

# Mental Health Services in Disasters: Manual for Humanitarian Workers

**RAQUEL E. COHEN**

*Mental Health Services in Disasters: Manual for Humanitarian Workers*, is composed of a noteworthy summary of the most updated knowledge in this field, in a world in which the effects from natural disasters are increasingly more dramatic – be they hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, or floods, etc. Crucial aspects in the management of different disaster victims are emphasized, with special attention to those most vulnerable: children, the aged, HIV patients, individuals with substance abuse problems and their interaction with other victims.

The manual is written in a simple and easy-to-read format for those persons who, in some way, are involved in providing relief to an affected population, as well as in the short and long-term psychosocial and psychophysiological repercussions from the disaster. It's main objective is to provide an orderly, immediate and efficient flow of relief, training public mental health elements and preventing already-identified adverse consequences.

The author, Dr. Raquel E. Cohen, a graduate of and former associate professor of Harvard Medical School, is a world-renowned authority in the field of psychological and social consequences from disasters and intervention methods. She has extensive experience in managing these situations and has been solicited by several victim relief governmental and non-governmental organizations. One of her most recent involvements was helping the inhabitants of the region affected by Hurricane Mitch in Central America.

*Mental Health Services in Disasters: Manual for Humanitarian Workers* is an instrument that will contribute to the greatest degree in decreasing the social and psychological consequences for all of those people affected by a disaster. Furthermore, it is complemented by the *Instructor's Guide* (published in the same collection) that serves to help those individuals who must create and execute training and orientation programs on mental health in disasters.



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