

# **UNDSS Capacity Building for Crisis Psychosocial Support Proposal**



**United  
Nations**

Department  
of Safety  
and Security

# Acronyms & abbreviations

CISMS – Critical Incident Stress Management Section

CISPM – Certification in Critical Incident Stress Prevention and Management

CISWG – Critical Incident Stress Working Group

EMHP – External Mental Health Professionals

IASMN – Interagency Security Management Network

ToT – Training of Trainers

UN – United Nations

UNDSS – United Nations Department of Safety and Security

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# Background

**The United Nations continues to operate in the most challenging parts of the world. Many United Nations personnel live and work under various levels of stress and are confronted with, or are called upon to respond to, critical incidents and emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic has further challenged the resilience and psychosocial well-being of UN personnel.**

As per the Secretary-General's Report for Jan-Dec 2021, UNDSS provides safety and security coordination and support to 180,000 UN personnel globally from across the UN Secretariat and UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes. CISMS/UNDSS is responsible for the UN system-wide coordination of stress and critical incident stress management services, especially in relation to the preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies and disasters.

As per the UN security policy manual (Chapter 6, "Management of stress and critical incident stress") CISMS is the central body responsible for establishing global UN standards of psychosocial support services for personnel and dependents. As stipulated in the UN Secretary-General's bulletin for 2013, CISMS is responsible for maintaining a roster of UN counselors and External Mental Health Professionals (EMHP) ready to support UN personnel and dependents impacted by critical incidents and emergencies.

CISMS endeavors to fulfill this responsibility by developing the capacity of UN staff counselors and stress counselors in the areas of critical incident stress prevention and management. Currently, CISMS coordinates a network of 110 UN counselors in 70 countries. However, there are several hazardous locations around the world where UN offices are located with no internal UN counselors due to funding limitations.

To address this resource gap, CISMS proposes to strengthen the capacity of external mental health professionals from the host community in the areas of critical incident stress prevention and management so they are better able to support UN personnel and dependents whenever needed.

This internal and host country capacity development has been ongoing since 2007 in the form of the CISMS certification program in critical incident stress prevention and management (CISPM). It has served the double purpose of strengthening internal UN capacity and resilience while simultaneously strengthening the capacity of psychosocial support services in the member states.

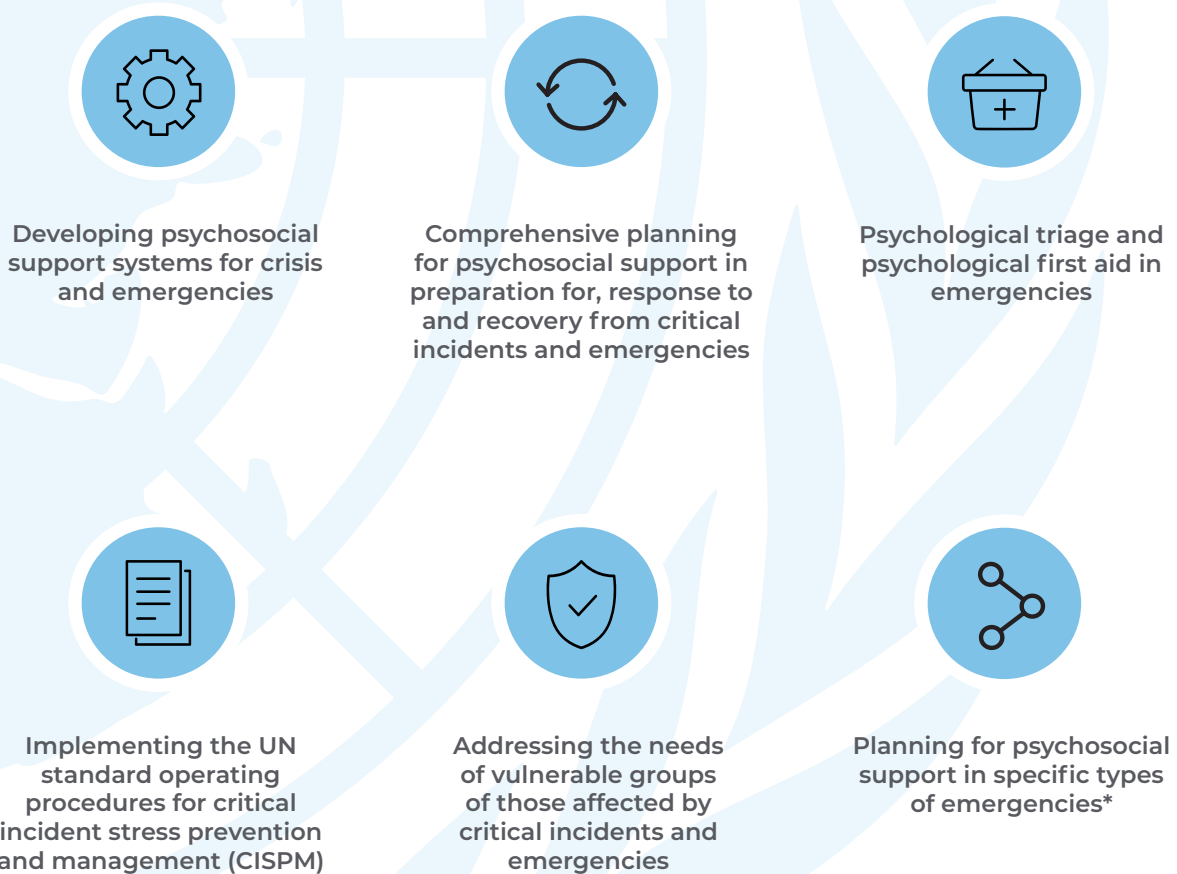
The certification program is an intensive skills-based training. In its original form, it is delivered through a 10 day in person training workshop involving practical scenario-based experiential learning, simulations, role-plays and demonstrated skills. It can be delivered by three trainers for a group of 25 to 30 participants. It has a basic and advanced level certification.

The in-person delivery of this certification program was impossible during the COVID-19 pandemic. CISMS was therefore forced to suspend the implementation of this program from 2020 to 2022. Simultaneously, the UN Critical Incident Stress Working Group (CISWG) of the interagency Security Management Network (IASMN) sanctioned the development of a field manual for psychosocial support in critical incidents and emergencies. This field manual was approved by the IASMN in June 2022. The guidelines contained in this field manual also need to be incorporated into the certification program.

# Project outline

CISMS would like to undertake a project with the core objective of revising the certification program to incorporate the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the guidelines contained in the field manual. We would also like to revise the training delivery model from an in-person training to a hybrid training model where some of the topics can be delivered through online training with skills-based exercises and modules still delivered in person.

This certification programme builds the capacity of counsellors and mental health professionals in the following areas:



\*Intentional attack on the United Nations with mass casualties; natural disaster with mass casualties; protracted and complex crisis; pandemic and epidemics; psychosocial aspects of Hostage Incident Management; supporting families after death in service.

# Operational details

The duration of this project is 18 months. To achieve the objectives mentioned above, the following activities will need to be undertaken:

Setting up of a technical advisory group consisting of experts on critical incident stress management and crisis management from within the UN system and from leading academic institutions collaborating with CISMS

Undertaking a review of the current scientific literature, best practices, and technical guidelines for critical incident stress management from within the UN as well as the larger scientific community

Revising the substantive part of the CISMS certification program for UN counselors and external mental health professionals with a view towards incorporating the latest scientific guidelines

Revising the training delivery model from an in-person model to a hybrid model where some of the modules can be delivered online while others can be delivered in-person

Developing the revised facilitators manual and participants manual for the basic level and advanced level certification

Translating the facilitator's manual, participants manual and other training related documents into French

Delivering four pilot training workshops, two for the basic level and two for the advanced level

Incorporating the lessons learned from the pilot workshops into the revised certification program

Conducting one Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop

Finalizing the project report with monitoring and evaluation

# Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the project, the following outcomes are expected:



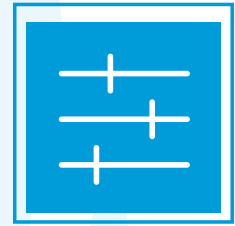
## MANUALS

Revised facilitators manual and participants manual, in English and French, with integration of latest evidence-based interventions and best practices



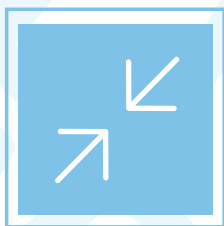
## TRAINERS

A trained cadre of master trainers who can deliver this certification program, under supervision of CISMS



## DELIVERY MODEL

A revised hybrid delivery model that is sustainable over the long term, and that can be scaled up across the UN system



## FIT FOR PURPOSE

The certification program will then be fit for purpose, for strengthening the capacity of internal UN counselors and of host country mental health professionals, in the areas of critical incident stress management and crisis psychosocial support



## MANDATE ENHANCEMENT

This enhanced capacity will contribute to the efficient delivery of UN humanitarian and peace building mandate, achievement of the sustainable development goals, through the effective resilience building and psychosocial support for UN personnel and dependents impacted by critical incidents

# Benefits

Upon successful completion of the project, the following outcomes are expected:

## 1. UN system capacity

The project will strengthen internal UN system capacity in the prevention and management of critical incident stress, equipping UN counselors with both the latest evidence-based skills and expertise and lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. It will incorporate innovative models of psychosocial support delivery in environments where there are resource constraints or travel restrictions.

## 2. Member states psychosocial support

The project will strengthen the capacity of psychosocial support services in member states, by training mental health professionals in the host community. These trained professionals will then be able to support UN personnel and dependents impacted by critical incidents, and also deliver similar High-quality services for people impacted in the host community. The project will specifically prioritize this capacity building in low- and middle-income countries, and hazardous locations where the UN provides peace keeping and humanitarian assistance.

## 3. Hybrid delivery model

The project will revise the training delivery model from in-person to hybrid delivery. It will also facilitate the scaling up of the certification program and reduce delivery costs for the UN in the long term. This will also make the certification program more sustainable over the long term. In its current form, the certification programme is delivered through in-person sessions over 10 working days. In the final hybrid form, it is anticipated that about 30% of the learning will be delivered online and 70% in-person. Thus, the cost of each training will be reduced by an average of 30% in terms of travel and DSA costs for the trainers and participants.



# Budget

	2023	2024
<b>1 Project Manager and 1 Support Staff at Headquarters for 18 months</b>	\$ 300,910	\$ 300,910
<b>Meetings of the Technical Advisory Group and Pilot Workshops</b>	\$ 95,000	\$ 95,000
<b>Translation</b>	\$ 25,000	
<b>Programme support costs of 13%</b>	\$ 54,718	\$ 51,468
<b>Total per year</b>	<b>\$ 475,628</b>	<b>\$ 447,378</b>
<b>Total budget</b>	<b>\$ 923,006</b>	

# Monitoring & evaluation

Strategic intervention	Indicators	2023 target	2024 target
<b>Revitalize the certification program and facilitator manual</b>	Revision of the certification program completed	100%	
	Revision of the facilitator manual completed	100%	
<b>Provide training to mental health professionals in the field</b>	60 mental health professionals who complete certificate training program		100%
	20 master trainers who complete training		100%
	Percent of participants who submit feedback on certificate training and master training program		95%







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