

MHPSS Session of the Global Protection Forum – CP AoR opening remarks
Monday 25th October 2021 – 14:30-16:00 CET

Good morning, good afternoon, good evening,

Thank you for joining the MHPSS session. I would like to thank our colleagues at the GPC/UNHCR for putting this session as the first thematic session of the Global Protection Forum, which demonstrates the increasing importance and attention given to the critical topic of MHPSS.

What are the three things we learned in the past year?

1. Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing is extremely important in humanitarian work. And it is not just us as child protection actors who are saying that. It is also being perceived as a main protection risk
2. We are investing effort in MHPSS. According to an analysis of the focus of CPIE activities, 62% of proposed projects in 2021 contain an MHPSS. In other words, MHPSS is actually the largest component in child protection humanitarian action
3. We are not doing enough. So many needs are not yet covered. I just mention two points here:
 - a. we know that for MHPSS to have the desired effect, we need to offer services on all 4 layers of the MHPSS pyramid. Yet, as a sector we are seriously underperforming in offering services on layer 3 of the MHPSS pyramid: focussed non-specialized care.
 - b. we do not have enough scalable interventions. Many of the activities are local, and only address a small percentage of the children and families that have needs.

Therefore, I believe that the topic of this session is very well chosen: **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Protection: Towards More Action and Greater Impact**. We need more action, we need greater impact.

The CP AoR will with great passion work together with its members and partners to implement more action. We will assist in the coordination aspects, aiming not only at more action but also on smart actions, so that we can generate more impact.

Greater impact can be generated through intersectoral collaboration and working scalable models on the one hand and concrete data from the field level on the other hand.

Let's work together to achieve this greater impact for children and their families.

I wish you all an informative and exciting session today!

Ron Pouwels
Coordinator, Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility