



Psychosocial Support

What is Psychosocial Support?

It is an activity that improves the ability of an individual or community to function after or through critical situations or ongoing stressful situations by collaborating with people to:

- promote use of their own and community's resources: use skills and resources that exist to enhance their recovery
- offer support to help reduce emotional suffering, give practical assistance and encourage social networks/links
- build resilience: the ability to cope.

The aim of IFRC Policy on Psychosocial Support is to:

- facilitate the resilience of the affected population while at the same time maintaining the health, well-being and efficiency of staff and volunteers
- Integrate psychosocial support into all three objectives in the IFRC Strategy 2020.

How is it carried out?

- integrated within National Societies or International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent activities and programmes
- directed to community groups rather than individuals
- meeting needs in a calm, safe environment and giving practical information and social support
- early interventions through to medium and longterm activities
- recovery takes time
- through delivery of psychosocial activities such as: telephone hotlines for prisoners in custody; telephone support lines for general public; practical and emotional support for migrant populations; services to vulnerable individuals and groups suffering from chronic diseases; post-disaster interventions; practical and emotional support for volunteers and staff etc.

Guiding principles and characteristics

Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntarism, Unity, Universality

- Focused on strengths and resilience
- Early intervention and on-going support
- Culturally sensitive
- Active participation of people affected
- Inclusive of all ethnic or social groups
- Sustainability and capacity building.

More information

enps@redcross.at
psychosocial.center@ifrc.org

OCT 2010