Syrian Crisis and Mental Health System Reform in Lebanon

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RESCAP-MED 2nd Regional Symposium
Socio-Political Challenges in the Mediterranean Region:
Implications for NCD Prevention and Control

Acknowledgments

Supporters

- **MOPH**
  - DG Dr. Walid AMMAR

- **Program Partners**
  - WHO
  - UNICEF
  - IMC

Mental Health Team

- Mr. Wissam KHEIR
- Ms. Sandra Hajal
- Mr. Ibrahim ABOU KHALIL
- Ms. Edwina ZOGHBI
- Ms. Jihane BOU SLEIMAN

"No numbers, percentages, or charts can begin to convey the tragedies lived by persons fleeing the war in Syria, the excessive violence witnessed and experienced by children, the crushed hopes of families to be reunited, or the feelings of helplessness overwhelming those involved in the response..."

El Chammay R. ; Ammar W., Syrian Crisis and Mental Health System Reform in Lebanon, The Lancet, Volume 384, Issue 9942, Page 494, 9 August 2014

Outline

- Background

- Mental Health Psychosocial Task Force

- National Mental Health Program

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Lebanon

- Eastern end of the Mediterranean sea

- Area : 10, 452 Sq km

- Population: 4,055,000

- Palestine Refugees: 200.000

- Long history of civil war and political unrest

Syrian Crisis

- More than **3 years**

- More than **3 millions** registered refugees with UNHCR

- **1.132.000** in LEBANON

Mental Health in Lebanon

- 3 psychiatric hospitals
- A few private psychiatric wards in general hospitals
- No Mental Health Legislation
- No mental Health Strategy
- Around 60 psychiatrists
- Mainly in the private sector
- Private insurance don't cover Mental Health

WHO AIMS 2009

MHPSS service provision assessment in 2013 for UNHCR

- Lack of coordination

- Lack of MHPSS services

- Weak referral System

- Tension between refugees and host community

- Lack of basic services is one of the main sources of distress for the refugees

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ASSESSMENT OF

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
SERVICES FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

by
Rabih El Chammay, MD
Wissam Kheir, Hala Alaouie

DECEMBER 2013
BEIRUT, LEBANON

Syrian Crisis and Mental Health System reform in Lebanon

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- Mental Health Psychosocial Task Force

- National Mental Health Program

MHPSS Task Force

- Chaired by the Ministry of Public Health
- Co-Chaired by WHO and UNICEF
- Include all actors (UN, iNGOs, NGOs, Other Ministries)
- Aiming at Mainstreaming, Harmonizing and up-scaling MHPSS services in the Syrian Crisis response

Outline

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- Mental Health Psychosocial Task Force

- National Mental Health Program

National Mental Health Program

- Launched in May 2014

- Supported by:
  - WHO
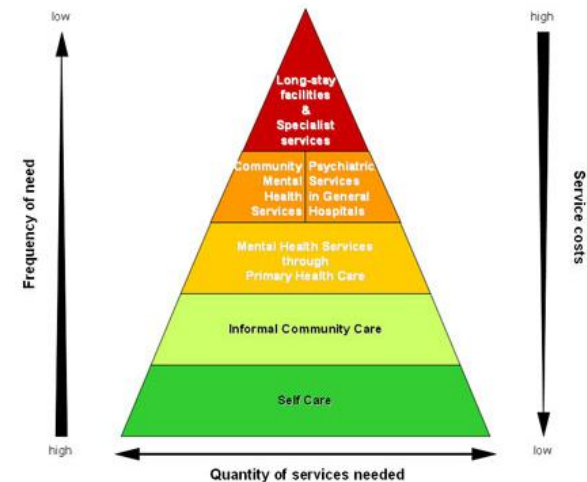 - International Medical Corps
  - UNICEF

National Mental Health program

- Leadership and Governance

- Service organization

- Promotion and Prevention

- HIS and Research

- Specific domains

National Mental Health program
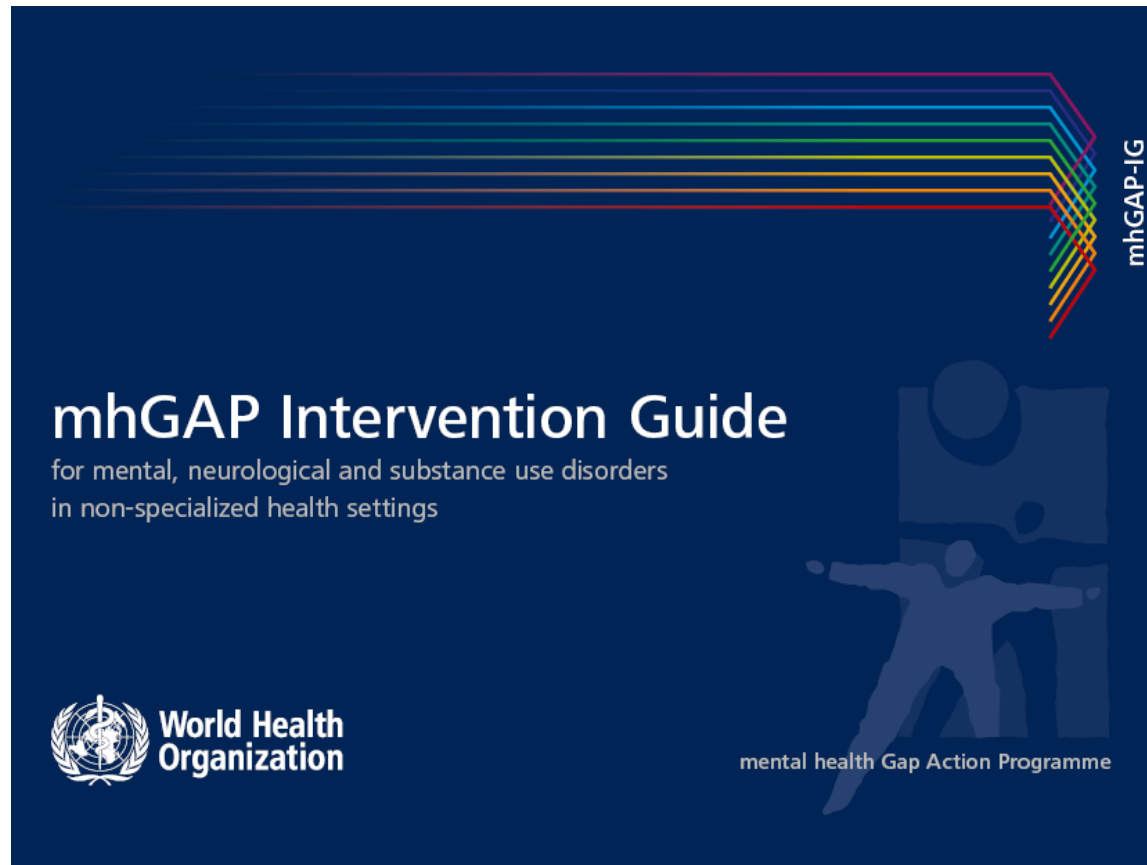
- Leadership and Governance
- Service organization
- Promotion and Prevention
- HIS and Research
- Specific domains

Leardership and governance

- A **Team** of mental health professional at the MOPH

- A National Mental Health **Strategy** consensus in March

- Draft **Law** for the protection of persons with mental disorders

- Revising the Mental Health **Budget** allocated by the MOPH for Mental Health

National Mental Health program

- Leadership and Governance
- Service organization
- Promotion and Prevention
- HIS and Research
- Specific domains

Organization of services

- Integration of mental health into primary care

- Building up community mental health

An evidence-based, clinical guide for the assessment and management of mental neurological and substance use disorders in non-specialized health settings

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MOPH Primary Care Network

- **47** centres included

- **106** GPs, nurses and social workers

- Support and Supervision will start in December 2014

National Mental Health program

- Leadership and Governance
- Service organization
- Promotion and Prevention
- HIS and Research
- Specific domains

Promotion and prevention

- Early child development in MCH programs

- Life Skills education in schools

- Harm reduction for Drug use

- Building a suicide prevention framework

National Mental Health program

- Leadership and Governance
- Service organization
- Promotion and Prevention
- HIS and Research
- Specific domains

HIS and Research

- Building a HIS system able to generate relevant indicators for service development

- In collaboration with academia set a **national mental health research agenda** to identify national priority focusing on service development.

National Mental Health program

- Leadership and Governance
- Service organization
- Promotion and Prevention
- HIS and Research
- Specific domains

Specific domains

Refugees' Mental Health

- MHPSS Task Force

- Advisory role for UNRWA

Survivors of torture and families of missing persons

- Civil war from 1975-1990

- More 17,000 missing persons

*"**Emergency** situations– in spite of the adversity and challenges they create – are openings to **transform mental health care**…They are opportunities not to be missed…because mental, neurological, and substance use disorders are among **the most neglected problems in public health**"*