

Terms of Reference

TITLE – GRADE – LOCATION

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Expert (MHPSS Expert) – P3 – Wadi Fira/Ennedi East- Chad

MISSION LOCATION

Iriba/Amdjarass (Wadi Fira/Ennedi East Provinces) Chad.

DURATION

Three months extension.

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Since the second half of April 2025, renewed fighting between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has led to a dramatic escalation of the conflict in North Darfur, particularly around El Fasher. This situation has led to a massive influx of Sudanese refugees into eastern Chad, particularly in the provinces of Wadi Fira and Ennedi East. This new population displacement is to provinces north of the Ouaddai that had hitherto received the bulk of the 872,000 Sudanese who fled their country since April 2023, bringing the total number of Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad to 1.27 million.

As of 14 August 2025, 91,444 refugees are at the site of Iridimi (Iridimi + Goudrane) in Wadi Fira, and 89,082 in Oure Cassoni in Ennedi East, with an estimated 87% being women and children. 14% have been identified as having specific needs, including persons at risk, older persons, and persons with disabilities [1]. Protection monitoring (18–24 July 2025) revealed widespread risks such as extortion (28%), physical assault (25%), and sexual violence (1%), while 60% of households lack documentation, mainly due to loss or destruction. These trends highlight the continuing urgent need for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services, especially for those with heightened vulnerabilities and exposure to protection risks (data from UNHCR).

In May, UNHCR has declared an L2 emergency for East Ennedi and Wadi Fira. The humanitarian actors are overwhelmed and unable to address the needs. See reports here. In the first quarter of the year some NGOs with experience in MHPSS, such as HIAS, closed their MHPSS work due to the US funding cuts. In addition to a handful of international agencies such as UNFPA, INTERSOS, some MHPSS services are provided by national NGOs, such as the Chadian Psychologists Association, Nirvana, and ADES, and by the Ministry of Health. Continued and severe gaps in MHPSS capacity and lack of MHPSS coordination have led to expressed need for support, with the most urgent need to build community structures to assist new arrivals, to map services and increase access, to create referral pathways and coordinate efforts for integration of MHPSS across sectors. The national health services and other basic social services system in Wadi Fira and Ennedi-East are severely under resourced and the influx of refugees cause tensions with the local populations.

AIM OF THE MISSION

Overall aim is to integrate MHPSS within the local humanitarian response and support actors to address urgent immediate needs around MHPSS, using available resources and supporting all humanitarian actors to mobilize new resources.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

During the 6-week deployment the deployee has carried out a series of activities aimed at strengthening MHPSS in Wadi Fira and Ennedi East. The work was structured around four core activities:

1. *Desk Review, Field Visits, and Consultations*

A comprehensive desk review was conducted alongside field visits and consultations with key stakeholders. These efforts culminated in a set of practical recommendations aimed at improving MHPSS interventions and coordination mechanisms.

2. *Launching Coordination Among MHPSS Actors*

The MHPSS expert facilitated the initiation of coordination among MHPSS actors, laying the groundwork for improved information-sharing, service mapping, and joint planning in the humanitarian response.

3. *Training of Trainers in Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Self-Care – French*

A 3-day Training of Trainers (ToT) in PFA and self-care was conducted in French, targeting local actors. The training built local capacity to provide frontline psychosocial support and promote wellbeing among affected populations.

4. *A 3-day Training of Trainers in Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Self-Care – Arabic*

Another 3-day ToT in Arabic is being conducted during the last week in the field of Iridimi site, for Sudanese community mobilisers. This training aims to enhance community-level support by equipping mobilisers with tools to deliver basic psychosocial support and promote resilience.

The next three months will have the following objectives:

1. Continued *capacity building of national staff* within organizations, including psychologists from the Chadian Psychologists Association;
2. Supporting the *development of psychosocial activities led by communities and refugees themselves*, with a particular emphasis on strengthening peaceful relations between refugees and host communities.
3. *Consolidating coordination initiatives* through the development of the ToRs and drafting an action plan of the MHPSS sub-working group initiated in Wadi Fira during the initial deployment phase. Establishing strong functional links with the coordination structures for health and protection in Wadi Fira and Ennedi-Est are essential. Essential is to develop close links with and report regularly and promptly to the MHPSS Technical Working Group in N’Djamena.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the line supervision of the head of office in Iriba and with technical guidance by the MHPSS Officer in Farchana and the head of the MHPSS expert will:

- Perform the assessment of needs and resources
- Set up a system for MHPSS coordination
- Provide technical support in capacity building around MHPSS
- Provide technical input for the refugee response plans and Sit Rep
- Carry out other tasks related to MHPSS and adapted to the needs of the context

PROFILE

Experience

- Experience in MHPSS responses in humanitarian contexts
- Experience working in conflict/humanitarian contexts
- Experience in working in large scale complex humanitarian emergencies (previous working experience in Chad or Sudan is an advantage).

Essential requirements

- Mental health professional (Master’s degree in psychiatry or clinical psychology with six years of experience)
- In depth theoretical and practical knowledge of and the IASC Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings and preferably with the IASC Minimum Service package for MHPSS and the
- Familiarity with Refugee Operations and the Refugee Coordination Model, humanitarian appeals, humanitarian response plans and common humanitarian funds
- Firsthand experience in training and implementation of MHPSS tools such as Psychological First Aid (PFA), 4W mapping and preferably also mhGAP-HIG and scalable psychological interventions such as Problem Management Plus and Team Up.

- Good understanding of health and protection responses.
- For this position, fluency in French is required. Arabic is strongly desirable.

Personal Characteristics

- Ability to work in physically and emotionally challenging context to adapt to rapidly changing situations.
- Strong networking capacities for building constructive relationships with all humanitarian actors and national counterparts.
- Willingness to serve in a capacity building role, fostering the capacities of actors on the ground.
- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with the Public Health and Protection teams.