

## Responsible Staff Care in humanitarian missions – important objectives

**Boris Budosan\***

*University of Zagreb, Croatia*

**Submission:** April 11, 2026; **Published:** April 22, 2026

**\*Corresponding author:** Boris Budosan, University of Zagreb, Vocarsko Naselje 22, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia

### Abstract

This article will present most important objectives of responsible staff care in humanitarian missions. Responsible staff care, often referred to as Duty of Care, is a foundational organizational responsibility to protect the physical, mental, emotional, and psychosocial well-being of employees. The primary responsibility for staff care lies with the organization, not the individual. Management must actively invest in staff care programs. Responsible staff care prioritizes mental well-being, acknowledging the impact of chronic stress and traumatic events.

**Keywords:** Humanitarian missions; Psychosocial; Staff care; Emotional strain

### Introduction

The first objective of responsible staff care would be that an organization has a commitment to staff care and implement policies and strategies to that end.

#### Main targets for this objective would be as follows:

- i. Organizations will have clearly defined philosophy of responsible staff care.
- ii. Organizations will have well-articulated staff policies and procedures.
- iii. Staff care will be included into program planning and budgeting.

#### Main indicators would be:

- i. Existence of written agreement among key stakeholders on importance of staff care for organization.
- ii. Existence of strategic communication plan in which the senior leadership emphasizes the importance and value of staff care for organization.
- iii. Existence of clear and specific staff policies and procedures for staff care at organizations.

- iv. Proposals of organizations include staff care activities and budgets of proposals include budget for staff care.

#### Means of verifications would include:

- i. Physical availability of written agreement among key stakeholders, strategic communication plan and staff care policy and procedures.
- ii. Physical availability of proposals which include staff care activities and budget for staff care. The second objective would be that an organization ensures to accomplish the assessment written as part of paragraph of coping skills / resilience of potential employees before start of humanitarian work.

#### Main target for this objective would be:

- i. Recruitment, screening and assessment procedures of organization to assess personal resilience and coping skills of potential employees by using appropriate methodologies will be standardized and strengthened.

#### Main indicators would include:

- i. Existence of tools to assess strengths and vulnerabilities

of an individual during selection process.

ii. Potential stressors for the specific job posting are clearly articulated during the recruitment process.

iii. Staff care policy of the organization is reviewed with job candidates during selection process.

iv. Number of job interviews where tools to assess strengths and vulnerabilities of an individual were used, potential stressors for the specific job posting mentioned and staff care policy of the organization reviewed with potential job candidate.

### Means of verification would be:

i. Physical availability of tools to assess strengths and vulnerabilities of an individual during selection process.

ii. Documentation of HR department.

The third objective would be to ensure that the staff has access to staff care resources upon joining organization or beginning a new assignment.

### Main targets for this objective would be as follows:

i. All the staff of an organization will have access to orientation and materials on staff care, resilience and stress management and information on how staff care, resilience and staff management resources can be accessed.

ii. Pre-assignment consultations to promote positive coping skills and resilience should be available to all staff.

### Indicators should include:

i. Existence of documentation and information on staff care as part of a standard orientation package.

ii. Number of pre-assignment consultations to promote staff resilience per number of staff joining the organization and / or beginning a new assignment.

### Means of verification would be:

i. Physical availability of documentation and information on staff care as part of a standard orientation package.

ii. Documentation of HR department.

The fourth one would be to ensure staff has access to confidential individual consultations, educational materials and training on staff care during their humanitarian work.

### Main targets for this objective would be:

i. Organizations will have in place learning opportunities for staff throughout their employment to increase their awareness about staff care, resilience and stress management and they will provide this information on an ongoing basis to specific high stress field locations in relevant languages for both international and local staff.

ii. Organizations will have in place opportunities for an individual counselling and capacity to respond to critical incidents.

iii. Organizations will establish and regularly review rest and recuperation (R&R) policies and support managers in assessing well-being of their staff and providing them with an adequate support.

### Indicators should include:

i. Existence of available educational and training materials on staff care, resilience and stress management.

ii. Number of distributed materials on staff care, resilience and stress management per number of staff.

iii. Number of provided individual counselling sessions for staff per number of individual counselling sessions requested.

iv. Existence of R&R policy and clear critical incident policies and procedures.

v. Number of trainings provided to managers on how to assess well-being of their staff and provide them with an adequate support.

### Means of verification would be

i. Physical availability of educational and training materials on staff care, resilience and stress management.

ii. Physical availability of R&R policy and critical incident policies and procedures

iii. Documentation of HR department.

Finally, the fifth objective would be to ensure that staff has access to confidential individual consultations, educational materials and training on staff care after they finish their assignment and / or humanitarian work.

### Main targets for this objective would be:

i. Organizations will have in place post-assignment resilience consultations as a standard part of the post-assignment and / or end of employment process and separate from programmatic or operational debriefings, particularly for staff concluding an assignment in a high stress context.

ii. Procedures and time frame for accessing such consultations will be clearly communicated to both international and local staff.

### Indicators should include:

i. Number of post-assignment resilience consultations per number of staff who finish the assignment and / or humanitarian work for the organization.

ii. Existence of clearly communicated procedures for accessing such consultations.

## Means of verification would be:

- i. Documentation of Human resources (HR) department.
- ii. Physical availability of clearly communicated procedures for assessing post-assignment resilience consultations.

## Conclusion

In conclusion it is important to emphasize that every humanitarian mission and its success depends not only on strategy and resources, but also on the people who show up to

deliver. Humanitarian aid professionals serve on the front lines of crisis, often under immense pressure, emotional strain, and logistical uncertainty. Yet, despite this reality, many organizations still fail to prioritize staff care as a fundamental part of mission readiness and impact.

## References

1. Antares Foundation (2012) Managing stress in humanitarian workers: Guidelines for good practice.



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License  
DOI: [10.19080/PBSIJ.2026.24.556131](https://doi.org/10.19080/PBSIJ.2026.24.556131)

### Your next submission with Juniper Publishers will reach you the below assets

- Quality Editorial service
- Swift Peer Review
- Reprints availability
- E-prints Service
- Manuscript Podcast for convenient understanding
- Global attainment for your research
- Manuscript accessibility in different formats  
( Pdf, E-pub, Full Text, Audio)
- Unceasing customer service

Track the below URL for one-step submission

<https://juniperpublishers.com/online-submission.php>