

# Guide to the training programme

## G.1 Who this training manual is for

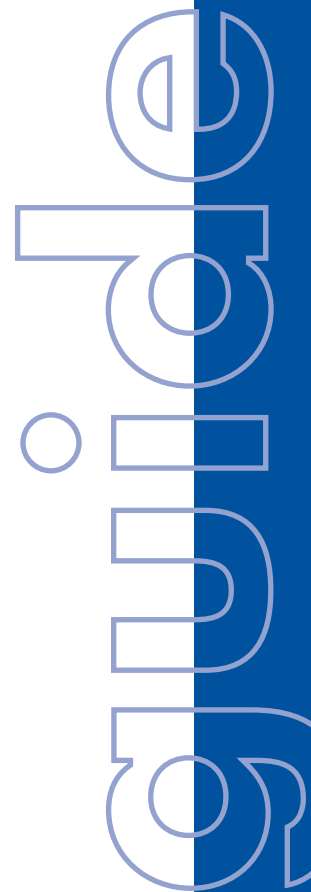
Critical events, such as disasters, conflicts, wars, accidents and health epidemics bring with them social and psychological consequences that often undermine people's ability to carry on with their lives. Red Cross - Red Crescent volunteers have historically provided support to people affected by these critical events, responding to human suffering in many different practical ways. More recently, the need for support which helps to relieve emotional suffering has been recognized as vitally important if people are to begin the process of recovery, picking up on everyday lives and coping with the hardships they will face in the near future. This kind of support, called psychological support, requires trained volunteers who will be able to meet the challenge of providing emotional help to vulnerable people at the time they need it.

This manual then is intended for those who would like to train Red Cross - Red Crescent volunteers in psychological support. For the trainer, a mental health background is not mandatory, but a good understanding of social work, psychology, or psychiatry is crucial. More specifically, the trainer should possess the following skills/knowledge:

- Thorough knowledge of the Red Cross - Red Crescent and the working conditions in the field
- Training/facilitation skills and knowledge of adult education
- Skills in caring for others and sound self-confidence.

If the National Society is not able to appoint a local trainer, the Reference Centre for Psychological Support at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies can be contacted. This Centre is charged with putting into effect the Psychological Support Programme (PSP), a recent innovation that builds on the traditional mission and practices of the Red Cross - Red Crescent. The Programme works in partnership with other services of the Red Cross - Red Crescent in order to serve the holistic needs of individuals and their communities. The Centre has produced a number of publications on psychological support which can be obtained directly from the International Federation.

The manual may be used as an aid for trainers, who can translate and adapt it to the language and customs of their particular region. Training on psychological support can be given as a separate programme or may support already existing programmes as a component of disaster preparedness, first aid or social welfare. The goal in both instances is to strengthen the quality of care for beneficiaries and provide adequate support for the helpers themselves.



## G.2 How the manual is organized

The training manual contains a guide to the programme for trainers, plus six modules covering different topics, which together make up a training programme of 30 hours. The modules can either be used as a package to assist in the development of a Psychological Support Programme, or single modules can be chosen for more specific training needs. For instance, volunteers who are working on home-based care for people living with HIV/AIDS might concentrate on Module 3: *Supportive communication*, whereas first-aiders would benefit particularly from training in Module 2: *Stress and coping*.

In developing this training manual, the aim has been to build on experience that the Red Cross - Red Crescent has gathered over the last decade. The framework that has been developed builds on many different situations from all over the world, and is designed to be applicable both geographically and operationally wherever it is used.

Trainers are given guidance and suggestions for planning training sessions, while the overall aim of the training materials gives participants opportunities to:

- Become familiar with psychological and social needs and interventions, respecting relevant and appropriate cultural frameworks
- Plan and apply a variety of interventions sensitive to local circumstances.

There are, in addition, specific learning objectives for each module. The text which makes up each module is designed to satisfy these learning objectives, which are reinforced by the use of activities, group work, often based on role-play, suggested discussion points and handout materials.

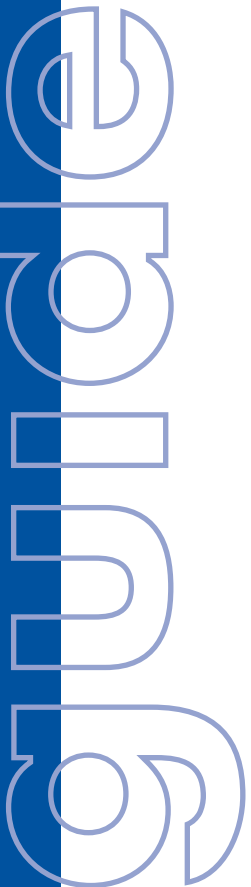
## G.3 Starting out

As experienced group facilitators, Red Cross - Red Crescent trainers may well find that the suggestions given below have been incorporated in their working practices for some time. The suggestions are repeated here, however, in order to reinforce those practices and to remind trainers of the good educational reasons behind them.

Research over the years has shown that adults learn best in the following circumstances:

- When the learning starts from the strengths of individuals, ensuring that they acknowledge and value their own experiences and their existing strengths and capabilities
- When they have a degree of control over what they are learning
- When the learning is well supported
- When the learning is relevant to their daily lives or is meaningful for the future
- When the learning can be put into effect immediately
- When the learning method is flexible
- When the learning achieves identified outcomes.

Trainers will note just how similar these circumstances are to those for effective psychological support. In fact, the situations are similar. Your group of participants comprises a community, and while you are not dealing with people in disaster situations with stress reactions, they have many of the same needs, particularly concerning supportive communication and the promotion of community self-help and use of resources.



## You, the group and the programme

If you are all to work together as a community, with some degree of trust and mutual sympathy, participants need to be given time to get to know each other. They also need to be comfortable in their surroundings, to be aware of the ground rules of the group and to feel confident and able to contribute fully.

Consequently, early information on basic essentials, such as where the toilets are, when breaks will occur, and the timing of sessions allows participants to concentrate on the content of the training.

Getting to know you and each other can be handled in a number of different ways:

- Welcome participants personally as they register, introduce yourself and introduce them to other participants
- Ensure participants label themselves clearly. This will depend on culture and tradition, but if possible, try to remain informal, with first names used
- Begin the first session with an “icebreaker” activity, designed to elicit a small amount of information about participants’ experience and current interests
- Ensure that your own details are clearly communicated: your role during the course, your field experience, what they should call you, and so on.

## The agenda, and how the group will work together

Participants need to have a clear indication of how the sessions will be run. This is where it is important to explain that you expect each participant to have a major input to the training, since the experience and skills that each one brings to the sessions will be of value. Your own training style should be explained, and participants given information on what you expect of them. This will again depend on culture and traditions, but as an example:

- Participants should ask questions immediately they occur, rather than wait until the end of a session
- The schedule is flexible up to a point, and may occasionally be modified within certain limits
- The trainer will act as referee and may intervene in discussions with valid ideas and points of view.

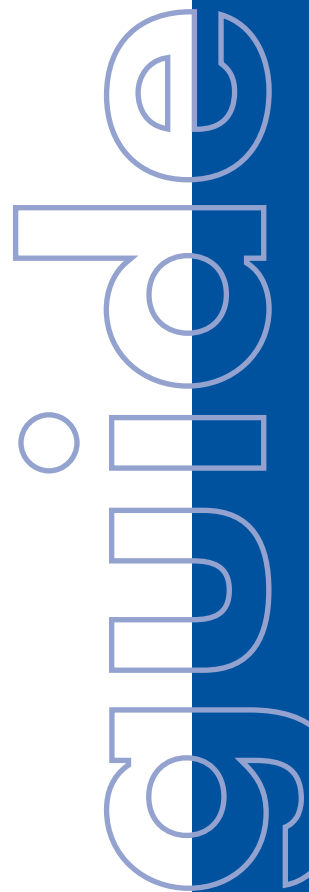
Remaining “learner-centred” means that participants themselves have responsibility for what they learn, but as the trainer, your role is to ensure that they take full advantage of that responsibility.

Explain how participants will work on the activities, sometimes individually and sometimes in smaller or larger groups. Explain the way that discussion will follow work on activities, and that they will be given an opportunity to think about and prepare future action on an individual basis.

When participants work in small groups (3 or 4 people suggested), it is recommended that membership of the group is varied from activity to activity. This will allow wider interaction, and will give group members a broader perspective.

## Expectations of participants

As well as giving information on what participants should expect of the training, it is important to find out what *their* expectations are before they begin. Often, the purpose of training is not well enough explained, and participants arrive with a number of



unrealistic expectations. There are a number of ways of eliciting this information:

- Include it as part of the introductory activity, i.e. say who you are, what you do, and what you are hoping to get out of this training
- Prepare a pre-training questionnaire, which asks about expectations of the training
- Give a clear explanation of what you expect participants to learn, and ask if this is what they expect.

Be prepared to modify the agenda if participants have valid expectations that you can meet, which are not currently included in the content.

### Supporting learners

The support of the trainer is essential if participants are to be empowered to take full advantage of the training on offer. Trainers should be aware of their role as *facilitators of learning*, rather than as *teachers*. They act as open doorways into the process of learning, giving help where necessary, guiding and nurturing. Trainers can help ensure that the content of the training is:

- Relevant and necessary, and aimed at providing knowledge that will be useful in real life situations
- Based on participants' knowledge and experience
- Action-oriented, i.e. it leads to practical action.

Trainers should treat the training materials in a flexible way, adapting suggestions made in the manual and adding to them according to local conditions and priority needs.

It is, furthermore, the responsibility of the trainer to ensure that:

- Participants are engaged in the process of learning, by being encouraged to air their views and discuss different points
- Participants understand the vocabulary and the words used
- Participants who show signs of discomfort are offered reassurance, support or advice, as appropriate.

### Providing handouts

The handout material contained within this pack of materials is of two kinds:

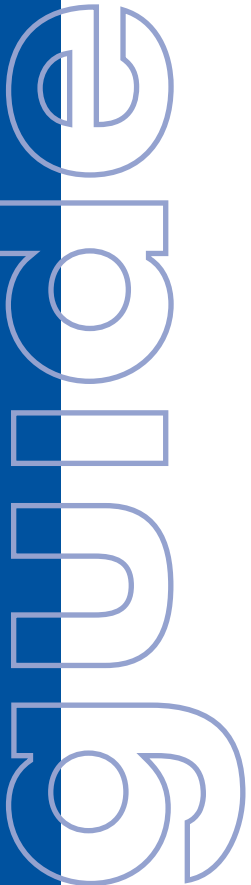
- Useful information, such as a glossary of terms
- Thumbnail versions of overhead projector slides used during the presentation of material.

The useful information will serve as a resource for participants. The slides have a dual purpose, acting both as a reminder of main points made during the session, and as a trigger for going over any information or points which need further clarification.

In order not to distract attention from your presentation, it is advisable to give handout material immediately after a session. If you combine the provision of handouts with a short period of summary and review, you will give participants a good opportunity to check their understanding of specific points. You may also find that the slide handouts serve as a starting point for their own notes, and are useful in periods spent reflecting on action to be taken in the future.

### Taking action

You will recall that two of the circumstances in which adults learn best are:



- When the learning is relevant to their daily lives or is meaningful for the future
- When the learning can be put into effect immediately.

To meet these objectives, it is suggested that a short period of time at the end of each session is used for private reflection and the opportunity for participants to note down any points which are directly relevant to their own work, and about which they might wish to find out more, or to plan for future action.

## Activities

Each module contains a number of activities. These are designed to help participants understand the relevance of the training to their own situations, and to broaden their view of their work through interaction with other group members. Activities may be based on individual experience, but the majority of them use group discussion as a means of widening the focus.

Note that these activities are adaptable to your own situation and to the culture and traditions of your group of participants. The content and timing of activities may vary from those suggested in the text, but their purpose is to achieve the best circumstances for adult learning, i.e.:

- When they have a degree of control over what they are learning
- When the learning is relevant to their daily lives or is meaningful for the future
- When the learning method is flexible.

## Content of the materials

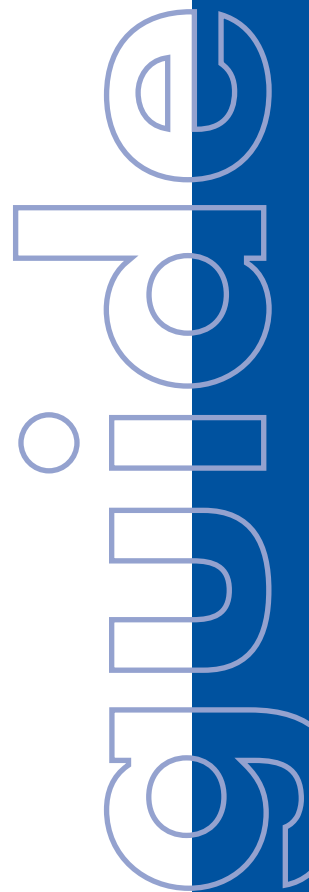
A brief description of the different sessions in the training course, and what they will contain, will be of interest to participants. The following gives an overview of the contents of each module, which make up the main background material to each training session.

### Module 1: Psychological support

Module 1 gives a definition of psychological support and shows how volunteer helpers provide support to communities, following critical events whose consequences often undermine people's ability to carry on with their lives. The module also provides background information on the International Federation's Psychological Support Programme and presents the basic principles that guide a successful programme. The module focuses on providing psychological support in disasters, but the approach is applicable and relevant to other Red Cross - Red Crescent contexts as well. This module is intended as reference material, and as a foundation on which the other modules build. Much of the information may be familiar to participants, but the module gives them an opportunity to reflect on and discuss issues to do with psychological support which may otherwise be taken for granted.

Most of the material in this module was inspired by the *Best practice* compilation<sup>1</sup>, which was launched by the International Federation on World Health Day 2001. The material was also presented at the 4th International Conference on Psychological Support held in Denmark, 2001.

1- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2001) *Psychological support: Best practices from Red Cross and Red Crescent programmes*, IFRC.



## Module 2: Stress and coping

This module looks at how volunteers can be trained to help people manage stress. Stress represents a central theme in Red Cross - Red Crescent activities. First aid, disaster relief and other emergency assistance services, like ambulance service and search and rescue activities come immediately to mind. Other services, such as social or psychological services designed to help people in need, have equally strong associations with stress. Volunteers are generally better equipped to handle their job both for the benefit of people affected and for themselves, if they understand the basic components of stress and coping.

## Module 3: Supportive communication

This module provides the basic foundation for supportive communication. Red Cross - Red Crescent volunteers will often find themselves in challenging situations, where feeling confident about how to communicate well with other people is vitally important. For instance, first aid volunteers need to feel confident informing relatives about injuries of their loved ones, and volunteers working with people living with HIV/AIDS need knowledge of how to communicate with people who have just received their positive status or who will soon be facing death.

## Module 4: Promoting community self-help

Module 4 explores how to engage communities in their own recovery process, and shows the beneficial effects of community self-help on the psychological consequences of critical events. The more a community is involved, the more the people feel a sense of worth that helps to reduce feelings of powerlessness. Subsequent improvements in cooperation and collaboration help achieve more effective solutions. Community ownership or investment may also lead to more sustainable programmes.

## Module 5: Populations with special needs

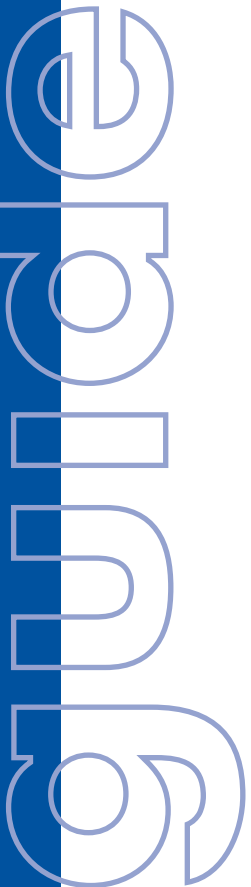
Module 5 describes populations that are likely to be particularly vulnerable with respect to psychological needs and who may require specific attention. It explores the psychological needs of vulnerable groups, while at the same time recognizing the vital role they play in social and community structures.

## Module 6: Helping the helper

The final module pays special attention to the helpers themselves, because timely and adequate support to helpers is a prerequisite for providing quality care and relief to people directly affected. Helpers are clearly affected by their jobs and may leave a situation with a feeling of not having done enough, because the need exceeds their capabilities. The volunteer giving psychological support might be troubled by tormenting stories of disaster survivors, first aid volunteers may feel guilt over the death of a patient, and volunteers in HIV/AIDS programmes are faced with the distress of the repetitive cycle of death.

## Annexes: Useful information

Annexes contain useful information to be given to participants, for example, a glossary of the terminology of stress and coping.



### Overhead slides/Handouts

At the end of each module, a set of slides is included. These slides summarize the main topics, and are intended as a resource for the trainer, giving direction and cohesion to the commentary provided. The slides appear also in thumbnail form, to be used as handouts for participants. They serve as reminders of work that has been covered, acting as a checklist of major topics. It is suggested that these are given to participants at the end of each session, and that participants are encouraged to make their own notes in addition.

### Activities

Activities occur within the text at points which seem most appropriate. Activities may take the form of group discussion, preparation of plans, or role-play scenarios. It is suggested that trainers adapt these activities to suit their own group of participants and the local conditions.

### Discussion points

During activities, trainers should encourage participants to contribute to the discussion, based on their own personal experience. The intention is to stimulate critical debate, to raise reflection and awareness rather than come to conclusions. There are also a number of areas in the text where Discussion Points have been flagged: these follow issues which would benefit from critical debate and from the different perspectives which participants will bring.

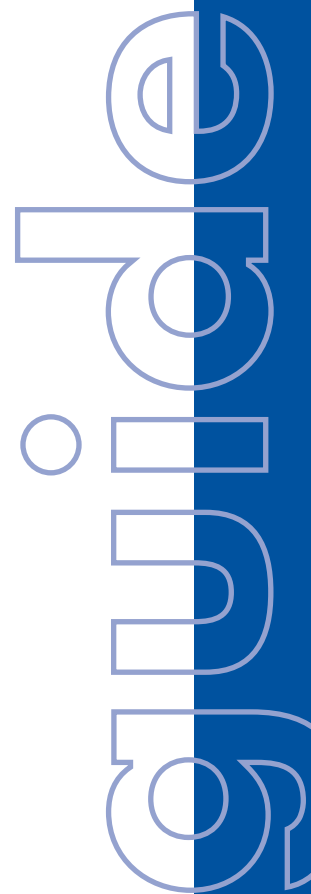
### Taking action

It is intended that there should be some clear and active results from the activities and discussions. For this purpose, at the end of sessions, participants should be encouraged to find an appropriate way of noting down specific action they wish to take. This might take the form of further research on certain aspects of psychological support, or positive action in a defined situation.

End of introductory session.

## G.4 The main programme

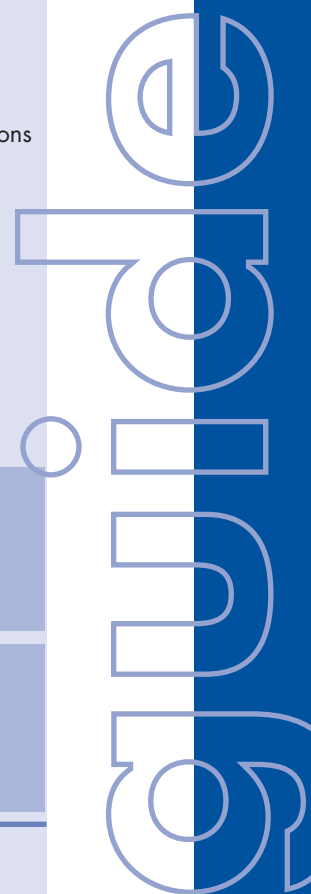
The following table will give you an indication of the way the modules are organized, the major elements in each module, and learning objectives for each part of the module. Activities are shown in this table where they may be most appropriate, but there is an in-built flexibility, where you, as trainer, should use your own judgement and initiative in fitting activities and discussions in at the most convenient time. The purpose of each activity is described, so that you may adapt it to suit local custom and culture if needed.



**Table 1: programme**

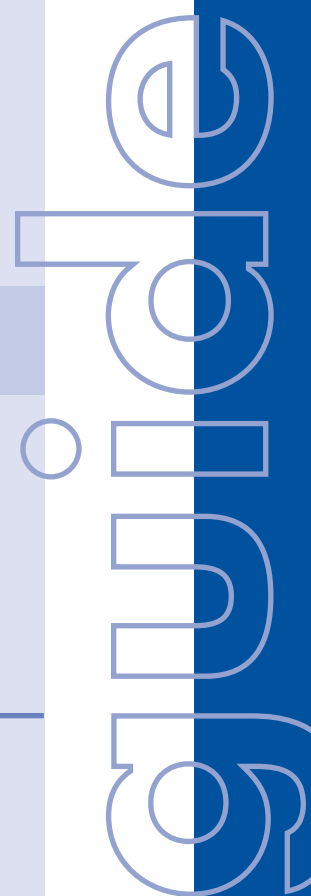
Day	Essential elements	Sections	Learning objectives
<b>Day 1</b> Session 1 3 hours	Starting out	Personal introductions The agenda  Supporting learners Content of the materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Familiarize participants with the trainer and with each other</li> <li>■ Share individual training goals</li> <li>■ Be aware of what is expected of participants during the course</li> </ul>
<b>Day 1</b> Session 2 3 hours	<b>Module 1:</b> Psychological support	<b>1.1</b> What is psychological support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe the purpose of psychological support and the role of volunteers in the provision of psychological support</li> </ul>
		<b>1.2</b> The role of volunteers	
		<b>Activity 1A:</b> Attributes and attitudes of helpers Brainstorming and group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Analyse attributes and attitudes of helpers</li> </ul>
		<b>1.3</b> The evolution of psychological support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Outline steps in the evolution of psychological support programmes</li> </ul>
		<b>1.4</b> Basic principles in the implementation of a psychological support programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe the basic principles involved in the implementation of a psychological support programme in a disaster situation</li> </ul>
	<b>Activity 1B:</b> The basic principles of psychological support programmes Individual contribution followed by group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reinforce reasons behind the basic principles</li> <li>■ Stimulate critical debate and discussion using own knowledge and experience</li> <li>■ Raise awareness of the broad spectrum of experience in the group</li> </ul>	
Review and revision		Discussion Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Analyse strengths and weaknesses of specific interventions</li> </ul>
		Thumbnail version of overhead projector slides as handout  <b>1.5</b> Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Act as permanent resource and reminder of the session's main topics</li> <li>■ Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>
<b>Day 2</b> Sessions 1 and 2 6 hours	<b>Module 2:</b> Stress and coping	<b>2.1</b> People under stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe the terminology of stress and coping</li> </ul>
		<b>2.2</b> Coping with stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe how people react to and cope with stress</li> </ul>
		<b>Activity 2A:</b> Coping strategies Individual work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Analyse individual responses to stress</li> </ul>
		Discussion Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Share coping strategies with other members of the group</li> </ul>

Day	Essential elements	Sections	Learning objectives
	Review and revision	<b>2.3</b> Loss and grief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe common reactions to loss and grief</li> </ul>
		<b>Activity 2B:</b> Loss and grief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss within the group varying emotional responses and different ways of coping</li> </ul>
		Discussion Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share ideas on emotional states and ways of coping with loss and grief</li> </ul>
		<b>2.4</b> The meaning of trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguish between a normal stress response and signs of trauma</li> </ul>
		<b>2.5</b> Guiding principles in the provision of psychological support Discussion Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess guidelines for the provision of psychological support</li> <li>Share experience and observations on the guiding principles</li> </ul>
	Annex 1: Terminology of stress and coping	<b>2.6</b> Crisis intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the steps to take in crisis intervention</li> </ul>
		Thumbnail version of slides as handout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as permanent resource and reminder of the main topics in the session</li> </ul>
		<b>2.7</b> Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>
	Annex 2: Glossary of typical emotional reactions	Handout material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that all participants have an equal understanding of the terminology of stress and coping, and the exact meaning of words used</li> </ul>
<b>Day 3</b> Sessions 1 and 2 6 hours	<b>Module 3:</b> Supportive communication	<b>3.1</b> Communication values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the values which accompany the most effective communication style</li> </ul>
		<b>Activity 3A:</b> World view Small groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share with the group the perception of values and their effect on communication</li> </ul>
		<b>3.2</b> Interpersonal communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practise communicating effectively in challenging situations</li> </ul>
		<b>3.3</b> Ways of responding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate the effects of good/bad communication on a personal basis</li> </ul>
		<b>Activity 3B:</b> Listening and responding Role-play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practise techniques used in being a good communicator</li> </ul>



Day	Essential elements	Sections	Learning objectives
	Review and revision	<p>Discussion Point</p> <p><b>3.4</b> Stages of constructive communication</p> <p><b>3.5</b> Assisted coping</p> <p><b>3.6</b> Working with groups</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p><b>3.7</b> Referral</p> <p>Thumbnail version of slides as handout</p> <p><b>3.8</b> Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Discuss techniques used in being a good communicator</li> <li>■ Focus on stages of constructive communication in order to foster resilience and self-help</li> <li>■ Practise working with groups of people in a community setting</li> <li>■ Discuss techniques to use when working with groups of people</li> <li>■ Analyse when and how to refer people to other professionals or organizations.</li> <li>■ Act as permanent resource and reminder of the main topics in the session</li> <li>■ Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>
<b>Day 4</b> Session 1 3 hours	<b>Module 4:</b> Promoting community self-help	<p><b>4.1</b> Defining a community</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p><b>Activity 4A:</b> Defining community participation Brainstorming</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p><b>4.2</b> Promoting self-help</p> <p><b>Activity 4B:</b> Social structures and leadership Small group discussion</p> <p><b>Activity 4C:</b> Planning action Small group role-play</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p>Thumbnail version of slides as handout</p> <p><b>4.3</b> Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe the factors that make a community supportive and healthy for its members</li> <li>■ Share ideas about community and membership</li> <li>■ Identify characteristics of community participation</li> <li>■ Share experience and knowledge of participatory methods</li> <li>■ Give details of how communities can be helped to use their own resources to solve problems</li> <li>■ Identify social structures/ power/leaders within a defined community</li> <li>■ Prepare an action plan for a specific community problem</li> <li>■ Discuss different approaches to support in the community</li> <li>■ Act as permanent resource and reminder of main topics in the session</li> <li>■ Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>
	Review and revision	<p>Thumbnail version of slides as handout</p> <p><b>4.3</b> Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Act as permanent resource and reminder of main topics in the session</li> <li>■ Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>

Day	Essential elements	Sections	Learning objectives
	<b>Annex 3:</b> Examples of Red Cross - Red Crescent interventions	Handout material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind of interventions when community participation helped restructuring</li> </ul>
<b>Day 4</b> Session 2 3 hours	<b>Module 5:</b> Populations with special needs	<p><b>5.1</b> Groups with special needs</p> <p><b>5.2</b> Children</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p><b>5.3</b> Older persons</p> <p><b>5.4</b> Persons with mental illness</p> <p><b>5.5</b> People living with HIV/AIDS</p> <p><b>Activity 5A:</b> Special needs Small group role-play</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p>Thumbnail version of slides as handout</p> <p><b>5.6</b> Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and describe the characteristic reactions of certain groups affected by disaster</li> <li>Share emotional reactions of helpers when children are suffering</li> <li>Describe effective types of intervention to assist certain groups at risk</li> <li>Assess special needs and plan appropriate action</li> <li>Reinforce many of the main principles of effective psychological support</li> <li>Act as permanent resource and reminder of main topics in the session</li> <li>Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>
	Review and revision		
<b>Day 5</b> Session 1 3 hours	<b>Module 6:</b> Helping the helpers	<p><b>6.1</b> Stress in the lives of helpers</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Warning signs of burnout</p> <p><b>Activity 6A:</b> Burnout signs Small group discussion</p> <p><b>6.3</b> Caring for the psychological needs of helpers</p> <p>Discussion Point</p> <p><b>6.4</b> Self-help techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe how reactions to stress may impact on helpers</li> <li>Give details of warning signs of stress or burnout among helpers</li> <li>Identify signs of burnout</li> <li>Describe how to provide psychological support for helpers</li> <li>Examine and assess different methods of caring for the psychological needs of helpers</li> <li>Give details of self-care methods for helpers</li> </ul>



Day	Essential elements	Sections	Learning objectives
	Review and revision	<b>Activity 6B:</b> Relieving stress and tension Small group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Share self-help methods</li> </ul>
		<b>6.5</b> Supportive supervision  <b>6.6</b> Peer group support  Discussion Point  Thumbnail version of slides as handout  <b>6.7</b> Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe ways of supporting helpers: supervisors and other volunteers</li> <li>■ Share ways of supporting peers</li> <li>■ Act as permanent resource and reminder of the main topics in the session</li> <li>■ Act as trigger for reinforcement of topics</li> </ul>
<b>Day 5</b> Session 2 3 hours	Summary, review and evaluation	Review and revision  Taking action  Evaluation  Completing the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Check on understanding and revisit areas of specific concern</li> <li>■ Ensure that planning is in place for future action</li> <li>■ Evaluate the course contents, delivery of the course and possible future changes</li> <li>■ Round off and ensure participants feel a sense of completion and continuity</li> </ul>

## G.5 Final session: summary, review and evaluation

All experienced trainers will be aware that one of the objectives of a good training programme should be to leave participants feeling invigorated and refreshed, wanting to go out immediately and implement all the good ideas that have come from the course. Leaving group members exhausted through information overload is not conducive to enthusiasm for tackling the job.

Ensuring that each individual member of the group feels valued and part of the decision-making process helps the training not just to be useful, but to be enjoyable, empowering and exciting. Through their contributions to the group discussions, participants should feel a sense of ownership of the process. This has many parallels to the community participation process recommended for psychological support programmes.

Participants need to feel that the experience has been “rounded off”, or completed. For this purpose, this final session of summary, review and evaluation is essential, and should not be rushed.

### Review and revision

Give a summary of the whole programme, inviting participants to revisit any parts of the programme where they feel additional attention might be usefully given. The summary allows the trainer to check understanding, as well as to ensure that all points have been covered adequately. If you have a mixed group, then take care not to allow

one member of the group to monopolize the discussion, concentrating only on the parts in which he or she is most interested.

### **Taking action**

Encourage participants to think about and to plan future action, taking into consideration what they have learned. This might be an ideal opportunity for small group work, asking people to get together to make an action plan of some kind to cover the next six months or a year of their work. This kind of planning will obviously depend on what their work is and whether they are currently involved in any psychological support programme, but encourage them to plan to put some kind of action into effect as soon as they return to work.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation of the training programme needs to be seen to be meaningful, with points made taken into consideration when the course is run again. Evaluation is the most useful way in which necessary changes can be made. The kind of questions that participants need to answer are:

- What pleased them during the course?
- What feelings did they experience?
- Did they find that participation in group activities was easy?
- What did they learn about themselves?
- What did they learn about other participants?
- Are there any areas in which more training is required?
- Do they have any suggestions for improving the course?

An evaluation questionnaire is included in the training materials, and this can be used to invite anonymous comment, and to give a statistical overview of how participants received the course. It can also be used for a more qualitative analysis of some aspects of the course. The device of a questionnaire is useful, but there is also a case for trying to elicit more immediate and personal feedback, particularly for the kinds of question listed above. A good relationship with participants allows the trainer to ask for comments, and to encourage constructive criticism.

Evaluation concerns the trainer and the delivery of the materials as well as the content. The trainer needs to ask: How do I know I am doing a good job? While there are some questions in the questionnaire about the trainer, a more personal response can help the trainer in his or her own professional development. Do not be afraid to ask.

### **Completing the process**

If you are to leave participants feeling still very much part of, and close to, the small community in which they have been involved during the training programme, ensure that they receive full contact details for the trainer and all participants. Encourage them to keep in touch as far as they are able, and to continue to exchange news, views and challenges. Giving the group a name (such as the January Group) can help maintain group identity. The purpose of this is to try to ensure that helpers working on psychological support programmes are not isolated. They may have their own peer group support mechanisms, but this wider group forms an extension to that support and can provide them with a broader field of focus in which they may find a stimulus for further professional development.

