

Psychosocial Support Projects of the Hungarian Red Cross (HRC)

Long-term projects, alternative approaches
and lessons learnt:
We can build up resilience.

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Overview

1. Recent crisis situations
2. What resources the HRC has in the field of PS?
3. What can be done?
4. Questions and challenges

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1. Recent crisis situations in Hungary

Natural disasters:

Heavy rains, storms
2010 Spring flooding in the
North



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1. Recent crisis situations in Hungary

Industrial disaster: October 4, 2010 – red sludge disaster

- 9 persons died, 120 injured (chemical burns)
- 550 persons evacuated from Kolontar
- 200 people left Devecser (fearing from another toxic spill)



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Hungarian RC actions

- Local Crisis Committee (NDGDM) involved HRC
- A hotline was set up to help RC raise funds for those affected by the disaster
- 50 Hungarian RC volunteers and 4 vans were mobilized
- Services provided
 - information and technical assistance
 - distribution of food, drinking water, protective masks and gloves; assisting in the shelter

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Psychosocial support?



2. What resources the HRC has in the field of PS?

- Febr 2008: attending the Belgian Red Cross's EURESTE project: „*Meeting needs in a Crisis including terrorist attacks*”
 - Training of trainers
 - Handbook in Hungarian language
- May 2008: 20 First Aid Coordinators (representing the 20 County Branches) received basic training in psychological support
- ENPS 2009 Forum – Dubrovnik: sharing experiences and making international contacts

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3. What can be done?

Step 1: Preparation

- 6 Oct. 2010: presentation about PS for the 20 County Branch Directors → Let's pay attention to the psychological effects of past disasters (2007 bus accident, 2008 gas explosion, 2010 flood, red sludge disaster):
 - insecurity, fear, frustration, lack of control.
- Hungarian RC has means of helping
 - Agreement on setting up a Working Group on PS to review experiences and draft a PS action plan focusing on training

3. What can be done?

Step 2: Planning for long term projects

- PS Training of staff and volunteers
- Implanting PS into existing HRC programs - first aid, disaster management, helping vulnerable groups(refugees, migrants...)
- Taking part in international projects and cooperation

4. Questions and challenges

- How can we raise awareness on PS?
 - Providing more information about it
 - Changing attitudes
- How can we reach affected people in crisis areas?
 - involvement of trained local volunteers
 - building community resilience
 - measure effectiveness

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Summary

The HRC is ready to work on **longterm projects**, using the psychosocial support framework as an **alternative approach** in responding to different needs in a crisis situation, and gladly accept **lessons learnt** in other international contexts.

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Thank you for your attention!

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