

RESILIENCE IN THE SUPPORT TO MSF TEAMS

Presentation at Tallories International Resilience Workshop



Annick Filot – MSF Belgium (OCB)
Carla Uriarte – MSF Spain (OCBA)



MSF Presentation topics

1. What is MSF
2. Brief history of the psychosocial care units
3. “Target population”
4. Indicators of resilience
5. Enhancing resilience

MSF What is MSF

MSF is an independent international medical humanitarian organization that delivers emergency aid in more than 70 countries to people affected by armed conflict; epidemics; natural or man-made disasters; or exclusion from health care.

There are 19 sections, of which 5 are operational. In this workshop we will be representing the Belgium (MSF-OCB) and Spain-Greek (MSF-OCBA) psychosocial care units for HR.

MSF Brief history of the psychosocial care units

The history of PSCU is the history of modern humanitarian psychology – there has been a shift of view from PTSD to Resilience + a shift from worries on traumatic stress to worries on cumulative stress

MSF Our “target” population

- The organization is our “community” – western culture but very multicultural
- Teams (composed of international and national staff)
- Individuals - different characteristics, challenges and resources

We care for the staff so they can care for the population

MSF Indicators of resilience

- Menaninfulness – most situations can be endured as long as pertinence of the project and the persons' contribution is clear
- Social recognition (from the communities, the organization)
- Cohesion of believes – sharing values – sense of belonging
 - Individual+cultural+idiosincronic ways

MSF Indicators of resilience

- We measure through the MSF psychosocial issues in the field questionnaire
 - In DBFs
 - In field visits – reports

MSF ENHANCING RESILIENCE

I. PREVENTION:

- a. Management teams assume their role taking care of staff
- b. Good BFs, trainings to empower coordinators to support staff, preparation for first missions
- c. Prevention workshops in the field – “stressors and strengths” – helping staff detect their resilience mechanisms

II. ACTION:

- a. Critical incident team – social support
- b. Support through MedCo and direct calls
- c. Emotional DBFs on return + post return support sessions – focused on “what helps you cope?”