

Building evidence around MHPSS within the RCRC Movement

What do we know about the effectiveness of MHPSS activities within the Movement?

In the humanitarian field in general, and within the RCRC Movement in particular, building and using evidence around MHPSS activities and services is rarely prioritised.

This project identified barriers which hinder evidence-building within the Movement, as well as factors which can facilitate it.

Based on this information, strategies to promote MHPSS evidence-building are suggested, and a repository of materials was developed to support National Societies in their efforts to strengthen evidence around MHPSS.

We're very operational. We're focused on delivering services rather than the higher level 'did this work?' questions. (Key informant)

Background

The project was commissioned by the RCRC Movement MHPSS Roadmap Working Group 4, which focuses on strengthening the evidence for MHPSS interventions through research, monitoring and evaluation.

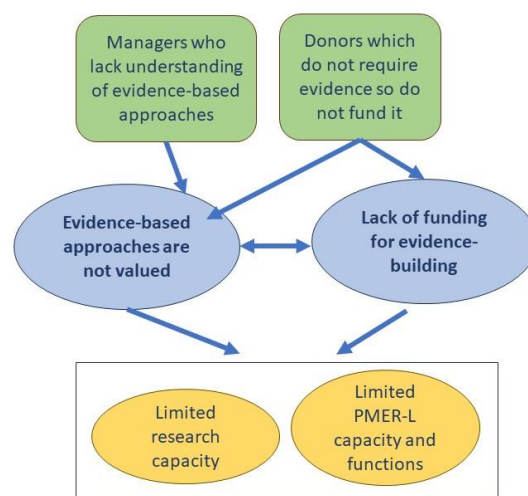
The project aimed:

- To map the current situation regarding MHPSS evidence-building within the Movement
- To produce a set of practical tools to support National Societies to plan and implement MHPSS-focused research projects and M&E activities

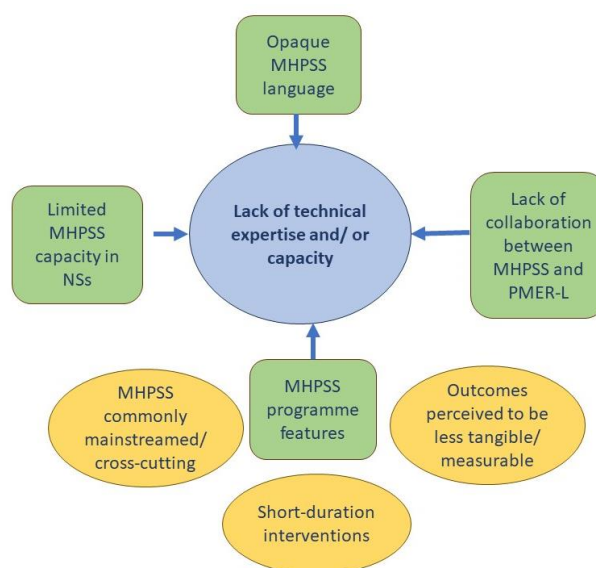
A desk review was conducted and 39 key informants interviewed.

What are the barriers to MHPSS evidence-building?

The main barriers exist at organisational level, and apply to evidence-building generally in the Movement, not only to MHPSS. They are summarised in the figure below.



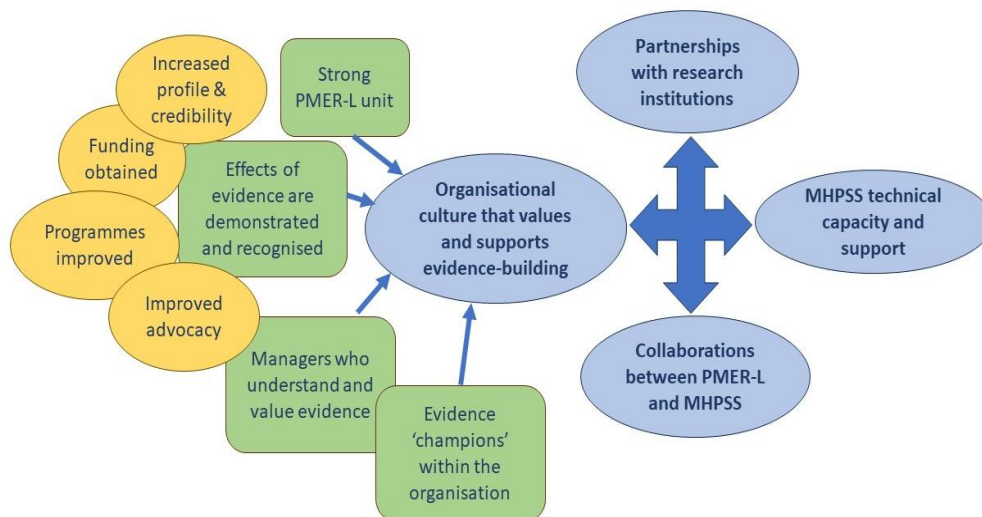
There are also some factors which make building evidence around MHPSS activities particularly challenging, as outlined below.



MHPSS is always cross-cutting, unlike other sectors, and this is one of the challenges in building evidence around it. (Key informant)

What factors facilitate MHPSS evidence-building?

Most factors which facilitate MHPSS evidence-building activities are those which facilitate evidence-building activities in all sectors. In general, a National Society or other Movement body which values evidence-based approaches will establish systems to support such approaches in all sectors, including MHPSS. The factors which facilitate MHPSS evidence-building are summarised below.



Creating a shift towards MHPSS evidence-building in the Movement.

Priority tasks for National Societies just getting started with MHPSS evidence-building are:

- Advocate for MHPSS evidence-building activities within your NS
- Strengthen your own understanding of MHPSS evidence-building concepts and approaches
- Start building partnerships and relationships
 - With research institutions and bodies both within and outside the Movement
 - With PMER teams in your NS
 - With MHPSS peers interested in evidence-building
- Start identifying gaps in knowledge and developing research questions for your context.

We need to develop a culture within the Movement around the need for evidence' (Key informant)

Once research begins, and the value in terms of advocacy and improving programmes can be seen, it's much easier to make the case. (Key informant)

Next steps

Within and beyond individual NSs, there are other activities which would contribute to strengthening evidence around MHPSS within the Movement.

- Simplify and contextualise tools that can be used for MHPSS evidence-building
- Start to build an evidence-base from existing information
- Communicate MHPSS evidence in ways perceived as practically useful within the Movement

Further information

A repository of resources to support National Societies in building evidence around their MHPSS activities has been created as part of this project. You can access this, along with the full report, at <https://pscentre.org/what-we-do/mhpssroadmap/> (Scroll down to find materials related to this project)

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