

Strengthening Resilience

A global selection of
psychosocial interventions

Psychosocial Centre



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



Psychosocial Handbook 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Lessons

Based on lessons learned and best practise

Compilation of knowledge from PSS focal persons, delegates, staff in the PS Centre and others.



Strengthening Resilience A global selection of psychosocial interventions

- Developed in answer to the growing demand for guidance on how to implement psychosocial support programmes.
- Designed to provide the practitioner with a range of possibilities when planning psychosocial support activities.
- Presents fundamental methods of providing psychosocial support, including concrete examples of interventions, ideas for activities, and how to modify them to suit specific contexts and groups.
- Provides guidelines for how best to implement psychosocial interventions, and illustrates how broad and diverse the field of psychosocial support is.



	Introduction	10
	Fundamental activities in psychosocial support responses	20
Part 1	Methods of providing psychosocial support	32
Part 2	Responses to specific contexts and events	52
Part 3	Health	92
Part 4	Programmes and activities for specific groups	110
	Glossary	138

Introduction

The PS Centre 11
What is psychosocial support?..... 12
What are psychosocial activities? 12
Content overview..... 19





What is psychosocial support?

The term 'psychosocial' refers to the dynamic relationship between the psychological and social dimension of a person, where the one influences the other.

The psychological dimension includes internal, emotional and thought processes, feelings and reactions.

The social dimension includes relationships, family and community networks, social values and cultural practices.



PSS as prevention

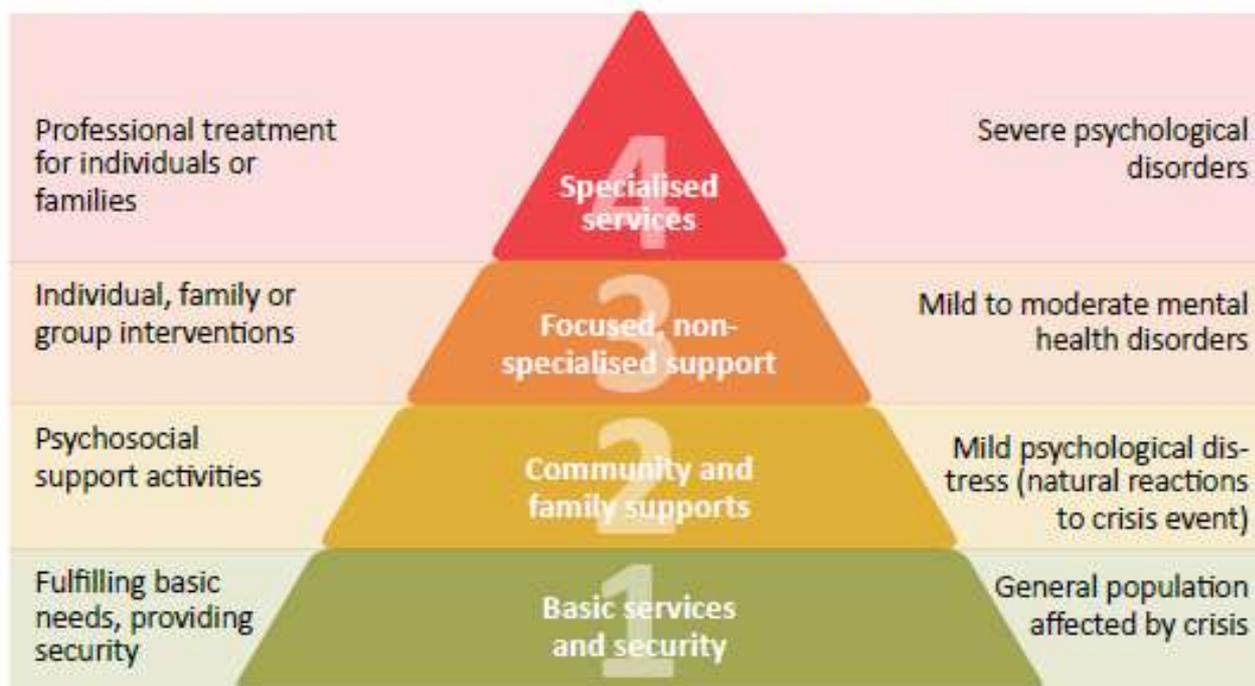
Psychosocial support can prevent distress and suffering from developing into something more severe and helps people overcome difficult life situations.

What are psychosocial activities?

Mental health and psychosocial support services

Responses suggested

Impacts on population due to crises

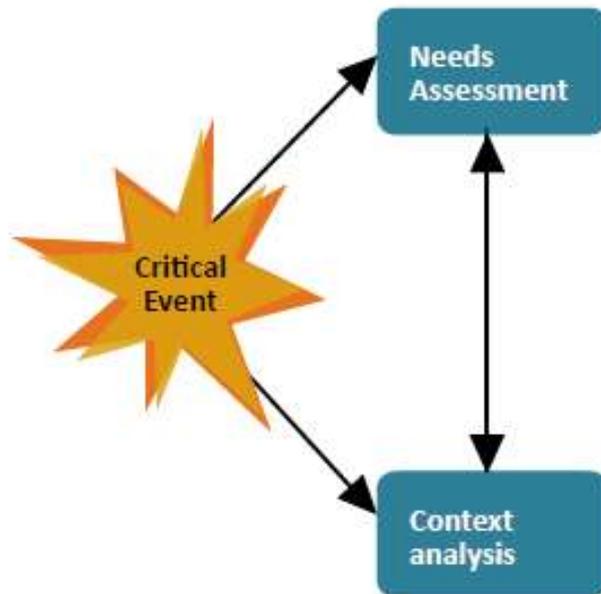


What are psychosocial activities?



Programme planning, implementation and management

Psychosocial response models



Model options:

Stand-alone psychosocial programme

Psychosocial plus:
‘Stand alone’ psychosocial programme that includes other aspects e.g. basic needs, livelihood support

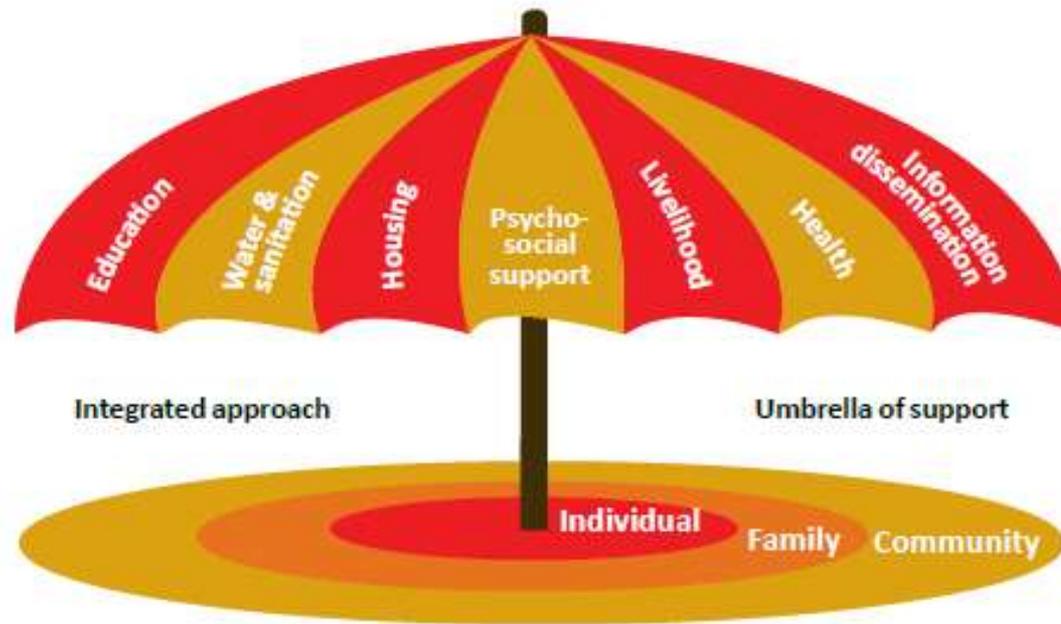
Integrated model A:
Psychosocial activities integrated into other responses e.g. health services / disaster management

Integrated model B:
Psychosocial intervention as a platform for other responses

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SOURCE Dr. Subhasis, American Red Cross and Indian Red Cross Society

Fundamental activities in psychosocial support responses

- Psychological first aid 21
- Lay counselling 23
- Peer support..... 25
- Support groups..... 26
- Self-help groups 27
- Caring for volunteers..... 27
- Psycho-education..... 27
- Making referrals 28
- Advocacy 29
- Training..... 29



Psychological first aid

Key activities when providing psychological first aid are:

- providing practical care and support that is sensitive and non-intrusive
- assessing needs and concerns
- helping people to address basic needs (for example, food and water, information)
- listening to people, but not pressuring them to talk
- comforting people and helping them to feel calm
- helping people connect to information, services and social supports
- protecting people from further harm.



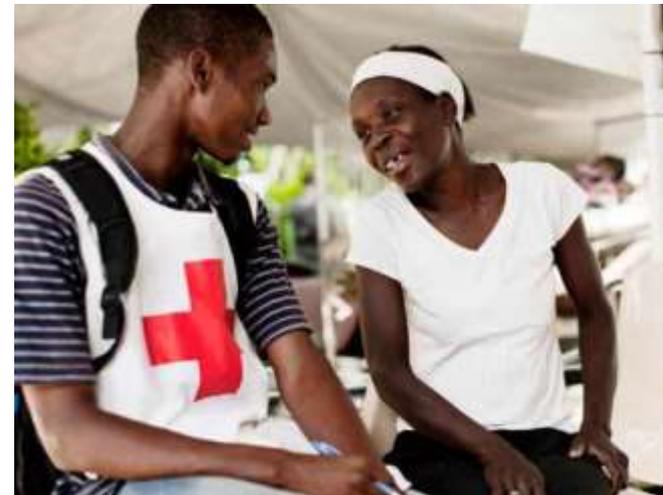
Lay counselling

Lay counsellors do

- give emotional and practical support
- listen and provide comfort
- provide helpful information
- facilitate self-help
- act alongside the help-seeker
- help people make decisions and solve problems
- help people access basic needs
- refer to more specialised care if needed.

Lay counsellors do not

- break the rule of confidentiality
- tell the help-seeker what to do or how to solve problems
- show disrespect
- make promises they cannot keep
- act as a psychotherapist, for example, by asking the person to discuss painful memories of childhood or other past events.



Peer support

Examples of peer support activities include:

- creating buddy systems, where trained peer supporters are linked up with a buddy who has not been trained
- support group meetings for peers
- training peer supporters on how to provide lay counselling.



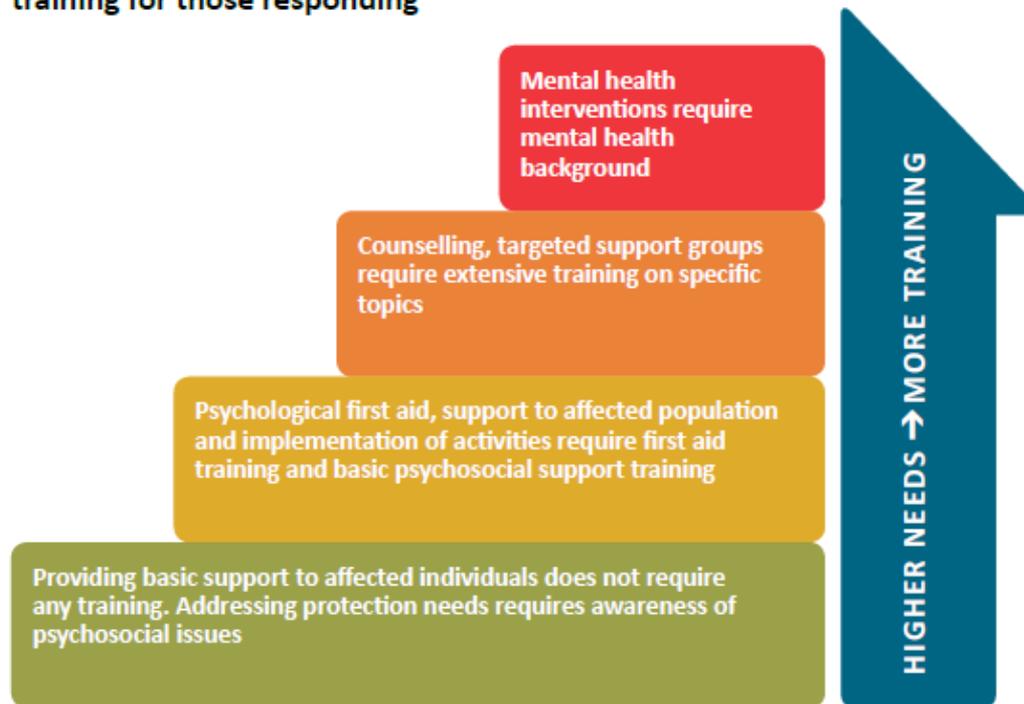
Support groups





Training

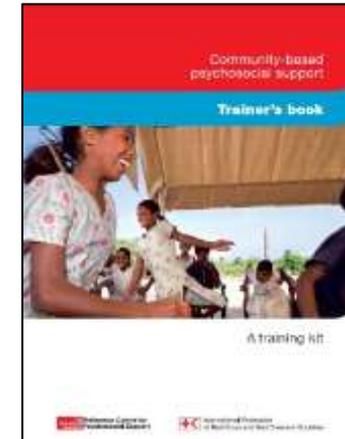
As the needs of those affected increase, so does the need for training for those responding



Training

PS Centre trainings:

- Basic Training in Psychosocial Support
- Training of Trainers



Part 1: Methods of providing psychosocial support

Connecting and lay counselling.....	33
Mobile outreach programmes	37
Restoring family links	39
Life skills	45
Providing legal support	49



Lay counselling

The most common form of counselling within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is lay counselling.

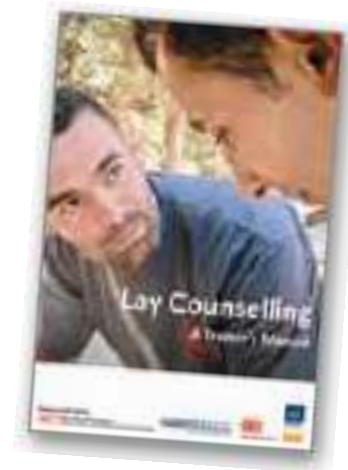
- The skills needed for lay counselling depend on the setting where the lay counsellors work, and what issues and challenges they are helping to address.
- For example, counselling on a phone line for people at risk of suicide is different from counselling for people living with a serious illness like HIV, or the counselling needed in the aftermath of a natural disaster.



Lay counselling

However, there are certain skills and behaviours that are generic and apply to all lay counsellors.

- Key attitudes of empathy, respect and being genuine
- Supportive communication
- Active listening
- Sharing helpful information
- Helping people make informed decisions
- Making referrals



Saving people's lives

Lay counselling can save people's lives, helping them to work through and stop thoughts of suicide and self-harm.

Restoring family links

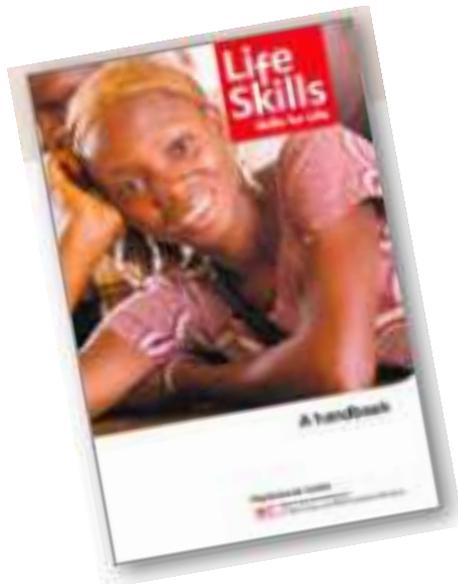
Restoring family links (RFL) activities may take various forms, depending on the situation and context. RFL activities include:

- organizing the exchange of family news
- tracing individuals
- registering and following up individuals to prevent their disappearance and to enable their families to be informed
- reuniting families and repatriation
- collecting, managing and forwarding information on the dead (location, recovery and identification).



Life skills

- Benefits of life skills
- Cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills



- Life skills and livelihood training in Uganda





Providing legal support

Legal support that improves psychosocial well-being

The different kinds of legal support that directly impact and improve psychosocial well-being include helping people to understand:

- what their legal rights are
- how and where to access legal support
- the implications of taking legal action against other parties
- how the wronged party and the accused are treated in the legal system
- what the possible outcomes of court cases may be, how to prepare emotionally for these and how to cope.





Part 2: Responses to specific contexts and events

Psychosocial support in disaster management.....	53
Disaster preparedness	53
Disaster response	57
Disaster recovery	61
Violence	65
Acts of terror.....	72
Armed conflict	76
Forced migration	80
Human trafficking and exploitation.....	84
Economic crises and poverty.....	87



Psychosocial support in disaster management

Disaster management



Disaster management is the organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with disaster preparedness, response and recovery, to lessen the impact of disasters.

Contingency planning

Contingency plans ask three simple questions :

- What do we think is going to happen?
- What are we going to do about it?
- What can we do ahead of time to get prepared?

Disaster preparedness

Part of being prepared for disasters is expecting strong emotional reactions and knowing how to react to these in helpful ways that promote calm and positive coping.



The ERU PSS component

1. Three psychosocial kits
2. IEC materials
3. Manual for PS delegates
4. Training for health ERU staff



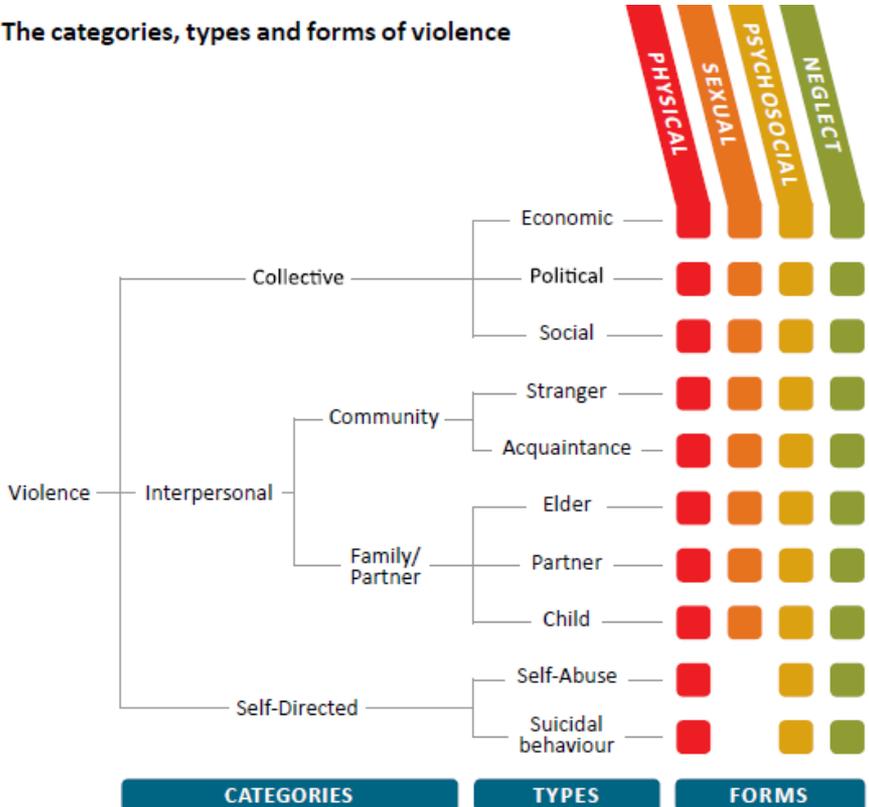
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Violence

The categories, types and forms of violence



SOURCE World Health Organization. (2002). World report on violence and health. Canadian Red Cross. (2011). Ten Steps to Creating Safe Environments.

Armed conflict

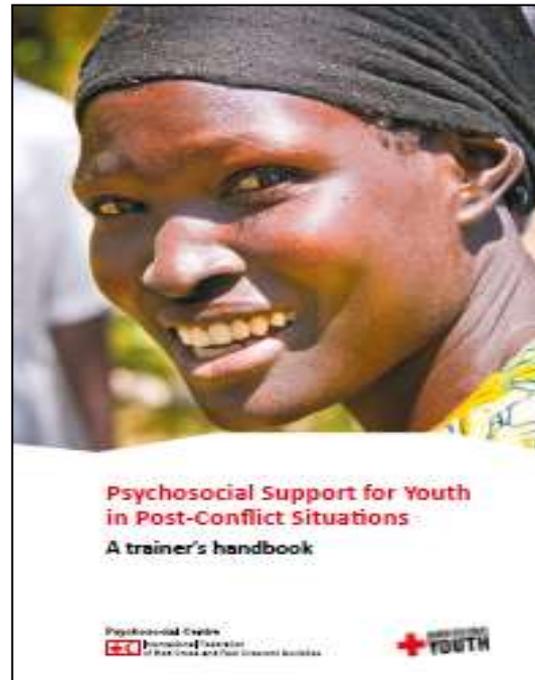
Armed conflicts include international wars, civil wars, gang violence, or rivalries between tribes or religious groups.

Examples of common activities in psychosocial support programmes in conflict and post-conflict settings are:

- Support group meetings
- Arts and crafts activities
- Play activities for children
- Sports and physical activities
- Livelihood skill building



YOUTH in Conflict



Forced migration

Forced migration is one of the most acute and visible consequences of disasters and conflicts.

Challenges to psychosocial well-being caused by forced migration:

- Pre-existing problems before the migration
- Emergency-induced problems
- Problems after migration



Economic crises and poverty

Activities focus on a range of different objectives:

- providing places where people can come together, e.g. in community centres or schools
- creating supportive networks
- providing debt counselling or employment services
- training staff and volunteers in psychological first aid, supportive communication, lay counselling etc.
- offering seminars on self-care, microcredit schemes, growing vegetables, etc.
- linking people to vocational training
- providing social activities, sports and physical activities, cooking, etc.
- encouraging people to volunteer to assist others.



Part 3: Health

Physical activities 93

Chronic diseases..... 98

Non-communicable diseases 99

Communicable diseases: HIV and AIDS..... 101

Substance abuse 106



Physical activities

More and more National Societies are recognizing the importance of physical activities and are including sports and physical activities in their psychosocial support programmes.



Nordic walking
Nordic walking is an exercise where walkers use specially designed poles held in either hand in their walking programme. It is a very effective form of cardiovascular exercise and helps promote good posture and muscle tone. Nordic walking is safe for older people as well as younger people, in terms of the stability offered by the use of poles.



Chronic diseases

National Societies around the world respond in a variety of ways to chronic disease. Activities include:

- counselling and support to people who are ill and to their families and caregivers,
- through home-visits, support groups and buddy systems
- psycho-education offering information and problem-solving strategies
- advocacy to raise awareness of the challenges faced by affected individuals and
- their families and to help reduce stigma and discrimination
- rights-based work to protect people who have become ill from discrimination or maltreatment because of their conditions.

Non-communicable diseases

- Risk factors for non-communicable diseases are largely associated with lifestyle and environment.
- Tobacco use, physical inactivity, unhealthy diets and harmful use of alcohol increase the risk of most non-communicable diseases.
- Approaches should thus include programmes and activities that address issues of poverty, access to health services, education on healthy life styles and life skills, etc.



Communicable diseases: HIV and AIDS

Examples of activities for children living with HIV:

- Support focusing on the disclosure of HIV status and issues related to treatment and adhering to the treatment plan.
- Art therapy in individual and group sessions using techniques such as the body map activity to support children who have difficulties to express themselves verbally.
- Health education and recreational activities, such as play activities or reading books with children who are waiting to see doctors at the hospital.



Substance abuse

Common activities in programmes targeting people struggling with, or at high risk for, substance abuse are:

- Preventative education
- Practical help
- Emotional and social help



Part 4: Programmes and activities for specific groups

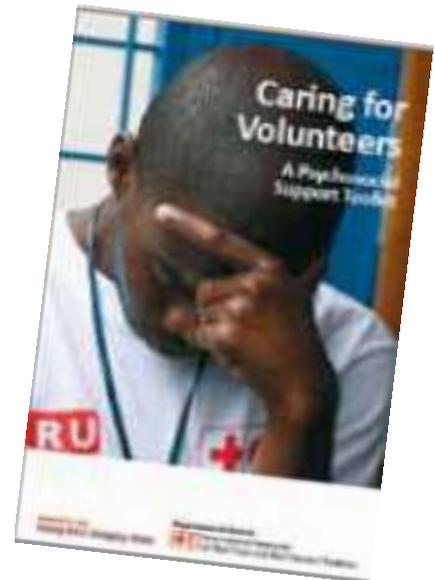
- Caring for volunteers 111
- Persons with disabilities 117
- Children 121
- People who are lonely 129
- Older people 131



Caring for volunteers

Support activities

- Before: **INFORM & PREPARE** before a crisis happens or before the volunteer is sent to help.
- During: **MONITOR & SUPPORT** during active response to a single event or prolonged crisis.
- After: **REFLECT & REFER** after the crisis is over, or when the volunteers end their work.



Persons with disabilities

- High-risk group in emergencies
- It is essential to include persons with disabilities in all aspects of relief and recovery.



Children

- In emergencies and crisis situations children have different needs than adults.
- Emergencies and crisis events not only threaten children's well-being, but also increase their risk of neglect, exploitation and other types of harm. Their physical, emotional and social development makes them dependent on others for care and protection.



Children

The Children's resilience Programme



People who are lonely

- Many Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies around the world have programmes and activities that target people who are lonely and isolated.
- Although everyone is at risk for feeling lonely, there are certain groups of people at higher risk than others. Some examples include:
 - people whose spouses or life-partners die, especially if they were living only with that person; or who have divorced or who are single
 - people who lose contact with their families; or have physically moved from family and friends
 - people who become sick and are no longer able to move around or interact easily

Older people

- Disasters or ongoing crises such as poverty, armed conflicts or health epidemics tend to impact older people very seriously.
- Disruption to social and medical care as well as transport and other basic services make the challenges of old age harder to deal with.



Older people

Drawing contest for elderly men in Pakistan



Thank you!

