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26th European Congress of Psychiatry

## Presidential Symposium

### Presidential Symposium: Vulnerable People in Humanitarian Emergencies

PS0001

#### Empowering women and girls in humanitarian emergencies

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**Introduction.**– The risk to fail women and girls in humanitarian crises is high.

**Objectives.**– Present and discuss the challenges and opportunities of empowering women and girls in humanitarian crises.

**Methods.**– Non-systematic review of experience and evidence on empowering women and girls in humanitarian crises.

**Results.**– Empowerment of women and girls is central for the health for all at any given time. Humanitarian crises pose a special risk for the mental health of all adults and children. Most often, women and girls are already the most marginalized and vulnerable members of their communities, have their resources constrained and suffer differently and often to a significantly greater extent. Gender responsive humanitarian programming plays a significant role for the success of emergency responses. Core examples of tasks warranting gender-specific attention concern access to reproductive health care, protection against gender-based violence and, essentially, consulting women and girls in recognition of their specific capabilities, needs, and human rights. Recent years have brought these issues into focus and strongly impacted guidelines and programming towards focusing on gender-sensitive and equality approaches in order to strengthen crisis response. It is also noteworthy, that humanitarian crises can offer special opportunities for the empowerment of women and girls with lasting positive effects as evidenced by changes in social structures and power dynamics in war and post-war societies.

**Conclusions.**– A focus on empowering women and girls strengthens the effectiveness and improves the long-term impact of interventions in reaction to humanitarian crises and can help promote additional lasting positive effects for communities and societies.

**Disclosure of interest.**– The authors have not supplied a conflict of interest statement.

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PS0002

#### The WPA program for strengthening the contribution and availability of psychiatrists in situations of conflict and emergency

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A capacity-building program is now being developed by WPA under its Action Plan 2017–2020 to strengthen the contribution and availability of psychiatrists in national and international responses to conflict and humanitarian emergencies as well as to severe adversities in city slums and other settings. With partners we will train and support psychiatrists to perform their roles in emergency responses with a special focus on human rights, including tackling the burden of stigma. The program will draw on the past experiences of joint WPA–WHO training for disaster response<sup>8</sup> as well as leading international NGOs such as Basic Needs. The program will support psychiatrists: to respond directly to mental health needs of young people in complex emergency situations and settings of adversity in accord with international protocols; train their peers and other clinicians and community-based workers in their own countries and regions; and support the development of new and existing community-based services in innovative and community directed ways. The trained psychiatrists in turn will be supported in their work by access to online resources and opportunities for regular face-to-face interaction with peers and an expert group. We plan for a global initiative with regional hubs. It is being initiated in Latin America with support from the Juan Jose Lopez Ibor Foundation and the development of the Alliance for Mental Health Responses to Emergencies and Conflicts, in collaboration with citiesRISE <<http://www.citiesrise.org/>>.

**Disclosure of interest.**– The authors declare that they have no competing interest.