The NEA’s view and contribution to advance the area of MHPSS

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WHO webinar-launch of “a framework of MHPSS in radiation Emergencies”
November 27, 2020
Recognition of mental health and psychosocial impacts of nuclear or radiological accidents

- Such effects were reported after all nuclear/radiological accidents (i.e. over several decades);
- Embedded into “non-radiological health effects” and recognized by all International Organisations, up to the level of international standards
- Manifest in individuals and communities in the form of mental health and psycho-social consequences associated with the impact of protective measures and medium- to long-term socio-economic disruptions
- Related to protective actions decisions and to lack of preparedness

“The major health impacts that had been observed among the public and the workers were mental health problems and impaired social wellbeing”
(UNSCEAR, 2016. White paper).
But their mitigation in practice are still not developed

- Until this WHO publication, no comprehensive international framework has addressed this issue.
- The new WHO framework represents a major breakthrough and a first step bridging the gap between disaster risk reduction sector and radiological and nuclear EPR sector.
- WHO benefits from its wide experience within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in elaborating guidelines for providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in emergency settings.
- As a result, the new WHO framework will serve as a basis for developing derivative products – practical tools and solutions which can be readily integrated into an all-hazards approach for EPR.
Ongoing work: Integration of MHPSS into Protective Action Decision-Making

- Develop methods for balancing direct health risks vs the indirect consequences of protective actions
- Consider impacts on the most vulnerable groups (e.g., children, elderly, hospitalised people)
- Provide more effective risk communication (e.g., provide people with knowledge on health risks from radiation exposure; know how to make the decision-making process consensual)
- Make the best use of international good practice of MHPSS operation and adapt them to improve national/local plans and procedures
- Integrate logistical aspects in preparedness
- Assess and Measure the efficacy of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, through exercising; try to assess if national and community resilience are sufficiently developed
Thank you for your attention

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