

Psychological first aid:
Facilitator's manual for orienting field workers

WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Psychological first aid: Facilitator's manual for orienting field workers.

1.Crisis intervention – methods. 2.Disasters. 3.Emergency medical services – personnel.
4.Adaptation, Psychological. 5.First aid – psychology. 6.Stress disorders, Traumatic – psychology.
7.Health personnel – education. I.World Health Organization. II.War Trauma Foundation. III.World Vision International.

ISBN 978 92 4 154861 8

(NLM classification: WM 401)

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Suggested citation: World Health Organization, War Trauma Foundation and World Vision International (2013). *Psychological first aid: Facilitator's manual for orienting field workers*. WHO: Geneva.

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Psychological first aid:

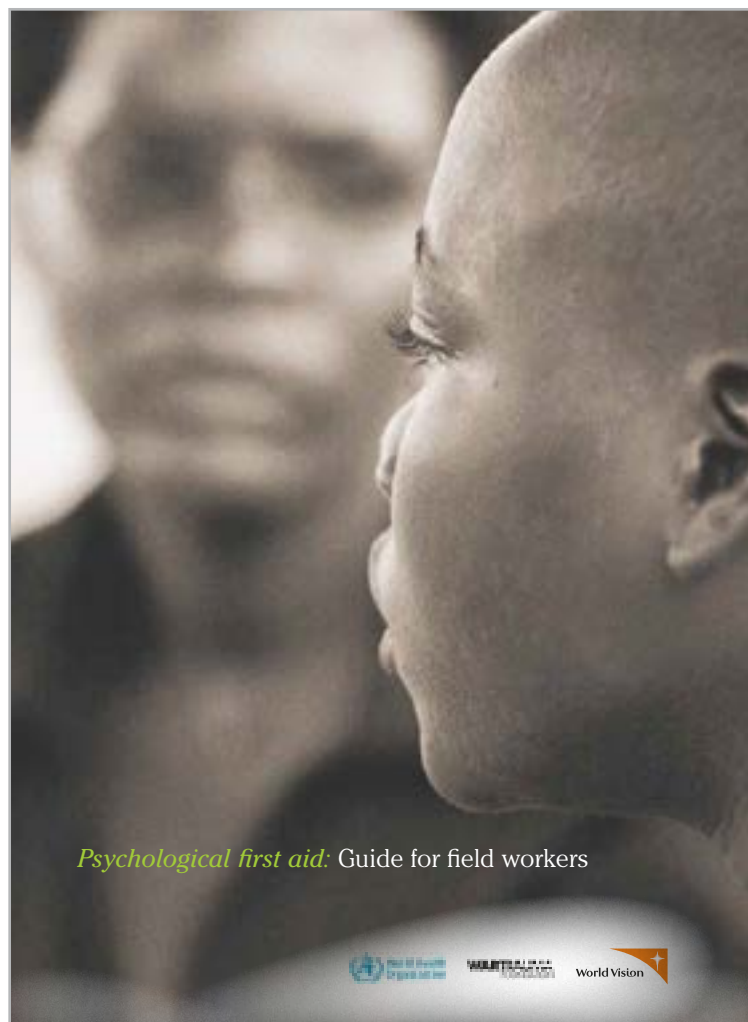
Facilitator's manual for orienting field workers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was written by Leslie Snider (War Trauma Foundation) in close consultation with Alison Schafer (World Vision International (WVI)), Mark van Ommeren (World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse) and Khalid Saeed (WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean).

We thank the following reviewers: Megan McGrath (WVI), Devora Kestel (WHO/Pan American Health Organization), Sarah Harrison (United Nations Health Commissioner for Refugees), Inka Weissbecker (International Medical Corps) and Emmanuel Streel (consultant).

The work was funded by the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean and World Vision Australia.



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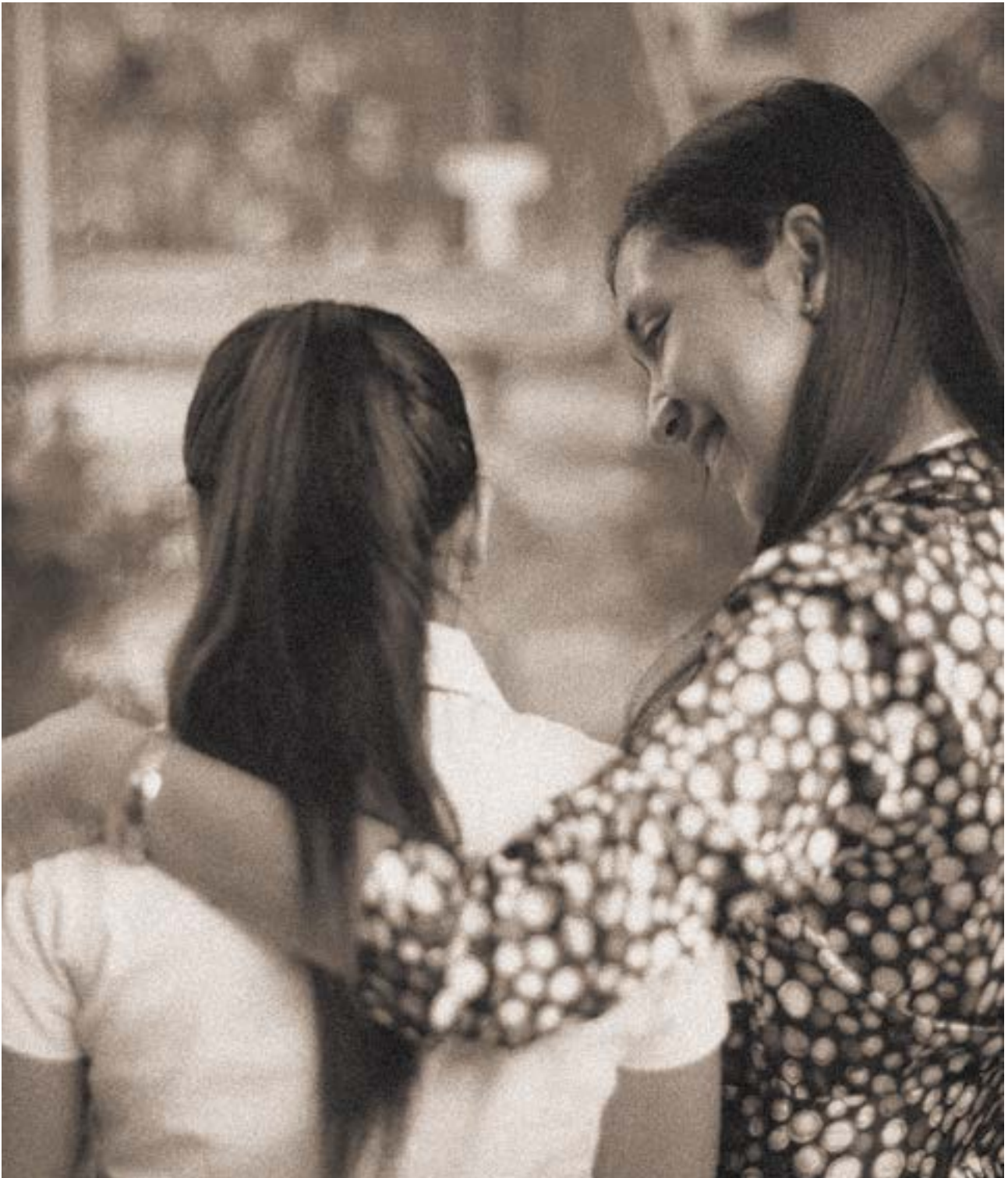
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OVERVIEW OF THE MANUAL



INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to orient helpers to offer psychological first aid (PFA) to people following a serious crisis event. PFA involves humane, supportive and practical assistance for people who are distressed, in ways that respect their dignity, culture and abilities.

This facilitator's manual is to be used together with the *Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers* (World Health Organization, War Trauma Foundation, World Vision International, 2011).

The manual is structured in three parts:

1) Overview of the manual

This section provides general information about how to use this manual, how to prepare for giving an orientation, and tips for facilitators.

2) Step-by-step orientation

This section provides a half-day orientation agenda and a step-by-step description of each module, including learning objectives, narrative and tips for the facilitator, accompanying slides, and instructions for group exercises and discussion.

3) Supporting materials

This section of annexes provides supporting materials to print as handouts for participants.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

The instructions and materials in this manual are for a half-day orientation (four hours excluding breaks) to prepare helpers to support people recently affected by very stressful events. If you have more time available for the orientation, the extra activities and slides included in the text boxes can be used to deliver a full-day orientation (five-and-a-half hours excluding breaks). Where possible, full-day orientations should be organized to allow for deeper learning.

It is important to adapt the orientation and materials to the local culture, language and context, and to the likely kinds of crisis situation in which your participants will be helping. Remember to build in extra time if you are using a translator. It is helpful if the translator is familiar with *Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers* and orientation materials beforehand.

This manual serves as a guide for PFA orientation, to which you can bring your own style, experience and ideas as a facilitator.

What will participants learn?

The orientation aims to build the capacity of helpers in crisis situations:

- » To approach a situation safely, for themselves and others;
- » To say and do the most supportive things for very distressed people; and
- » To NOT cause further harm by their actions.

The orientation provides many opportunities for participants to develop and practise PFA skills.

The orientation will not give participants clinical skills in “counselling.” A key learning objective is for participants to understand the boundaries of the support they can provide and when to refer people for more specialized assistance.

Who is this manual for?

Facilitators using this manual will often have experience in offering mental health and psychosocial support. It is helpful if they also have:

- » Prior experience assisting people affected by crisis events
- » Interest and experience in providing orientation and training.

Who should participate in a PFA orientation?

PFA is an approach that can be learned by both professionals and non-professionals who are in a position to help people impacted by very distressing events. They may include staff or volunteers of disaster relief organizations (in health and non-health sectors), health workers, teachers, community members, local government officials and others.

It is not necessary for helpers to have a psychosocial or mental health background in order to be able to offer PFA. Helpers who provide various kinds of relief and assistance during a crisis event may find PFA skills useful in the course of their usual work. Participants will ideally:

- » Have the time and willingness to assist in crisis situations.
- » Be accessible and available to help people in distress.
- » Be connected with a recognized agency or group if assisting in a large emergency (for their safety and for the coordination of effective response).

PREPARING TO DELIVER THE ORIENTATION

Even if you are working in an acute crisis situation, you should take time to prepare for the orientation so that it will run smoothly and be a useful experience for your participants. The following checklists will help you to prepare for the orientation, including:

- ☐ Preparing yourself: what you need to know
- ☐ Preparing materials and handouts

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