



MHPSS  
INTERNATIONAL  
MOVEMENT  
HUB

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

RED CROSS RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT MHPSS HUB



**Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub**

Hejrevej 30 st.  
2400 Copenhagen NV  
Denmark

T +45 35 25 92 00  
E [mhpsshub@rodekors.dk](mailto:mhpsshub@rodekors.dk)  
W [mhpsshub.org](http://mhpsshub.org)



**MHPSS**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**MOVEMENT**  
**HUB**





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# A year of transformation: 30+ years of MHPSS experience – one Movement Hub

On 1 January 2025, the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support officially transformed into the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub. Hosted in Copenhagen by the Danish Red Cross (DRC), it is the first entity uniting the entire Movement in one formal partnership.

The Movement MHPSS Hub represents the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and National Societies. This is a significant step forward in terms of cooperation and coordination, and a critical opportunity to utilize our combined expertise and experience - all under the banner of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).

There is a lot to celebrate, a lot to look forward to, and a lot to achieve together. However, it is important to acknowledge the three decades of groundwork and efforts that culminated in the establishment of the MHPSS Hub. It has been an intense and historical year – and it took years to get where we are. And where is that? A few illustrative highlights from 2024:

In June, we hosted the IFRC PS Centre's 30-year anniversary in Copenhagen. The event brought together people from all over the world – researchers, technical experts, colleagues from the Movement and beyond. Presentations, debates and speeches offered insights, opinions and anecdotes reflecting decades of MHPSS engagement and knowledge generation.

At the 34th International Conference in Geneva in October, we featured a world map at our booth and asked visiting colleagues to mark up their MHPSS work. Across the globe from Greenland to South Africa and from Colombia to Indonesia every dot on the map represented a unique MHPSS programme, project or initiative by Movement staff and volunteers.

That would have been inconceivable when the IFRC PS Centre was established, as MHPSS was represented by just a small group of dedicated experts, and not the vibrant global community it became. It was made possible through research, tools, trainings and guidelines developed over the years. And the people who put them to use in Movement operations with the strategic backing of the Movement – illustrated by the 2019 policy that ultimately gave birth to the MHPSS Hub.

Personally, I am reminiscing over more than two decades at the IFRC Psychosocial Centre. What stands out most vividly is the dedication of the many colleagues with whom I have shared so many moments of laughter and tears, hopes and frustration, achievements and challenges – the people who build an international MHPSS community with a global reach to help people in need.

In 2025 and beyond we are facing a complex and harsh reality on multiple fronts. The funding situation is unpredictable and resources scarce while the need for MHPSS is increasing. At the same time crises are becoming ever more complex and we have to mitigate mis- and disinformation.

We can be proud of the history we represent, and it encourages us to turn it into the future it deserves in a world where mental health is more challenged than ever before. I am not expecting it to be easy, but I cannot wait to get started. Mental health matters! In essence, it is as simple as that.

*Nana Wiedemann*

Nana Wiedemann

Director,  
The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub



# The functions of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub



Support National Societies in developing their capacity to provide community-based mental health and psychosocial support to vulnerable groups and volunteers through assessment and training.



Advise and guide National Societies to sources of information on community-based mental health and psychosocial support.



Develop, translate, and share models, tools and case studies that reflect best practice in community-based mental health and psychosocial support within and outside of the Movement.



Cooperate with other humanitarian organisations providing mental health and psychosocial support to exchange materials and experience, and to avoid duplication.



Identify, review, translate and compile relevant research and make it accessible to National Societies.



Build systems to enable implementation to international mental health and psychosocial support programmes within National Societies.

## The MHPSS Hub online



www



Facebook



Bluesky



LinkedIn



You Tube

# INTERVIEW: Becoming a Movement Hub – a broad mandate requires a broad representation

When the former IFRC PS Centre officially transformed into the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub on 1 January 2025, it was the culmination of years of negotiations with the IFRC, the ICRC, and the Danish Red Cross as host. Part of the task was to ensure buy-in and representation from stakeholders across the Movement.

As Transformation Manager, Shanna Jensen played a key role in the last year of the transformation process, including the work to ensure the broadest possible mandate and representation.

**The MHPSS Hub is the first of its kind in the sense that it represents the entire Movement. What are the main challenges in ensuring that all voices are heard in the process?**

*The MHPSS Hub grew out of more than three decades of cooperation and coordination, anchored in the PS Centre as well as the 2019 Movement policy and resolution on MHPSS, and the roadmap project for its implementation with involvement from National Societies from across the Movement as well as the ICRC and the IFRC.*

*As part of our efforts to ensure an inclusive process, we contracted an external MHPSS specialist to conduct a technical review in advance of the establishment of the Terms of Reference for the MHPSS Hub. The aim was to pinpoint gaps and potentials, aligning objectives with the identified needs and resources within the Movement. The technical review consists of a comprehensive desk review of key documents relating to MHPSS within the Movement, followed by a series of consultations with relevant IFRC, ICRC, National Societies, and PS Centre staff and management. It generated an incredible body of input from more than 140 colleagues across the globe, which*

*contributed significantly to the final ToR.*

**How did the MHPSS Hub approach the transformation of its communication channels?**

*We conducted a survey when we replaced and revised our communication platforms and outlets during the transformation. Hundreds of colleagues following our work through social media, newsletter, podcasts, publications from all five regions responded and their input informed the strategic decisions we made in the current communication portfolio.*

**How is the broad representation ensured in the ongoing work of the MHPSS Hub as we move forward?**

*The leading organ of the MHPSS Hub is the Steering Committee, which represents all five regions of the Movement along with the founding partners: the ICRC, the IFRC and the Danish Red Cross. The National Societies elected to represent their regions as Steering Committee members for the next four-year period are Kenya Red Cross, Syrian Arab Red Crescent, Australian Red Cross, Mexican Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross. Further, we are in the process of forming an Advisory Group adding width and depth to the coordination of global MHPSS efforts.*

**What are the next steps in the implementation of the MHPSS Hub and who are involved?**

*While 2024 was about transformation, 2025 will be a year of consolidation, where we will develop the Strategy for the RCRC Movement MHPSS Hub. The Steering Committee members will be vital in this while we continue working with and relying on all of our partners across the Movement.*



# The MHPSS Hub in numbers

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub had **150,898** online visits and **63,304** resource downloads from the MHPSS Hub website. In 2024, mhpss.org had visits from every country in the world – except one.

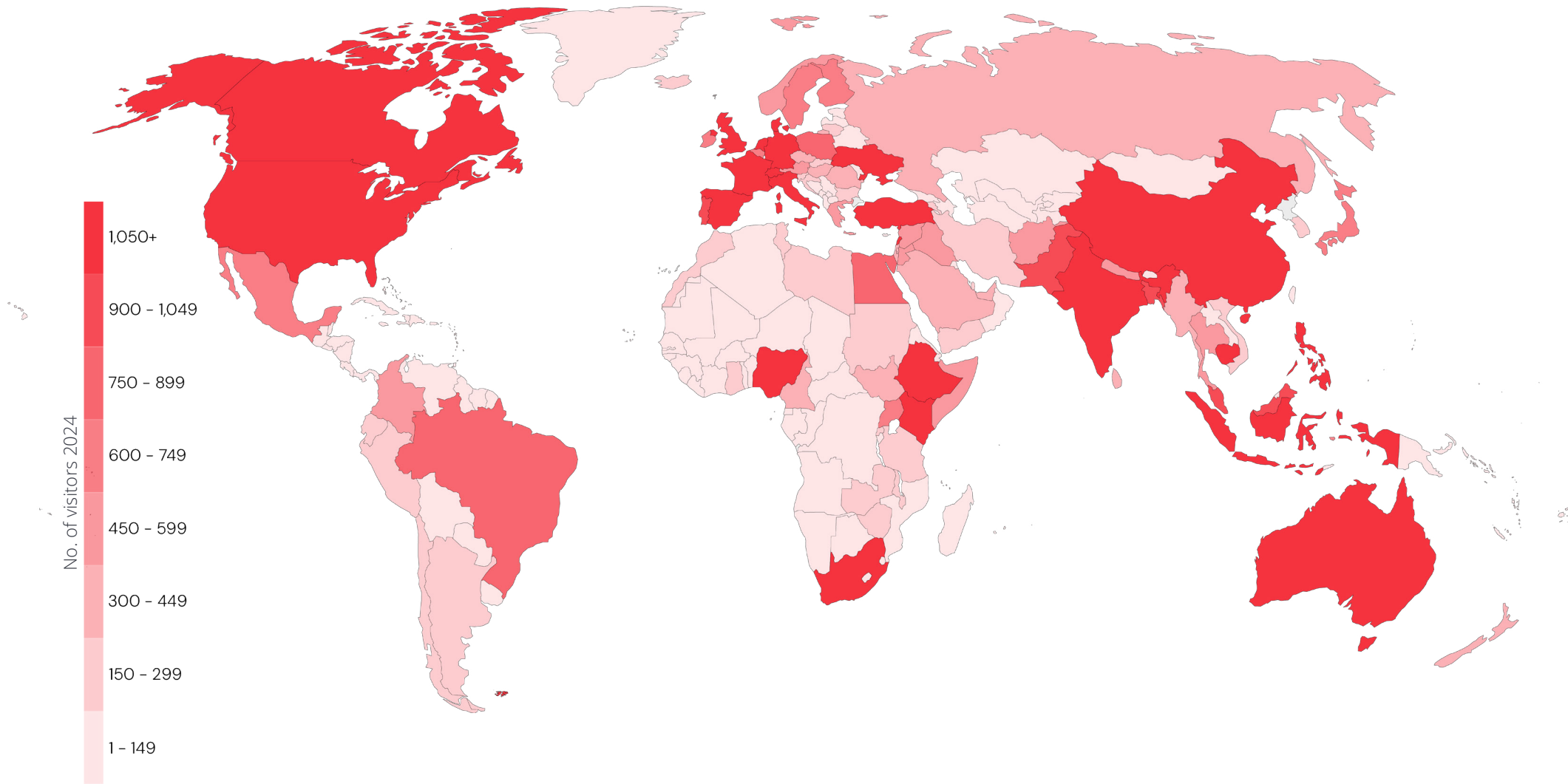




Photo: MHPSS Hub



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*There is an increasing understanding of the importance of PFA both in the Red Cross and in other parts of society, like the police or the professional fire brigade. But in the volunteer fire brigade, it is still missing, and my aim is to become a PFA trainer and help change that.*

**Vladimir Mrekaj**  
firefighter, volunteer  
Slovak Red Cross



## PFA on the frontline

"Once I was called to an accident. A car had driven off a bridge after the driver had had a heart attack while at the wheel. We managed to pull the car out of the water and get the driver out, but as we were taking turns giving him CPR, I heard this high-pitched sound. It was the daughter of the driver observing us from the bridge, crying. I removed her from the scene, she was obviously in shock, and found a safe place where I could calm her down. I didn't know it then, but today I know that I was providing psychological first aid."

Vladimir Mrekaj has been a professional firefighter for 27 years and a volunteer in Slovakian Red Cross for almost as long. "As a firefighter, my job was to extinguish fires, and that is what I did. But I also wanted to help the affected people after the fire was out, the families who had lost their homes or the people who had been through a traumatic incident, and that is why I joined the Red Cross. I would wear my Slovak Red Cross T-shirt underneath my fireman's uniform to be able to take the uniform off and continue supporting the affected people once the fire was out."

Today, Vladimir is still volunteering for the Red Cross as well as for the fire brigade, and in 2024 he attended a psychological first aid (PFA) training provided by the Slovak Red Cross, where he was introduced to a structured approach to PFA, something he had provided more intuitively until then.

"Before the training, I just felt that I had to be there for the people in need, observing and showing compassion. Now I have learned the principles of look, listen and link, and I know how to identify emotional stress even if it is not that visible in the people affected."

Also attending the course was Robert Martauz, a teacher and volunteer rescue diver for 25 years.

"One winter, we were called out to a lake. An eight-year-old boy had gone through the ice. We searched for a full day without finding the boy, and in the evening, we stayed with the family for some hours. The next day, when we found the boy, I asked the police if I and the family doctor should bring the family the tragic news. By then they knew me, and

I felt it would be easier for them to hear it from me."

Just like Vladimir, Robert had an intuitive approach to PFA before the training in 2024. "I knew that whatever I was doing was useful, but now I have a different understanding of PFA, and I use it a lot, for example as a teacher, when I talk to students about difficult topics like their parent's divorce or death in the family.

Decades of working as frontline responders have taught Vladimir and Robert the importance of selfcare. Robert: "I use nature a lot – I run, I dive, I take long walks in the countryside. And I talk things through with good friends. Sometimes just for 30 minutes, but sometimes for hours.

"Vladimir: "There is an increasing understanding of the importance of PFA both in the Red Cross and in other parts of society, like the police or the professional fire brigade. But in the volunteer fire brigade, it is still missing, and my aim is to become a PFA trainer and help change that.

Robert: "PFA is so useful, I think there should be at least one family member in every family who is trained in PFA.









*We conduct trainings to make sure coaches have the understanding of how stressful experiences impact young players, the knowledge and expertise to create safe and supportive sport environments, and the tools and techniques to engage with young athletes in trauma-informed and healing ways.*

**Guleed Dualeh**  
MHPSS Specialist  
MHPSS Hub

## Sport Coach+: stepping up the game for those who need it the most

In partnership with the Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF), the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub launched the Sport Coach+ project in 2024.

“Almost 120 million people across the globe are forcibly displaced and close to 40 percent are youth under the age of 18. Many are impacted emotionally and mentally by the experience, and host countries and communities need the expertise and tools to support and include them. We and our partners at ORF saw the potential of joining forces to help in that regard,” says MHPSS Hub Project Manager, Anna Tarsetti.

The aim of Sport Coach+ is to support sport coaches working with young people aged 10-24, with a focus on those affected by displacement and other adversities.

“We conduct trainings to make sure coaches have the understanding of how stressful experiences impact young players, the knowledge and expertise to create safe and supportive sport environments, and the tools and techniques to engage with young athletes in trauma-informed and healing ways,” says MHPSS Specialist, Guleed Dualeh.

Safe and supportive sports can help young people overcome the negative effects of displacement and other adversities, and support their abilities to learn, grow, form healthy relationships, and gain skills to effectively navigate life challenges in the future.

Close to 500 sport coaches were trained during the course of 2024 in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Ukraine, Czech Republic and Germany in cooperation with Red Cross National Societies and National Olympic Committees.

# **sport** coach+ in numbers 2024



## Trainings

**6**

Trainings of Trainers organized (Sofia, Prague, Bucharest, Kyiv, Warsaw, Cologne).

**95**

Trainers trained.

**457**

Sport coaches trained.

Handbook and training package finalized and translated to

**6**

languages.



## Training of coaches

**155** in Bulgaria

**228** in Romania

**26** in Ukraine

**14** in Poland

**10** in Czech Republic

**24** in Germany



## Communication and collaboration

Website published and translated to

**10**

languages.

**46**

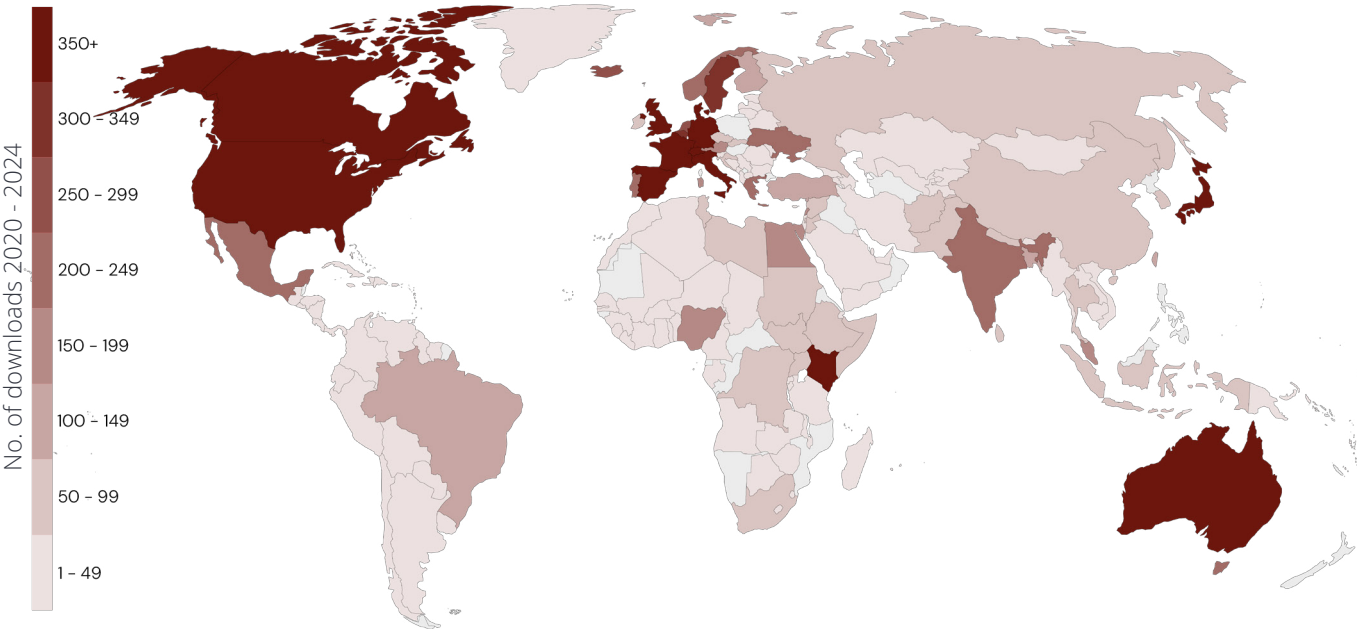
posts about Sport Coach + on the MHPSS Hub platforms with an accumulated reach of

**43,000**

# Voices that matter: Heartbeat of Humanity

Heartbeat of Humanity is a podcast for staff and volunteers in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement working with MHPSS services. It provides a platform to explain and discuss different aspects of MHPSS - like ambiguous loss, mental health and crisis management, youth mental health, mental health stigmas etc.

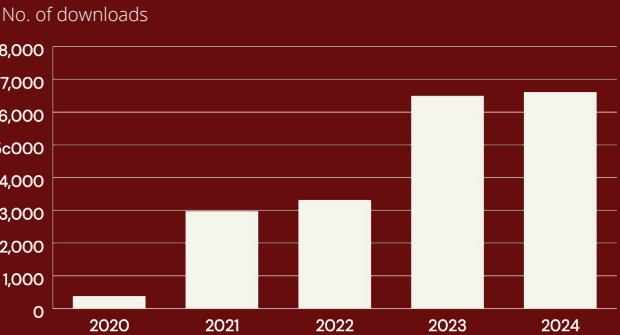
Listen to the Heartbeat of Humanity podcast on the MHPSS Hub website or subscribe to it on Apple Podcast, Spotify, Google Podcast, or wherever you find your podcasts.



## The MHPSS Hub in numbers

In 2024, the PS Centre produced **15** episodes of Heartbeat of Humanity and the podcasts were downloaded **6,603** times.

From 2020 to 2024, the podcast Heartbeat of Humanity was downloaded **21,778** times in more than **150** countries.





# The MHPSS Hub in numbers

## Trainings

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub developed the capacity of **1,667** people.

Capacity-development initiatives included:

MHPSS in Emergencies (**407**)

Psychological First Aid (**300**)

Caring for Staff and Volunteers (**172**)

Supportive Supervision (**145**)

Sport Coach+ (**95**)

IASC guidelines/ MHPSS coordination (**81**)

MHPSS and climate change (**66**)

MHPSS and Restoring Family Links (**64**)

Community-based MHPSS (**47**)

Integrated Model of Supervision (**44**)

Quality Rights (**43**)

M&E for MHPSS (**17**)

Other (**118**)



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*The side-event and IC34 in general confirmed that MHPSS no longer is a fringe issue for a few experts – it is a priority across the Movement. Collectively we have gained experience and expertise that enables us to make a real difference for the mental well-being of staff and volunteers as well as the people we assist. However, it is also important to point out that the needs are significant and that we need to continue to resource and built on our joint efforts.*

**Eliza Yee Lai Cheung**

MHPSS Specialist

MHPSS Hub and Asia Pacific MHPSS

Training and Learning Collaborative

*Erni Kristiansen, Project Manager in the Greenlandic Red Cross, adding MHPSS activities to the world map at the MHPSS booth in the Humanitarian Village during the 34th Red Cross Red Crescent International Conference in Geneva.*

*Photo: The MHPSS Hub*

## IC34: MHPSS finding new frontiers on the organizational world-map

In December 2019, the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement adopted a set of commitments addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. From 2020 onwards the MHPSS Roadmap Project became the engine that helped turn those common commitments into a coordinated implementation effort.

In October 2024 the 34th Red Cross Red Crescent International Conference in Geneva confirmed that mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is part of the pulse of the Movement and is gradually becoming a strategic and operational priority.

Following support and advocacy by the ICRC, the IFRC, RCRC National Societies and a number of States, an MHPSS booth was established at the Humanitarian Village at the conference venue. During the event, staff members from the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub, as well as experts from IFRC, ICRC and Greenlandic, Netherlands, Danish, Hong Kong Branch, Swedish, British and Swiss Red Cross Societies were exchanging with colleagues on MHPSS related developments.

“We asked colleagues to provide examples of their MHPSS related work and mark them up on a world map and it was extremely inspiring to see how the descriptions of projects and initiatives spread to every corner of the globe during the event. This was a very tangible illustration of how far we have come over the past years and how there remains a wish to connect across regions,” says Nathalie Helena Rigall, MHPSS Hub Project Manager.

The booth also hosted more formal exchanges. Nathalie Olijslager, the Special Envoy on MHPSS at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, hosted an exchange on Psychological First Aid (PFA). A celebratory reception marking the launch of the MHPSS

Hub was attended by Steering Committee members including the Secretaries General from the IFRC and the Danish Red Cross as well as ICRC’s Director-General.

Further, MHPSS was broadly featured during the 34th International Conference. IFRC Europe social media platforms live-streamed a panel discussion featuring MHPSS Hub experts and the Netherlands government representative from the pop-up studio at the conference venue.

The side-event ‘From commitment to impact: MHPSS in action’ brought together a panel consisting of the Vice president of the Colombian Red Cross, the Youth Director of the Lebanese Red Cross, the MHPSS Team Lead of the Danish Red Cross and the Director for Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid and the Special Envoy on MHPSS at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Numerous state representatives, the ICRC, the IFRC, RCRC National Societies and external organizations were part of the audience.

The side-event was followed by a reception hosted by the Swedish Red Cross to bring various MHPSS actors together and celebrate the milestones in MHPSS and honour the alliances and partnerships that have been instrumental in driving progress since the adaptation of the MHPSS Resolution and Policy in 2019. Swedish Red Cross wanted particularly to acknowledge the achievements of the MHPSS Roadmap and the establishment of the MHPSS Hub this included speeches by IFRC, ICRC and National Societies, including the British Red Cross and the Secretary General from Hong Kong Red Cross Branch, Red Cross Society of China, hosting the Asia Pacific MHPSS Training and Learning Collaborative.

# Americas: dedication and drive in the face of immense challenges and despite limited resources

MHPSS Specialist, Cátia Matos is MHPSS Hub focal point for the Americas and has a finger on the pulse when it comes to the key MHPSS challenges and potential in the region.

## **What were the main crises facing the Americas region in 2024?**

*It is of course hard to talk about 'a' region when it defines a vast area with multiple languages, cultures and social realities covering Alaska in the North, Chile in the South and the Caribbean in between. Sometimes a disaster like a flood or a wildfire in South America covers an area the size of a large European country. However, when you look specifically at the challenges it is clear that the Americas has faced pretty much any type of emergency or disaster imaginable in 2024.*

*The multiple challenges are often interlinked and feeding one another like climate change, natural disasters, poverty, armed conflict, forced displacement, migration – like a chain of causalities. To give just a few examples. A summer of wildfires and droughts followed by a winter of floods and landslides with the occasional hurricane and earthquake. A migratory route considered one of the most dangerous in*

*the world crossing South and Central America. Violence and armed conflict continuing in parts of the region. Now add poverty and inequality and mix it all together then it becomes evident that there are severe mental health implications for populations exposed and of course our colleagues in the region supporting them.*

## **Can you give us examples of how National Societies in the region mitigate these considerable challenges?**

*Again, it depends. There are huge differences in the level of resources and severity of challenges across the region. However, if I should point to some common features of the National Societies in the most volatile and exposed countries and with the least available resources then several things come to mind.*

*Generally, volunteers are the backbone of the operations and often they are young people with full time jobs on the side. Which brings me to the next point – it is the drive and dedication that allows them to overcome seemingly impossible odds and deliver time and time again. At the same time, they have unique experience finding ways to deliver MHPSS in volatile contexts and despite a huge gap between*

*resources and funding on one side and the large and complex needs on the other.*

*Maybe that is also why the National Societies in the region are trusted and respected by the populations they serve. I know I personally feel a combination gratitude and respect for their abilities and results.*

## **How can the MHPSS Hub support the work of National Societies in the Americas region?**

*I have to start by saying I wish we could do much more but given capacity constraints and mandate we do what we can. The MHPSS Hub is global and non-operational so our support is mostly remote and based on reaching out to, or getting requests from, National Societies facing emergencies or otherwise in need – it is always about multiplying efforts and takes the form of designing trainings, developing tools, reviewing curricula's and taking a lead role in the regional community of practise. In the Americas the MHPSS Hub alongside Canadian Red Cross and IFRC organizes monthly online meetings where cross regional networking is strengthened and insights, tools and information can be shared across countries - having a lasting structure also*



*The Mexican Red Cross supports migrants - including women and children - with health care and psychosocial assistance at Humanitarian Service Points on the southern border.*

*Photo: Susana Arroyo Barrantes*



*helps ensure consistency and sustainability of coordination with a constant turnover of staff.*

**Looking ahead how do you see this support develop?**

*I have no doubt challenges will remain severe and funding limited but I know that our colleagues in the region will continue to take the lead on MHPSS. There are two new developments that makes me somewhat optimistic in terms of our ability to support them. One is the fact that Mexican Red Cross have been appointed to represent the Americas in the Steering Committee of the MHPSS Hub and the other that we are planning our first regional training in the region in 2025.*

*The equation is simple. Our colleagues in the Americas are undertaking a huge responsibility in delivering MHPSS in the face of all the challenges they face and we as the MHPSS Hub will continue to support as well as we can despite our limited resources – because mental health matters – in every region of the Movement.*

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*The multiple challenges are often interlinked and feeding one another like climate change, natural disasters, poverty, armed conflict, forced displacement, migration – like a chain of causalities.*

**Cátia Matos**  
MHPSS Specialist  
MHPSS Hub



Opening remarks from MHPSS Hub  
Director Nana Wiedeman at the 30-years  
anniversary celebration in Moltkes  
Mansion, Copenhagen, Denmark

Photo: MHPSS Hub

## 30-years anniversary: MHPSS goes full circle

From June 25 to 27 the global MHPSS community gathered in Copenhagen to mark three decades of combined efforts. A period spanning the time between the establishment of the IFRC Psychosocial Centre and its transformation into the Red Cross Red Crescent MHPSS Movement Hub.

Experts and stakeholders including colleagues within and beyond the Movement - partners, donors, academia, and decision makers joined an intense three-day event. Within the event frame: 'MHPSS Momentum: Celebrating 30 Years of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support' the participants analyzed and debated the fundamental questions 'What have we learned? And 'Where are we going?'

"With more than a hundred people participating from all corners of the world and a tight and packed agenda, logistics and timing is of course a challenge. However, from the first anecdotes shared at the opening reception to the last of the closing remarks the event evolved organically through the engagement and drive of participants and at the same time efficiently and without delays – the best of both worlds," says MHPSS Hub project coordinator, Frida Maria W. Henriksen.

The event content and features spanned across video greetings by the IFRC Secretary General, and RC National Societies from all the five regions to key-note speeches by MHPSS Hub host, DRC's Secretary General, to presentations, roundtables and panel debates featuring ICRC and key-UN Agencies IOM, WHO and UNHCR as well as independent experts and government representatives.

"We went from inter-agency responses and donor engagement to research, monitoring and evaluation and from SOGIESC/LGBTQIA+ and indigenous communities to technological emergencies and humanitarian diplomacy – it was truly the MHPSS community going full circle professionally and socially as well to the tune of the Youth Mental Health Choir, the sharing of old stories and new insights and lots of laughter as well as concerns," says MHPSS Hub Director, Nana Wiedemann.

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*With more than a hundred people participating from all corners of the world and a tight and packed agenda, logistics and timing is of course a challenge. However, from the first anecdotes shared at the opening reception to the last of the closing remarks the event evolved organically through the engagement and drive of participants and at the same time efficiently and without delays – the best of both worlds.*

**Frida Maria W. Henriksen**  
Project coordinator  
MHPSS Hub

# The MHPSS Hub in numbers



## Communication

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub had

**150,898**

online visits on the MHPSS Hub website and

**24,125**

people followed the MHPSS Hub on social media,

**2,528**

subscribed to the MHPSS Hub newsletter and people watched videos produced by the MHPSS Hub more than

**180,000**

times online. The podcast Heartbeat of Humanity was downloaded

**6,603**

times in 2024.



## Humanitarian diplomacy & collaboration

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub collaborated with

**12**

academic institutions, participated in

**94**

high level meetings, conferences, seminars, and Movements events. Additionally, the MHPSS Hub participated in

**54**

stakeholder meetings and

**40**

webinars reaching a total of

**1,662**

participants.



## Resources

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub published

**114**

publications, guidelines, reports, tools, policy briefs and scientific papers, produced

**54**

videos,

**15**

podcast and wrote

**55**

articles for mhpsshub.org.

Resources were downloaded

**63,304**

times from the MHPSS Hub website.



## Translations

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub made

**85**

publications available in the following languages, other than English:

Spanish (**22**)

Arabic (**16**)

French (**12**)

Polish (**11**)

Chinese (**7**)

Portuguese (**6**)

Ukrainian (**4**)

Turkish (**4**)

Croatian (**2**)

Russian (**1**)









Group photo from the 30-years anniversary celebration in Moltkes Mansion, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Photo: MHPSS Hub



# The MHPSS Hub in numbers

## Requests

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub responded to

**2,109**

requests for assistance from

**119**

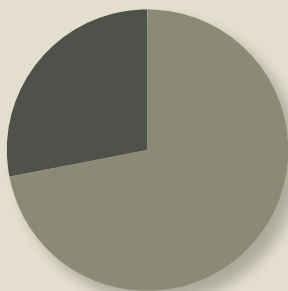
countries.

**1,518** requests came from organizations within the RC RC Movement and

**591** requests came from organizations external to the Movement.

**28%**

Requests from organizations external to the RC RC Movement



**72%**

Requests from organizations within the RC RC Movement

## Reacting to mental health concerns amid mpox outbreak in Africa

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was the epicentre of a serious outbreak of mpox in 2024 that spread to countries in Central, East and West Africa. In August, the WHO Director-General determined that the upsurge of cases constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) - the highest level of alarm under the International Health Regulations (IHR).

"We were following the outbreak, and we knew from experience that RCRC staff and volunteers in the frontline of the response would potentially face challenges of irrational fears, stigmatization and mistrust. I reached out to our emergency focal point Shona Whitton to discuss how we could provide fast and efficient remote support," says MHPSS Specialist and focal point for the Africa region, Guleed Dualeh.

One of the answers became a guidance note on mental health and psychosocial support implications of mpox outbreaks that was published in early September by the MHPSS Hub. The publication covered common reactions and behaviours in epidemics, caring for staff and volunteers in health emergencies, integration of MHPSS considerations into health responses and a compilation of links to existing relevant materials.

"We have very qualified and dedicated Movement colleagues on the African continent, and they are often the backbone of crises responses regardless of whether they are sparked by armed conflict, mass displacement, climate change and disasters or combinations of all of them. However, when it comes to health emergencies there are particular challenges at play adding an extra layer of pressure and short structured guidance is one of the tools we can offer," says Guleed Dualeh.













*In contexts in which resources are scarce and access is limited, technology-empowered and internet-based services can provide a scalable, evidence-based and resource-efficient extension of traditional approaches to care. Digital MHPSS services have the potential to not only increase reach, but also improve health equity by opening up a new way of connecting with individuals and groups not seeking help due to stigma or other obstacles.*

**Monia Aebersold**  
Project Manager  
Swiss Red Cross

## Digital MHPSS: expanding the toolbox in response to capacity gaps

A Focus Area on Digital MHPSS has been launched on the MHPSS Hub website. It was established to raise awareness for evidence-based digital MHPSS, to create opportunities for learning and to provide practice-oriented, accessible guidance for the effective and efficient implementation of digital MHPSS initiatives at a local and global level within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

“There is an enormous gap in human resources for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) at a global level. The ramifications of this gap are magnified in situations of armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies, where needs intensify, and health systems are overwhelmed. Accordingly, there is a need for innovative and promising cost-effective MHPSS services,” says Monia Aebersold, Project Manager, Swiss Red Cross (SRC) adding: “In contexts in which resources are scarce and access is limited, technology-empowered and internet-based services can provide a scalable, evidence-based and resource-efficient extension of traditional approaches to care. Digital MHPSS services have the potential to not only increase reach, but also improve health equity by opening up a new way of connecting with individuals and groups not seeking help due to stigma or other obstacles”.

The focus area is structured in five sub-themes, including: Learn about digital MHPSS; Dive deeper; Get inspired; innovate and implement; Share and connect. It was developed based on the work of the Digital MHPSS Working Group that represented 21 National Societies from four regions, as well as the MHPSS Hub, the IFRC and the ICRC and was chaired by the SRC.

The focus area presents resources that originate from the meetings and discussions in that forum that was established in support of the implementation of the MHPSS Roadmap and the Digital MHPSS Pledge of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. The body of work presented in the focus area was elaborated and finalized by the SRC in collaboration with Kristofer Vernmark, an external consultant and digital mental health expert from Linköping University.



# Ukraine response: multiplying efforts – delivering together

In May 2022, only months after the escalation of the Russia-Ukraine international armed conflict, the IFRC in partnership with the EU4Health programme initiated one of the largest responses to mental health challenges in emergencies ever implemented by the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

The project connects people with mental health professionals and volunteers from the Red Cross, who offer mental health and psychosocial support services to hundreds of thousands of people from Ukraine.

Support is offered in Ukrainian and other languages through various platforms, including helplines, mobile outreach and in-person group activities. Materials on mental health and psychosocial support in several languages are also distributed.

With the support of the EU4Health programme, the IFRC, the MHPSS Hub and 28 Red Cross National Red Cross Societies in Europe developed a wide-ranging approach to breaking stigmas about mental health and to directly address the psychosocial needs of Ukrainians throughout Europe.



**Funded by  
the European Union**



**30,300**

**HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS  
AND VOLUNTEERS**

trained in mental health  
and psychosocial  
support



**2,000**

**UKRAINIAN/RUSSIAN  
SPEAKING HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS**

mobilized and trained  
in mental health and  
psychosocial support



**85**

**HELPLINES AND  
SERVICE  
PLATFORMS**

expanded with mental  
health and psychosocial  
support services



**548,091**

**PEOPLE INCLUDING  
UKRAINIAN DISPLACED  
PERSONS**

were supported through  
helplines and service  
platforms



**26,553**

**STAFF AND  
VOLUNTEERS**

receiving mental health  
and psychosocial  
support



**1,330**

**COORDINATION AND  
COLLABORATION  
MEETINGS**

held with relevant  
partners



”

*I never dreamed that one day in this little Red Cross branch at the far end of Slovakia we would have a psychosocial centre. But it wasn't just a dream. It is real and I carry that notion wherever I go.*

**Silvia Knapikova**  
Director,  
Slovak Red Cross Branch Humenne



”

*It is a very rewarding experience to work with Icelandic Red Cross and the EU4Health project, because I can see that we make a difference. I can see that we really can help those people coming all the way from Ukraine. And I'm just feeling very proud and blessed to be part of it.*

**Nataliia Pelypets**  
Project Officer  
The Icelandic Red Cross



”

*From the first day buses with Ukrainians refugees arrived, we had Ukrainian speaking Red Cross volunteers at the buses assisting the refugees to the local authorities.*

**Peter Deyle**  
CEO of the German Red Cross local  
branch Wesermarsch



”

*I think it is important to practise the skills given to us in PFA trainings: active listening and tools to be more attentive and provide more humane care. It allows us to identify different types of complex reactions in people who we can see is in emotional agony and intervene better.*

**Rachel Carvalho**  
Social worker, PFA trainer in  
Portuguese Red Cross Coimbra  
Branch





”

When you look at the statistics and broad selection of interventions in the annual report of the Collaborative – the width and depth of their efforts – it is impossible not to be impressed. They constitute a regional MHPSS powerhouse and year after year they expand their reach and impact.

**Nana Wiedemann**  
*Director*  
*MHPSS Hub*



*In 2024, Mongolia experienced one of the  
harshest winters in nearly five decades.  
More than 80 per cent of the territory  
grappled with the impact of Dzud.*

*Photo: Mongolian Red Cross Society*

## Asia Pacific: warm support during extreme cold weather

The Asia Pacific MHPSS Collaborative (the Collaborative) is at the center of mental health and psychosocial support in the region and beyond. The Collaborative is hosted by the Hong Kong Red Cross Branch, supported by IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office, and cooperating with the RCRC Movement MHPSS Hub.

“When you look at the statistics and broad selection of interventions in the annual report of the Collaborative – the width and depth of their efforts – it is impossible not to be impressed. They constitute a regional MHPSS powerhouse and year after year they expand their reach and impact,” says MHPSS Hub Director, Nana Wiedemann.

While assistance in emergencies is just one area of work for the Collaborative, they supported 14 Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in countries facing conflict and disasters including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Vietnam, and Mongolia.

By January 2024, the Dzud or extreme cold weather in Mongolia had impacted 90 percent of the country. Although the country had experienced harsher winters over the last years, the severity of the impact on communities was unprecedented. Herder families lost livestock and the situation in turn affected their mental health and psychosocial well-being. Assessments have revealed multiple MHPSS needs and concerns, including higher stress levels, distress reactions like sleeplessness and seasonal depression, increased substance use, and rising suicide cases in the country. These issues stem from physical loss, loss of livelihoods, family separation, health problems associated with the cold weather, and climate migration.

To mitigate these challenges the Mongolian Red Cross (MRCS) identified MHPSS as one of the primary response activities under the Emergency Appeal for Dzud Response. MRCS conducted MHPSS in-person trainings for 45 volunteers from 21 provinces. In cooperation with the

National Center for Mental Health, MRCS also developed key messages on mental health including contact numbers for support reaching more than 130,000 people through social media.

Moreover, the Collaborative also hosted the MHPSS in Emergencies Training and the Asia Pacific MHPSS Regional Conference in Mongolia, which was attended by 27 participants from 12 National Societies in the region. This provided more opportunities for MRCS staff and volunteers, as well as government and other MHPSS stakeholders, to build their capacity in setting up and operationalizing MHPSS responses in the country. In addition, the Regional Conference served as a platform to bring together the World Health Organization, UNICEF, Save the Children, and the government's National Center for Mental Health to discuss the establishment of an MHPSS Technical Working Group and strengthen collaboration among the participants.





”

*Imagine the conviction and courage it takes to support the mental health of displaced children in Gaza amid daily bombings, shortages of all basic supplies and surrounded by ruins and death – we have to give them all possible support.*

Ahlem Cheffi  
MHPSS specialist  
MHPSS Hub



## Colleagues in the MENA region: challenged, committed, competent

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has seen armed conflicts, mass displacement and civilian casualties throughout 2024. Gaza stands out as the most severe example, but turmoil and conflict also escalated in Lebanon and Syria and the situations in Libya and Iraq remain volatile. Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers in the region work under an immense pressure with serious implications for their mental well-being.

### **WMHD campaign**

"In advance of World Mental Health Day in October, we came together as mental health Red Cross Red Crescent professionals in the MENA region to discuss how to raise awareness about the importance of caring for staff and volunteers working under extremely stressful, dangerous and tragic circumstances. The answer became a campaign under the tagline 'From self-care to duty of care'. The engagement and results were beyond our expectations," says Ahlem Cheffi, RCRC Movement MHPSS Hub specialist for the MENA region.

The 17 National Societies in the region all joined the campaign initiative and contributed to the messaging and the dissemination of content across multiple organizational social media platforms. The Movement MHPSS Hub supported with graphic design and dissemination of content translated from the original Arabic to English. Further, videos and podcasts in Arabic were produced to deliver the message.

"I am proud of my colleagues – it is an absolute inspiration to see them continue to take responsibility and action when it would be so easy to fall into despair. Imagine the conviction and courage it takes to support the mental health of displaced children in Gaza amid daily bombings, shortages of all basic supplies and surrounded by ruins and death – we have to give them all possible support," says Ahlem Cheffi.

### **Training of Trainers - Integrated Model for Supervision**

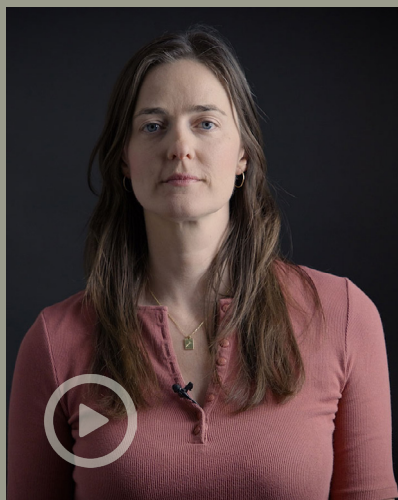
In November, the first USAID funded inter-agency Training

of Trainers (ToT) in the MENA region under the Integrated Model for Supervision (IMS) project took place. The training was hosted by the RCRC Movement MHPSS Hub and involved 21 MHPSS professionals from Syria, Palestine, Libya, Egypt, Somalia, Yemen, and Jordan representing 13 organisations.

"The participants solid level of expertise and technical skills were demonstrated throughout the training and the sharing and collaboration between national Red Cross Red Crescent societies and other NGOs provided a rich, supportive and inspirational context – a great starting point of the implementation phase that is follow up process," says Ahlem Cheffi.

The eight-day ToT that was facilitated in cooperation with Dr. Faiza Alabdullah, head of PSS, protection and community services at Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) was preceded by a five-day online training and will be followed by 6 months of close follow up and supportive supervision to the 21 participants.





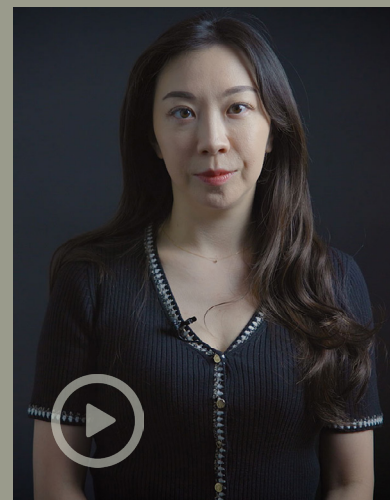
MHPSS AND CLIMATE CHANGE



MHPSS AND CHILDREN  
(ARABIC)



WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGICAL  
FIRST AID? (FRENCH)



SAYING GOODBYE TO LOVED  
ONES WHO DIED



TALKING ABOUT MHPSS  
IN EMERGENCIES



TIPS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE  
MHPSS TRAININGS



CARING FOR STAFF  
AND VOLUNTEERS



SUICIDE PREVENTION



HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY  
AND ADVOCACY IN AN MHPSS  
CONTEXT



MENTAL HEALTH AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS (SPANISH)

Find all the training videos on the MHPSS Hub website [mhpssbug.org](https://mhpssbug.org)

# Short videos, long reach, lasting impact

In 2024, the MHPSS Hub launched an advocacy and educational campaign on social media internally called the “short training videos” campaign: A total of 30 videos each explaining a topic or theme relevant to MHPSS.

“The concept was very simple”, explains Jesper Guhle, Senior Communications Officer in the MHPSS Hub. “My colleagues, from the Technical Unit would explain an MHPSS relevant topic of their choosing. It could be caring for staff and volunteers; it could be Moral Injury or something else. There were only three rules: The video should be no more than four minutes long, it had to be a one-take, and the presenter had to look into the camera the whole time”.

The preparation for the campaign begun in the fourth quarter of 2023. “We had six videos ready when we launched the campaign in January 2024, still we managed to publish a new video for 30 consecutive weeks except a six week break in July-August”.

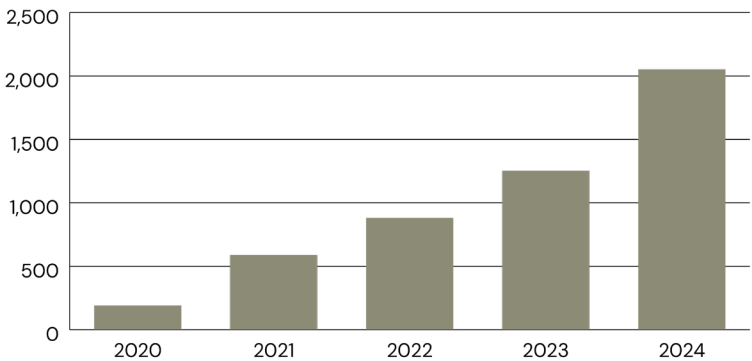
The videos drove the number of video views on the MHPSS Hub social media channels to new heights. “In the first video, my colleague MHPSS specialist Carmen Valle-Trabadelo explains what is MHPSS. Within a week the video had been seen more than 6,000 times, and I knew we were doing something right”, says Jesper.

“I think the short training video campaign was more than a success, I think it was a show of force”, says Jesper. “We produced 18 videos in English, 5 in French, 4 in Arabic and 3 in Spanish. We did what we aimed to do and what is stated in our strategic operational framework: We adapted existing content to new formats to make the resources more accessible to our audience”.

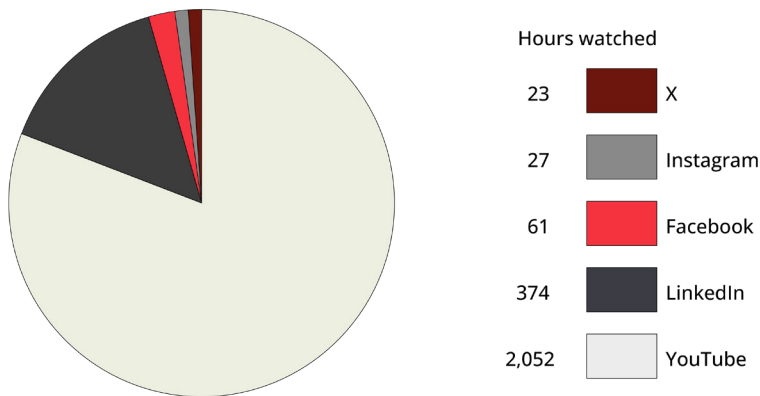
In 2024, the MHPSS Hub produced 54 videos and the time spent by viewers watching video content produced by the MHPSS Hub in 2024 across all platforms exceeded 2,500 hours.

# The MHPSS Hub in numbers

Hours of watched video content on YouTube produced by the MHPSS Hub 2020 to 2024.



Hours spent watching video content produced by the MHPSS Hub in 2024 across all platforms.





## Strengthening inter-agency coordination across sectors

As the co-chairing agency of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) MHPSS Reference Group, the MHPSS Hub plays a key-role in fostering collaboration between NGOs, UN and International Agencies and academics to promote best practices in MHPSS in emergencies. “Coordination is the invisible thread that weaves resilience into the fabric of crisis response. Without it, even the strongest interventions can unravel,” says co-chair Teresa Ombalo.

The Reference Group supports the MHPSS country-level coordination mechanisms, known as Technical Working Groups (TWGs), through capacity strengthening, mentoring, humanitarian diplomacy and technical support calls and missions. In 2024, the MHPSS Hub co-chairing team conducted missions to Jordan and Nigeria, and provided remote support to MHPSS TWGs in over 20 countries.

Further, the MHPSS Hub supports experts deployed through the inter-agency MHPSS Surge Support Mechanism, funded by the Netherlands Ministry of

Foreign Affairs. “MHPSS experts are deployed on short notice in severe crisis settings for three to six months to support and strengthen the TWGs. They work under an extreme pressure in volatile contexts at fast pace and with limited resources – we do whatever we can to support the deployments and country teams,” says Teresa Ombalo. The support includes technical advice, standardized briefings, pre-mission sharing of materials, follow-up calls, and ad hoc problem-solving sessions as well as post mission debriefings.

Throughout 2024, the MHPSS Hub has continued engaging across multiple sectors, clusters and Areas of Responsibilities (AoRs) at global and country levels. “MHPSS is by nature a cross-cutting intervention and ensuring that it is mainstreamed throughout all sectors of the humanitarian response is crucial,” says Communication and Coordination Officer Barbara Levin, as the other half of the MHPSS Hub IASC team.

This work includes the integration of MHPSS in cluster resources, joint working sessions and publications with

other clusters, support to global focal points across all clusters, and collaboration for integration and coordination at the country level. For example, in 2024, the MHPSS Hub co-chair supported the review of the Oslo Action Plan by the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention to reflect further integration of MHPSS within Mine Action, and supported the joint development of guidance for the integration of MHPSS activities by the Shelter and WASH sectors.

In its co-chairing role, the MHPSS Hub also participates in and organizes high-level engagements for increased global visibility and prioritization of MHPSS. For example, the MHPSS Hub co-chair conducted a mission to Uganda in March 2024 to engage with the integration of the Africa Mental Health Leadership programme of the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention and partners of MHPSS curriculum content, strategic consideration of MHPSS preparedness and response. Since then, the co-chair has been part of the bi-weekly online coordination fora, including facilitating a session on MHPSS Coordination to African Volunteers Health Corps in Tanzania, as well as moderating a session stress management during mpox outbreak.







Active MHPSS TWGs in 2024

## The IASC MHPSS Reference Group in numbers

Since a Task Force of **25** agencies collaboratively developed the guidelines in 2007, the Reference Group has significantly grown, now consisting of **66** members and **23** observer agencies.

The number of TWGs from 2020 to 2024 has more than doubled from **23** to at least **60** around the world. They cover **89%** of humanitarian emergencies, compared to **53%** in 2020.

Since 2020, the IASC MHPSS Reference Group has supported **65** deployments.

In 2024, **16** deployments were supported in Afghanistan, Cameroon, Colombia, Central African Republic, Chad, three deployments in the Democratic Republic of Congo

(North Kivu, South Kivu, and Tshopo), Gaza, Iraq, Lebanon, Romania, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Yemen.

In its co-chairing role, the MHPSS Hub directly supported more than **20** countries, including: Afghanistan, Brazil, Central African Republic, Colombia, Cameroon, Haiti, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria, occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), Peru, Poland, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, and Yemen.

### MHPSS Hub support to inter-agency webinars and online workshops

- In 2024, 12 francophone webinars were held with over 500 participants from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central

African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Mali, and Niger.

- In 2024, the MHPSS Hub co-chairing team supported **5** interactive online Minimum Service Package (MSP) orientation workshops, contributed to the multi-sectoral MHPSS assessment toolkit, and provided direct links to existing inter-agency helpdesks throughout country missions.

### Information sharing in 2024

- **24** distributed newsletters
- **763** newsletter subscribers
- Co-hosted **9** global and emergency calls, with more than **430** participants







# Donors



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**ICRC**



**IFRC**



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Irish Red Cross



**Canadian  
Red Cross**



日本赤十字社  
Japanese Red Cross Society

人間を救うのは、人間だ。



**Australian  
Red Cross**



**Olympic Refuge  
Foundation**



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands

**Finnish Red Cross**



**World Health  
Organization**

## Donors and collaborators

The MHPSS Hub collaborates and receives funding from a broad variety of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies, research institutes, NGOs, institutional donors, and the private sector. Without their generous financial support and collaboration, the increase in activities and reach the MHPSS Hub experienced in 2024 would not have been possible.

# Collaborators



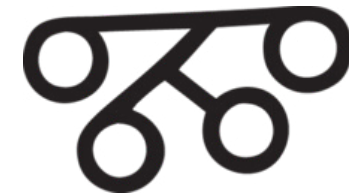
Queen Margaret  
University  
EDINBURGH



**Rädda  
Barnen**



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
FIRENZE



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European Council  
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Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin



**Save the Children**



Universitat Autònoma  
de Barcelona



Lietuvos Respublikos  
socialinės apsaugos  
ir darbo ministerija



**THE MHPSS  
COLLABORATIVE**  
FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN ADVERSITY





## SECRETARIAT



**Nana Wiedemann**  
Director



**Jesper Guhle**  
Senior  
Communications  
Officer



**Villads Zahle**  
Senior  
Communications  
Officer



**Pia Tingsted Blum**  
Head of Operations



**Sabina Dziadecka  
Gråbæk**  
Senior Project  
Manager



**Nathalie Helena  
Rigall**  
Project Manager



**Anna Tarsettl**  
Project Manager



**Shah Nawaz Khan**  
Global Finance  
Manager & Advisor



**Shanna Jensen**  
Transformation  
Manager



**MARK LATONA**  
Senior Advisor,  
Partnerships  
and Resource  
Mobilization



**ADAM JOHNSTON**  
Senior Advisor,  
Partnerships  
and Resource  
Mobilization



**BARBARA LEVIN**  
Communication and  
Coordination Officer



**LOTTE BRUHN  
PETERSEN**  
Administrative  
Coordinator



**FRIDA MARIA W.  
HENRIKSEN**  
Project Coordinator



**CLARA THI THANH  
HEILMANN  
JENSEN**  
Student Assistant

## OPERATIONS

## MHPSS TECHNICAL EXPERTISE



**SARAH HARRISON**  
Head of MHPSS  
Technical Unit



**CÁTIA MATOS**  
MHPSS Specialist



**AHLEM CHEFFI**  
MHPSS Specialist



**CARMEN  
VALLE-TRABADELO**  
MHPSS Specialist



**TERESA OMBALO**  
IFRC Co-Chair of  
the IASC MHPSS  
Reference Group



**ELIZA YEE LAI  
CHEUNG**  
MHPSS Specialist



**ARZ STEPHAN**  
MHPSS Specialist



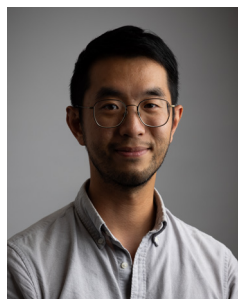
**GULEED DUALEH**  
MHPSS Specialist



**GANNA  
GOLOKTIONOVA**  
MHPSS Specialist



**SHONA WHITTON**  
MHPSS Specialist



**JOSHUA LEE**  
MHPSS Specialist

THE  
MHPSS  
HUB  
TEAM





**MHPSS  
INTERNATIONAL  
MOVEMENT  
HUB**

**Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub**

Hejrevej 30 st.  
2400 Copenhagen NV  
Denmark

T +45 35 25 92 00  
E [mhpsshub@rodekors.dk](mailto:mhpsshub@rodekors.dk)  
W [mhpsshub.org](http://mhpsshub.org)

