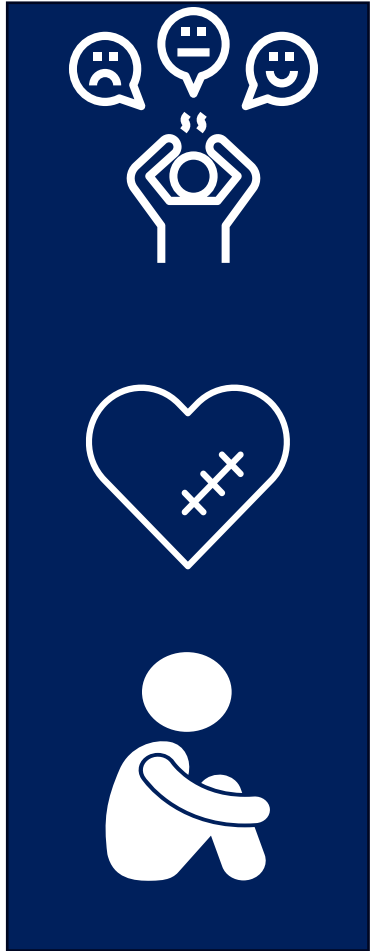


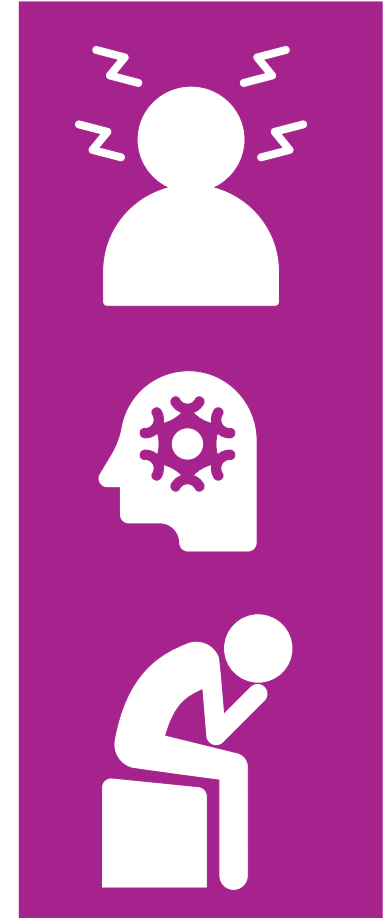
Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Aspects of Responding To Public Health Emergencies: **The Why, What and How?**

26 February 2025

Mpox, Ebola Disease and Mental Well-being



- People affected by mpox may experience:
 - A range of feelings, emotions and stressors
 - Physical changes that can lead to stigmatization
 - Impact on mental and psychosocial well being
- People affected by EVD may experience:
 - A unique range of stressors
 - Neurological complications
 - Mental health conditions, including substance use disorders

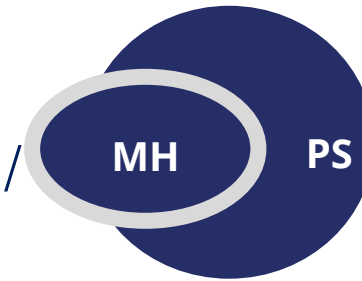


Activities

Setting inter-agency standards in MHPSS operations.

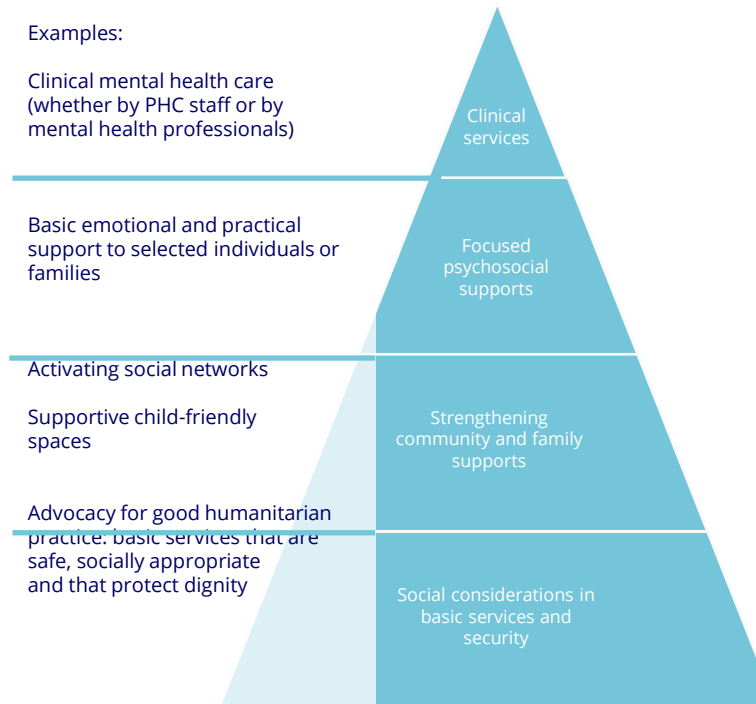
Consensus for a composite term and definition

- Protecting or promoting psychosocial well-being and/or preventing or treating mental health conditions.



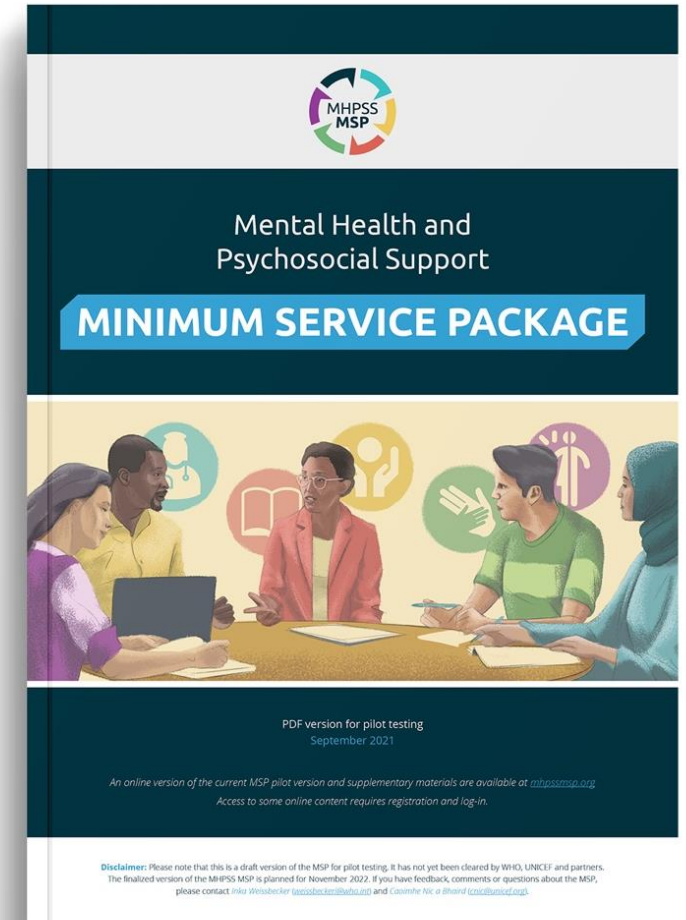
A new model for interventions

- Shifting from a single disorder-focused model towards a multi-layered intervention pyramid.



What is the MHPSS Minimum Service Package?

- Set of 22 **high priority MHPSS** activities
- Based on:
 - **Existing guidelines**
 - Best **available evidence**
 - **Consultation & expert consensus**
- **Intersectoral**
 - shared understanding, common language
- Designed for a **faster, more effective, better coordinated response**



MSP Guidance on Using the MSP in PHEs

Part 1.
Additional actions
needed for each MSP
activity in PHE

Part 2.
Adaptations
to existing MSP
activities

Part 3.
**Guidelines, standards
and tools**

Using the MSP in Public Health Emergencies



Infectious disease case management

e.g. emotional & practical
support for those in
treatment, quarantine,
family members, recovery



Infection prevention and control (IPC)

e.g. safe and dignified
burials & grieving rituals,
supporting behaviour
change & positive decision-
making



Risk communication & community engagement

e.g. Key messages on staying
well and empowering
messages on effective
individual action for IPC



Maintenance of essential health services

e.g. adaptation and
maintenance of MH services
(e.g. through remote delivery)

Uganda Experience: MHPSS TWG RESPONSE TO EVD

Best experiences

- Joint task force In response
- Deployed pysocial and parasocial workers at all isolation units
- Capacity enhacment of the general health workers at the isolation units through a one hour daily training on MHPSS identifation and provisoion of basic PSS
- Community awareness against stigama and segeration
- Developed play materials for children at the isolation units
- Child friendly services through case management at individual level for the affected children

Next steps:

- Deployment at the serviors clinics for follow up for post EVD support in all the five serviours clinics
- Training for General health workers on Mhgap HIG
- Development of materials against stigame for community dessiminations

CHALLENGES

- Communication with children

BEST PRACTICE

- Mutidisplinnary response team
- Structured thematic TWG
- Intergation of services at community levels

My Hero is You

*an illustrated storybook series
to support children's wellbeing
during uncertain times*



Children's storybook: **mpox** edition

An RCCE resource spearheaded by WHO & UNICEF

Main objectives:

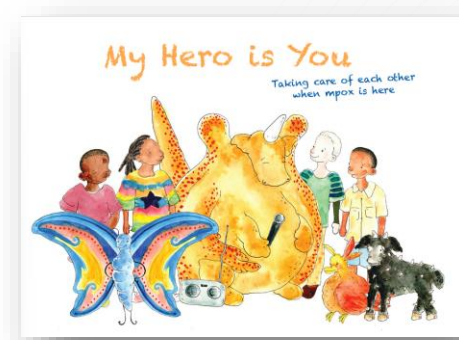
- Inform children about mpox in an accessible manner
- Introduce coping strategies
- Reduce fears and stigma

Informed by the voices of children

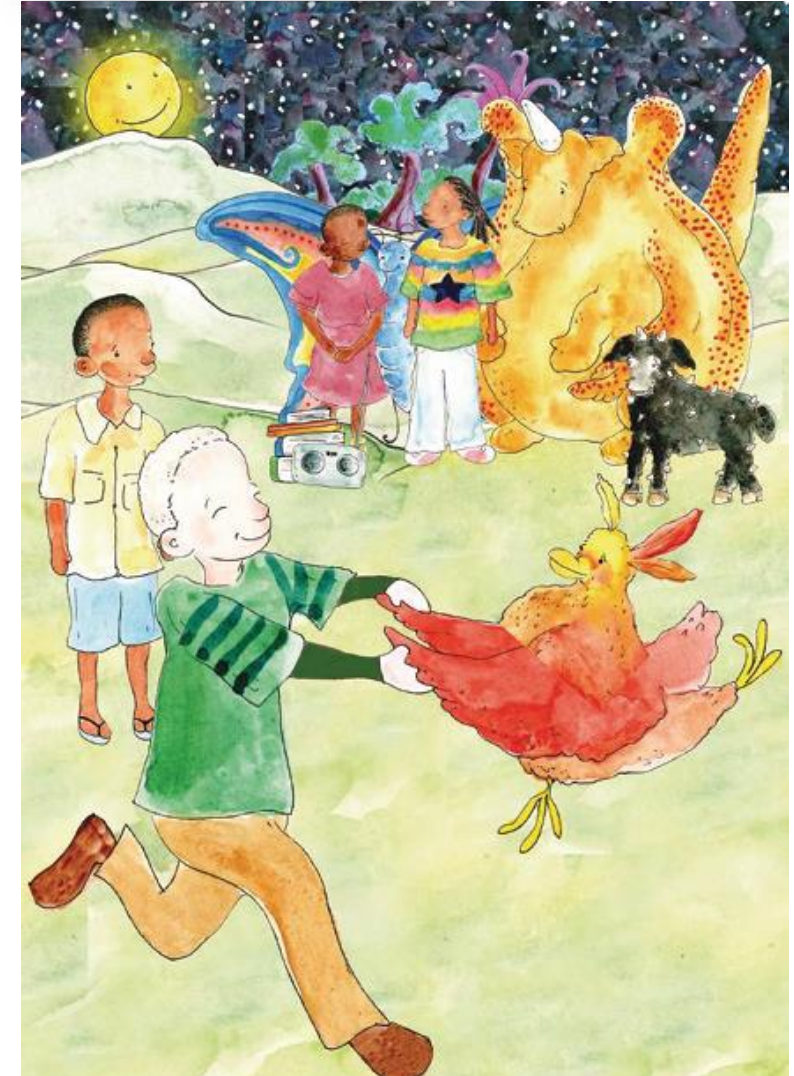
- Inputs into the story framework
Qualitative and quantitative surveys
- Intensive field-testing
→ *With more than 100 children in DRC and Burundi*

Expert reviews

WHO, UNICEF, CBM, African Albinism Network



In the
pipeline





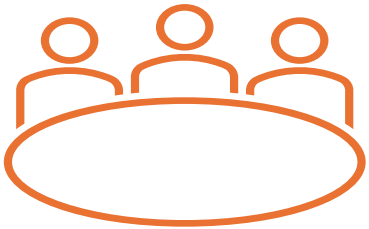
IASC Information Note: Disability and Inclusion in MHPSS

To be effective and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities, an MHPSS programme/response must:

- Address barriers to access
- Be informed by the participation of persons with disabilities

5 Keys to Ensuring Inclusion in MHPSS

in a Public Health Emergency



Consult
with/ensure
meaningful
participation
of disability
actors



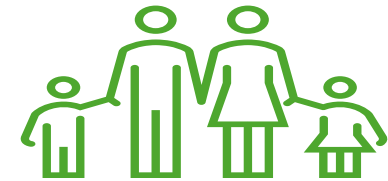
Ensure
capacity of
staff and
volunteers



Identify and
remove
barriers



Ensure/
advocate that
data collection
systems allow
disaggregation



Leave
NOBODY
behind

Africa CDC Flagship Interventions on Workforce

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) integration into EPR

- Conducted workshops in Western, Central, Eastern Africa and Southern Africa
- Trained 80 Mental Health leads and emergency officers on MHPSS during emergencies and integration into EPR.

MHPSS Surge Capacity within AVOHC

- Developed MHPSS capacity within African Volunteers Health Corps (AVoHC).
- Trained 25 specialized MHPSS experts for AVoHC
- Integration of MHPSS in all AVoHC induction trainings for advocacy and Awareness.
- Deployed experts to support emergencies, e.g., Mpox (DRC, Burundi, Tanzania) Marburg (Rwanda).
- In country training for Selected member states for provisional MHPSS leads capacity strengthening.

Mental Health Legislation Support

- Support Member States in reviewing and implementing Mental Health legislation.
- Facilitated country-to-country peer learning (e.g., Sierra Leone's Presidential Taskforce on Mental Health).

Africa CDC Mental Health Leadership Program (MHLP)

MENTAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME PILLARS



1

Integration of mental health into the Africa CDC Kofi Annan Global Health Leadership Programme

15 Senior mental health leaders will complete the prestigious Kofi Annan Global Health Programme, with dedicated mental health content introduced for all public health leaders.



2

Establish an African Field Epidemiology Training Programme (FETP) in Global Mental Health

80 Mental health and public health professionals will join the Field Epidemiology Training Programme (FETP) with a dedicated mental health track, and mental health will be incorporated into this practical field epidemiology course.



3

Implement the Short Public Mental Health Leadership Courses

A diverse range of 240 mental health, public health, civil society and lived experience leaders will undergo an intensive introductory course in public mental health, services reform, leadership and advocacy.



4

Strengthen the Networking and Civil Society Engagement

20 mental health-focused civil society organizations, including organizations of people with lived experience across AU regions will be supported to advance their mental health reform work and advocacy plans.

- Networks of mental health actors, including AMHLP course alumni and civil society will enable better sharing and learning across countries and across disciplines.

Useful references and links

- All MHPSS resources can be accessed on the MHPSS MSP website:
<https://www.mhpssmsp.org/>
- [OpenWHO.org](https://openwho.org/) - Mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies
- Email to register or inquire about Build Better Before workshops and simulations:
buildbetterbefore@who.int

EPI-WIN webinar

- View EPI-WIN webinar “[Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Aspects of Responding To Public Health Emergencies: The Why, What and How?](#)”
- Speakers:
 - Fahmy Hanna, WHO & IASC MHPSS RG
 - Grace Obalim, TPO Uganda
 - Dumsani Njobo Mamba, Africa CDC
 - Caoimhe Nic a Bhaired, UNICEF
 - Phiona Koyiet, World Vision International
 - Maya Bachet, WHO
 - Heather Pearson, WHO