Key Actions for Psychosocial Support in Flooding:

Creating resilience in urban areas

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Foreword

In 2013 British Red Cross asked 67 people who had experienced one or more severe flooding to sum up their experience in only three words. Worry, loss, shock, fear, lack, panic, stress, community, damage and despair were the ten most frequent words.

Floodwater destroys or damages most of what it gets into contact with. Most obviously, flash floods sweep property, infrastructure, and sometimes also people away. Floods soak homes and everything in them such as clothes, photo albums, floors, walls, furniture, toys, gardens, cars, and kitchen utensils. The water is dirty and smells. When it recedes it leaves silt or mud behind. The water can be mixed with sewage and therefore be dangerous. When homes are left wet even for shorter periods of time, they can be infested with moulds, which cause harmful allergies. People affected by flooding very often need to relocate for months while their homes are dried out and refurbished. Floods also damage or destroy common areas such as places of worship, schools, community halls, parks, or other recreational areas and shopping areas. These are places people normally go to meet, communicate or seek support.

The most important predictor of whether a person will recover well from a crisis is having a close and stable network of family, friends and community. But a crisis situation like a flooding can put severe strains on these networks. Families may be temporarily separated, communities will be disrupted while the rebuilding is going on, and sometimes people will move away for good. The psychosocial effects of flooding are long lasting and if left unattended can complicate recovery and rebuilding and can cause lasting harm to individuals, families and communities.

The man who opened up his conservatory to his friends and neighbours, offering them a comfortable place to rest, may not have realized at the time that he was providing psychosocial support to his community. He was just being neighbourly. And sometimes that is all that is needed: people showing their friends and neighbours compassion and understanding. Rescue workers remembering to ask "How are you doing?" Neighbours looking in on the old widower down the street.

But when a whole community is experiencing a flooding, "being neighbourly" is not always enough. Civil protection agencies, authorities, voluntary organisations, schools, sports clubs and religious organisations also need to play a role to support individuals, families and communities to get back on their feet and enable them to meet future challenges better prepared.

Key Actions for Psychosocial Support in Flooding provides guidance on how to do just that. The document is short and practical and is accompanied by the *Toolbox for Psychosocial Support in Flooding"*, which points to further reading, resources for training and activities.

"By some miracle, the conservatory wasn't badly damaged, so the first thing we did was to clean it up, put in a space heater, some nice furniture and cosy lightning. Then, amidst all the chaos, filth and uncertainty, we had a sanctuary, a place to be and for the neighbours to come together."

Danish man whose entire village was completely flooded after a levee broke during a storm.

Purpose of the key actions
for flooding

Purpose of the key actions for flooding

This material provides key actions on psychosocial support in flooding. It focuses on flooding of urban areas and on how to strengthen the resilience of urban communities. The material helps prioritise actions and supports integrating psychosocial support in the overall actions.

Each crisis and response is unique. Crisis implies impossible time constraints, extreme demands on resources and imperfect choices. It will very rarely be relevant or possible to implement all key actions for every crisis. Therefore, the material is modular; written to supports the design of the best possible actions in a given crisis. Key actions are divided according to disaster phases; preparedness, response and recovery. The material can be used as reference tool in the middle of a crisis, to prepare and plan for community engagement for flooding, or both.

This material is for organisations that want to engage with urban individuals, families, social networks and communities on psychosocial support in flooding. It is written for psychosocial advisors and general crisis managers. However, volunteers and community leaders will also find is useful as it provides very practical directions on what activities to do first. It is developed with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in mind, but can be adapted for use by non-governmental and civil society organisation as well as local, regional and national governmental agencies with relative ease.

A separate toolbox contains the most relevant tools for psychosocial support in flooding situations. It consists of an overview of the tools, followed by a detailed description of each of the tools and how to adapt them to flooding situations.

The psychosocial impact of flooding is felt long after the water has gone. So the material contains key actions for long-term recovery that often need to continue for two to five years after the flooding, sometimes longer depending on needs. A section on psychosocial issues common and specific to flooding in urban areas supports long-term actions.

Psychosocial well-being is essential for individuals, families, social networks and communities recovering from crisis, and the community itself is often the most important source of psychosocial support. Yet urban communities are often more vulnerable to flooding. The key actions are designed to support and strengthen the resilience of urban communities and the recommended tools use community based approaches that empower individuals, families, social networks and communities to help themselves. The material is developed to compliment and support the work of civil protection agencies.

How to use this material

How to use this material

To get started without reading more than a page, go to the next chapter called *"How to get started on psychosocial support in the middle of a flood?".* With a little more time, a good place to start using this material is the overview of key actions.

Especially in the middle of a response, it can be useful to identify the key action that appears most relevant and doable in the moment. Then look up its details further down. The most relevant tools for each key action are listed right next to that key action. *The toolbox* will give a quick-to-read introduction to each tool, specify where to find it and give directions on how to start using it.

It is important to recall that psychosocial support interventions will not be perfect. Finding a starting point that is relevant and doable and working from there is often the better way forward. Responding to ongoing needs assessment and referring back to this material at regular intervals to consider if and how the key actions are relevant will help build good interventions incrementally.

When there is more time, such as in the recovery or preparation stages, it makes sense to also use the material as a point of departure for more detailed and wider planning and implementation. The key actions can be used as a basis for engaging in collaborative interventions with other stakeholders, implementing organisations and civil protection agencies. They are also relevant for advocacy.

The section on *emotional resilience and psychosocial support in urban flood situations* focuses on the specifics of flooding. It provides a useful starting point to learn more about psychosocial support, particularly if combined with the definitions section. However, to be fully useful, the contents of the section should be combined with more general and in depth knowledge on psychosocial support. Much of this knowledge can be found using the toolbox.

This material is developed based on the international standards for mental health and psychosocial support in crisis, such as the *Comprehensive Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Crisis* action sheets, the *IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings,* and the *NATO-TENTS Guidelines* as well as the large body of guidelines and manuals on community based crisis management and psychosocial support developed by the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

SALTBONES, OLAV A / RED CROSS

How to get started on psychosocial support in the middle of a flood?
– Nine easy steps

How to get started on psychosocial support in the middle of a flood?

These activities can take as little as one to three days to carry out.
Keep it simple, use common sense and start small.

Nine easy steps

1. Check with the organization in charge of response and with your own organization that your efforts are welcome.

2. Form a team of a few colleagues and/or volunteers who know the local area. Meet up once a day to touch base and plan next steps.

3. Find a safe and convenient space to work from and for convening people (the evacuation centre, local school or similar).

4. Make sure that you and your team learn basic psychological first aid. Start here: *Community-Based Psychosocial Support. Participants' Book. Module 5, Psychological First Aid.*

5. When it is safe and you are not obstructing other (lifesaving) response activities, team members take walks in the affected area.

6. Meet with your team at the end of the day to work out how to address the needs you identify. You will not be able to do it all yourself, so find other organisations who can.

7. Follow up with people who need support as soon as possible.

8. Walk around the affected areas often. In the beginning someone from the team may need to visit once a day.

9. When this work has started, assign yourself or another person to read the rest of this material. Go over the identified needs and make a plan for the next 1-3 weeks.

Psychosocial community walks
- If you know which areas are flooded, divide the streets between team members to cover all homes
- Go door by door
- Present yourself and ask people how they are doing
- Talk to all the members in a household who would like to talk, including children
- Listen to their stories, take your time
- Ask if people can offer to support others in any way (looking in on neighbours, offer some hours of relief work at the shelter cooking or minding children etc.)
- Take down the needs and contact details of the people you talk to
- Do not make promises of help that you cannot deliver
- Ask if they know others who may need support

Key actions

Key actions

Due to climate changes it is expected that flooding will become more common. This means that more and more individuals, families, social networks and communities will be at risk of flooding and that communities in flood-prone areas should prepare to be flooded more than once in a lifetime.

The key actions are structured under the headings preparedness, response and recovery.

Key action overview	Preparedness	Response	Recovery
Complete contingency planning	√		
Include psychosocial support in overall preparedness activities	√		
Select, train and support staff and volunteers for psychosocial support	√	√	√
Prepare and share Information Education and Communication materials			
Embed psychosocial support in scholls	√	√	√
Advocate for psychosocial support by offering information and training to relevant authorities and stakeholders			
Do regular and continous needs assessments and provide support accordingly		√	√
Provide information regularly at special information points and information meetings		√	√
Use mobile teams providing a range of support, including psychosocial support		√	
Embed psychosocial support into evacuation centre structures		√	
Embed psychosocial support into logistics centre structures		√	
Provide special support for children and adolescents		√	√
Provide special support to vulnerable groups		√	√
Include psychosocial support in the handling of dead bodies			
Work closely with authorities in family tracing services and family reunions		√	√
Advocate towards authorities and stakeholders ensure accountability and represent the benbeneficiaries' needs		√	√
Provide coordination points for further care		√	
Combine long term needs-based support with preparedness activities			√

Preparedness

Preparedness, response and recovery are cyclical. The level of preparedness influences the response, which gradually moves into recovery. Part of good rebuilding and recovery is to reduce risk of future disasters and therefore in itself preparedness. For this reason some key actions are repeated under two or even all three headings. In some cases the actions are identical across all phases in others they change across phases.

Disaster preparedness refers to measures taken to prepare for and reduce the effects of disasters. That is, to predict and, where possible, prevent disasters, mitigate their impact, and respond to and effectively cope with their consequences. Preparedness must be kept up, and individuals, families, social networks, communities, authorities and organisations have to collaborate to make it work.

Social and community support is the single most powerful predictor for getting through difficult experiences in a positive way. So, networks are at the heart of good preparedness, response and recovery.

Individuals, families, social networks and communities need to be resilient. Flooding often takes a long time to get through, and people have to prepare for the long haul. From a psychosocial point of view, resilience is about having the ability to accept and use social support, it is about being able to ask for and give help in a positive way, both as individuals, families, social networks and as communities.

Psychosocial preparedness is an integrated part of overall preparedness.

Key actions for preparedness

Complete contingency planning

• Identify who is responsible for overall contingency planning, including who is responsible for establishing crisis communication systems

• Work with those responsible for overall contingency planning to include psychosocial aspects in the overall contingency planning for flooding

• Include individuals and communities with previous experience of flooding in the preparedness planning and activities

• Understand the potential risks. For instance: what type of flooding is likely and which areas might be flooded? Do regular risk assessments and involve the older population into these risk assessments as they may have valuable experience of previous flooding

• Understand how the concept urban is defined at national level and how it is used for the area or communities the plans will cover.

• Understand how communities are likely to be hit by flooding. For instance: Who are the most vulnerable groups? Who are potential resources? What are the risk factors and what are the protective factors of the communities in risk of flooding?

• Align psychosocial activities with the relevant policies, procedures and responsible/ implementing authorities using the stepped model of care, which is introduced in Annex 1.

• Identify key actions for response and recovery. Use the chapters on response and recovery in this material as a starting point

• Identify already existing psychosocial activities within your organisation that could be integrated in the contingency plan. Consider branch and national levels. Staff and volunteers trained in psychosocial support for regular activities can be mobilized to respond to flooding, especially if they are trained in advance.

> **TOOLS**
> IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings

• Write the contingency plan down. Share it with relevant authorities, stakeholders and community leaders and take actions to implement preparedness activities.

Include psychosocial support in overall preparedness activities

• Identify where and how psychosocial elements should be included in the overall preparedness activities. Examples include:

  - Discuss potential risks with individuals, families, social networks and communities and identify challenges avoiding or reducing their impact (e.g. older people may not want to be evacuated because they fear to be institutionalized, people worry about what happens to their pets)

  - Training communities on preparing grab bags should include discussion on whether items with sentimental value, photos, or a comforting teddy bear for a child should be part of the bag

  - Community mappings should include mapping resource persons and institutions that can arrange psychosocial support activities

    • Libraries can extend opening hours and arrange reading groups for children,

    • Nursing homes can open additional social and information cafés,

- Religious leaders can organise a hot meal,
- GPs can arrange lectures on health in flooding and refer for professional support,
- Schoolteachers, youth and sports club leaders, religious leaders, social workers and others can be trained to educate on the emotional impact of flooding and how to foster resilience
  - Including children and adolescents in preparedness activities
  - Including vulnerable groups in preparedness activities
  - Training communities in basic psychosocial support and to talk to peers about flood risk and preparedness. In the event of a crisis, checking in on neighbours and friends to ask "How are you?" is simple but can be very effective.

- Communicate the risks to individuals, families, social networks and communities and involve them in the development of emergency and evacuation plans
- Do regular preparedness exercises. For instance, flood evacuation can be included in fire drills at institutions and workplaces.

> **TOOLS**
> Start by answering the seven questions from Rapid Assessment Guide for psychosocial support and violence prevention in emergency and recovery, part two, p. 21

Select, train and support staff and volunteers for psychosocial support

- Train staff and volunteers dedicated to psychosocial response and recovery to prepare them for crisis work
- Train staff and volunteers that are part of the general preparedness, such as first responders, members of mobile teams, communication specialists or evacuation centre teams, in basic psychosocial support and psychological first aid
- Train potential members of needs assessment teams to assess psychosocial issues
  - Prepare for an integrated approach by training teams on how to build psychosocial principles (sense of safety, connectedness, calm, self and collective efficacy, hope) into the overall response.

> **TOOLS**
> Community-Based Psychosocial Support - A training kit

Prepare and share Information Education and Communication materials

- Identify or develop Information, education and communication materials that are relevant to the communities, authorities, responders, staff and volunteers likely to be involved in the response
- Identify how the materials should be adapted to better reach specific groups such as children and adolescents, non-native speakers or persons with disabilities
- Make the materials openly available and share them as relevant through distribution and training

> **TOOLS**
> - Crisis and emergency risk communication (CERC)
> - Emergency hand-outs (IEC) for psychosocial support in emergencies
> - Talking and writing about psychosocial support in emergencies

Embed psychosocial support in schools

• Include the students in developing and drilling flood preparedness plans, particularly for schools in flood-risk areas. Preparation activities can also be extended to include family flood plans

• Educate students on flood, local flood risk and flood warning systems and build understanding of the practical and emotional consequences of flooding in an age-appropriate format. Activities could be built into regular classes or curricular, such as geography

• Educate teachers and other staff on how to understand and support students affected by flooding both emotionally, practically and educationally

• Develop plans to support students whose homes have been flooded. Bear in mind that while the school may not be flooded, some or all of it students may be affected. Provide practical and emotional support for affected students, who may be rehoused far away, live in damp or unsuitable housing, often experiencing higher than normal levels of stress. Ensure that class mates, teachers and all parents understand their situations and how to support.

Schools have the potential to play a pivotal role in all phases of a flooding. The lessons students learn will often cascade into their families and wider communities.

TOOLS
• The Children's Resilience Programme – Psychosocial support in and out of schools
• How to educate on flood will differ between school systems. The British Red Cross has developed good teaching resources on flooding that can be used as inspiration: http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Teaching-resources/Lesson-plans/Emergency-flood

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Advocate for psychosocial support by offering information and training to relevant authorities and stakeholders

• Advocate for a coordinated approach and exchange between organisations

• Support that psychosocial intervention is included in all relevant stakeholders' preparedness plans and responses by advocating the nature and importance of psychosocial support. Relevant stakeholders could include the insurance sector, banks, municipalities, nursing homes, waste management administration, builders' associations

  - Urge the insurance sector to liaise with civil protection agencies to be prepared to set up one-stop-shops in flooded areas to provide immediate and precise support for insurance holders at the flood sight. Other stakeholders may also contribute by make themselves available in one-stop-shops

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TOOLS
• Talking and Writing about Psychosocial Support in Emergencies
• Advocacy package. IASC guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings, can serve as useful input for advocacy work in flooding.

Response

The primary aims of disaster response are rescue from immediate danger and stabilization of the physical and emotional condition of survivors. These go hand in hand with the restoration of essential services such as water and power and, in some floods, the recovery of the dead. How long this takes varies according to the scale, type and context of the disaster. But it typically takes between one and six months and is composed of a search and rescue phase in the immediate aftermath followed by a medium-term phase devoted to stabilizing the survivors' physical and emotional condition.

Response activities are often not understood as psychosocial activities, but they can have significant implications for the psychosocial well-being of individuals, families, social networks and communities. For instance, most flood affected people justifiably worry about theft and looting if they have to evacuate. Meeting the need for patrolling flooded homes and property until they can be secured clearly reduces the financial impact of a flooding. It also reduced stress and promotes a sense of safety and hope which are important factors for psychosocial well-being and the ability to be resilient in the face of adversity. The way that a need is met also has psychosocial consequences. Police or armed forces can provide very good patrolling, but can feel unsafe for vulnerable groups, such as undocumented immigrants or people and communities that have experienced oppressive military rule or police brutality. In some cases the community can organise to provide its own patrolling.

Bear in mind that urban communities are complex. They can be "our side of the street", "my friends across town", "we retired", "us the newcomers", but they are rarely defined by a specific local area. Flooding affects a very specific local area. This means that communities will not automatically respond to a flooding or understand what to do to support. It can also mean that new communities emerge as a result of the flood. Making the resilience of the community visible will strengthen response activities and make them more accessible to those who need support.

Key actions for response

Do regular and continuous needs assessments and provide support accordingly

- Especially after flooding, people's needs may change quickly, so that continuous needs assessments are recommended.

- If needs are assessed, support should be organized accordingly (daily needs assessments in the beginning has to be followed by daily (re) organisation of support teams and goods to be distributed

- Multi-disciplinary teams are recommended for needs assessments, e.g. medical, rescue, psychosocial and other responders should be part of the team.

It can be useful to know that during crisis the risk of violence will usually increase. Violence can take different forms: self-directed violence (substance abuse, suicide), interpersonal (hitting children, neglect), and community violence (looting of homes).

> **TOOLS**
> - Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA)
> - Rapid Assessment Guide for psychosocial support and violence prevention in emergency and recovery
> - It may also be useful to review the IFRC Strategy on violence prevention, mitigation and response 2011-2020, found here: www.ifrc.org

Provide information regularly at special information points and information meetings

- Providing information has to be done in close cooperation with local authorities and organisations involved, and may include a wide range of professionals, e.g. geologists, meteorologists, insurance experts, mental health professionals, etc. to ensure that it is accurate and reliable. It is important that individuals, families, social networks and communities trust the information and the organisation communicating it.

- Regular information can be given at designated information points at evacuation and logistics centres. Information can also be given on digitally and via social media, if these are available. Ensuring that people have the information they need when they need is psychosocial support because it helps individuals, families, social networks and communities to understand and navigate a complex situation and to make informed decisions. It is empowering to be informed.

- Information can be provided at information meetings where people have the chance to ask questions and consult experts about their most urgent questions and needs. Mental health and psychosocial issues should be integrated into these meetings.

- Because urban communities are complex it may be necessary to use several different channels to communicate activities that have taken place and will take place for the flood affected and the communities they are part of.

  - Tell the stories about community working together to local media. Feeling acknowledged and being a part of something supports community spirit and psychosocial well-being.

  - Announce activities and events regularly and invite people to attend.

  - Possible communication channels: local newspapers, public notice boards, meetings, Facebook and other social media and texts

- Communicate positive key messages and use easy-to-understand, everyday language instead of complicated terms and concepts and technical language

- Educate children and caregivers on how to limit TV-time and other media consumption. Sensation driven and repeating media coverage of flooding may further harm children's' emotional well-being
- Social media can be powerful tools for providing information and mobilizing support. It is however, also often a source of misinformation and disturbing imagery. Talk to children and adolescents about the pictures and stories they see on social media regarding the flood and help them make sense of it.

TOOLS
- Crisis and emergency risk communication (CERC)
- Emergency hand-outs (IEC) for psychosocial support in emergencies
- Talking and writing about psychosocial support in emergencies
- The Children's resilience programme – Psychosocial support in and out of schools (CRP), booklet on Understanding Children's well-being

Use mobile teams providing a range of support, including psychosocial support

- Mobile teams are recommended to ensure that everybody in need gets support, especially in the initial stages of response. This enables teams to reach those who are not in shelters.
- Mobile team members should at the very least have an understanding of the basic principles of psychological first aid. Preferably one or more members should be trained in psychosocial support
- Mobile team activities should be mixed, providing practical information and support (like distribution of water bottles). This enables teams to reach those needing psychosocial support too.

TOOLS
- Community-Based Psychosocial Support: Participants' book.
- If no preparedness work has been done, training and activities should focus on Psychological First Aid, Module 5 (which includes the basic principles of psychological first aid)

Select, train and support staff and volunteers for psychosocial support

Training ensures that the support staff and volunteers provide is safe and of high quality support, both for the people of concern and themselves.

- Select staff and volunteers who are fit to meet the needs of the community, given the right training
  - Balance recruitment by gender, cultures and age and recruit within the flooded-affected communities. People have different psychosocial needs and a diverse group of helpers are able to reach more individuals, families, social networks and communities
  - Select people who conduct themselves well towards other people
  - Ensure that all appropriate background checks on volunteers are carried out in accordance with local legislation. Special care must be taken to check volunteers who will be working with children.

- Have them sign the Code of Conduct of your organisation; the IFRC Code of Conduct can serve as inspiration, if a Code of Conduct is not already in place.

• Train staff and volunteers to be able to handle the tasks they are given.

• Train staff and volunteers in self-care strategies, to know the limits of their own capacities and how to refer cases beyond their remit.

• Create a supportive and open atmosphere for staff and volunteers, so they feel comfortable to ask for support when they need it

• Set up regular team meetings to reflect on how recent event and activities affect staff and volunteers

• Provide sufficient staff and volunteer support structures (peer support, access to mental health professionals, …)

• Provide positive feedback and support to staff and volunteers being aware that flooding response often is long-lasting and exhausting and that volunteers and staff often are affected by the floods themselves

TOOLS
- Caring for one another. Psychosocial support to vulnerable groups
- IFRC or National Society Code of Conduct
- The training that is most relevant to start with will differ from flooding to flooding. Please refer to the overview of the toolbox accompanying this material to identify the tools that are most relevant to the situation at hand

Embed psychosocial support into evacuation centre structures

• In the European context and in flooding, people do not often live in shelters, but are housed by friends and family. In this scenario, evacuation centres can provide support when people come back during the day to work on their houses or when people seek support in accessing food and non-food item distribution, information, medical support etc. Psychosocial support must be integrated into these support structures, and not be provided separately.

• In the case that schools and other institutions are not functioning, teachers can run psychosocial support activities at the centres and/or build up school and kindergarten structures

• If there is a need for a pharmacological and/or medical support structure in the evacuation center mental health professionals should be integrated in order to give immediate help and screen for vulnerable and extremely distressed persons or families

• Information points and information meetings as well as information websites should include mental health and psychosocial issues and should always function in a two way manner (collecting the most frequently asked questions and concerns at the given moment)

• Child friendly spaces should be built into evacuation center structures

TOOLS
- Community-Based Psychosocial Support – A training kit, Participants' book. If no preparedness work has been done, training and activities should focus on Psychological First Aid, Module 5
- Guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies
- The Children's resilience programme – Psychosocial support in and out of schools, track 3, children affected by disaster

Embed psychosocial support into logistics centre structures

- Psychosocial support should also be integrated into logistics centres that provide for the collection and distribution of cash and/or non-food items, for instance:

    - Collection and distribution should be done in a dignified and safe manner.

    - Staff and volunteers at the logistics centre should be trained in basic psychological first aid and on how to refer people with psychosocial needs to other services,

    - Setting up calm spaces within the logistics centres manned by dedicated psychosocial staff or volunteers.

    - Regular assessments about the needs at the given moment should be at the basis of the provision of goods

> **TOOLS**
> - Community-Based Psychosocial Support – A training kit, Participants' book. If no preparedness work has been done, training and activities should focus on Psychological First Aid, Module 5
> - Guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies

Provide special support for children and adolescents

Children are more vulnerable than adults, due to their age, size, and lack of maturity, lack of experience, limited knowledge and practical and emotional dependency on parent or caregivers.

- Keep families together and promote family reunions as fast as possible. If at all possible, keep children with their mothers, fathers, family or other familiar caregivers. The family is usually the source of daily care and support and provides protection to children, if it is functioning well. In a stressful situation, children tend to look towards their caregivers for guidance about how to react

- Provide child friendly space(s) and youth corners. Providing a playful break from the crisis and establishing routines are important to support the psychosocial well-being of children.

    - If schools and kindergartens are not open, provide safe places for education and recreation

    - Parents and other caregivers may be occupied by rebuilding their homes, also in the evenings and on weekends.

- Psychosocial support and counselling for parents, teachers and other caregivers regarding the specific needs of children and adolescents will help the caregivers support the children and adolescents and also strengthen the resilience of the adults.

- Ensure that activities are implemented in a way that is culturally appropriate and includes already vulnerable children and adolescents such as persons with disability or from marginalised groups. Take additional steps to support them to take part when needed.

- Inform and involve children and adolescents as much as possible while at the same time protecting them from too much confrontation and responsibility.

> **TOOLS**
> - Community-Based Psychosocial Support – A training kit, Participants' book. If no preparedness work has been done, training and activities should focus on Psychological First Aid, Module 5
> - Guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies
> - The Children's resilience programme – Psychosocial support in and out of schools (CRP)

Embed psychosocial support in schools

- Educate students on the flooding and its consequences and build understanding of the practical and emotional consequences of flooding in an age-appropriate format. Activities could be built into regular classes or curricular, such as geography, help students to take an active role in the rebuilding process (for example in painting the walls of the school) and focus information also on rescue and rebuilding activities in order to rebuild trust and a feeling of safety.

- Ensure that students are provided with age appropriate, relevant, accurate and timely information that they understand.

- Educate teachers and other staff on how to understand and support students affected by flooding both emotionally, practically and educationally

- Support students whose homes have been flooded. Bear in mind that while the school may not be flooded, some or all of it students may be affected. Provide practical and emotional support for affected students, who may be rehoused far away, live in damp or unsuitable housing, often experiencing higher than normal levels of stress. Ensure that class mates, teachers and all parents understand their situations and how to support.

- Open school facilities for after-school activities such as study-corners, recreational activities, cooking classes, breakfast clubs for students and, if relevant, their families

- Set up groups in schools for children affected by flood so they can talk and to get support

- Give students the opportunity to voice their concerns and ensure that they are addressed

Schools have the potential to play a pivotal role in all phases of a flooding. The lessons students learn will often cascade into their families and wider communities.

> **TOOLS**
> - The Children's Resilience Programme: Psychosocial support in and out of schols (CRP)

Provide special support to vulnerable groups

The more stressors people have in their lives the more likely they are to be vulnerable. Taking additional care of those who are already vulnerable can reduce the negative impact they are likely to experience

- The needs assessment will have identified which vulnerable groups to focus on
- Often vulnerable groups benefit most from being included in the general psychosocial activities.
  - Persons with disabilities can be included by ensuring that information is accessible to them (e.g. give messages using several format in parallel such as audio, visuals and writing), that spaces for support are accessible to e.g. wheelchairs.
  - Older persons might need support with transport to and from venue or support can be brought to them, for instance a hot meal.
  - People and groups speaking non-local languages can be included with the help of a translator.
  - Persons with mental disabilities may need clear routines and structures as well as caregivers they know well and trust in order to be able to participate in activities
- Other vulnerable groups might need activities tailored to them.

- People living in institutions might need extra emotional support during evacuation.
- Refugees and asylum seekers are likely to need support in accessing help.
- Families living in illegal housing are often reluctant to make use of public support system out of fear of being evicted. This can have implications for their ability to claim the insurance needed to rebuild their homes.

> **TOOLS**
> - Caring for one another. Psychosocial support to vulnerable groups
> - The tools that are most relevant to start with will differ from flooding to flooding. Please refer to the overview of Tools for psychosocial support to specific target groups accompanying this material to identify the tools that are most relevant to the situation at hand.

Include psychosocial support in the handling of human remains and ensure ongoing support to the families of missing persons

- Ensure that the deceased and the bereaved are respected at all times

- Accompany family members receiving explanations and information about a missing or deceased loved one and during identification. Children should not aid in the identification of human remains. Supporting families means staying close and calm, listening to the families' fears and sorrows, providing a sense of safety, offering practical support for funerals and providing information e.g. about where to seek further help or knowledge

- Provide ongoing support to the families of missing persons. Ensure that they have access to updated information, if available by referring them to restoring family links or similar services Include them in regular psychosocial support activities or set up tailored activities as relevant

- Support that cultural and religious needs are respected including families' wishes to view the bodies as part of the grieving process and releasing the human remains to next of kin as swiftly as possible. Cooperate with parents or caregivers to ensure child friendly ways of saying farewell

- Provide support and supervision to staff and volunteers who handle human remains and/or support family members of these staff and volunteers.

> **FURTHER READING**
> Tools dedicated to psychosocial support issues of handling of human remains are yet to be developed. However, understanding the standards and practical steps for handling human remains is relevant to providing good psychosocial support to bereaved family members and relatives. The material: Management of dead bodies after disasters: A field manual for first responders, PAHA, WHO, ICRC and IFRC, 2009, provides a good starting point for such understanding.

Work closely with authorities in family tracing services and family reunions

- If people are missing and/or casualties are suspected, close cooperation between authorities and psychosocial helpers is recommended in family tracing, identification of dead bodies and family reunions.

- It is natural for people to experience a sense of loss when they are separated from family members. Feelings of uncertainty, guilt, self-accusation, anger and fear are likely to accompany the sense of loss. The feelings are so powerful that they can prevent people from dealing with their situation in general. In the middle of a flooding this can be dangerous or harmful to themselves and those around them

TOOLS
- Community-based Psychosocial Support – A training Kit, Participants' book. If no preparedness work has been done, training and activities should focus on Psychological First Aid, Module 5

Advocate towards authorities and stakeholders ensure accountability and represent the beneficiaries' needs.

A single organisation will not be able to meet all the needs they identify on its own and collaborating with other agencies, authorities and stakeholders is important. Being heard and seeing that action based on voice is taking place is important for psychosocial resilience

- Advocate towards authorities and stakeholders such as education authorities, health care facilities, public waste management, insurance companies and banks to ensure accountability and represent the beneficiaries' needs.
- Encourage organisations to coordinate and "speak with one voice".
- Encourage communities to set up groups to advocate on their own behalf. Experiencing self- and community efficacy is an important element in psychosocial well-being.

TOOLS
- Talking and Writing about Psychosocial Support in Emergencies
- In addition the material Advocacy package. IASC guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings, can serve as useful input for advocacy work in flooding.

Provide coordination points for further care

- After evacuation centres have been closed, it is recommended to maintain coordination points for the provision of long term support and proactive care
  - These coordination points (or one-stop-shops) should provide assessment, screening, referral to all kinds of support needed
  - The physical coordination centre should be supported by a web based coordination point.
- Especially very risk prone areas can benefit from having evacuations centres converted to community centres to provide a sufficient physical focus for recovery efforts

TOOLS
- IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings.

Recovery

Recovery refers to those activities and programmes which go beyond the provision of immediate relief to assist those who have suffered the full impact of a disaster to rebuild their homes, lives and services and to strengthen their capacity to cope with future crises.

Flooding is a serious stressor in itself, but often secondary stressors are harder to deal with. Secondary stressors include the financial burden of rebuilding one's home, being rehoused, feeling unsure about the future, fearing another flood, the project management of dealing with builders, insurance companies and authorities, not getting the promised or needed support and the negative impact this has on marriages, family relationships and friendships and the ability to function at work or school. Therefore the biggest emotional impact on individuals, families, social networks and communities is felt after the water has gone and often continues for months and years. This means that people have a tendency to experience more distress and ill health just as they seem to have adjusted. Transitional ceremonies, remembrance events and celebration of achievements are important in this phase.

Recovery activities are partly continuations or adaptations of response activities, partly preparedness activities. If the response did not include sufficient psychosocial support activities, it is even more important to start them in the recovery phase. The recovery phase allows more time for building community resilience and developing psychosocial well-being. Activities are possibly more specialised and structured. Compared to the response phase, this requires different or additional skillsets and training in those implementing the activities.

Preparedness activities help individuals, families, social networks and communities regain a sense of control and therefore a step toward psychosocial well-being. Preparedness activities should target at risk communities in general – both those who have been flooded and those who have not.

Individuals, families, social networks and communities will react both positively and negatively and this is more likely to happen after some time as the stressors of flooding begin to take their toll. New social constellations and tears in the social fabric will emerge as a result of the flood. This evolution can be both positive and negative but regardless it is likely to be particularly complex in an urban setting. Making the resilience of the community visible will strengthen resilience and make it more accessible to those who need support. Activities where the community works together on something with a common goal, such as restoring a recreational area and playgrounds, restoring gardens etc. can help strengthen the community bonds. Cleaning up debris and other visible signs of the flood quickly, making gardens and parks flourish again helps restore a sense of normality and place.

Recovery is an opportunity to improve and become more resilient in the future. Houses can be built back better, and so can communities and personal skills. Part of recovery is preparing for the next flood or crisis in order to reduce its impact.

Key actions for recovery

Do regular and continuous needs assessments and provide support accordingly

• Especially after flooding, people's needs change and may only materialise sometime after the actual flooding, therefore continuous needs assessments are recommended.

• If needs are assessed, support should be organized accordingly.

• Multi-disciplinary teams are recommended for needs assessments, e.g. community engagement officers, psychosocial staff or volunteers, religious leaders could be part of the team as relevant to the situation. As the needs change it might be relevant to change the compositions of the assessment teams to reflect this.

• Ensure that community members of all ages and backgrounds are involved in the redesign of community structures, buildings and decision making processes

It can be useful to know that during crisis the risk of violence will usually increase. Violence can take different forms: self-directed violence (substance abuse, suicide), interpersonal (hitting children, neglect), and community violence (looting of homes).

TOOLS
• Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA)
• Rapid Assessment Guide for psychosocial support and violence prevention in emergency and recovery

Provide information regularly at special information points and information meetings

Advocacy is crucial during this stage. Often promises that are no longer relevant or possible have been made and this may lead to aggression and anger. An ongoing dialogue between the affected people, the authorities and companies (insurance, builders, etc.) helps prevent or reduce the negative impact for individuals, families, social networks and communities. Public meetings as well as coordination points for aftercare can facilitate this process.

The key actions on information from the response phase remain valid and important, please see above.

Combine long term needs-based support with preparedness activities

- Support or establish one-stop-shops or community centres for coordination and provision of long term support in collaboration with other authorities, stakeholders and other organisations
- Arrange workshops and processes to engage and include community members in the recovery work, including the development of mid- and long term psychosocial support programmes
- General activities such as arranging public meetings with a qualified psychologist to talk about normal reactions and stressors after flooding, public meetings with other experts and the authorities regarding further risks and the rebuilding of safety are recommended
- Talking about flooding at schools might be relevant and can be followed up by preparedness activities
- Targeted and structured support for identified vulnerable groups can be set up to provide stronger support. The support should be set up based on the findings of the needs assessments.
    - parents and caregivers might need support to support their children,
    - communities might need support to maintain connections with those who are relocated
    - children and adolescents might need support to explain to their unaffected peers what they are going through
    - community members who have lost their livelihoods might need supports to re-establish stable incomes
    - individuals, families, social networks and communities may need resilience building activities in order to regain a feeling of safety and prepare for further flooding,
- A good evaluation of all psychosocial support activities can underpin an adapted approach and better preparedness for the next flooding incident

TOOLS
- The tools that are most relevant to start with will differ from flooding to flooding. Please refer to the overview of the toolbox accompanying this material to identify the tools that are most relevant to the situation at hand.

Select, train and support staff and volunteers for psychosocial support

During recovery, training needs are likely to increase as activities shift from predominantly psychological first aid and more practical support to addressing issues such as loss, coming to terms with the risk of a second flood, flood "anniversaries", strains on family and relations, or working as a community to increase preparedness and mutual support. Thus training needs will often be centred on topics as lay counselling and running support and activity groups.

- Set up trainings in advance of activities and arrange refresher trainings in consultation with volunteers
- Ask branch offices or national headquarters for support from their psychosocial support pool of trainers

- New staff and volunteers should be given induction training to their organisation
- Continue regular team meetings to reflect on how events and activities affect staff and volunteers
- Train staff and volunteers in self-care strategies, to know the limits of their own capacities, peer support and how to refer cases beyond their remit
- Monitor individual and team stress and arrange stress reducing and fun activities
- Create a supportive and open atmosphere for staff and volunteers, so they feel comfortable to ask for support when they need it
- The key actions on staff and volunteers from the response phase remain valid and important, please see above

TOOLS
- Caring for Volunteers. A Psychosocial Support Toolkit
- Caring for one another. Psychosocial support to vulnerable groups
- IFRC or National Society Code of Conduct
- The training that is most re-levant to start with will differ from flooding to flooding. Please refer to the overview of the toolbox accompanying this material to identify the tools that are most relevant to the situation at hand

Provide special support for children and adolescents

The key actions on special support for children and adolescents from the response phase remain valid and important, please see above.

Embed psychosocial support in schools

The key actions on special support for children and adolescents from the r esponse phase remain valid and important, please see above.

Additionally,

- During recovery schools should follow up and update flooding plans and help celebrate flood anniversaries and recovery milestones.

Provide special support to vulnerable groups

The key actions on special support to vulnerable groups from the response phase remain valid and important, please see above.

Work closely with authorities in family tracing services and family reunions

The key actions on family tracing and reunion from the response phase remain valid and important, please see above.

Advocate towards authorities and stakeholders ensure accountability and represent the beneficiaries' needs

The key actions on advocacy from the response phase remain valid and important, please see above.

Emotional resilience and psychosocial support in urban flood situations

Emotional resilience and psychosocial support in urban flood situations

Flooding is the most recurring natural disaster worldwide and in Europe. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), river and coastal flooding have affected 3.4 million people in the WHO European Region in the last 10 years and has had large socioeconomic costs. Flooding events are predicted to increase in both frequency and intensity as a result of climate change.

Urbanization presents a risk, as infrastructures such as buildings, roads and cemented spaces present in urban areas prevent rainfall and river or coastal floods from infiltrating the soil and thus increasing the risk of flooding. In addition, poorly maintained and insufficiently dimensioned sewage systems significantly compound risk.

Seventy-five percent of Europe's citizens live in urban areas and this number is expected to rise. The increase in the frequency and intensity of flooding as well as in the number of people living in urban areas can results in a higher number of people vulnerable to the consequences of flooding.

In the aftermath of flooding most people (80%) are able to recover with the support of family, friends, social networks and their communities alone and so need less or no support from the Red Cross Red Crescent or similar organisations. The remaining 20% will benefit from community-based psychosocial support and a small proportion will need referral to specialised care. With flooding in particular, psychosocial issues tend to materialise long after the water has gone, so it is important to maintain psychosocial activities as long as the continued needs assessments say this.

This section is an introduction to the issues specific to flooding in terms of psychosocial support. An abundance of knowledge and tools exists for psychosocial support in general and for specific issues or target groups. A starting point for exploring this material can be found in the toolbox.

Emotional Resilience

Resilience is the ability to react or adapt positively to a difficult and challenging event or experience, or to get through difficult experiences in a positive way. As such, it is the adaptive capacity of people and their ability to access, accept and use social support. Different human, physical, psychological, social, financial and political factors affect people's ability to endure, adapt and quickly recover from stresses and shocks such as flooding. The concept of emotional resilience accepts that people may experience temporary distress. By acknowledging the capacities individuals, families, social networks and communities have and can acquire within their contexts, the resilience approach aims to strengthen their ability to withstand the effects of adversity. Resilience can be observed and strengthened at individual, community, organisational and country levels. These levels are interconnected, affect each other and are also linked to regional and global levels.

Individuals, families, social networks and communities show remarkable psychosocial resilience in crisis. Overall, up to 80% recover psychosocially with the care of family and friends and with the support of their communities and do not need professional support. However, the percentage changes from crisis to crisis.

TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
As part of a workshop on flood preparedness and psychosocial support in Hungary members of a tightly knit town discussed the many sources of support that were necessary and forthcoming in their response and recovery work. Regarding the success of the municipal response, the group commented that:
"…there is a regular personal relationship between the affected population and the officers from the municipality. [It] is a little town (7700 ppl.) and many officers have multiple positions, local government officials were able to establish relationships [with citizens] long before the events. This trust was an important element of the success of their work."

Emotional resilience in urban areas

Emotional resilience for individuals, families, social networks and communities living in urban areas is complex. People can belong to social networks and communities such as "our side of the street", "my friends across town", "we retired", "us the newcomers", that are rarely defined by a specific local area. Flooding affects a very specific local area. This means that social networks and communities will not automatically respond to a flooding or understand what to do to support. It can also mean that new communities emerge as a result of the flood.

For some, living in an urban area means that there are specific risk factors to consider in a flooding situation:

- Family and friends, who can offer most emotional and practical support, may not live close by and are therefore less available or understanding of the situation
- Next-door neighbours may be strangers, and therefore not available or willing to support
- Offers of support from organisations or local government may be available, but unknown to those in need because they are not included in their normal networks or communities. Examples include the local places of worship, the local thrift shop offering dry clothes and furniture or the extraordinary waste disposal measure put in place by the municipality
- People in urban settings may expect authorities to handle the situation and can benefit from being supported to organise self-help
- Vulnerable individuals may be identified by neighbours but not supported as they are seen as someone else's problem

- The more stressors people have in their lives, the more resilient they have to be to manage them. Identifying and accessing practical and financial support may also require significant effort. Urban development is complex and requires sophisticated administration that can be difficult to navigate and use. Especially for long-term recovery there are indications that the effort it takes to manage rebuilding one's home is large. The task of navigating municipal decisions for recovery and offers of support has to be added to the negotiation with insurance companies, directing builders, taking care of one's family, living in temporary housing that might be far from one's home and asking for time off work to rebuild.

- Individuals, families, social networks and communities rarely know the first responders, municipal administrators, politicians or others responding to the flooding. This makes establishing trust important. Conflict may also arise if some people act more aggressively towards people they don't know. The public actions of volunteers from the Red Cross Red Crescent and other respected organizations will increase trust. Actions such as opening soup kitchens, shelters, areas for children in public libraries, donating clothes for free from second hand shops send a strong message that spurs other acts of kindness among strangers.

- Media play an important role in urban settings as most individuals, families, social networks and communities will look to them for information. Trustworthy, accurate and precise messages on flood issues can support in all stages of a flooding crisis. Working with the media to make visible that people help and support each other in a flooding situation can benefit the often fragmented urban social networks and communities by providing an alternative to images and stories of conflict and disagreement. The Red Cross Red Crescent branches or other another organisation that is commonly accepted as a trustworthy voice can set up sites on different platforms that highlight positive actions from different members of the urban community and as such can act as an inspiration for more positive actions.

While most people will have an understanding of the concept "urban", no clear definition exists. Each country has its own definition. In addition, organisations working within the same area often use different definitions as well. To make it even more complex different communities and individuals may or may not see themselves as urban, even if the government or an organisation defines them as such.

For building emotional community resilience in an urban setting it makes sense to consider if and how targeted individuals, families, social networks and communities feel connected to one another and what may protect or pose risks to their sense of connectedness.

WAYS TO DEFINE THE CONCEPT URBAN

Common criteria used to define urban areas include but are not limited to; population size, population concentration, service provision, commute time to major towns and cities, predominant type of economic activity, conformity to legal or administrative status, areas historically designated as urban and local knowledge.

In Ireland, urban is defined as cities and towns including suburbs of 1500 or more inhabitants.

In Denmark, urban is defined as localities with 200 or more inhabitants.

In Hungary, urban areas are localities recognised by the President of the republic with the title of town. A town is identified using economic, commercial, institutional, cultural and other criteria.

In 2014, The European Union developed a grid system with 1km2 squares to measure population density. An area is urban if a cluster of squares have a density of at least 300 people per square and a combined total of at least 5000 people. Results of how this system works remain to be seen and each EU member states continue to use its own systems at national level.

The UN does not use its own definition as the different characteristics of urban and rural across the globe are too different. Instead the UN uses the national definitions and numbers to compile their global statistics.

Understanding how communities are affected by flooding

Communities need to be supported to manage their recovery and communicate their needs. Most communities do not have the experience or common frame of reference to deal with the damage to the social fabric that flooding or other major crisis bring. Yet to recover, people need to make sense and create meaning of the situation. This helps explain why it is so important for people to talk about the event, to tell their story and to relate to others who are also affected.

Before a flooding the affected individuals, families, social networks and communities are relatively stable. Differences in social and economic status, emotional strengths and weaknesses, and needs for and rights to support from others are generally accepted. The choices people make are largely understandable and predictable. Problems can be communicated and resolved using a common, accepted language.

A flooding damages and affects people in different ways and how they recover depends on the severity of the damages and on the resilience people have after the flooding.

During the flooding some of the affected people will have felt that their lives were threatened. Some may almost have drowned, others will have not have been in physical danger but feared that they might die. Most will never have experienced this before. The threat is subjective and all consuming. Mind and body go into a completely new survival mode. The past and future seem irrelevant as every action is focused on survival.

Psychosocial support activities including the key actions above contribute to developing a common understanding and a way to talk about things and social ways to be together that allow individuals, families, social networks and communities to talk about and explain their needs, to acknowledge differences, to understand information, manage emotions and work towards defining new or adapted roles to recover and eventually build the social fabric for after the flood.

COMING TOGETHER TO BE RESILIENT IN FLOODING

In Denmark, a group of flood affected people who did not previously know each other well, but were all affected by the same flood, came together to discuss and prepare for the future. As part of their tasks they developed six pieces of advice for individuals, families, social networks and communities affected by flooding:

BEFORE:

1. Be prepared. Make sure your insurance coverage is satisfactory. Seek information on how to prepare yourself and your household and how to respond in a flooding situation

DURING/AFTER:

2. Create virtual and physical platforms for exchange of information and community support
3. Ensure and organise local access to practical help
4. Create activities facilitating psychosocial networking and room for exchanging experiences as well as providing community self-support
5. Remember to listen to each other's stories and don't be afraid to offer your help and support to anyone who might need it
6. Remember to look out for the most vulnerable near you and in your community. Especially for the children, remember to create special activities and seek alternative ways to maintain normal relations and networks.

Loss of sense of place after flooding

Sense of place is the subjective experience that individuals, families, social networks and communities have of the location they inhabit, including meanings, beliefs, symbols, memories, values, and feelings. To be sufficient, the location must support people to feel that they have a good enough living environment. Loss of place implies a loss of confidence in the norms, networks, and mutual trust in the civil society that is supposed to protect and facilitate collaborative actions among the citizens and institutions.

Floodwater destroys or damages most of what it gets into contact with. Most obviously, flash floods sweep property, infrastructure, and sometimes also people away. Floods soak homes and everything in them such as clothes, photo albums, floors, walls, furniture, toys, gardens, cars, and kitchen utensils. The water is dirty and smells. When it recedes it leaves silt or mud behind. The water can be mixed with sewage and therefore be dangerous. When homes are left wet even for shorter periods of time, they can be infested with moulds, which cause harmful allergies. People affected by flooding very often need to relocate for months while their homes are dried out and refurbished. Floods also damage or destroy common areas such as places of worship, schools, community halls, parks, or other recreational areas and shopping areas. These are places people normally go to meet, communicate or seek support.

When individuals, families, social networks and communities have their homes and common spaces damaged or destroyed by flooding, is causes physical, psychological and social harm and people grieve their places in ways similar to mourning a death. It strains their psychosocial well-being to grieve their places. Furthermore, the loss of place means they do not have that base to draw on for much needed resilience, rest and comfort. On the contrary, they must put efforts into establishing a home and thinking about and handling practical day-to-day tasks that were routine before the flood.

During relocation, people may have difficulties connecting with their normal social networks and communities. It may be too impractical for children to play with friends and for adults to talk to neighbours. Others may choose to move to another location and some couples will divorce due to the strain of the flooding. These secondary psychosocial damages often only start to be important several months after the flooding and affect both the individuals who take steps to move, divorce etc. and those they leave behind. In these cases people who stay may grieve for the losses this inflicts on community.

To address these issues, reconstruction often happens very quickly. The preoccupation with reconstruction can cause people to neglect the emotional and social needs, both for themselves and their families and networks. In practice reconstruction also often means re-building the physical structures that existed before the flooding. Flood affected people rarely take time to reflect on what they want to achieve with their reconstruction and miss the opportunity to build back differently and better. Supporting individuals, families, social networks and communities to care for themselves and imagine and work to achieve good futures is an important to support long-term emotional well-being and resilience.

LOOSING SENSE OF PLACE

After visiting a family who had their home in Northern Ireland flooded, a Red Cross staff member reported the following:

They did not have stable accommodation to stay in while their house was drying out and thus described this period of their lives as "living like we were homeless". They moved around from hotels to family members houses, to other hotels and B&B's. This meant that they had to live out of bags, they had to do all their laundry in other people's houses, or more often in expensive laundrettes. They could not do their own cooking and so had to eat out two or three times a day for months and this was a financial burden and may have impacted their health. On top of these practical considerations the interviewees explained how they felt during this time; they felt their home was a base they returned to each day, and during this time they literally felt baseless: like they were constantly travelling. Normally their home was their sanctuary; and without it they felt less secure.

When they did return home, this was not the end of their difficulties. Their home was still not fully functional, and they basically lived only in the upstairs rooms for another month or two. Their water service was intermittent as work progressed and cooking was still difficult. These daily disturbances mounted up and contributed to their stress levels.

Children and youth

Children are acutely affected during and after floods. Flood events and the inevitably long and protracted recovery period can have a significant impact on children's physical and emotional well-being.

Floods affect children's day-to-day lives in many ways. Children may have to leave their homes, stay in unsuitable or damp housing, or be unable to attend their usual school. Mental and physical health and well-being is negatively affected by evacuation, often because of lack of recreational activities and poor sleep and low guilty food due to inadequate cooking facilities. Loss of possessions as a result of flooding has a tangible impact for all ages, and children understand clearly the impact of losing personal 'precious' items that embody memories.

VOICING CHILDREN AND YOUTH'S CONCERNS AND NEEDS
This section on children and youth is adapted from the 2016 report Children, Young People and Flooding. Recovery and Resilience by Save the Children and Lancaster University. It contains strong key messages to planners and policy makers and methodologies for working with children on flooding issues.

More information on:
http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/cyp-floodrecovery/

If they are displaced, they may lose friendship networks, school connections, and familiar surroundings. At the same time, they see adults under great strain and they can develop anxiety about future flooding.

Children play an important role in recovery, helping their families, neighbours and the wider community. Children accept the notion of future flooding often more readily than adults, which prompts them to think about adaptation and the need for a 'new normal'. If asked, they often express interest in having a role in developing flood prevention and preparedness in their communities and families. Children's participation enhances recovery and sense of control.

Adults tend to shield children from what is happening, but children often know and understand much more about what is going on than adults sometimes realise. Depending on their age, most children understand and show empathy for others' reactions during and after a flood.

FLOOD-AFFECTED CHILDREN: FACTORS THAT IMPACT WELL-BEING:
Loss of valued personal and family possessions, friendship networks, familiar spaces, general education
- Experience of fear, anxiety, poverty, isolation, unfairness, destruction, stress, uncertainty, being ignored/misunderstood
- Lack of sleep and recreation
- Deterioration in diet, space and housing conditions
- Lack of flood education provision in schools for children and all staff

Often emergency planning either ignores children or positions them in a group marked 'vulnerable', along with disabled people, older people and pets. This has the effect of patronising and disenfranchising children. Children are also more afraid when they do not know what is happening. This could be addressed by actively involving children in disaster risk reduction activities and ensuring that children have access to information on flooding.

Financial loss and insurance

The material damages from flooding are often severe and the financial impact overwhelming. For households, the immediate financial losses relate to loss of property such as furniture, electrical appliances, cars, and interior decoration but also toys, clothes, and kitchen utensil that are destroyed by floodwater. Most often the structural integrity of buildings are compromised or destroyed, causing further financial loss for owners. In the longer run, secondary financial loss stems from the additional cost of living during relocation, including using expensive services for work that were previously done at home, such as restaurants or laundrettes, complete or partial loss of income and loss of market value of homes.

If people are insured, some of this loss can be recouped, but far from all of it. Depending on insurance policies, depreciation means that property needs to be replaced with lower quality goods and structures or not at all. Other losses may not be covered at all. Finally, insurances are not designed to cover the secondary financial losses which are borne totally by the affected people.

People who are not insured may be eligible for support from social services or private funds, but the financial impact is still likely to be harder than on those who do have insurance. Most often, people are uninsured because they cannot afford to pay insurance premiums in the first place. Nevertheless they are often judged negatively by others for not being insured and are like to feel shame or guilt.

Individuals and families living permanently but illegally in buildings designated for other purposes such as commerce or non-permanent residence only may have made significant investments in these homes and under all other circumstances be very resilience and resourceful. However, after flooding they will be adverse to claim insurance as this risk involvement from authorities who might then evict or punish them.

Regardless of their insurance coverage or type, the process of claiming it is a source of significant uncertainly, stress and worry. Some may chose not to make claims as this may cause premiums to rise beyond their means, which can lead to a lower sense of safety, anger and feelings of injustice. Those who claim insurance face multiple difficult situations, including:

• Having to draw up a complete inventory of damaged items and having them valued. Some items may be invaluable, carry special emotional value that is not reflected by the insurer or not be covered by the insurance although they represent significant value

• Waiting for assessors to assess damages and bearing the uncertainty this entails

• Getting into protracted and stressful arguments with the insurer

• Working to understand the details of the insurance policy and the results of valuation while also handling all the other stressors caused by the flooding

• Seeing other individuals and families being treated differently and perceiving the difference as unjust or random

• Not being able to recover in a good enough way with the payment from the insurer

• Not understanding the messages from the insurer and the frustration and uncertainty this entails working under insurance policies that work to a format that does not support resilience or is perceived as limiting the ability to recover

• Borrowing money from the bank or family and friends to cover expenses that the insurance does not

Dealing with financial loss and insurance following a flood implies loss of control on many levels including loss of financial control, loss of choice for the present and future as funds to go towards reconstruction and loss of control over own emotions.

In larger flooding, the insurance sector may be heavily burdened by claims. This can lead to delays in processing claims, stress in employees, and mistakes. Experience indicates that many front line employees are not equipped to deal with frustrated, emotional or angry customers. This can have negative impacts for both employees and customers.

TIPS FOR THE INSURANCE SECTOR
- Not much systematic community-based work has been done on understanding how the insurance sector can be supported to improve their roles during flooding. However, as part of research done on children, youth and flooding a set of tips for the insurance sector on how to support children and families affected by flooding better were developed.
- The tips are available here: http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/cyp-floodrecovery/

This material advocates that the insurance sector and responding organisations work together to address this issue. One way to start this collaboration is to support affected individuals, families, social networks and communities to advocate their needs and concerns towards the insurance sector. By listening to their customers, the insurance sector can adjust their processes to underpin resilience and provide much needed emotional support. Front line insurance staff in the fields or in call-centres can be trained in psychological first aid, learn about common and normal emotional reactions to abnormal events, be trained in basic lay counselling and learn emotional self-care to be better equipped to deal with crisis situation such as flooding.

Overview of psychosocial reactions, needs and possible support

The overview on the following page is structured according to the disaster phases and gives a high-level understanding of the common and normal feelings and needs of individuals, families, social networks and communities affected by crisis in general. It also outlines some relevant psychosocial support activities. It is not exhaustive and often only some of the elements listed will be identified in any specific flooding. Other times, in reality, elements will appear in different phases than they do in the overview. So, while it can be very useful for give an overall understanding, it is not applicable as an exact model or checklist for a specific crisis.

Emergency Phase	Recovery Phase	Reconstruction Phase
Feelings and common reactions of survivors		
Displacement Disorientation Alienation Multiple loss	Mourning the loss of connection between the survivor and the beloved place Acceptance of loss and striving to achieve comfort Beginning to bond with the new place, new neighbours, and social structures Engaging in rituals from the old place, and rituals from the new place. Both are essential to the process of psychological rebuilding. Manipulation of the environment to meet the needs of children, women, adolescents, the elderly, and population with special needs.	A feeling that grief reactions have been addressed Feelings of enhanced psychological competence Increasing feelings of ownership Feelings of being included and settled
Needs of survivors		
To know what type of assistance is available To know how and whom to approach for assistance To understand why each person's assistance package may be different than their neighbours To know what to do if they are not satisfied with their assistance pacwkage, and where to lodge a grievance To know how the aid effort is progressing; how money is being spent; and what problems are being experienced elsewhere To know what resources the community has so that it can continue to rebuild on them	Accurately identifying personal, social, and cultural factors that encourage natural recovery Participatory appraisal, such as, mapping, brain storming, and prioritization of needs Survivors and Communities building on their strengths and solidarities in developing their own capacity Community involvement in planning, participation, and implementation of multiple projects	Knowledge of the project development cycle Reconstitution of order in social setting Reestablishment of a health promoting habitat Affirmation of each person's sense of belonging to that place
Psychosocial support responses		
Information Psychological first aid and self-care Participatory decision making Inclusion of socially excluded individuals/groups	Recording indigenous concepts and terms to describe stress (language of distress) Looking at a whole set of reactions: psychosomatic, emotional, behavioural, and relational changes Implementing multiple projects to initiate and enhance the sense of belonging with new surrounding (health, water and sanitation, disaster preparedness, etc.) Survivors are involved in monitoring, evaluation, and reporting	Rebuilding human communities requires attention to social and emotional problems beyond the infrastructural support. Reconnection leads to restoring natural networks effective for health, building resilience, and everyday functioning Diligent planning leads to an environment of physical and psychosocial well-being of human as well as the natural, environment. Surviving survivors to express their feelings.

Toolbox for psychosocial support in flooding situations

A separate toolbox to support the implementation of the key actions has been developed together with this material.

The purpose of the toolbox is to provide an overview of available tools that are relevant for psychosocial support in flooding situations. The toolbox consists of an overview of the tools, followed by a detailed description of each of the tools. The description of each tool covers the following points (if applicable):

• Introduction to tool

• Introduction to target group's needs in flooding

• Languages

• Training needs

• Adaptation to context

• Tool location

The full toolbox can be found here: www.pscentre.org

Some tools are more relevant for managers and team leaders; others are tools for providing psychosocial support to specific target groups and can be implemented by volunteers and staff that have the necessary training and experience. The tools have furthermore been identified according to their applicability in the following areas: used by/target group, guideline, training, programme, activities, and information/education/communication

Table 1: Tools and guidelines for managers and team leaders

Tool	Used by	Guideline	Training	IEC material
General guidelines				
IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings	Senior staff and managers	√		
Assessment tools				
Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA)	Program managers and assessment team	√		
Rapid Assessment Guide for psychosocial support and violence prevention in emergency and recovery	Managers and assessment team	√		
Communication and IEC materials				
Crisis and emergency risk communication (CERC)	Managers and team leaders	√	√	
Emergency hand-outs (IEC) for psychosocial support in emergencies	Team leaders and volunteers			√
Talking and writing about psychosocial support in emergencies	Communicators	√		√
Training tools for volunteers				
Caring for one another. Psychosocial support to vulnerable groups	Volunteer managers and trainers		√	
Community-Based Psychosocial Support – A training kit	Volunteer managers and trainers		√	
Lay counselling: a trainer's manual	Volunteer managers and trainers		√	
Psychological First Aid: Guide for Field Workers	Volunteer managers and trainers		√	

Table 2: Tools for psychosocial support to specific target groups

Tool	Target group of intervention	Guideline	Training	Programme	Activities	IEC material
Tools for psychosocial support to specific target groups						
Caring for Volunteers. A Psychosocial Support Toolkit	Volunteers team leaders and volunteer managers	√	√		√	
Different. Just like you.	Persons with disabilities		√		√	
Guidelines for Child friendly spaces in emergencies	Children	√				
Moving together: Promoting psychosocial well-being through sport and physical activity	Recreational activities for all age-groups	√	√		√	
Sexual and gender-based violence. A two day psychosocial training. Training guide	People at risk for or affected by sexual and gender-based violence		√			
The Children's resilience programme – Psychosocial support in and out of schools (CRP)	Children, adolescents	√	√	√	√	√
The Resilience programme for young men – a psychosocial handbook	Adolescents and young people		√	√	√	

Definitions

Crisis
Any sudden interruption in the normal course of events in the life of an individual or group or population that makes re-evaluation of modes of action or thought necessary.

Flood
Flood means the temporary covering by water of land not normally covered by water. This includes floods from rivers, mountain torrents, ephemeral water courses, floods from the sea in coastal areas, and floods from sewerage systems.

Psychological First Aid
PFA is caring support offered to people who have experienced a very distressing event or situation. Basic elements include: staying close, listening attentively, accepting feelings, and providing general care and practical help. A training module on PFA is in the Community-based Psychosocial Support – A training kit, available on the IFRC PS Centre's website.

Psychosocial
Psychosocial refers to the dynamic relationship between the psychological and social dimensions of a person, one influencing 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.

Psychosocial support
Psychosocial support refers to the actions that address both the emotional and social needs of individuals, families, social networks and communities, with the aim to help people use their resources and to enhance resilience.

Psychosocial well-being
Psychosocial well-being describes the positive state of being when individuals, families, social networks and communities thrive. It is influenced by the interplay of both psychological and social factors.

Place, sense and loss of place
Sense of place is the subjective experience that individuals, families, social networks and communities have of the location they inhabit, including meanings, beliefs, symbols, memories, values, and feelings. It is a place where disaster affected people feel that they have a good enough living environment. Loss of place implies a loss of confidence in the norms, networks, and mutual trust in the civil society that is supposed to protect and facilitate collaborative actions among the citizens and institutions

Resilience
Resilience is the ability to react or adapt positively to a difficult and challenging event or experience, or to get through difficult experiences in a positive way. As such, it is the adaptive capacity of people and their ability to access, accept and use social support. Different human, physical, psychological, social, financial and political factors affect people's ability to endure, adapt and quickly recover from stresses and shocks such as flooding. The concept of emotional resilience accepts that people may experience temporary distress.

Preparedness
Disaster preparedness refers to measures taken to prepare for and reduce the effects of disasters. That is, to predict and, where possible, prevent disasters, mitigate their impact on vulnerable populations, and respond to and effectively cope with their consequences.

Response

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aims to respond to disasters as rapidly and effectively as possible, by mobilizing its resources (people, money and other assets) and using its network in a coordinated manner so that the initial effects are countered and the needs of the affected communities are met. The primary aims of disaster response are rescue from immediate danger and stabilization of the physical and emotional condition of survivors. These go hand in hand with the recovery of the dead and the restoration of essential services such as water and power. How long this takes varies according to the scale, type and context of the disaster but typically takes between one and six months and is composed of a search and rescue phase in the immediate aftermath of a disaster followed by a medium-term phase devoted to stabilizing the survivors' physical and emotional condition.

Recovery

Recovery refers to those programmes which go beyond the provision of immediate relief to assist those who have suffered the full impact of a disaster to rebuild their homes, lives and services and to strengthen their capacity to cope with future disasters.

Stress

Stress is a state of pressure or strain that comes upon human beings in many different situations. It can be caused by any change – positive or negative. It is an ordinary feature of everyday life and is positive when it makes a person perform optimally, for example in doing a written school exam. However stress becomes distress, when an individual is unable to adapt to the stress they are experiencing and often implies a certain degree of suffering. It is however a normal reaction when experiencing an abnormal situation. Sometimes people become disoriented, have intrusive memories and try to avoid being reminded of the crisis situation they have experienced. Other reactions include not feeling anything at all, difficulties in making decisions and isolating oneself from other people.

Urban and urbanization

No globally accepted definition of urban exists. Common criteria used to define urban areas include but are not limited to; population size, population concentration, service provision, commute time to major towns and cities, predominant type of economic activity, conformity to legal or administrative status, areas historically designated as urban and local knowledge.

Violence

WHO defines violence in three categories: self-directed, interpersonal and collective. Each of these categories has four different types of violence which are common to all: physical, sexual, psychological and neglect/deprivation.

Vulnerability

The characteristics of a person or group in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of crisis. A range of factors that may decrease individuals, families, social networks and communities' ability to cope with distress experiences, e.g. poverty, mental or physical health disabilities, lack of social network, lack of family support, age and gender.

Vulnerabilities change over time as people and groups' abilities to use the resources available to them changes and as resources and opportunities presented to them change.v Further reading and useful sources of information

Further reading and useful sources of information

Advocacy package. IASC guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings, IASC, (undated). Available here: www.who.int/mental_health/en/

Children, Young People and Flooding. Recovery and Resilience, Maggie Mort, Marion Walker, Alison Lloyd Williams, Amanga Bingley and Virginia Howells, Save the Children and Lancaster University, (2016). Available here: wp.lancs.ac.uk/cyp-floodrecovery/

IFRC Strategy on violence prevention, mitigation and response 2011-2020, available here www.ifrc.org

Management of dead bodies after disasters: A field manual for first responders, PAHA, WHO, ICRC and IFRC, (2009). Available here: www.icrc.org

NATO TENTS Guidance for responding to the psychosocial and mental health needs of people affected by disasters or major incidents (2009), www.coe.int

PrepAge guidelines and material on older people in emergency and disaster preparedness and prevention programmes, available here: www.prepage.eu

Prewitt Diaz, Joseph O., Recovery: Re-establishing place and community resilience, Global journal of community psychology practice, 4(3), 1-10

Psychological First Aid Training Manual for Child Practitioners (PFA), Save the Children Denmark (2013), Available here: www.resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/

The British Red Cross has developed good teaching resources on flooding, available here: www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Teaching-resources/Lesson-plans/Emergency-flood

The Comprehensive Guideline on mental health and psychosocial support, OPSIC project, University of Innsbruck, University of Zagreb, Academic Medical Centre University of Amsterdam, (2016). Available here: www.compass-crisis.org

The effects of flooding on mental health, Health protection agency, United Kingdom (2011). Available here: www.alnap.org/resource/12562

The IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, www.pscentre.org

ANNEX 1
The strategic stepped model of care

The strategic stepped model of care links the impact of crisis with the psychosocial and mental health care that individuals, families, social networks and communities need using screening, triage, assessment and intervention. It is intended as a conceptual and practical resource for planners. The strategic stepped model of care has six main components that fall into three groups:

Strategic and Operational Preparedness
- Strategic planning : comprehensive multi-agency planning, preparation, training and rehearsal of the full range of service responses that may be required
- Prevention services that are intended to develop the collective psychosocial resilience of communities and which are planned and delivered in advance of disastrous events

Public Psychosocial Care
- Families, peers and communities provide responses to people's psychosocial needs that are based on the principles of psychological first aid
- Assessment, interventions and other responses that are based on the principles of psychological first aid that is delivered by trained laypersons, who are supervised by the staff of the mental healthcare services, and social care practitioners

Personalised Psychosocial and Mental Health Care
- Access to primary mental health care services for screening, assessment and intervention services for people who do not recover from immediate and short-term distress
- Access to secondary and tertiary mental health care services for people who are thought to have mental disorders that require specialist intervention

The details of the six main components are developed in the NATO TENTS Guidance for responding to the psychosocial and mental health needs of people affected by disasters or major incidents (2009), available here: www.coe.int

ANNEX 2

General principles of the response

- Coordinate: Establish coordination of intersectoral mental health and psychosocial support
- Assess: Conduct assessments of mental health needs and psychosocial issues
- Monitor: Initiate participatory systems for monitoring and evaluation
- Promote human rights: Apply a human rights framework throughout mental health and psychosocial support
- Protect: Identify, monitor, prevent and respond to protection threats and failures through social and legal protection
- Activate: Facilitate conditions for community mobilization, ownership and control of emergency response in all sectors of the response
- Recruit, train and support staff and volunteers including cultural and ethical issues
- Provide support on all levels following the multilevel approach /stepped model of care
- Provide special support for children and adolescents including safe places of education
- Provide Information to the affected population
- Embed the psychosocial support into the overall support system

These general principles are drawn from the Comprehensive Guideline on mental health and psychosocial support, which contains over 50 action sheets with key actions for mental health and psychosocial response in crisis. The comprehensive guideline is available for download here: www.compass-crisis.org