**New Zealand Red Cross and Mental Health Responses**

New Zealand faced significant challenges in this regard due to the Auckland Floods of January 27, 2023, and Cyclone Gabrielle from February 5 to February 17, 2023. These events not only caused physical damage but also inflicted a heavy toll on the mental wellbeing of affected individuals, families, and communities. To effectively respond to these challenges, the following actions were in alignment with Resolution 2:

1. **Early Access to Support:**
	* Deployment of Psychological First Aid (PFA) training starting from February 3, 2023.
	* Immediate intervention by the Disaster Welfare Support Team (DWST) following the Auckland flood, beginning on January 29, 2023.
	* Deployment of Psychosocial Support (PSS) Advisors and facilitators for community-based support.
	* Providing PFA training to over 1000 individuals in the affected communities within 8 months post-event.
	* Establishment of the NZRC Disaster Fund with provision to finance PSS courses.
2. **Comprehensive and Integrated Care:**
	* Establishing links with external Psychosocial Support (PSS) sub-function groups across North Island for a coordinated response.
3. **Prevention of Mental Health Harm:**
	* Ensuring protection and dignity for affected individuals by considering cultural needs.
	* Adaptation of training programmes to suit the specific needs of diverse communities.
4. **Capacity Building:**
	* Increasing the number of MHPSS facilitators.
	* Offering PSS training to all Red Cross staff and volunteers.
	* Developing a Comprehensive PFA training programme tailored for DWST.
	* Providing guidance, resources and training to New Zealand Red Cross employees and members, to prevent and manage psychosocial risks, and build knowledge and awareness on mental health and wellbeing.
5. **Supporting Responders’ Mental Health:**
	* Implementing a wellbeing check-in system, using a traffic light model, to monitor the mental health of responders.
	* Offering peer-to-peer supervision to support responders.
	* Providing suicide prevention training.
	* Offering free counselling services for employees and volunteers through Telus Health.
	* Proposing a new supervision model to ensure ongoing support for responders' mental wellbeing.
	* Funded, confidential counselling available 24/7 to New Zealand Red Cross employees, members and their immediate family through our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with Telus Health, which provides mental health and wellbeing support to our people.

These actions represent a holistic approach to addressing mental health and psychosocial needs in the aftermath of natural disasters and emergencies. By focusing on early intervention, comprehensive care, prevention of harm, capacity building, and support for responders, New Zealand Red Cross aims to bridge the gap between the increasing demand for MHPSS services and the available resources.