

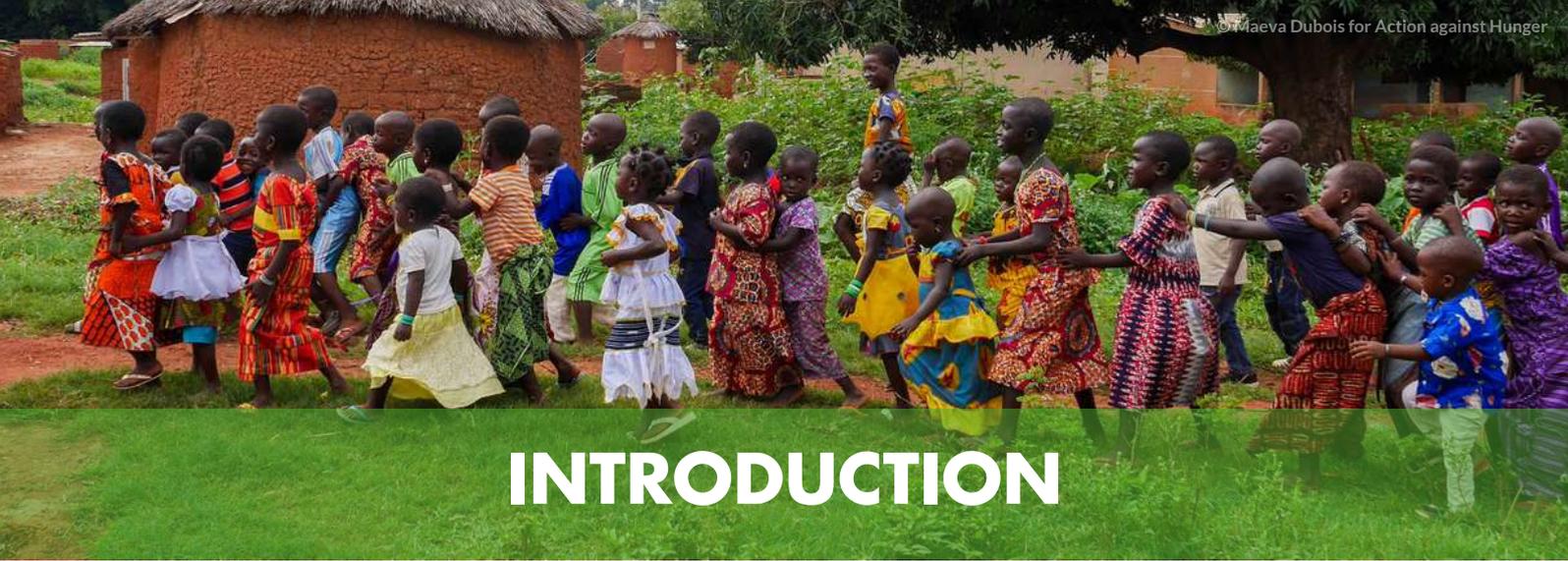


# MENTAL HEALTH PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Strategy 2023 > 2025



**ACTION  
CONTRE  
LA FAIM**



# INTRODUCTION

Action against Hunger (ACF in France) is a globally recognized Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) actor in the field of humanitarian emergency response and the fight against hunger. We also provide assistance in the sectors of **Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), Nutrition & Health and Food Security & Livelihoods (FSL)**.

- **We play an active part in MHPSS humanitarian coordination** via platforms such as national and global MHPSS working groups, including the IASC MHPSS reference group and its working groups, MAMI Global Network, Infant Feeding in Emergencies (IFE) Core Group, Child Protection Humanitarian Action Alliance and WHO mhGAP working group among others.
- **We are building a scientific database for MHPSS programming** by working together with world-renowned research institutes such as the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research in Bangladesh, the University of Worcester and University College London.
- **We are developing technical psychological and social expertise in the MHPSS sector** with partners the likes of WHO, UNICEF and EMDR France/Europe/US.
- **We share our MHPSS expertise and knowledge** at annual conferences including the World Association for Infant Mental Health, European Congress of Psychiatry and EMDR Europe Conference.

## IN 2020

Action against Hunger reached more than 25 million people in 46 countries, more than in any previous year.

Our MHPSS activities have supported over

## 682 121 PEOPLE



## A TRACK RECORD SPANNING MORE THAN TWO DECADES

supporting the implementation of MHPSS programs in resource-poor settings in collaboration with local partners. The national strategies aim at gradually fulfilling human rights and achieving, through specific and integrated programs, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This strategy sets out the **direction of Action against Hunger’s MHPSS sector from 2023 to 2025**. It follows the **network’s International Strategic Plan 2021–2025** (Figure 1) as well as the **strategic plan 2022–2025** of ACF France’s Expertise & Advocacy Department.

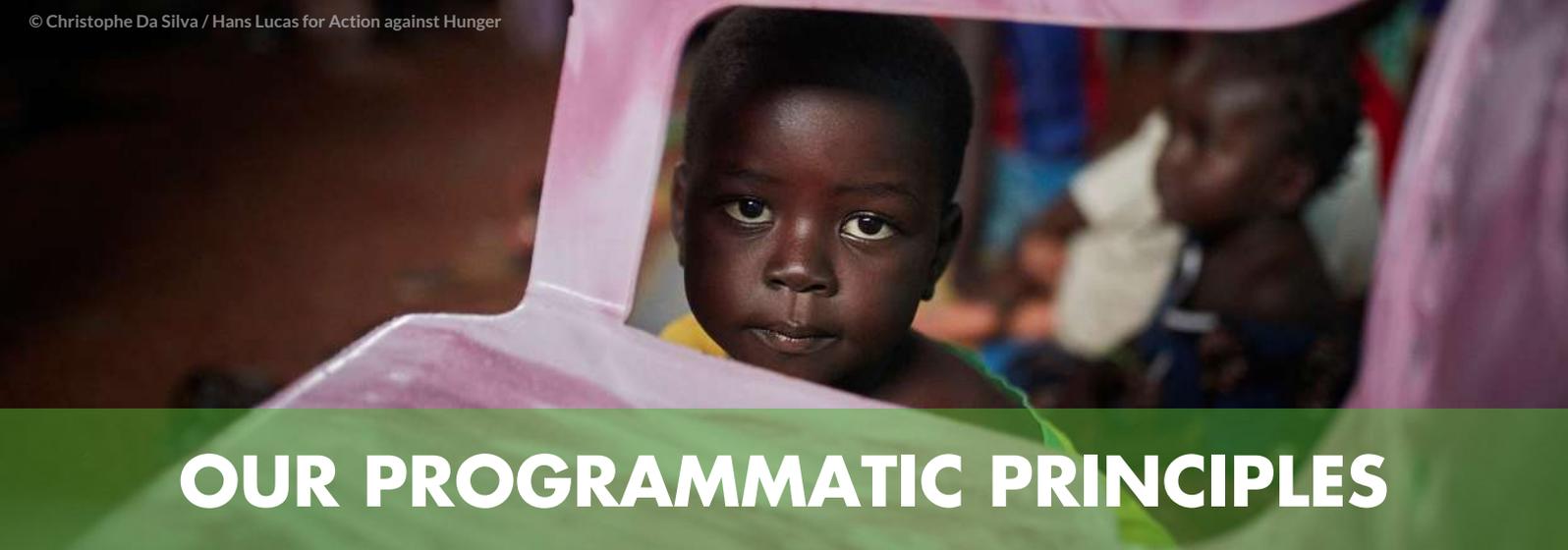
It is based on **five programmatic principles** that govern the way we work. It is further composed of:

- **core programmatic approaches** which cut across all our activities and are mandatory for all our programs,
- **programmatic priorities** that provide a framework for the areas of intervention where Action against Hunger can have the greatest added value to meet current MHPSS challenges.

The strategy is designed to cover all phases of the **humanitarian-development Nexus**, to **strengthen MHPSS systems** while ensuring the continuity, coverage and affordability of **essential MHPSS goods and services** based on existing knowledge. All priorities, particularly those listed under **Pillar 1 “Save and Protect Lives”** and **Pillar 2 “Build Resilience”** are complementary in this respect.



Figure 1: International Strategic Plan 2021–2025



# OUR PROGRAMMATIC PRINCIPLES

These principles govern all our interventions:

## 1 WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE CRISES

Our interventions focus on what people can do to meet their needs, harness their resources and achieve their aspirations. People of all ages, genders, cultures, heritages, languages, beliefs and identities are involved in all stages of a project, are given the opportunity to make decisions and steer operational responses and our advocacy, in order to fulfil their rights and needs.

## 2 WE PROTECT PEOPLE

The assistance delivered does not expose people to new dangers, violence, or human rights abuses or violations. We identify and reduce the potential negative effects of our interventions, in line with the “Do No Harm” principle. In accordance with fundamental human rights, we make sure that access to psychosocial support and mental health services is sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible, dignifying and affordable.

## 3 WE STRIVE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR INTERVENTIONS

In addition to providing reliable and sustainable MHPSS services that meet national and international MHPSS standards, we are committed to ensuring that these services are safe, protective,

inclusive, participatory and effective. Together with the international MHPSS community, we seek to maximize accountability and quality by being transparent about our achievements and striving to measure the impact of our interventions.

## 4 WE PARTNER WITH A WIDE RANGE OF LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL PARTNERS

Such as civil society organizations (including women’s and cultural minority rights groups), local governments, public entities, the United Nations, the private sector, universities and research institutes, and coordination platforms. We recognize the legitimacy and know-how of local actors. Only together can we bring the right combination of resources, experience, and understanding needed to achieve our objectives and foster the co-construction of programs.

## 5 WE USE EVIDENCE TO DEVELOP OUR PROGRAMS

Effective decisions are based on the analysis of existing evidence and experience. We are committed to better prioritizing the data we collect, increasing our capacity to conduct qualitative assessments, and being at the forefront of operational research to generate evidence to influence decision-making.



# OUR PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES

CORE PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH	GOALS FOR 2025	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE INTERVENTIONS
<p><b>ENSURE LOCAL ACTORS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE RESPONSE</b></p>	<p>Communities and local actors have a decisive voice in MHPSS projects' needs assessments, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and are able to provide feedback and make complaints. The response includes people of all ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds, without discrimination.</p>	<p>% of country offices designing, implementing and evaluating MHPSS services based on participation of local communities and actors.</p> <p>% of country offices providing mechanisms for giving feedback and complaints that trigger corrective actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When assessing projects, collect data from affected communities using participatory social science methods (e.g., focus group discussions, semi-structured, narrative and in-depth interviewing).</li> <li>Strive to co-construct as much as possible (or at the very least, consult and share information) with affected populations throughout the project, and adapt the project accordingly.</li> <li>Support community-led self-help initiatives.</li> <li>Establish feedback mechanisms.</li> <li>Work with local organizations that can help bring the voices of women and minorities to the fore, without putting them at risk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ADDRESS POWER INEQUITIES THROUGH GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES</b></p>	<p>Gender-transformative approaches are applied in the planning, operations, monitoring and evaluation of MHPSS programs.</p>	<p>% of country offices systematically conducting gender and power analyses in their MHPSS programming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct gender and power analyses.</li> <li>Train skilled facilitators who can engage both men and women as equal partners in decision-making and in carrying out MHPSS activities.</li> <li>Work with national and international institutions that support greater participation and engagement of women.</li> <li>Make women, girls, men and boys agents of change.</li> </ul>
<p><b>STRENGTHEN MHPSS ADVOCACY</b></p>	<p>Country offices assess the needs, resources, and gaps in MHPSS advocacy in their country strategy.</p>	<p>% of country strategies including an MHPSS component based on an analysis of needs, resources and gaps in MHPSS advocacy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the capacity of Action against Hunger offices to plan, implement and evaluate MHPSS advocacy projects.</li> <li>Develop MHPSS advocacy based on a rights-based approach and an intersectional methodology.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PROGRAMS</b></p>	<p>Action against Hunger's 2020 environmental policy is mainstreamed in MHPSS projects to mitigate and reduce negative environmental impacts. An integrated approach to natural resource management is adopted to prevent the onset of crises and lessen the impact on other sectors (e.g., food production and livelihoods). MHPSS programs are adjusted in line with expected climatic stimuli.</p>	<p>% of country offices using the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+) and implementing interventions accordingly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct environmental risk assessments and design programs accordingly.</li> <li>Comply with local health codes and national environmental legislation.</li> <li>Mitigate the impact of MHPSS activities (e.g., reduce distances between activities, use recyclable toy kits, etc.).</li> </ul>



# OUR PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES

**Programmatic priorities** are the areas of intervention where Action against Hunger can have the **greatest added value** to meet current MHPSS challenges. Each programmatic priority is broken down into **goals to be achieved by 2025** and **indicators as a means of monitoring** progress between 2023 and 2025. Our priorities are underpinned by the **core programmatic approaches** (see *previous page*) which cut across all our interventions and are mandatory for all our programs.

The strategy also outlines **examples of interventions** to achieve these goals, which are by no means exhaustive, mandatory, or relevant to all contexts. However, with this star ★, we indicate the **priority interventions for the next three years** and summarize them at the end of this chapter.

**WE SAVE LIVES AND RESPOND TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS**

- Anticipate, mitigate and manage risks  
Focus MHPSS interventions on areas with high public health risks
- Better understand social needs, resources, norms and values to trigger change
- Strengthen MHPSS surge capacity
- Support humanitarian coordination

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**WE COLLECTIVELY BUILD RESILIENCE**

- Implement sustainable MHPSS services
- Use and strengthen community resilience systems to bring about innovative MHPSS actions
- Mainstream MHPSS activities in WASH, Food Security, Protection, Nutrition and Health strategies and programs
- Mainstream intersectional methodology (gender, social inequalities, climate justice) in MHPSS programs

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**WE CONNECT AND MOBILIZE**

- Build local, national and international strategic partnerships
- Use evidence to influence decision-makers on MHPSS
- Support civil society and empower communities to influence socio-political change

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**WE CREATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE**

- Identify, select, test and disseminate the most promising innovative solutions  
Generate evidence through formal and operational research
- Manage knowledge to support decision-making
- Share and disseminate knowledge and data
- Contribute to the professionalization of the sector

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# WE SAVE LIVES AND RESPOND TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS

PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES	GOALS FOR 2025	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE INTERVENTIONS
<b>ANTICIPATE, MITIGATE AND MANAGE RISKS</b>	<p>Action against Hunger's MHPSS teams, their partners and communities are capable of:</p> <p><b>Anticipating risks:</b> they improve their analytical skills are aware of potential risks and take preparedness measures before a disaster happens.</p> <p><b>Mitigating risks:</b> they take steps to minimize the impact of potential disasters by promoting local adaptation and risk mitigation practices.</p> <p>They manage natural resources more sustainably and efficiently.</p>	% of emergency, preparedness and response plans taking into account mental health-related risks in populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct risk and vulnerability assessments.</li> <li>• Use mechanisms to manage and share disaster information (e.g., identification of vulnerable people).</li> <li>• Define MHPSS activities to be mainstreamed in country contingency plans.</li> <li>• Develop psychosocial activities with communities (e.g., disaster risk management training, psychological first aid, strengthening care practices).</li> <li>★ <b>Finalize the MHPSS &amp; Disaster Risk Reduction guide and systematize the mainstreaming of the MHPSS component in DRR projects.</b></li> <li>• Implement climate-proof MHPSS activities (e.g., strengthening care practices).</li> </ul>
<b>FOCUS MHPSS INTERVENTIONS ON AREAS WITH HIGH PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS</b>	MHPSS interventions are swift and located in areas with the highest public health needs (based on severity classification, outbreaks and high burden of malnutrition) to improve public health.	% of country offices with MHPSS responses located in epidemic and/or malnutrition hotspots identified by epidemiological data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>Continue the development of targeted protocols (e.g.: EMDR, CBT) that support children and adults suffering from different forms of psychological distress (including trauma).</b></li> <li>★ <b>Continue the development of integrated MHPSS'Nutrition projects to reduce acute malnutrition (e.g.: Baby Friendly Spaces, psychological support).</b></li> <li>• Mainstream an MHPSS component in DRR projects to help protect the most vulnerable during disasters and strengthen MHPSS emergency response (e.g., disaster preparedness activities via PFA).</li> <li>★ <b>Roll out, during an emergency, the minimum MHPSS package (MHPSS emergency kit) in communities and specialized health services.</b></li> <li>• Contribute to multisectoral outbreak response (e.g., COVID-19, Ebola).</li> </ul>
<b>BETTER UNDERSTAND SOCIAL NEEDS, RESOURCES, STANDARDS, PERCEPTIONS AND VALUES TO TRIGGER CHANGE</b>	MHPSS projects and outreach activities are based on a better understanding of social norms and determinants. Projects are shaped accordingly, leading to more effective programs, gender equity, action against stigma and improved public health.	% of country offices basing their MHPSS projects and activities on a contextual analysis (e.g., socio-anthropological study).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train staff in the assessment of MHPSS needs and resources in the context of a crisis using the Action against Hunger guide.</li> <li>• Incorporate findings of needs and resource studies into emergency programs.</li> <li>★ <b>Implement a strategy to systematize socio-anthropological studies (carried out by local/national actors if possible) at project outset—excluding emergencies (including a gender analysis and behavioral change analysis).</b></li> </ul>

## STRENGTHEN MHPSS SURGE CAPACITY

Action against Hunger's ability to respond to crises increases proportionally to the growing humanitarian needs. This particularly includes developing organizational surge capacity, working in consortium with other organizations, and improving local deployment capacity.

% of humanitarian responses including MHPSS activities (such as rapid response mechanisms).

- Improve and update the MHPSS emergency roster on a continuous basis.
- Maintain stand-by local partnerships to supply the MHPSS HR pools. Systematize participation in emergency responses.
- Finalize and disseminate the Emergency toolboxes (guide) and guidance.

## SUPPORT HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION

Action against Hunger actively contributes to key MHPSS and intersectoral humanitarian coordination platforms at global and national levels, and supports local actors to participate in these coordination mechanisms as well.

% of country offices leading or co-leading national or subnational MHPSS coordination platforms.

- Contribute to local humanitarian coordination (e.g., initiate an OCHA/IASC SURGE mechanism, lead a national or subnational working group, respond to group calls, report data to the protection cluster and contribute to working group advocacy).
- Participate in and support the IASC MHPSS Reference Group and its working groups (Child and family Group; M&E, CB MHPSS thematic group, Climate Change, Community Based MHPSS, Peace Building).
- Support a local actor logistically or financially so that they can contribute to the national working group meetings.
- Actively participate in the development of an inter-NGO for MHPSS humanitarian roadmap (via Coordination Sud, URD, AFD).
- Actively participate in the international technical networks MHPSS'Nutrition and MHPSS'Protection.





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## WE COLLECTIVELY BUILD RESILIENCE

PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES	GOALS FOR 2025	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE INTERVENTIONS
<b>IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE MHPSS SERVICES</b>	Clear exit strategies are developed at project outset to ensure continuity and sustainability of services and to implement sustainable MHPSS solutions.	% of projects including a partnership with government, academia or CSOs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize the Mental Health Systems Strengthening manual.</li> <li>★ Train Action against Hunger staff in interventions aimed at strengthening mental health and/or social protection systems (access to services, universal cover, minimum package of services, etc.).</li> <li>Conduct and then centralize diagnostics on mental health systems on NHF.</li> </ul>
<b>USE AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY RESILIENCE SYSTEMS TO BRING OUT INNOVATIVE ACTIONS IN MHPSS</b>	In intervention areas, Action against Hunger uses and supports community resilience mechanisms, promotes innovations and invests in social initiatives.	% of MHPSS projects using community resilience-based arrangements or supporting a social initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help social and psychosocial associations adapt to crises.</li> <li>Bring about or strengthen social self-help initiatives for MHPSS services.</li> <li>Build or support tripartite partnerships between humanitarian actors, local associations and development actors.</li> <li>Seek to take community-based approaches on board with the use of specialized MHPSS protocols.</li> <li>Capture and promote innovative MHPSS initiatives.</li> </ul>

## MAINSTREAM MHPSS ACTIVITIES IN WASH, FOOD SECURITY, PROTECTION, NUTRITION AND HEALTH PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

The MHPSS sector leverages skills in social sciences and ecology to round off those of the traditional humanitarian business sectors, through the promotion of an intersectional approach.

% of WASH, Food Security, Protection, Nutrition and Health projects, in the intervention areas where MHPSS services are integrated.

- Identify common programmatic opportunities based on areas and timeframes of common interest and then implement them (e.g., Baby Friendly Spaces, the 1,000-day window of opportunity, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Health Systems Strengthening, MAMI).
- Mainstream relevant MHPSS approaches and activities in Action against Hunger WASH, Food Security, Protection, Nutrition and Health frameworks and strategies while ensuring MHPSS quality and expertise.
- Develop common referral systems between the WASH, Food Security, Protection, Nutrition and Health sectors of Action against Hunger.
- Support governments to align national WASH, Food Security, Protection, Nutrition and Health frameworks, policies and strategies by mainstreaming MHPSS activities.

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## MAINSTREAM THE INTERSECTIONAL METHODOLOGY (GENDER, SOCIAL INEQUALITY, CLIMATE JUSTICE) IN MHPSS PROGRAMS

The MHPSS sector leverages skills in social sciences and ecology to round off those of the traditional humanitarian business sectors, through the promotion of an intersectional approach.

% of MHPSS projects embracing an intersectional approach targeting gender issues, social inequalities and climate justice.

- Practice scientific monitoring for easier consideration of key ecological issues within assistance programs.
- ★ Get involved in international partnerships and coalitions (one health, planetary health) where Action against Hunger intervenes, on climate change and biodiversity loss and their impact on the mental health of women and girls as well as other marginalized people (climate migrants, people in precarious situations in particular).
- ★ Participate in the development of innovative MHPSS interventional research and approaches contributing to One Health or to planetary health paving the way to improved health and well-being and to a sustainable future for living organisms and ecosystems: agroecology biomimicry, bio-sourcing, disaster risk management, etc.
- ★ Participate (based on the MHPSS sector's experience in behavioral change management) in the development of transformative MHPSS approaches that specifically target patriarchal gender, race, or class norms in programs combating gender-based violence, bearing on sexual and reproductive health, or access to essential services within migration trajectories.

# WE CONNECT AND MOBILIZE

PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES	GOALS FOR 2025	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE INTERVENTIONS
<p><b>BUILD LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS</b></p>	<p>Relationships and partnerships with humanitarian and development actors (national governments, ministries, primary health care centers, CSOs, community-based organizations, technical networks where appropriate) at the global and national levels are strengthened.</p>	<p>% of country offices having at least one strategic partnership with a local actor (operational and/or academic).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>Develop an MHPSS financial, scientific and technical partnership strategy.</b></li> <li>• Identify partnerships with local associations mobilized on the issues of the MHPSS sector.</li> </ul>
<p><b>USE EVIDENCE TO INFLUENCE DECISION MAKERS ON MHPSS</b></p>	<p>Action against Hunger is developing specific MHPSS advocacy supporting its global mandate and the advocacy of other sectors of the organization. At the local level, MHPSS advocacy goals are adapted to the local context, with people affected by the issue and in consultation with MHPSS working groups or health ministries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurturing care</li> <li>• Fighting against austerity policies</li> <li>• Climate crisis</li> <li>• Health care system</li> </ul>	<p>% of country offices with multi-year MHPSS advocacy goals and reporting annually on their progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>Develop an MHPSS advocacy strategy.</b></li> <li>• Communicate about Action against Hunger’s MHPSS advocacy among decision makers (e.g., government representatives, donors, MHPSS working groups).</li> <li>• Organize campaigns over social media and in the press.</li> <li>• Contribute to national and regional MHPSS advocacy initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY AND EMPOWER COMMUNITIES TO INFLUENCE SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGE IN MHPSS</b></p>	<p>Civil society and communities are empowered to influence socio-political change and claim their rights. Action against Hunger promotes participatory governance and gives civil society organizations access to spaces at local, regional and international levels where they can be heard directly. Proactive efforts are made to give a voice to minorities and advocate for rights-based approaches.</p>	<p>% of local CSOs and/or communities receiving support from Action against Hunger in claiming their rights and influencing MHPSS decision makers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advocacy and community mobilization training to national and local MHPSS actors.</li> <li>• Support the creation of a feedback mechanism between communities and the authorities in charge of organizing state MHPSS services.</li> <li>• Facilitate meetings between local actors and decision makers.</li> <li>• Support the active contribution of young people (especially girls) and local actors at MHPSS events.</li> <li>★ <b>Work with organizations that can help represent minorities.</b></li> </ul>

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## WE CREATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES	GOALS FOR 2025	INDICATORS	INDICATIVE INTERVENTIONS
<p><b>IDENTIFY, SELECT, TEST AND DISSEMINATE THE MOST PROMISING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS</b></p>	<p>Action against Hunger MHPSS teams identify the areas where innovations are most needed. Together, they develop and test new approaches and technologies to meet the changing MHPSS challenges.</p>	<p>% of country offices developing and/or leading innovations that address current MHPSS challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share MHPSS innovations (e.g., protocols: EMDR—GTEP/IGTP, CBT, Emotional and stress management intervention; e-health—mobile tech, app) via NHF and dedicated information within Action against Hunger.</li> <li>Work together with the private sector on assessing innovative solutions (e.g.: Latitudes, Lego, etc.).</li> <li>★ Contribute to international MHPSS innovation initiatives (e.g., climate change, social cohesion, e-health).</li> </ul>
<p><b>GENERATE EVIDENCE THROUGH FORMAL, INTERVENTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL RESEARCH</b></p>	<p>Evidence on transformative MHPSS interventions is generated. A multi-year MHPSS scientific and operational research agenda is developed in line with Action against Hunger country office contributions, the Action against Hunger research strategy and the international MHPSS community's own research agenda.</p>	<p>% of country offices conducting research aligned with Action against Hunger's multi-year MHPSS research agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Define an MHPSS research strategy consistent with Action against Hunger's research and advocacy strategies.</li> <li>Implement operational research projects by establishing collaboration between country offices, MHPSS technical resources, dedicated Action against Hunger research staff, academic partners, technical partners, operational partners and donors.</li> <li>★ Contribute to international MHPSS research initiatives that showcase local knowledge and experiential knowledge, and promote the implementation of community-based research.</li> <li>Conduct MHPSS research related to human rights and gender inequality.</li> <li>Partner with national and international universities and research institutes.</li> </ul>

## MANAGE INFORMATION TO SUPPORT OPERATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

An MHPSS knowledge management framework is developed to help identify, collect, distill, analyze and manage the vast body of information needed for effective and prompt decision-making for MHPSS programs in complex settings.

A knowledge management framework is developed.

- Develop an MHPSS knowledge management framework.
- Identify, collect and analyze key data and conduct MHPSS studies.
- Organize and share knowledge digitally (e.g., Action against Hunger FR websites, MHPSS NHF community).

## SHARE AND DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE AND DATA OUTSIDE OF ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

Key MHPSS data and resources are shared externally (MHPSS RG, Action against Hunger FR, Action against Hunger UK websites, etc.).

Number of technical publications written or co-authored by Action against Hunger shared with the international community and made accessible on the internet.

- Update the MHPSS web page of Action against Hunger FR by adding new posts, websites (M&E, AAC and SMPSP) in connection with the communication, knowledge management and advocacy teams.
- Promote capitalization on and learning from experiences in MHPSS.
- Share/Disseminate Action against Hunger's MHPSS knowledge (manuals, briefs, articles) with international and national working groups (e.g., MHPSS.net).
- Promote Action against Hunger's key MHPSS resources and research publications through promotional tools, events and publications (e.g., webinars, posters, international events, academic seminars).

## CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE SECTOR

Professional development and training opportunities are made available to Action against Hunger's MHPSS teams and local actors to fill the human resource gaps in the MHPSS sector.

Number of Action against Hunger staff and partners having attended MHPSS-related training given by Action against Hunger.

- Develop and disseminate the MHPSS Strategy 2023–2025.
- ★ **Develop the MHPSS SPEC (level 1 digital, level 2 face-to-face).**
- Develop a collaborative work space between Action against Hunger's different technical MHPSS resources.
- ★ **Review the MHPSS professional sector (benchmark job, competency by including particularly coordination functions in the job descriptions of the relevant MHPSS staff).**
- Formally include general training in mental health and psychology to build the capacity of local learning institutes (e.g., French and foreign universities).
- ★ **Help to develop local university syllabi in MHPSS or to design a university degree in mental health in one of the countries where Action against Hunger is active.**



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## SUMMARY OF PRIORITY INTERVENTIONS

2023

### SECTORAL STRUCTURING

- Develop sector strategies for MHPSS advocacy and financial, scientific and technical partnerships.
- Review the MHPSS professional sector.
- Implement a strategy to systematize socio-anthropological studies (carried out by local/national actors if possible) at project outset.

### SECTORAL INNOVATION AROUND CLIMATE ISSUES AND INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES

- Get involved in international partnerships and coalitions (one health, planetary health) where Action against Hunger intervenes, on climate change and biodiversity loss and their impacts on the mental health of women and girls as well as other marginalized people (climate migrants, people in precarious situations in particular).
- Participate in the development of innovative MHPSS interventional research and approaches contributing to One Health or planetary health paving the way to improved health and well-being and to a sustainable future for living organisms and ecosystems: agroecology, biomimicry, bio-sourcing, disaster risk management, etc.
- Participate in the development of transformative MHPSS approaches that specifically target patriarchal gender, race, and class norms in programs combating gender-based violence, bearing on sexual and reproductive health, or access to essential services within migration trajectories.

### KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND ASSIMILATION

- Finalize the MHPSS & Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) guide, the Mental Health Systems Strengthening manual and the MHPSS Emergency Kit.
- Continue the development of targeted activities and protocols (e.g.: EMDR, CBT) to accompany children and adults suffering from various forms of psychological distress (including trauma) and to reduce acute malnutrition (e.g., Baby Friendly Spaces, psychological support).
- Develop the MHPSS SPEC (level 1 digital, level 2 face-to-face).

### PARTICIPATION IN THE AID LOCALIZATION AGENDA

- Contribute to international MHPSS research initiatives that showcase local and experiential knowledge, and promote the implementation of community-based research.
- Help to develop local university syllabi in MHPSS or to design a university degree in mental health in one of the countries where Action against Hunger is active.
- Work with organizations that can help represent and channel the voice of minorities.

2025



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