support
- encourage volunteer work to be carried out in pairs
- set up peer support or buddy systems

- offer information about stress and its impacts
- encourage good coping strategies
- support volunteers who have experienced especially difficult events
- show appreciation and let volunteers know they are valued members of the team.

6.2 Analysing and understanding current support systems

 Tell the participants that you are now going to spend some time looking at what the systems they currently have in place in their National Society. You are going to think about the basic and additional measures, and work on what needs to be added in each phase – before, during and after a crisis.

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Analysing and understanding current support systems

Read the handout 'Basic and additional strategies.'

Tick off the procedures and strategies you currently have in place in your National Society.


6.3 Developing support systems

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Developing support systems

The following three questions are good prompts in developing a strategy for psychosocial support of volunteers:

- **What** – what kind of support can we provide?
- **Who** – who provides the support? Who is eligible to receive support?
- **When** – how often and under what circumstances should support be provided?

 Tell the participants that you are now going to look at how to develop a strategy for volunteer psychosocial support:

There are various ways of developing a strategy for volunteer psychosocial support. Some National Societies have included psychosocial support strategies within general volunteering policies or first aid policies. Others have created separate psychosocial support policies.

The following three questions are good prompts in developing a strategy for psychosocial support of volunteers:

- **What** – what kind of support can we provide?

Activity 14: Analysing and understanding current support systems (individually, group work and plenary)



To list current support procedures within a National Society and identify two or three areas for development



Handout 3 (annex 3): “Basic and additional strategies”



1. Distribute handout 3 to the participants.
Ask the participants individually to tick off the procedures and strategies they currently have in place in their National Society.
2. After 10 minutes ask the participants to form groups - maximum 4 people per group. If possible, form groups based on National Societies or regions.
3. Ask the groups to spend 20 minutes discussing their answers and choose two to three areas they would like to improve in the future.
4. Ask each group to share in plenary one or two of the insights they gained during this exercise.

- **Who** – who provides the support? Who is eligible to receive support?
- **When** – how often and under what circumstances should support be provided?

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Developing support strategies

Spend 40 minutes in your groups, answering the questions in handout 4 'Developing support strategies.'

Activity 15: Developing support systems (group work)



To understand how to develop support systems



Handout 4 (annex 3):
“Developing support strategies”



1. Explain the purpose of the activity.
2. Ask the participants to form groups of up to 4 people. If possible, group people according to their National Societies or regions.
3. Distribute handout 4.
4. Now ask the participants to spend 40 minutes answering the questions in the handout.
5. Answer any questions that arise during the exercise.
6. Wrap up in plenary by explaining the points in the checklist on the next page.

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What kind of support?

Whatever activities your National Societies decide upon, the important thing is to be sure to include all the points of the response cycle - **before, during and after** – in order to be truly effective.

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Who will provide the support?

- Supervisors and team leaders play an important role in support.
- Senior managers provide backup.
- Supervisors need basic training, both in supporting volunteers and in caring for their own psychosocial well-being.
- Volunteers themselves are a resource in the psychosocial support system.
- Peer support mechanisms can be put in place to provide a network of support.

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Who will receive psychosocial support?

- All volunteers must be able to access adequate and systematic psychological support.
- Not all volunteers will need the same level of support, but they should all be able to access appropriate support when they need it.
- As you consider your resources, try to match psychosocial support strategies with the needs of your volunteers and the context in which they work.

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When will support be provided?

- Consider the feasibility and relative advantages of providing support **before** an emergency happens.
- Other types of support involve routine individual and team support measures **during and after** the emergency.
- Making some psychosocial support measures mandatory, rather than ‘on-demand’ will make it easier for volunteers to seek support.
- Not everyone will want or need professional support during or after working in an emergency.



What kind of support will your National Society provide?

- Whatever activities your National Society decides upon, the important thing is to be sure to include all the points of the response cycle – before, during and after – in order to be truly effective.
- At the end of this training, participants will have more ideas about what kinds of support will be relevant and useful in their situation.

Who will provide the support?

- Supervisors and team leaders play an important role in preparing volunteers for their work, keeping an eye on their well-being, and supporting and appreciating their efforts.
- In order to make this a priority, they also need to have the backup of senior managers and the time and resources to support volunteers. For this reason, supervisors need basic training both in supporting volunteers and in caring for their own psychological well-being.
- Remember that volunteers themselves are a resource in the psychosocial support system. They will have developed their own strategies for handling stress, as well as having their own ideas about what kind of support they would like to receive and that may be most helpful to them and to their team.
- Peer support mechanisms can be put in place to provide a network of support, building on the resilience of volunteers and the emergency response team.

Who will receive psychosocial support?

- According to Federation policies and strategies, all volunteers must be able to access adequate and systematic psychological support as a long-term and reliable commitment of the National Society.

- Not all volunteers will need the same level of support, but they all should be able to access appropriate support when they need it. Some may get the benefit they need from regular team meetings, peer support or a generally supportive work environment. Others may require more regular supportive supervision or perhaps a referral to a professional.
- As you consider your resources, try to match psychosocial support strategies with the needs of your volunteers and the context in which they work.

When will the psychosocial support be provided?

- Consider the feasibility and relative advantages of providing support before an emergency happens. If it is not possible in an acute emergency just as new volunteers are joining to help, you may still be able to provide a psychosocial briefing and orientation and some written information.
- Other types of support involve routine individual and team support measures during and after the emergency. When these support measures are integrated into the organizational culture and made a part of the working strategies for teams and supervisors, it is more likely that such measure will be implemented without much additional effort.
- Making some psychosocial support measures mandatory rather than 'on-demand' will make it easier for volunteers to seek support.
- It is important to remember that not everyone will want or need professional support during or after working in an emergency. However, for those who do, try to have mechanisms in place to assess their need for referral and provide easy access for them to receive it.



7. Monitoring and evaluation of volunteer support (1 hour)

Learning points

By the end of this section, participants should know how to:

- collect monitoring and evaluation information
- measure the support given to volunteers
- apply information gathered from evaluation.

For more information on monitoring and evaluation, please see *Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit* pages 60-70.



Introduce the section:
Monitoring and evaluating the support volunteers receive is vital in order to ensure that the support systems you put in place actually have the intended effect. This section will cover the basic principles behind monitoring and evaluation.

7.1 What is monitoring and evaluation?

Ask the participants what they understand by monitoring and evaluation. Make sure the points below are covered.

Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) of psychosocial support systems for volunteers means checking up on the systems that are in place, getting feedback from volunteers, and using that feedback to find out if the support is working well and if it is perceived as helpful by volunteers. M & E should also show if the support offered to volunteers is not in line with volunteers' needs, and if changes are needed.

Programme managers have the overall responsibility of making sure that monitoring activities are undertaken in a responsible and ethical manner. The Red Cross Red Crescent programme staff at branch level typically collect monitoring data in relation to their direct interaction with volunteers.

7.2 Why monitor and evaluate?



Ask participants why it is important to monitor and evaluate the psychosocial support given to volunteers. Make sure the points below are mentioned:

- accountability – to ensure that we are accountable, not only to donors and beneficiaries, but also to our staff and volunteers.
- relevance – to ensure that the support we provide is useful for volunteers.
- efficiency – to ensure that volunteer support is timely and at reasonable cost.
- affectiveness and impact – to ensure that the support provided has the desired effect for volunteer well-being.
- sustainability – to ensure that the benefits of support continue, even after the current emergency has come to an end.

7.3 What to monitor and evaluate?

What to monitor and evaluate?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of volunteer support are currently in place? • How well are the support systems working? • What methods can be used to collect this information?



Explain that the kind of information you may want to collect addresses the following questions:

- What types of volunteer support are currently in place?
- How well are the support systems working?

It is often not possible to directly monitor the changes brought about by a psychosocial support system to volunteers. However certain indicators can be used, for example, in monitoring changes in the recruitment and orientation of volunteers. Indicators can be either quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative indicators are things that can be counted, such as the number of volunteers trained or the number using peer support. Qualitative indicators measure perceived quality of support, such as how helpful volunteers feel training or peer support is for them.

7.4 How to collect the information?



Ask the participants what methods can be used to collect information. Make sure the methods below are mentioned:

Methods for collecting M & E information:

- Talk to volunteers, staff and managers (e.g., in focus groups, interviews) about their understanding and perceptions of volunteer stress and the support available.
- Conduct anonymous surveys for volunteers, staff and managers to assess their knowledge about volunteer stress and coping.
- Make an inventory of your current resources – human, material and financial – and find out how effectively those resources are currently being used.

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Monitoring and evaluating

Work in the same groups as before and develop a strategy for monitoring and evaluation. Answer the following questions:

- How can you monitor and evaluate the psychosocial support system you developed in the last activity?
- What could work as indicators of a change?

Spend 20 minutes on this task and be prepared to present your strategy in plenary.

Activity 16: Monitoring and evaluating (group work and in plenary)



To reflect on how to monitor and evaluate psychosocial support activities for volunteers



Flipchart paper and markers for each group



1. Ask participants to go into the same groups as in the last activity.
2. Now ask participants the following questions:
 - How could you monitor and evaluate the psychosocial support system you developed in the last activity?
 - What could work as indicators of change?
3. Ask participants to spend 20 minutes developing a strategy for how to monitor and evaluate the psychosocial support activity. Ask them to write the strategy on their flipchart paper.
4. Ask the groups in turn to briefly present their strategy in plenary.



Wrap up this section with the following: It is important to prioritize monitoring and evaluating the psychosocial support for volunteers. By monitoring and evaluating the support activities you put in place, you ensure that the activities have the intended effect and you get valuable information on how to improve the activities in the future.



8. Communicating the message (1 hour)

Learning points

By the end of this section the participants should be able to:


- explain what psychosocial support is and why it is important
- inform volunteers about the support strategies within their National Society.



worthwhile if volunteers know about them and understand them! Often volunteers do not use the available support systems, simply because they lack information about what is available. In this section we will look at how to communicate the importance and availability of psychosocial support for volunteers.

8.1 Informing volunteers




 Introduce the section by asking participants why it is important to communicate what support services are available to volunteers.

All of the psychosocial support messages, policies and strategies that you put in place in your National Society are only

Communicating the message

When providing information to volunteers:

- Consider the language(s) your volunteers speak, their level of education, their culture and their customs.
- Try to keep messages simple, and give clear instructions for accessing support, including telephone numbers of referral networks or other contact details.
- Have information available in various formats, such as posters, leaflets or other pocket information.
- Prepare information in advance of an emergency, where possible.
- Consider when the information should be given to volunteers.

 Present the following:
Here are some important points in providing information to volunteers:

- Consider the language(s) your volunteers speak, their level of education, their culture and customs when providing information about psychosocial support.

- Try to keep messages simple, and give clear instructions for accessing support, including telephone numbers of referral networks or other contact details.
- Have information available in various formats, such as posters, leaflets or other printed information to raise awareness about psychosocial support for volunteers in the National Society.
- Prepare information in advance of an emergency, where possible.
- Consider when the information should be given to volunteers.

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Communicating the message

Prepare a five-minute presentation suitable for volunteers on the topic allocated to your group:

Group 1: Key messages about psychosocial support

Group 2: Psychosocial support for volunteers

Group 3: Information for volunteers

Activity 17: Informing volunteers (group work and presentation)



To practise communicating to volunteers



Flipchart paper, pens in different colours, tape and scissors



1. Explain to participants that they are now going to spend 20 minutes preparing a five-minute presentation suitable for volunteers on topics related to psychosocial support.
2. Divide participants into three groups and ask them to prepare a short presentation on the topic allocated to their group:
 - Group 1: Key messages about psychosocial support
 - What is psychosocial support?
 - What are the possible stressors of being a volunteer, some reactions to stress, and ways of coping with them?
 - Group 2: Psychosocial support for volunteers
 - Include clear directions on how to access support (procedures, referral networks, contact details, etc.).
3.
 - What is expected of volunteers in managing their own stress? For example, should they attend training in stress management, or take time for reflection; or report to their supervisor, etc.?
 - Group 3: Information for volunteers
 - How can National Societies provide information about psychosocial support for volunteers?
 - When can National Societies provide information about psychosocial support for volunteers?
4. Tell group 1 and 2 that they can present their information as though they were presenting to a group of volunteers, if they wish.
5. After all groups have presented, ask the participants to comment on points they thought were especially effective, innovative or useful.
6. Add to the presentation by group 3 from the checklist below, if they did not cover all the points.



Informing volunteers

Information is spread more effectively through an organization if it is communicated through multiple channels. Identify key points in the volunteer recruitment and support process and ensure that information about psychosocial support and stress is communicated.

This includes:

- during the recruitment process
- within policies, codes of conduct, and job descriptions they receive upon joining the National Society
- during training sessions
- during briefing and orientation for a specific emergency
- in 'pocket information' for volunteers in the field
- during individual and team supervision meetings
- during reflection meetings at the end of the day or at the end of a crisis event or emergency
- in the follow-up phase after the emergency has ended.



Wrap up this section with the following:

It is extremely important that all staff and volunteers, who are aware of the importance of psychosocial support to volunteers, communicate effectively to fellow staff and volunteers. It is only by getting a common understanding of the importance of taking care of volunteers' psychosocial well-being that National Societies can effectively address the psychosocial needs of volunteers.



Mikko Vaharanta/ Finnish Red Cross

9. Developing an action plan (45 minutes)

Learning points

By the end of this section the participants should be able to:

- develop an action plan for the following six months.



Introduce the section:

There is a saying: “People don’t plan to fail, they fail to plan.” This emphasizes the value of planning. We want to ensure success in using the knowledge gained in this training. It is therefore important to make an action plan, i.e. a list of activities to achieve goals. For example, it may be an action plan to set up a new psychosocial support system for volunteers. It may alternatively be an action plan to develop one particular aspect of psychosocial support for volunteers that is missing from what is already in place within a National Society. This section helps you identify what areas to develop in the next six months.



Psychosocial Centre International Centre	
Developing an action plan	
Developing an action plan has the following advantages:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It lends credibility to your National Society. • You keep track of important details. • You save time, energy and resources. • You understand what is possible and not possible with your resources. • You increase the chance of reaching your goals. 	

Developing an action plan has several advantages:

- It lends credibility to your National Society.
- It enables you to keep track of important details.
- You save time, energy and resources.
- You understand what is possible and not possible with the resources available.
- You increase the chance of reaching your goals.

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Developing an action plan

- What are your goals for the next six months?
- What actions do you need to take to achieve your goals?
- What is the deadline for each action?
- Who is responsible for following up on each action?

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Developing an action plan

- Do you need any further training to achieve your goals?
- Where can you get support if you need additional support to achieve your goals?
- How will you communicate with each other about the status of your specific actions (e.g., monthly meetings, phone meetings, e-mail, web-based groups, etc.)?

Activity 18: Developing an action plan (group work)



To develop an action plan



Handout 5 (annex 3), paper, pens



1. Divide the participants into groups based on their National Society. (If the entire training group is from the same National Society, divide them into their departments, branches or responsibilities).
2. Using the handout, ask participants to take 30 minutes to discuss the key aspects of their action plan:
 - What are your goals for the next six months?
 - What actions do you need to take to achieve your goals?
 - What is the deadline for each action?
 - Who is responsible for following up on each action?
3. In addition, ask the participants to consider the following issues:
 - Do you need any further training to achieve your goals?
 - Where can you get assistance if you need additional support to achieve your goals?
 - How will you communicate with each other about the status of your specific actions? (E.g., monthly meetings, phone meetings, e-mail, web-based groups, etc.)
4. Write down key action points agreed during the discussion on the handout.
5. Follow up in plenary by asking the participants if they all agree to the points in their action plan and if they think it is realistic.
6. Decide with the whole group how to follow up on their action plans in six months' time. For example, one person from each National Society could be asked to send an email to the facilitator about the status of their action plan.
7. Ask each group to send you their current action plan by email before the training workshop closes.



Wrap up this section with the following: It is important to spend more time after the training to develop your action plans. For an action plan to be effective, it should be:

- **complete** It lists all the actions you want to take to reach your goals.

- **clear** It lists clearly who is responsible for following up on what actions.
- **current** It reflects the current situation in the National Society, including opportunities and barriers.

10. Evaluation (30 minutes)

Activity 19: Find your buddy (in pairs)



To use the buddy system set up for the training



None



1. Ask the participants to find their buddies.
2. Ask the participants to ask their buddies the following questions:
 - What were your learning points from the training?
 - How will you apply what you have learned in your work?

Activity 20: Evaluation questionnaire (individually)



To evaluate the training



Copies of the evaluation questionnaire (annex 2)




1. Hand out the evaluation questionnaire from annex 2.
2. Ask the participants to spend fifteen minutes filling in the questionnaire.
3. Collect the questionnaires for assessment later.

Ibrahim Malia/FRC



Wrap up and goodbye (15 minutes)



 Having spent two days together, it is likely that participants will feel a bond with one another. Personal stories might have been shared and vulnerabilities might have been shared. Consequently, just as you say goodbye to a dear friend, take time for parting and saying goodbye. It is a good idea to compile a participants' list with names and contact information for circulation with everyone's consent.

Exercise: Saying goodbye

Purpose

To say goodbye

Procedure

Find examples of saying goodbye activities in annex 1.



Annexes

Annex 1: Icebreakers, check-in and check-out activities and energizers

Icebreakers

Activity 1: Introducing my partner (15-30 minutes)



To enable participants to get to know one another



None



1. Divide the group into pairs and give them three minutes to interview one another.
2. Now ask each pair in turn to introduce their partner to the group.

Questions could include:

- Where were you born?
- How many years have you been with the Red Cross Red Crescent and in what capacity?
- Why did you want to come to this training?
- What would you do for volunteers in this National Society if you won a million dollars?



Your role as facilitator will be to manage the time and facilitate the activity as indicated. It is also important that you share some information about yourself too. Do this by taking a few minutes to describe yourself before you continue onto the next part of the training.

Activity 2: Ball toss (15-30 minutes)



To provide an opportunity for participants to get to know one another. (If the participants already know one another, you can use this activity to share expectations of the training by asking the participants to say one thing they hope to get out of this training.)



A small ball



1. Invite participants to stand in a circle and explain that the idea of this icebreaker is for the group to get to know one another by throwing a ball to one another. Explain that whenever someone catches the ball, they have to say four things about themselves: 1) their name, 2) their National Society or affiliation 3) something special about themselves as a person, and 4) one expectation for the training.
2. Now throw the ball to someone in the circle. If the person you throw the ball to does not know how to respond, help them by reminding them of what they need to say.
3. Encourage the first participant to throw the ball to someone else in the group and so on, until everyone has had a chance to introduce themselves.
4. Include yourself as the facilitator in this activity so that participants get to know you, too.

Activity 3: Greetings (25-30 minutes)

To provide an opportunity for participants to get to know one another



None



1. Explain to participants that you are going to be spending a lot of time together over the coming days, so it would be fun to get to know each other a bit.
2. Ask participants to stand up and go around the room, and introduce themselves to as many people as possible. They should give their name and one interesting thing or fun fact about themselves. This could be their National Society or professional affiliation – or something completely different. The idea is to help people remember each other. Examples:
 - a. “Hello I’m Gupta and I’m from Nepalese Red Cross.”
 - b. “Hello I’m Anna and I’ve volunteered for ten years.”
 - c. “Hello I’m Khaled and I like dancing.”
3. Let everyone mingle and introduce themselves to one another for 5-7 minutes (depending on the size of the group).
4. After the time is up, ask everyone to go around the room again. This time instead of introducing themselves, participants should seek out persons whose name or details they remember. For example, “Hello, your name is Gupta!” Or “Hello, you are from Danish Red Cross.” Or “Hello, Khaled, you like dancing.” (Or whatever the thing is that they shared that makes them memorable.)

Activity 4: The sun always shines on (15-20 minutes)

To welcome the participants and for the participants to introduce themselves



None




1. Welcome the participants. Ask them to stand with you in a circle where everyone can see each other.
2. Ask the participants to step into the circle in turn and to say their name and National Society/position.
3. When everyone has introduced themselves, tell them that they will now get an opportunity to get to know each other better by playing the game called “The sun always shines on...” (You can change this sentence if it’s not appropriate).
4. When the participants hear something true for them, they should step into the circle.
5. Start the game with:
 - “The sun always shines on those who work directly with volunteers.”
 - “The sun always shines on those who are or have been volunteers themselves.”
 - “The sun always shines on those have worked in the organization for more than five years.”
6. Participants can continue the activity and make up their own statements.

Check-in activities

Activity 1: “I check in with...” (15 minutes)




 To start the day on a positive note

 A small ball



1. Invite the participants to stand in a circle with you.
2. Explain that whenever someone catches the ball, they have to say one thing they check in with (i.e. “I check in with...” a feeling, an expectation, something they have been thinking about after the last day’s training).
3. Now throw the ball to someone in the circle. If the person you throw the ball to does not know how to respond, help them by reminding them of what they need to say.
4. Encourage the first participant to throw the ball to someone else in the group and so on, until everyone has had a chance to speak.



 Include yourself as the facilitator in this activity.

Activity 2: Mood circle (15 minutes)



To allow participants to share how they feel with the group, initially without talking

Write out sets of words (see details below) on four pieces of paper and arrange them on the floor in what will become a circle.

- At the “north” point of the circle, lay the words **Energetic / Open / Communicative** on the floor.
- At the “east” point of the circle, lay the words **Contemplative / Thoughtful / Inquisitive** on the floor.
- At the “south” point of the circle, lay the words **Troubled / Tired / Uncommunicative** on the floor.
- At the “west” point of the circle, lay the words: **Neutral / Listening / Observing** on the floor.
- (Alternatively, instead of writing the words for these feelings, use a simple drawing of a happy face, a contemplative face, a sad face, and a neutral face.)



1. Start by explaining that participants will be asked to tell the group how they are feeling. They will do this by positioning themselves in the circle (without talking) next to the words (or the smiley face) that best describe their mood. Explain each of the four categories, and what it might represent:
 - Energetic / Open / Communicative – represents someone who feels well rested, positive, and is ready to share something with the group.
 - Contemplative / Thoughtful / Inquisitive – represents someone who has deep thoughts or has questions about yesterday’s training, or is just feeling pensive.
 - Troubled / Tired / Uncommunicative – represents someone who has special concerns, is feeling tired or just uncommunicative.
 - Neutral / Listening / Observing – represents someone who is feeling neutral or undecided, or perhaps just wants to listen or observe for the time being.
2. Now give everyone a few moments to move around and find the place on the circle that best represents how they are feeling.
 - Participants who position themselves next to or near “north” (open/sharing) or “east” (contemplative / inquisitive) may be asked to share with the group why they put themselves there. Participants who position themselves next to “west” (neutral /listening/ observing) may be best left to themselves, as this positioning indicates that they may not wish to communicate just now.



Include yourself as a facilitator in this activity.

Check-out activities

Activity 1: “I check out with...” (15 minutes)



For participants to share what they have learned (which also enables the facilitator to get an impression of how the training is going)



A small ball



1. Ask participants to form a circle.
2. Ask them to throw the ball to one another. When someone catches the ball, ask them to share one thing with the group that they will take home from the day. It can be an “a-ha moment”, something that they found especially important, a lesson learned, a new understanding, a different perspective, etc.
3. Start with sharing your own impression of the day; then continue by throwing the ball to someone else.

Activity 2: Notes from the day (15 minutes)



For the facilitator to see how participants feel about the day’s training



Post-it notes, pens, flipchart paper and markers



1. Ask participants to give their impressions of the day’s training. Ask them to draw or write on four post-it notes as follows:
 - Describe their feelings
 - Write any questions
 - Write any comments
 - Draw an emoticon (☺☹️ etc.)
2. While they are writing, draw a big cross in the middle of a flipchart paper (dividing it into four sections) and write the four categories – one per box.
3. Ask participants to stick their post-it notes on the flipchart in the corresponding categories (e.g. “happy” should be placed under the “feelings” category; “would like more energizers” should go under the “comments” category).
4. When everyone has completed this task, read the post-it notes out loud.
5. Place the flipchart paper on the wall.

Activity 3: Saying goodbye (Last day) (20-25 minutes)

To give everyone the opportunity to share one thing they will take with them from the training.



A small ball



1. Ask the participants to form a circle.
2. Throw a ball to someone and ask the person who catches the ball to say one thing that they will take some with them from the training. It can be an “a-ha moment”, something that they found especially important, a lesson learned, a new understanding, a different perspective, etc.
3. Ask the person who has spoken to throw the ball to someone else. Take time for everyone to have an opportunity to speak.

Activity 4: Saying goodbye ritual (last day) (20-25 minutes)

To end the training in a positive, thoughtful way



One small object for each participant



1. Gather the participants in a circle in a quiet place where you won't be interrupted. Ensure that you have roughly 1-2 minutes per group member for the activity.
2. Put a pile of small objects in the centre of the circle, one object for each member. The objects should seem noteworthy in some way, but they need not be costly, e.g. They could be key rings, badges or small polished stones.
3. Tell the participants that when they feel like speaking they should step to the centre, choose an object, return to their spot, and say one thing they check out with from the training. It can be an “a-ha moment”, something that they found especially important, a lesson learned, a new understanding, a different perspective, etc.
4. The object is theirs to keep as a reminder of the experience.
5. Emphasize that everyone will speak, however briefly, and you won't proceed around the circle but rather each person will speak up when they're ready.
6. As the facilitator, don't go first or last; but find an opportunity to participate in the middle.



Option: Instead of lots of small objects, lay one object in the middle of the circle. Invite participants to go into the centre of the circle, one at a time. Ask them to pick up the object and share what they check out with.

Energizers

Activity 1: Paint your phone booth (5-10 minutes)



To have fun, engage participants in physical activity and to stimulate participants' creativity



None



1. Invite the participants to stand in a circle.
2. Ask the participants to imagine that they have a phone booth in front of them.
3. Ask everyone to draw the outline of the phone booth in the air. Show the participants how to do it.
4. Now tell the participants that there is a big bucket of paint in front of every phone booth in their favourite colour, but unfortunately, there are no paintbrushes. This means that they will have to paint the phone booth using their body.
5. Show participants how to do this by dipping your foot into the imaginary bucket. Now paint the lowest part of the phone booth with your foot.
6. Continue by dipping your knee into the bucket and painting the next part of the phone booth with your knee.
7. Continue in this way using your body in the way you find most suitable for your group of participants, for example, by using your bottom, stomach, shoulders and head.
8. Continue until you have painted the whole phone booth.
9. It makes the activity more fun if you exaggerate the movements and helps participants feel more comfortable about joining in.

Activity 2: Multi-tasking (10-15 minutes)



To reflect on how multi-tasking affects focus (as a starting point for talking about stress)



Different types of small balls



1. Ask participants to stand in circles of 6-10 people.
2. Tell the participants that the aim of the energizer is to throw balls to each other in a specific pattern.
3. In developing the pattern, each participant can only throw and catch the ball one time.
4. The participants cannot throw to someone on their immediate left or right.
5. Each person has to remember who threw the ball to them and to whom they threw it, so that the pattern can be repeated.
6. Tell the group to practise the pattern a few times.
7. Begin by introducing one ball. After a couple of minutes, add a second, third, fourth, etc., until the participants start dropping the balls.
8. Now collect all the balls and ask the participants to describe what they experienced during this activity. You can use the energizer as a starting point for a discussion about physical and emotional reactions to stress.



Option: Make this a silent activity.

Activity 3: Count to 20 in a circle (10-15 minutes)



To strengthen group co-operation and enable participants to tune into each other quietly and calmly



None



1. Ask the participants to stand in a circle.
2. Tell the participants to look at a point in the middle of the circle.
3. Now explain that they are going to count to 20, by saying one number at a time. They are not allowed to look at each other and they are not allowed to decide beforehand the order of who's counting.
4. If two people say a number at the same time, the group has start from one again. The group has succeeded when the group has counted to 20.



If the group is finding it difficult to count in sequence, tell them to slow down. The group can make it work if they take their time between each number, allowing a brief second or two of silence, until they begin counting again.

Annex 2: Evaluation questionnaire

Please give your responses to the following statements using the scale below:

Very poor	Unsatisfactory		Satisfactory		Good		Excellent	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
The concepts and theories presented in the training were appropriate to my learning needs.								
Section 1 (Understanding psychosocial support) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 2 (Risks, resilience and responsibility) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 3 (Self-care) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 4 (Peer support) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 5 (Psychological first aid) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 6 (Setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 7 (Monitoring and evaluation) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 8 (Communicating the message) was of relevance in my work.								
Section 9 (Developing an action plan) was of relevance in my work.								
Facilitator feedback on activities/exercises was helpful.								
Group feedback and discussion were helpful.								
Activities in the training were culturally relevant /appropriate.								
I gained useful skills and experience during the training.								
Briefly comment on which skills, if relevant, you learned from this training programme:								
More time might be allowed for:								
Less time might be used on:								
Overall rating of content: (please use the scale above)								
Overall rating of presentation: (please use the scale above)								
Any other comments:								

Annex 3: Handouts

Handout 1: Volunteering in Norway after July 2011

In July 2011 in Norway, two terrorist attacks claimed a total of 77 lives. The first attack was a car bomb explosion in Oslo killing eight people and injuring at least 209 people. The second attack occurred less than two hours later at a youth summer camp on the island of Utøya. A gunman dressed in a fake police uniform gained access to the island and opened fire on the participants, killing 69 of them.

Several hundred volunteers from Norwegian Red Cross participated in the search for those missing from the shootings on Utøya and in supporting relatives and youth across the country. The Red Cross encouraged volunteers to talk openly about their reactions, and regular meetings were organized where the volunteers could share their problems and experiences.

A special programme was implemented to train and assist staff and volunteers in local branches to provide support to affected young people and their relatives returning home after the tragedy. Afterwards, volunteers reported that what they did for the young people and their relatives was highly appreciated.

Handout 2: Scenarios for PFA

Volunteering for a mobile health team in a conflict-affected country

Help-seeker:

You have been working for a mobile health team since the beginning of a violent conflict in your country. Two hours ago, a close colleague of yours was shot, while you were on duty with him. You were driving the car as it happened. You managed to escape the gunfire and went to the nearest hospital. The doctors say your colleague's condition is critical. You feel like your whole world is falling apart. Before you left this morning, your colleague had been reluctant about going to this area, but you knew that there were people who needed your help there. You were convinced that you would be safe in the car with the Red Cross Red Crescent emblem. You tell yourself over and over again: "If only I had listened to him, this would not have happened. If only I had listened to him...."

PFA helper:

You are a colleague of the help-seeker and the volunteer who was shot. At the hospital, you find your colleague sitting on a chair with his head in his hands. As you are close to the two people affected by this incident, you cannot help but be affected, and this is a challenging situation for you. Demonstrate providing PFA to your colleague.

First aid volunteers in a conflict-affected area

Help-seeker:

Ten months ago, you started volunteering in an area of violent conflict. Since then you have carried out a range of different tasks, including distributing relief items and helping to evacuate the wounded. You have felt well prepared, strong and capable of helping people in need. But last week you began feeling afraid and anxious about what the day would bring, and you have had difficulty sleeping. It started the day after you and about 20 other Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers went to evacuate dead bodies in an area. You felt anxious and afraid while you were doing the task, but you knew it had to be done and didn't even consider not doing your part. Now you feel weak and alone with your thoughts and you have disturbing memories of what you witnessed.

PFA helper:

You are a colleague of the help-seeker. You have seen that your colleague's mood has changed dramatically over the last week. You approach him/her. Demonstrate providing PFA to your colleague.

Handout 3: Basic and additional strategies

1

BEFORE

Recruitment and selection

Basic

When recruiting and screening potential volunteers, do you currently:

- Discuss tasks they may perform in difficult situations?
- Emphasize the importance of their well-being?
- Ask about their resources and strategies to cope with stress?
- Routinely ask about their previous experience with crises or stressful events, how they coped and how they feel now about the event(s)?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Emphasize the shared responsibility of the National Society and the volunteer in ensuring their well-being?
- Give information about available psychosocial support for volunteers?
- Have screening and recruitment guidelines and train staff in those guidelines?
- Screen volunteers using professional crisis responders or psychosocial personnel?

Orientation

Basic

When orienting volunteers to the organization and crisis work, do you currently:

- Provide information on the stresses of emergency work and how it may impact their well-being?
- Talk about good self-care and team care strategies?
- Ask volunteers what kind of strategies they use and what support from their team members and supervisors would be most helpful to them?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Provide verbal and written information about stress and coping in their orientation talk and materials?
- Provide verbal and written information about psychosocial support resources available to volunteers through the National Society, including details of referral resources?

Briefing and training

Basic

When briefing and training volunteers to respond to a specific emergency, do you currently:

- Include information about specific stresses relevant to the crisis situation (e.g., encountering death or serious injuries)?

Handout 3: Basic and additional strategies

2

- Emphasize the importance of self-care and team care?
- Assess together the readiness of volunteers for their role?
- Explain how volunteers can access support from their supervisor or peers?
- Include psychological first aid (PFA) in first aid training for all staff and volunteers?
- Train all line managers and supervisors in individual and group PFA?
- Have crisis responders share their experience during training to normalize stress reactions, emphasize self-care and reinforce the importance of accepting support?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Explain how volunteers can access support from their supervisor or peer supporters?
- Emphasize the importance of attending individual and team meetings for support and supervision?
- Give contact details and instructions for volunteers to access confidential psychosocial support (e.g., from a mental health professional)?
- Train all volunteers in recognizing symptoms of stress and basic self-care and team care?
- Ensure all managers have tools for individual and group crisis support?
- Train all managers in how and when to refer volunteers for professional psychological support?

Contingency planning

Basic

In planning for unexpected serious events, do you currently:

- Have a plan to support volunteers working in especially difficult circumstances (e.g., within the organization or by referral)?
- Know up-to-date information on referral resources and mechanisms in your area?
- Have a line within your annual budget for funds to cover psychosocial interventions for volunteers in difficult circumstances, if they arise?
- Know who has the authority to release funds for psychosocial support?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Have a referral system in place, where support is provided by a psychosocial volunteer or lay counsellor and which is supervised by professionals?
- Have a referral system in place for confidential, professional, psychological support?
- Have a system in place to supervise and support line managers who provide support to volunteers?

Handout 3: Basic and additional strategies

3

DURING

Team meetings

Basic

When conducting team meetings, do you currently:

- Brief volunteers at the beginning of each workday to prepare and encourage them?
- Debrief volunteers at the end of each day to ask what they experienced and how they are coping?
- Create a culture of support among team members and openness to seek help and support when needed?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Hold additional regular team meetings during work in especially difficult circumstances?
- Hold special team meetings, if volunteers themselves are impacted by a critical event, to provide information, assess needs and offer additional support?

Monitoring individual and team stress

Basic

When monitoring individual and team stress, do you currently:

- Have systems in place to ensure volunteers take work breaks and time away from the emergency to go home and rest?
- Check in with individual volunteers and teams to see how they're coping and getting along together?
- Encourage good self-care and team care strategies?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Rotate volunteers who are performing particularly difficult tasks into less stressful work to give them breaks?
- Create a schedule of shifts for volunteers working long hours in a sustained emergency so that no one volunteer works too long?
- Provide individual and group PFA as needed?
- Organize routine meetings for all staff and volunteers working in particularly difficult settings to check in with a psychosocial support person?

Handout 3: Basic and additional strategies

4

Supervision and additional training

Basic

When supervising and training volunteers, do you currently:

- Make sure managers are accessible to volunteers who need supervision or support?
- Give volunteers opportunities for supervision at regular intervals during an emergency response?
- Supervise volunteers on-site during their fieldwork?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Ensure managers have access to supportive supervision by professionals?
- Provide additional training as needed for volunteers responding in especially difficult circumstances?
- Provide managers with additional training as needed for supporting volunteers, including refresher training in PFA and peer support?

Peer support and referral

Basic

When implementing peer and professional support for volunteers, do you currently:

- Encourage team members to look out for each other?
- Have volunteers working in pairs in difficult settings?
- Have a buddy system for mutual support among team members?
- Provide a referral system for volunteer support within the organization or with locally available resources?
- Share information with volunteers about how to access available, confidential support?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Have peer support networks in place?
- Provide supervision of peer supporters by trained staff a psychosocial support volunteer?
- Maintain a roster of psychosocial support resources (such as lay counsellors or psychosocial support volunteers) for volunteers in need of referral?
- Provide timely, confidential referrals to a professional for volunteers in need of extra support or those exposed to critical events?

Handout 3: Basic and additional strategies

5

AFTER

Team and individual reflection

Basic

When helping volunteers reflect on their emergency experiences, do you currently:

- Bring team members together after the crisis has ended for reflection and appreciation of their work?
- Meet individually with volunteers after the crisis has ended to reflect and assess their need for additional support?
- Take the opportunity in individual or team meetings to give information about common feelings after crisis work, and how to deal with difficult emotions?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Arrange individual or team meetings with psychosocial support persons (within the organization or using external resources) to provide information on stress and coping?
- Have managers or other designated staff check in with volunteers by phone or in person one month after the crisis response to assess their well-being and need for additional support?
- Ask volunteers for feedback on psychosocial support offered to them before, during and after the crisis response in order to make improvements in the future?

Appreciation of volunteers

Basic

To acknowledge the work of volunteers in the emergency, do you currently:

- Thank volunteers and acknowledge their work individually and in team meetings?
- Provide a token or a letter of appreciation to volunteers?

Additional

Do you currently:

- Arrange formal and informal events or ceremonies to acknowledge and appreciate the work of volunteers, after the crisis has ended?
- Promote their work as volunteers, e.g. in newsletters, magazines, social media?

Handout 4: Developing psychosocial support strategies

1

Consider the following questions when developing strategies for the psychosocial support of volunteers:

1. What kind of support could your National Society provide?

a) You are probably already doing many things as a National Society in the training and general care for volunteers that help in their psychosocial support. List some of the activities you are already doing in your National Society that improve the psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers:

b) Many strategies are very low cost, and can be mainstreamed easily into the ways you currently prepare and manage volunteers during emergency responses. List one or two activities you would like to implement into your support strategy:

2. Who will provide the support?

Work out which persons within your National Society would best provide support within their current roles, e.g. supervisors and team leaders, senior managers and volunteers.

Handout 4: Developing psychosocial support strategies **2**

3. Who will receive the support?

Try to match your psychosocial support strategies with the needs of your volunteers and the context in which they work.

4. When will support be provided?

Consider when and how often psychosocial support activities will be provided. Is there already a plan in place for support activities in the event of conflict or crisis? Who is responsible for which aspects of support?

Handout 5: Action plan template

Action plan			
Action	Costs and resources	Person/s responsible	Deadline for completion of action
Goal #1:			
Goal #2:			
Goal #3:			
Goal #4:			

Annex 4: Self-care scenarios

Scenario 1: Dealing with exhaustion and physical limitations

You are a volunteer at a refugee camp. The last week you have been registering newly arrived refugees. Up to 3000 refugees are registered daily. It is extremely hot and the refugees are exhausted and in need of food, water and a place to rest. The language barrier makes it difficult to process the registrations quickly, and some of the refugees are impatient and yell at you and your colleagues. You haven't had a chance to take a break today. You are tired and hot and your blood sugar is low. You start to feel faint and you are losing your patience, answering the refugees in an irritable way.

What do you do?

Options include:

- *Tell your colleagues that you need to take a short break.*
- *Ask your manager to help organize your breaks.*
- *Stay for now, but go to bed early tonight.*
- *Other constructive ways of handling the situation?*

Scenario 2: Dealing with events that are emotionally demanding

You are working as a volunteer after a violent attack in a public place. There is noise and chaos all around and people are afraid and panicked. You can see dead bodies. You can see there are some children who have died, and you are shocked at seeing all this. Some people are wounded and there is a lot of blood. Being a volunteer for the Red Cross Red Crescent, people approach you for help. You are moved by the loss and devastation and feel a sense of injustice. You are emotionally affected and feel unable to deal with people's needs.

What do you do?

Options include:

- *Let your supervisor or colleagues know how you are feeling.*
- *Find a quiet place to rest for a few minutes.*
- *Tell your supervisor that you are not able to work today.*
- *Other constructive ways of handling the situation?*

Scenario 3: Dealing with personal issues

You are a volunteer helping people after a violent conflict. You receive word that your brother has lost his life in the conflict OR you receive word that your mother has fallen ill, and your family is urging you to come home to be with them. You feel the need to be with your family, but you are also hesitant to return home since there are so many people here in need of help.

What do you do?

Options include:

- *Go home to your family.*
- *Stay.*
- *Talk to your supervisor or colleagues about your dilemma.*
- *Other?*

Scenario 4: Dealing with unrealistic expectations about your role as a helper

You are a volunteer helping people after a natural disaster. You have spent several hours sitting with a distressed couple who have become separated from their son. The mother has been crying constantly, showing you pictures of her son and begging you relentlessly to bring him back. You have followed all the proper procedures, including registering the case, but you begin to feel responsible for finding the missing boy. Feeling emotionally involved, you feel certain there is something more you could do to help, and you begin to have feelings of guilt and anxiety.

What do you do?

Options include:

- *Stay with the family for a while and tell them that you have done everything possible for now.*
- *Remind yourself that you cannot perform miracles, even if you wanted to.*
- *Talk to someone about your thoughts and feelings (supervisor/colleague/friend or family member).*
- *Other?*

Scenario 5: Dealing with fear and stigma

You are a volunteer helping people who are HIV positive. You observe the necessary precautions, but once in a while you still feel nervous about contracting the disease. Some of your friends and others in your community have questioned you about having contact with people who are HIV positive. They wonder if it is safe to volunteer in this setting and are afraid that you will get HIV/Aids. You feel a few of your friends have begun to distance themselves from you because of your volunteer work and that it has begun to affect your social life.

What do you do?

Options include:

- *Reassure those around you of the safety of your actions by explaining the ways the illness is transmitted and the precautions being taken.*
- *Talk with other volunteers to hear if they have had the same experiences.*
- *Express your concerns to your supervisor to see what he/she can advise you to do.*
- *Other?*

Annex 5: Workshop planner

Caring for Volunteers – Workshop Planner		
DAY 1		
Time	Section	Activity
09:00-10:00	Welcome, introduction to the training programme and ground rules	Icebreaker (25-30 minutes) 1. Ground rules (15 minutes)
10:00-10:30	1. Understanding psychosocial support	2. What is psychosocial support? (15 minutes)
10:30-10:45	COFFEE/TEA BREAK	
10:45-12:00	2. Risks, resilience and protective factors	3. Risks to volunteer well-being (20 minutes) 4. Signs of stress (10 minutes) 5. Protective factors (30 minutes)
12:00-13:00	3. Self-care	6. Resources for stress management (20 minutes) 7. Preparing mentally for practising self-care (25 minutes)
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	
14:00-15:00	4. Peer support	8. Setting up peer support systems (30 minutes) 9. Buddy talk (10 minutes)
15:00-15:15	COFFEE/TEA BREAK	
15:15-16:45	5. Psychological first aid	10. Supportive communication (20 minutes) 11. PFA role play (30 minutes) 12. Find your buddy (10 minutes)
16:45-17:00	Wrap up	
DAY 2		
09:00-09:15	Check-in	Check-in (15 minutes)
09:15-10:00	6. Setting up psychosocial support systems for volunteers 6.1 Support strategies	13. Support activities at each phase of a response (before, during and after) (40 minutes)
10:00-10:15	COFFEE/TEA BREAK	
10:15-11:00	6.2 Analysing and understanding current support strategies	14. Analysing and understanding current support systems (40 minutes)
11:00-12:00	6.3 Developing support strategies	15. Developing support systems (55 minutes)
12:00-13:00	7. Monitoring and evaluation	16. Monitoring and evaluating (40 minutes)
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	
14:00-15:15	8. Communicating the message	17. Informing volunteers (50 minutes)
15:15-15:30	COFFEE/TEA BREAK	
15:30-16:15	9. Developing an action plan	18. Developing an action plan (40 minutes)
16:15-16:45	10. Evaluation	19. Find your buddy (10 minutes) 20. Evaluation questionnaire (15 minutes)
16:45-17:00	Wrap up and goodbye	Saying goodbye (15 minutes)

Caring for Volunteers

Training Manual

Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual sets the context for psychosocial support for volunteers, including the key concepts and definitions needed by trainers in the field. It articulates the possible risks to volunteers' well-being in their role, and presents strategies for reducing those risks. It includes sessions on self-care, peer support and PFA and has guidance on how to set up a support system for volunteers and on monitoring and evaluation. The training also includes a valuable session on making an action plan to follow up the work done in the training. An appendix featuring a training of trainers accompanies this manual. All the training resources including the manual, PowerPoint slides, handouts and appendix for the ToT are available online at www.pscentre.org.

Psychosocial Centre



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