

## **INTERVENTION TOOLS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS**

### **IENE 6**

**Contemporary large migration waves into Europe: Enabling health workers to provide psychological support to migrants and refugees and develop strategies for dealing with their own emotional needs.**

### **Intellectual Output 7**

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# INTERVENTION TOOLS FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND VOLUNTEERS

The interventions for refugees or in any other emergency settings occurs in different levels. The role of health-care providers extends beyond clinical care to advocacy for the overall well-being of people who need support across multiple sectors, as shown in the IASC Guidelines pyramid (cited in “Clinical Management of Mental, Neurological and Substance Use Conditions in Humanitarian Emergencies: mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide”).

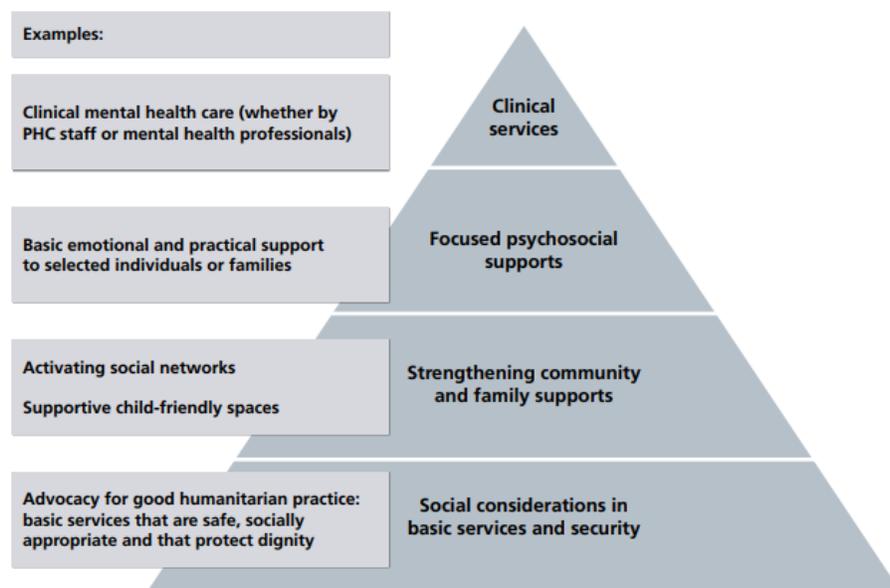


Figure GPC 1. The IASC intervention pyramid for mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies (adapted with permission)

According to this pyramid, activating social networks (level 2) is one of the aims and expected results of IENE 6 project by designing a comprehensive knowledge hub for refugees and also health care providers dealing with refugees. As part of the “Intellectual Output 7: Psychological support tools and best practices” we aimed the focus on level 3&4.

Various specific professional treatments have shown some preliminary efficacy for common mental disorders in refugees. There is no standard of care for treatment of common mental disorders in refugees. Interventions that have shown efficacy in research studies include the following:

- Pharmacotherapy,
- Culturally-adapted psychotherapy for PTSD, depression, and anxiety,
- Psychological first aid,
- School-based education and trauma healing exercises for children,

- Multi-family disclosure, education, and support,
- Trauma disclosure and testimony therapy for adults and children,
- The use of lay-counselors for larger populations,
- Qigong and tai'chi,
- Dance and movement therapies.

In this writing, you can find several resources for conducting basic psychosocial support for refugees and also the general knowledge about other intervention methods used mostly by mental health professionals.

## Resource 1&2

### Title 1: Psychological First Aid: Guide for Field Workers

### Title 2: Psychological First Aid: Facilitator's Manual for Orienting Field Workers

**Organization:** World Health Organization (WHO)

**Year:** 2011

**Authors:** Leslie Snider (War Trauma Foundation, WTF), Mark van Ommeren (World Health Organization, WHO) and Alison Schafer (World Vision International, WVI).

**Source/Link:**

[http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/publications/guide\\_field\\_workers/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/guide_field_workers/en/)  
[http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/102380/1/9789241548618\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/102380/1/9789241548618_eng.pdf?ua=1)

© World Health Organization 2011 All rights reserved. Publications of the World Health Organization are available on the WHO web site (www.who.int).

**Purpose of the Tool:** These tools provides information about how to conduct and utilize PFA in a textbook format. One of them (the facilitator's manual) has more descriptive group exercises and supporting materials inside.

**Description/Brief Summary:** These tools gives detailed information about what is PFA and how it can be used.

The three basic action principles of PFA are **look**, **listen** and **link** :

**Look** » Check for safety. » Check for people with obvious urgent basic needs. » Check for people with serious distress reactions.

**Listen** » Approach people who may need support. » Ask about people's needs and concerns. » Listen to people, and help them to feel calm.

**Link** » Help people address basic needs and access services. » Help people cope with problems. » Give information. » Connect people with loved ones and social support.

The guide for facilitator's orientation aims to build the capacity of helpers in crisis situations. These aims are:

- » To approach a situation safely, for themselves and others
- » To say and do the most supportive things for very distressed people
- » To NOT cause further harm by their actions.

The case scenarios and sample conversations could be adaptable and helpful for the health care professionals and volunteers when they are dealing with refugees. Also there are lots of group exercises, such as role-playings inside the facilitator's manual for orienting field workers.

**Special Features (Validation, Language Options etc):** This manual is available in Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, English, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Japanese, Kiswahili, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Sinhala, Slovenian, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, and Urdu.

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** These resources could be useful for learning the basic principles of a psychological first aid and how to conduct a PFA.

## Resource 3

### Title: Psychological First Aid: Field Operations Guide 2nd Edition

**Organization:** National Child Traumatic Stress Network and National Center for PTSD

**Year:** 2006

**Authors:** Brymer M, Jacobs A, Layne C, Pynoos R, Ruzek J, Steinberg A, Vernberg E, Watson P, (National Child Traumatic Stress Network and National Center for PTSD).

**Source/Link:**

[https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/manuals/manual-pdf/pfa/PFA\\_2ndEditionwithappendices.pdf](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/manuals/manual-pdf/pfa/PFA_2ndEditionwithappendices.pdf)

Copyright © 2006 Brymer M, Jacobs A, Layne C, Pynoos R, Ruzek J, Steinberg A, Vernberg E, Watson P, (National Child Traumatic Stress Network and National Center for PTSD). All rights reserved. You are welcome to copy or redistribute this material in print or electronically provided the text is not modified, the authors and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) and National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD) are cited in any use, and no fee is charged for copies of this publication.

**Purpose of the Tool:** This tool also provides information about how to conduct and utilize PFA in a textbook format.

**Description/Brief Summary:** The core actions mentioned inside the guide are:

- Contact and Engagement
- Safety and Comfort
- Stabilization

- Information Gathering: Current Needs and Concerns
- Practical Assistance
- Connection with Social Supports
- Information on Coping
- Linkage with Collaborative Services

Especially “information on coping” (Page: 77-92) is a comprehensive chapter to provide information about stress reactions and coping to reduce distress and promote adaptive functioning. There are many tips for parents including “responses” and “examples of things to do and say” in different reactions/behaviors after trauma. Some of these could be adaptable and useful for health care providers/volunteers dealing with refugees.

**Special Features (Validation, Language Options etc):** This manual is available in English, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese.

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** This resource could be helpful for health care providers and volunteers dealing with refugees to find examples of things to do and say in different reactions/behaviors after trauma.

## Resource 4

### **Title: Clinical Management of Mental, Neurological and Substance Use Conditions in Humanitarian Emergencies: mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide (mhGAP-HIG)**

**Organization:** World Health Organisation (WHO), The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

**Year:** 2015

**Authors:** Peter Ventevogel (UNHCR), Ka Young Park (Harvard Kennedy School) and Mark van Ommeren (WHO)

**Source/Link:**

[http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/162960/1/9789241548922\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/162960/1/9789241548922_eng.pdf?ua=1)

**Purpose of the Tool:** According to WHO and UNHCR; in every general health facility in humanitarian emergencies at least one supervised health care-staff member should be capable to assess and manage mental, neurological and substance use conditions. The mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide is a simple, practical resource that aims to ensure this target.

**Description/Brief Summary:** This guide contains first-line management recommendations for mental, neurological and substance use conditions for non-specialist health-care providers in humanitarian emergencies where access to specialists and treatment options is limited.

The tool has brief modules on the assessment and management of:

- Acute Stress (Page: 13-16)
- Grief (Page: 17-20)
- Moderate-severe Depressive Disorder (Page: 21-26)
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Page: 27-30)
- Psychosis (Page: 31-34)
- Epilepsy/Seizures (Page: 35-40)
- Intellectual Disability (Page: 41-44)
- Harmful Use of Alcohol and Drugs (Page: 45-48)
- Suicide (Page: 49-52)
- Other Significant Mental Health Complaints (Page: 53-55)

This guide provides the basic management principles of these conditions, including their psychoeducation and basic pharmacological interventions. It also defines necessary referrals for further interventions like specific psychotherapies given by health care professionals.

**Special Features (Validation, Language Options etc):** This manual is available in Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** This resource could be useful for health care providers dealing with refugees for learning the basic intervention methods.

## Resource 5

### **Title: Refugee Health Technical Assistance Center's Website**

**Subtitle:** Refugee Suicide Prevention Training Toolkit (Facilitator's Guide)

**Organization:** Refugee Health Technical Assistance Center

**Year:** 2012

**Authors:** Unspecified

**Source/Link:**

Refugee Health Technical Assistance Center's Website:

<http://refugeehealthta.org/physical-mental-health/mental-health/adult-mental-health/treatments-and-services/>

Refugee Suicide Prevention Training Toolkit:

<http://refugeehealthta.org/physical-mental-health/mental-health/suicide/suicide-prevention-toolkit/>

Refugee Suicide Prevention Training Toolkit (Facilitator's Guide):

[http://x9yjk2t4l9ghu7ty7bhu81ac.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/RHTAC\\_QPR\\_Facilitator\\_Guide\\_8\\_21\\_12-1.pdf](http://x9yjk2t4l9ghu7ty7bhu81ac.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/RHTAC_QPR_Facilitator_Guide_8_21_12-1.pdf)

**Purpose of the Tool:** This tool is a refugee suicide prevention toolkit.

**Description/Brief Summary:**

Responding to suicide within refugee communities can take the form of **prevention** or **direct intervention**.

***Prevention:*** Working broadly in a community to decrease risk factors and promote protective factors can help prevent risk for suicide across whole refugee communities. For instance, finding ways to promote social connection and a sense of belonging, connecting refugees with employment and language resources, and conveying a sense of hope that things will become easier may all be important ways to reduce the risk for suicide.

***Targeted Intervention:*** For individuals who are most at risk for suicide, specific steps can be taken to help them through the typically brief period where they are at risk for attempting suicide. Certain warning signs may be present in those most at risk for suicide, such as:

- Making statements that life is not worth living
- Making statements that they will not be around in the future
- Behaving in unexpected and unusual ways
- 'Saying goodbye' to loved ones

There may also be culture-specific warning signs that someone is considering suicide. Members of refugee communities are important resources in helping to identify cultural expressions of distress and despair within specific cultural groups.

If an individual seems to be considering or at risk for suicide, targeted intervention can include:

- Asking whether someone is considering suicide
- Referring someone to treatment and/or helping them to call a suicide hotline
- Asking about what is upsetting them and trying to offer a sense of hope
- Staying connected to the person and helping him/her to connect to other people and helpers

The toolkit contains a self-study webinar, a facilitator's manual and external links of other websites & resources on refugees. Also there are many helpful role play exercises inside the manual.

**Special Features (Validation, Language Options etc):** This website is available only in English.

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** This website is a useful resource for the health care providers dealing with refugees because it presents mental health facts of refugees and gives general information about psychological intervention methods. It also gives external links to screening and assessment tools and a refugee suicide prevention toolkit. There are also several webinars about refugee's mental health.

## Resource 6

### Title: Addressing Depression in Muslim Communities

- BA-M Treatment Manual
- Self-Help Booklet "One step at a time"

**Organization:** Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Health

**Year:** 2012

**Authors:** Ghazala Mir, Jonathan Kanter, Shaista Meer (BA-M Treatment Manual);  
Mohammad Shabbir, Ghazala Mir, Shaista Meer, Wali Wardak (Self-Help Booklet "One step at a time")

**Source/Link:**

[http://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/info/615/research/327/addressing\\_depression\\_in\\_muslim\\_communities](http://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/info/615/research/327/addressing_depression_in_muslim_communities)

file:///C:/Users/Win10/Downloads/BA\_M\_Manual\_February\_2016.pdf (BA-M Treatment Manual)

file:///C:/Users/Win10/Downloads/Client\_Self\_Help\_Booklet\_September\_2012\_final.pdf (Self-Help Booklet "One step at a time")

**Purpose of the Tool:** The aim is to fill the gap in knowledge about how best to address the needs of Muslim service users with depression through:

- Adapting a mental health therapy called Behavioural Activation, combining existing approaches with evidence from existing research and practice to produce a guidance manual for practitioners
- Gathering feedback on how acceptable and useful Muslim service users and their therapists find the guidance and using this to further improve the manual
- Outlining in detail important principles and effective methods for treating Muslim service users from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

**Description/Brief Summary:**

BA-M Treatment Manual contains session plans for delivering BA-M therapy include references to sections later in the manual that the therapist will need to read and understand in order to engage appropriately with Muslim clients, particularly those for whom religion is important.

Self-Help Booklet "One step at a time" could be helpful for the refugees use either with their therapist or on their own. It includes basic information about Islam and some teachings that you could be useful.

**Special Features (Validation, Language Options etc):** This manual is available in Arabic, English, and Urdu.

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** This resource could be useful for health care providers dealing with Muslim refugees with depression. It combines the behavioral activation therapy method with the relief of religion.