



PROGRAM REPORT:

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Assessment Workshop

*Facilitated by the IFRC Asia Pacific MHPSS Collaborative at the
Malaysian Red Crescent National Headquarters (NHQ)*

Date: 23rd & 24th January 2024

Venue: Level 2, Training room NHQ

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS)

**National Headquarters, Malaysian Red
Crescent (MRC)**



Introduction

The Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Assessment Workshop convened on the 23rd and 24th January 2024 at National Headquarters, Malaysian Red Crescent (MRC) bringing together a diverse group of professionals, including mental health practitioners, MRC staff and volunteers to address the critical need for comprehensive assessments in the context of a dengue outbreak. This workshop served as a platform for participants to deepen their understanding of the intricate relationship between mental health, psychosocial well-being, and the challenges posed by dengue outbreaks.

As the incidence of dengue continues to rise globally, the workshop aimed to equip participants with the necessary tools, knowledge, and skills to conduct effective MHPSS assessments, thereby fostering a holistic approach to public health responses. Recognizing the unique psychosocial impact of infectious diseases, the workshop focused on integrating mental health considerations into the broader framework of disease management and community support.

Through this report, we aim to share the insights gained during the workshop, contributing to a broader understanding of the critical role that MHPSS assessments play in addressing the multifaceted impact of dengue outbreaks on individuals and communities.



Objectives

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) assessments during a dengue outbreak aim to understand and address the psychological and social well-being of individuals and communities affected by the outbreak. The objectives of conducting an MHPSS assessment tool during a dengue outbreak include:

- i. Identifying Mental Health Needs**

The assessment helps in identifying individuals and communities with mental health needs arising from the stress, anxiety, and trauma associated with the dengue outbreak. This includes both direct and indirect effects of the disease.
- ii. Tailoring Support Services**

The assessment allows for the development of targeted and tailored MHPSS interventions to meet the specific needs of the affected population. Different individuals and groups may require different types and levels of support.
- iii. Preventing and Managing Psychological Distress**

By understanding the mental health impact of the outbreak, appropriate interventions can be implemented to prevent and manage psychological distress among the affected population. This may include counselling, psychoeducation, and support groups.
- iv. Strengthening Community Resilience**

Assessments help in identifying existing community strengths and resilience factors. Interventions can then be designed to build upon these strengths, fostering a sense of community support and resilience in the face of the outbreak.
- v. Reducing Stigma and Discrimination**

MHPSS assessments contribute to the identification of factors contributing to stigma and discrimination associated with the dengue outbreak. Strategies can be developed to address and reduce stigma, promoting a more supportive community environment.



vi. **Improving Overall Health Outcomes**

Mental health and psychosocial well-being are interconnected with physical health. Addressing mental health needs can contribute to improved overall health outcomes for individuals affected by dengue.

vii. **Capacity Building**

The assessment provides an opportunity to identify existing capacities within the community and among local healthcare providers. Capacity-building interventions can then be implemented to enhance the ability of individuals and communities to cope with the psychosocial impact of the outbreak.

viii. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

MHPSS assessments help in establishing baseline data and indicators for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of mental health interventions over time. This allows for adjustments to be made to the response strategies as needed.

In summary, the objective of conducting an MHPSS assessment tool during a dengue outbreak is to holistically address the mental health and psychosocial needs of the affected population, contributing to a more comprehensive and effective public health response.



Participants

The workshop brought together several number of participants, including mental health practitioners, staff, and volunteers. The diverse group contributed to a rich exchange of perspectives and expertise.

Agenda / Topics

- MHPSS in Emergencies
- MHPSS Assessment
- Conducting Desk Review
- Review of the Emergency Context
- Applying PFA Skills in Data Collection
- Formulation of Interview Questionnaire
- Conducting Assessment (Simulation Exercise)
- Assessment Planning

Outcomes

- a. Participants gained a deeper understanding of the interconnection between dengue outbreaks and mental health.
- b. Enhanced skills in developing, implementing, and analysing MHPSS assessments.
- c. Strengthened collaboration and networking among participants from diverse backgrounds.
- d. Increased awareness of ethical considerations and strategies for addressing them in the field.
- e. Practical insights gained through fieldwork simulations provided a hands-on experience.



Further planning

- Pilot test the assessment during DREF dengue. If successful, the assessment will be utilised during emergency response for MHPSS needs.
- Plans for follow-up training sessions and workshops to delve into specific MHPSS intervention strategies.

Conclusion

The MHPSS Assessment Workshop achieved its objectives by providing participants with the necessary tools and knowledge to conduct effective assessments in the context of a dengue outbreak. The interactive and participatory nature of the workshop contributed to a successful learning experience, fostering a commitment among participants to contribute actively to mental health and psychosocial well-being in their communities.

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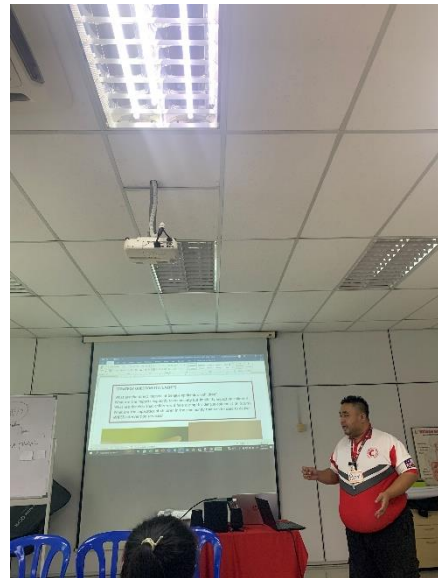
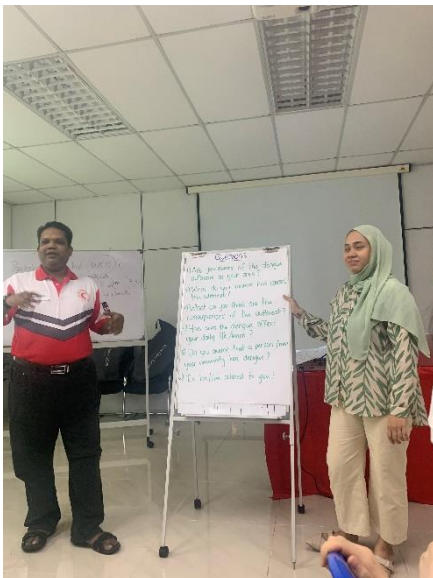
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Photos during the workshop





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