

**International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
commitments on addressing
mental health and psychosocial needs**

**A roadmap for implementation
2020 – 2023**

Power of humanity
RED CROSS RED CRESCENT STATUTORY MEETINGS
4-12 December 2019, Geneva



Introduction

In December 2019, the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) adopted a set of commitments addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. These commitments are expressed in resolution 2 of the 33rd International Conference (resolution 2) and resolution 5 of the 2019 Council of Delegates (resolution 5), which includes a Movement policy.

The purpose of this roadmap is to help strengthening the Movement's collective response to mental health and psychosocial needs, in line with these commitments.

While all components are expected to fully implement these comprehensive measures critical to addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, the roadmap supports a strategic and coordinated approach to implementation and identifies six priority action areas.

It sets out key activities for National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC and for the Movement as a whole and outlines the outputs and outcomes expected by 2023. Several crosscutting actions are also suggested to support the rollout of the roadmap.

The priority action areas will guide the Movement in the steps towards full implementation of its commitments. The priority action areas interconnect and, taken together, build the necessary conditions for relevant, effective and sustainable services. The priority action areas have been selected to establish a strong mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) foundation across the Movement. A strong base will enable the Movement components to enforce the strategic measures in resolution 2 as well as the Movement policy, including to ensure early access to MHPSS, strong local and community-based action, comprehensive MHPSS responses and actions addressing stigma, exclusion and discrimination.

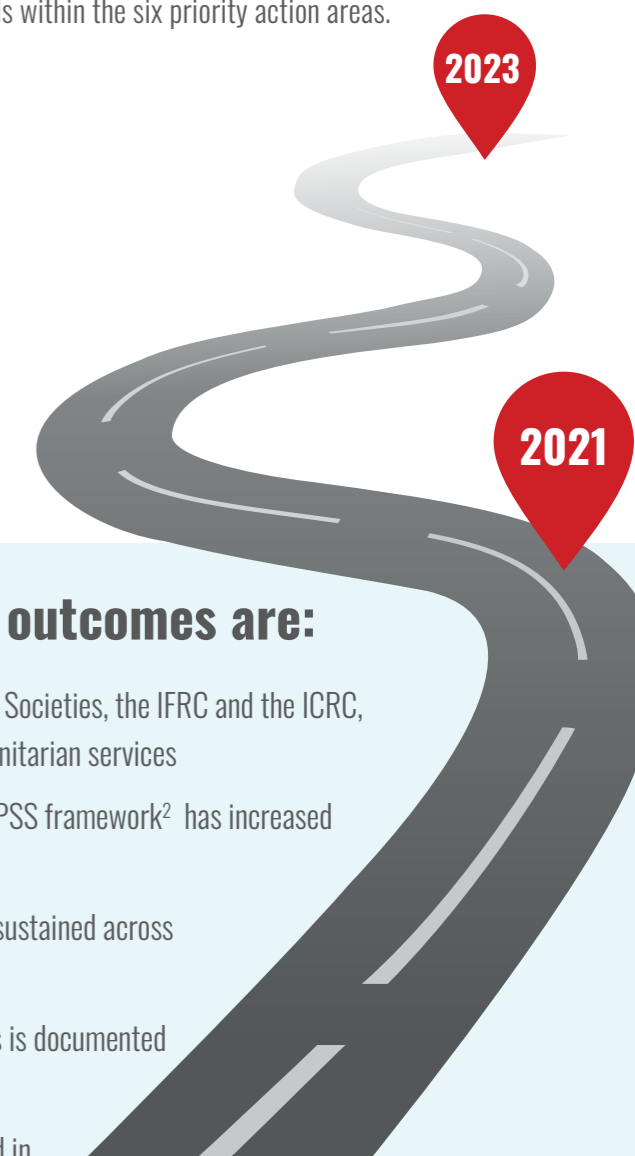
Where are we now and where do we want to go?

This roadmap takes as its starting point where the Movement is at the present time in terms of providing MHPSS services. The Movement has identified significant levels of unmet mental health and psychosocial needs and acknowledges an urgency in increasing its capacity and capability to respond.

A recent survey on MHPSS activities within the Movement¹ shows that the vast majority of National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC do provide MHPSS services. Psychosocial support activities are the most common type. MHPSS services are frequently integrated into other humanitarian activities, though National Societies also provide standalone psychosocial support and mental health services. The survey is a snapshot of current activities but does not provide information about the quality of services being implemented or about the potential variation in approaches used across the Movement.

The roadmap outlines concrete steps in further establishing MHPSS as an integral part of the Movement's humanitarian services and identity.

The Movement will therefore build capacity in addressing mental health and psychosocial needs within the six priority action areas.



Priority action areas:

1. Guarantee a basic level of psychosocial support and integrate mental health and psychosocial support across sectors
2. Develop a holistic MHPSS approach between Movement components and in collaboration with other actors
3. Protect and promote the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers
4. Demonstrate the impact of MHPSS interventions through research, evidence, monitoring and evaluation
5. Strengthen resource mobilization for MHPSS in humanitarian response
6. Mobilize political support for MHPSS – humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy



By the end of 2023, the expected outcomes are:

1. A basic level of psychosocial support is established in National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC, and MHPSS considerations are integrated into other key humanitarian services
2. Access to quality MHPSS services across the Movement's MHPSS framework² has increased in selected operational contexts
3. A supportive and caring working environment is achieved and sustained across the Movement
4. The impact of MHPSS interventions and innovative approaches is documented more widely
5. The Movement's financial resources for MHPSS have increased in line with funding targets defined in a Movement resource mobilization strategy for MHPSS
6. The commitments set out in resolution 2 are reflected in national and international policy and legal frameworks

¹ Mental Health Matters: Mapping of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Activities within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (December 2019)

² The Movement's MHPSS framework is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial support.

Who is the roadmap for and how should it be used?

This roadmap should be read together with resolution 2, resolution 5 and the Movement policy. It is not intended as a standalone document. The roadmap supports and directs National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC in implementing the commitments expressed in the resolutions. It sets out a strategic and coordinated approach in terms of the activities to be carried out individually by National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC and activities to be carried out together. The ICRC, the IFRC and a group of National Societies will support and coordinate the rollout of the roadmap.

Resolution 5 and the Movement policy focus on commitments within the Movement, whereas resolution 2 concerns actions States have agreed to with the components of the Movement. This roadmap includes only activities to be carried out by the Movement. However, these activities may relate to or involve interactions with States who have the primary responsibility to address the mental health and psychosocial needs of people in their territory.

Support from and collaboration with States will be important for successful implementation of the roadmap. The components of the Movement should use the roadmap in accordance with their respective roles and mandates, including National Societies in their role as auxiliaries to public authorities when providing MHPSS services.

All components are encouraged to implement the activities as described in this roadmap. Even though the roadmap identifies joint priority action areas, it should not prevent components of the Movement from taking additional measures that support the implementation of resolution 2, resolution 5 and the Movement policy.

The roadmap follows the cycle of the Movement's international statutory meetings. The Councils of Delegates in 2021 and 2023 and the 34th International Conference in 2023 are important milestones in the timeline.

Barriers

The most significant barriers that may hinder the Movement from achieving the expected outcomes set out in this roadmap include:

- Limited understanding of MHPSS
- Lower priority placed on MHPSS in humanitarian action
- Limited human and financial capacity in relation to MHPSS
- Lack of a harmonized and coordinated response
- Pervasive stigma around mental health

Crosscutting actions

There are five broader crosscutting actions which support the rollout of the roadmap and address the barriers:

▪ **Increasing awareness and knowledge of resolution 2 and the Movement policy**

The IFRC and the ICRC will develop a package through the MOMENT project³ to support leaders and relevant staff and volunteers in implementing these commitments. Existing Movement platforms, meetings and events will also be used to increase awareness and knowledge.

▪ **Communicating progress and achievements in MHPSS to mobilize further support and resources**

An important strategic element of this roadmap is to communicate progress and achievements. The ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies should dedicate resources to communicating success stories and good practices to inspire and generate positive developments in MHPSS, both within the Movement and in relation to external stakeholders.

▪ **Mobilizing leadership engagement and Movement MHPSS champions**

Continued strong and effective leadership engagement from the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies is vital for the process towards implementation. It is also crucial in tackling stigma and exclusion. Movement leaders and other champions should support the collective efforts to implement this roadmap and promote MHPSS in their own organisations and in relevant Movement and other forums.

▪ **Ensuring prioritization of MHPSS in institutional structures and strategies**

National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC should include MHPSS as a focus area in their institutional structures and strategies allowing for increased prioritization. MHPSS focal points should be designated in all National Societies and at various levels of the IFRC and the ICRC.

▪ **Working together**

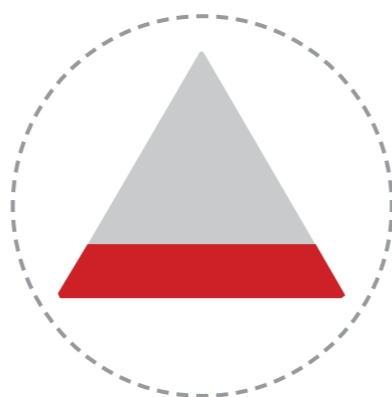
Working efficiently together as a Movement will be critical to improving service provision and impact, as will strengthening coordination and collaboration with external stakeholders. The IFRC and the ICRC, together with National Societies, will identify the appropriate structure for promoting the coordination, collaboration and coherence of the Movement's collective MHPSS work. The Movement Reference Group on MHPSS will continue to support the work throughout the period of the roadmap.

³ Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement project on addressing mental health and psychosocial consequences of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies (MOMENT)

Priority Action Area 1:

Guarantee a basic level of psychosocial support and integrate MHPSS across sectors

All National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC should guarantee the basic level of psychosocial support, as described in the Movement's MHPSS framework, and assess needs, refer and advocate in relation to the full spectrum of this framework (see resolution 5). This is a precondition for achieving other actions set out in the Movement policy and resolution 2. Integrating MHPSS across sectors will allow the components to reach more people and ensure that persons in need of more specialized MHPSS services are identified and properly referred. Integration is also critical to reducing stigma, discrimination and exclusion.



Activities:

Each National Society, the IFRC and the ICRC should

- Identify focal points for MHPSS activities/programmes
- Include basic psychosocial support (such as Psychological First Aid (PFA), basic psychoeducation, and sensitization) as a mandatory training component for all staff and volunteers
- Train, mentor and supervise staff and volunteers involved in MHPSS and support their further development within their organization
- Integrate MHPSS in standard assessment tools and preparedness plans
- Integrate basic psychosocial support into other key services, such as first aid and other health activities, shelter, water and sanitation, food, livelihoods, education and protection

Together, the Movement should

- Develop a training package on the basic level of psychosocial support
- Develop training modules and guidance on how to address stigma and support people who are facing discrimination and exclusion

Outputs:

- Staff and volunteers have the skills and competences required to provide the basic level of psychosocial support relevant to their tasks and are able to identify more specialized needs and refer to relevant services
- MHPSS is an integral part of the Movement's humanitarian services and identity
- Measures have been developed to tackle stigma, discrimination and exclusion
- A diversified and increased pool of staff and volunteers are equipped to provide MHPSS services in accordance with the Movement's MHPSS framework

Expected outcome by 2023:

A basic level of psychosocial support is established in National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC, and MHPSS considerations are integrated into other key humanitarian services

Priority Action Area 2:

Develop a holistic MHPSS approach between Movement components and in collaboration with other actors

The Movement will strengthen MHPSS services in a selected number of operational contexts. Actions to improve access to services across the Movement's MHPSS framework will be implemented along with other measures to address mental health and psychosocial needs such as prevention, promotion, protection and humanitarian diplomacy. Coordination between the components of the Movement emphasizing their complementary roles will be critical to this, as will collaboration between the Movement and other actors.



Activities:

Together, the Movement should

- Select a few operational contexts
- Develop action plans and coordination mechanisms for Movement engagement in the selected operational contexts
- Support the organizational development and sustainability of MHPSS in National Societies, including the development of their capacity to provide an increased range of specialized services in the selected operational contexts
- Compile a number of case studies from across the selected contexts to inform learning and resource mobilization

Outputs:

- Comprehensive and complementary interventions across the spectrum of the Movement's MHPSS framework have been developed which are specific to different contexts
- Movement components have increased capacity for providing quality MHPSS services relevant to their role and mandate
- The Movement's wider engagement in MHPSS is documented in the selected operational contexts, including the response to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic

Expected outcome by 2023:

Access to quality services across the Movement MHPSS framework has increased in selected operational contexts

Priority Action Area 3:

Protect and promote the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers

The Movement will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of the factors that protect and promote their mental health and psychosocial well-being and that they receive support when needed. This will increase MHPSS awareness and capacity across all components. The protection of the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers is vital to the provision of sustainable quality humanitarian services.



Activities:

Each National Society, the IFRC and the ICRC should

- Identify focal points for staff and volunteer mental health and psychosocial well-being
- Conduct trainings for managers and other leaders in National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC on the importance and benefits of mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers
- Set up systems to support staff and volunteers' mental health and psychosocial well-being (including self-care activities, peer-to-peer support, psychological support, etc.)

Outputs:

- Staff and volunteer mental health and psychosocial wellbeing is recognized as a priority across the Movement
- Management and leaders have knowledge and skills to promote the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers
- Systems are in place to support, protect and promote the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers and ensure accountability

Expected outcome by 2023:

A supportive and caring working environment is achieved and sustained across the Movement

Priority Action Area 4:

Demonstrate the impact of MHPSS interventions through research, evidence, monitoring and evaluation

The Movement components will strengthen capacity in monitoring, evaluating and learning related to MHPSS interventions. They will focus efforts in collecting, analyzing and reporting data to contribute to research in this field. Strengthening evidence and developing quality interventions will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of MHPSS with a view to reaching more people with appropriate mental health and psychosocial support.



Activities:

Together, the Movement should

- Support implementation of monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- Conduct a range of studies on the impact of MHPSS interventions, including PFA, in different contexts
- Develop, test and document the impact of innovative approaches, including digital MHPSS interventions

Outputs:

- National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC monitor and evaluate MHPSS interventions to inform learning and document effectiveness and impact
- Evidence of the effectiveness of PSS interventions, including PFA, is strengthened
- Innovative approaches have been developed, tested, documented and shared to inform learning and promote good practice

Expected outcome by 2023:

The impact of MHPSS interventions and innovative approaches is documented more widely

Priority Action Area 5:

Strengthen resource mobilization for MHPSS in humanitarian response

A major constraint in the delivery of a sustainable MHPSS response is the lack of financial resources. All stakeholders must play an active role in tackling this challenge. Mobilizing resources for MHPSS should also be linked to other initiatives to increase efficiency and effectiveness. The Movement will increase its efforts to allocate resources to addressing mental health and psychosocial needs.



Activities:

Each National Society, the IFRC and the ICRC should

- Include MHPSS in appeals and other fundraising opportunities

Together, the Movement should

- Develop a Movement resource mobilization strategy for MHPSS with specific funding targets for 2021 and 2023
- Engage in strategic dialogues and partnerships with States and other donors to mobilize more resources for MHPSS

Output:

- MHPSS is included in objectives and activities in grant mechanisms and appeals

Expected outcome by 2023:

The Movement's financial resources for MHPSS has increased in line with funding targets defined in a Movement resource mobilization strategy for MHPSS

Priority Action Area 6:

Mobilize political support for MHPSS – humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy

Mental health and psychosocial well-being should be a global, regional and national humanitarian and health priority. All components should influence international and national policy to promote and implement the commitments agreed in resolution 2.



Activities:

Each National Society, the IFRC and the ICRC should

- Promote the commitments of resolution 2 in national and international policy and legal frameworks

Together, the Movement should

- Map policy dialogue platforms, forums and events and coordinate a Movement-wide engagement
- Cooperate with other actors to influence global, regional and national policy agendas relating to MHPSS
- Produce three publications per year (e.g., research, case studies, articles, etc.) to support humanitarian diplomacy and Movement advocacy efforts on MHPSS

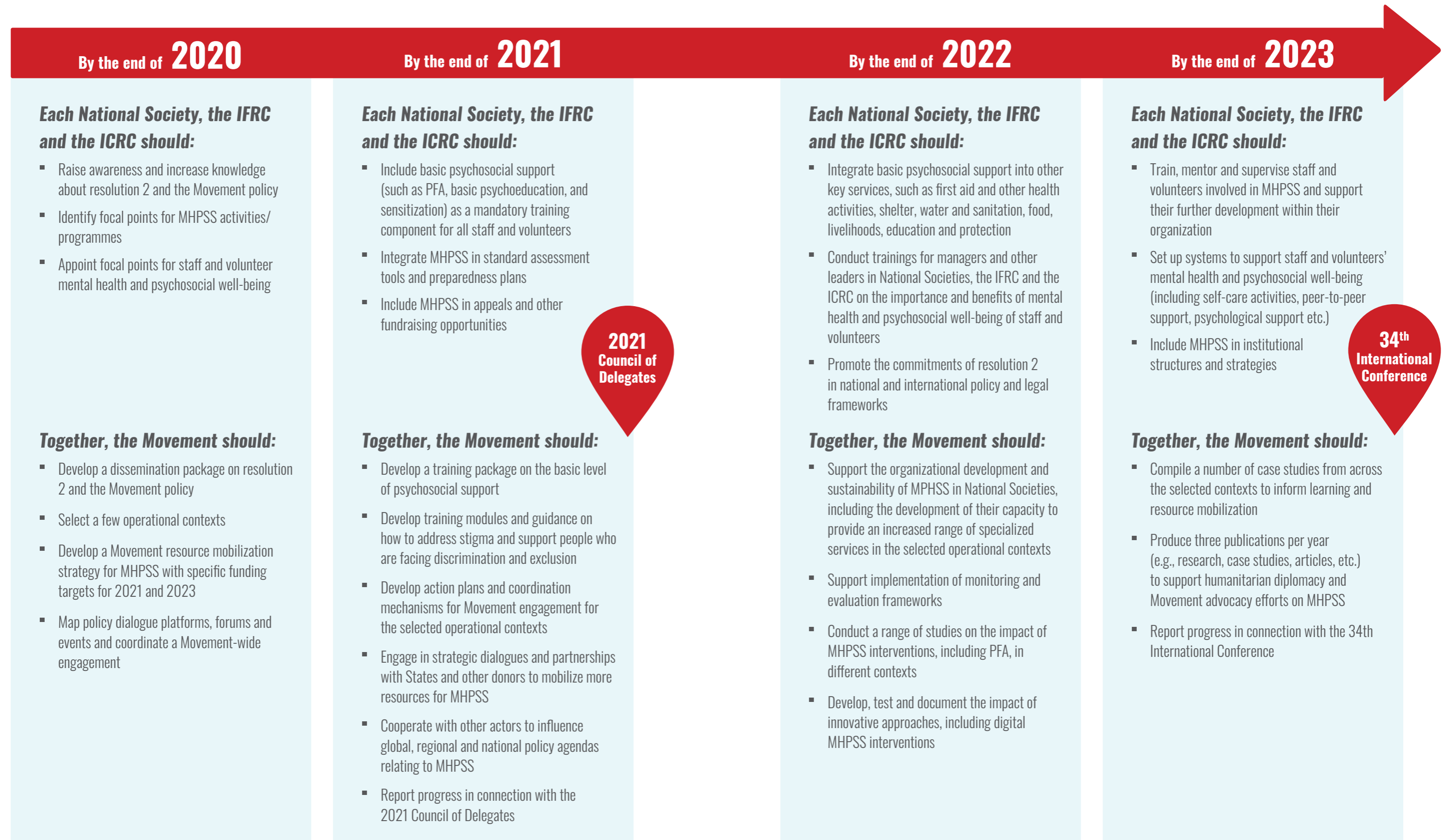
Outputs:

- The Movement influences strategic global, regional and national policy agendas relating to MHPSS
- Components of the Movement are recognized as key partners in MHPSS in accordance with their respective roles and mandates, including the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities

Expected outcome by 2023:

The commitments set out in resolution 2 are reflected in national and international policy and legal frameworks

Timeline



Monitoring and evaluation

Progress in implementing this roadmap will be reported by the ICRC and the IFRC in connection with the 2021 Council of Delegates and the 34th International Conference in 2023, alongside the formally requested reports on the implementation of the Movement Policy and resolution 2.

A joint framework for monitoring and evaluating the activities outlined in the roadmap will be developed in 2020. National Societies will monitor MHPSS services in their contexts and report to the ICRC and the IFRC as agreed in the framework.

2021: Progress report in connection with the Council of Delegates

2023: Progress report in connection with the 34th International Conference

This roadmap has been developed jointly by National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC coordinated by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement project on addressing mental health and psychosocial consequences of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies (MOMENT)