



# GLOBAL MULTISECTORAL OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

for Mental Health and  
Psychosocial Support of  
Children, Adolescents and  
Caregivers Across Settings

*Field demonstration version*

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*Zheng Rong, a Barefoot Social Worker in North China's Shanxi Province, visits 5-year-old girl Xiaoyu at her home. She helped Xiaoyu's family to raise money for a brain surgery, and apply for government subsidies. Under a programme supported by the Ministry of Civil Affairs and UNICEF, a Barefoot Social Worker is a non-professional social worker selected by a community to provide child protection and welfare services. Each person is trained in essential social work skills, including how to conduct child vulnerability and well-being assessments, monitor family situations. They also spend a great deal of time informing communities on all dimensions of child well-being.*

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# GLOBAL MULTISECTORAL OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

## for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support of Children, Adolescents and Caregivers Across Settings

*Field demonstration version*

*The Global Multisectoral Operational Framework for MHPSS has been developed to operationalize the [UNICEF MHPSS Technical Note \(2019\)](#).*

The framework is designed to support relevant sectors and areas of work, including health, social welfare and child protection, education, adolescent development and participation, early childhood development, disability, and nutrition, to be more MHPSS-sensitive, and scale up quality MHPSS interventions for children, adolescents, young people and families in development and humanitarian settings. It is intended to help UNICEF staff and partners develop mental health and psychosocial support programmes across the social ecological model and the mental health continuum of prevention, promotion and treatment to improve the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of children, adolescents and their caregivers globally.

This document is for field demonstration only. The final version is expected to be issued in 2022.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Global Multisectoral Operational Framework for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support of Children, Adolescents and Families Across Settings, referred to for convenience as the 'MHPSS framework', is an adaptation and update to the Community Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (CB MHPSS) Operational Guidelines launched in 2018. The adaptation and update were informed by the field testing of the CB MHPSS Operational Guidelines up until the end of 2020, and additional consultations with UNICEF staff at headquarters, and in both regional and country offices. The framework draws from real-world experiences across settings, and input from a range of actors in the fields of, but not limited to, MHPSS, education, health and nutrition, and child protection.

We acknowledge with thanks all the contributors to this document, as noted below.

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>BFS</b>	Baby friendly spaces	<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning or other
<b>CB MHPSS</b>	Community-based mental health and psychosocial support	<b>LMICs</b>	Low- and middle-income countries
<b>CCC</b>	Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action	<b>mhGAP</b>	Mental Health Gap Action Plan
<b>CCCM</b>	Camp Coordination and Camp Management	<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>CFC</b>	Caring for the caregiver	<b>MEAL</b>	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
<b>CFS</b>	Child-friendly spaces	<b>MH</b>	Mental health
<b>CP</b>	Child protection	<b>MHPSS</b>	Mental health and psychosocial support
<b>C4D</b>	Communication for development	<b>MoV</b>	Means of verification
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>PFA</b>	Psychological first aid
<b>ECD</b>	Early childhood development	<b>PHC</b>	Primary health care
<b>ECE</b>	Early childhood education	<b>PM+</b>	Problem Management Plus
<b>EQUIP</b>	Ensuring Quality in Psychological Interventions	<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>FGD</b>	Focus group discussion	<b>SEL</b>	Social and emotional learning
<b>HICs</b>	High income countries	<b>SP</b>	Strategic Plan
<b>HIV</b>	Human immune deficiency virus	<b>SRH</b>	Sexual reproductive health
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization	<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>IMS</b>	Information management system	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration	<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene
<b>IPT</b>	Interpersonal therapy	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>KAP</b>	Knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions		
<b>KII</b>	Key informant interview		

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### Outcome 1: Improved child and adolescent mental health and psychosocial wellbeing

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Children and adolescents have access to safe & nurturing environments, and to quality services that improve their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing at home, school and in the community	
<b>Intermediary Outcome 1.2</b>	31
Children and adolescents have access to support systems that facilitate positive relationships that promote inclusion, belonging and agency	
<b>Intermediary Outcome 1.3</b>	34
Children and adolescents have opportunities for stimulation, learning and skills development that contributes to mental health and wellbeing	

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### Outcome 2: Improved caregiver mental health and psychosocial wellbeing including for parents, caregivers, mothers, family, and teachers

<b>Intermediary Outcome 2.1</b>	p. 37
Families/ parents/ caregivers and/or teachers have access to support for developing and maintaining improved mental health and psychosocial wellbeing	
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Parents/caregivers have access to family and community support networks that improve their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing	
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Caregivers/family develop skills for parenting and supporting children and adolescents in distress (MHPSS needs)	

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**Outcome 3:** Improved community capacity at the district and subdistrict levels for non-stigmatizing, accessible, available, and quality MHPSS service delivery across the primary health care, social welfare and protection, and education systems and structures

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**Intermediary Outcome 3.1** 49

Strengthened community awareness and positive behaviour change for child, adolescent and family/caregiver mental health, psychosocial wellbeing and protection, rooted in a stigma- and judgement-free environment

**Intermediary Outcome 3.2** 53

Strengthened community mental health and psychosocial wellbeing support systems across sectors, including innate community capacities to support children, adolescents, parents/caregivers and families

**Intermediary Outcome 3.3** 56

Strengthened multisectoral care systems (PHC, social welfare & protection, education) for children, adolescents and families, including use/leveraging of family-friendly policies

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**Outcome 4:** Improved enabling environment for MHPSS across the policy, legislation and financing systems, the MHPSS workforce, multisectoral supports and referral pathways, and MHPSS research and data

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**Intermediary Outcome 4.1** 59

Policy, legislation & financing: The policy, legislative, and financing environment is developed and strengthened to ensure that supportive mechanisms are in place for quality mental health and psychosocial service delivery

**Intermediary Outcome 4.2** 62

Strengthened multisectoral systems & referral pathways: Strengthened multilayered support systems and processes within existing structures, including functional referral systems across PHC, Social Welfare & Protection, and Education

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Workforce development and capacity: Capacity strengthened among professional and non-specialist MHPSS providers in quality age- and gender-responsive MHPSS care across all sectors

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Research, evidence & data: Improved evidence and data ecosystem for MHPSS that informs and drives policy changes around mental health and psychosocial support

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