

# **WHO Conference on Health Aspects of Tsunami Disaster in Asia**

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# Mental Health Needs in Disasters

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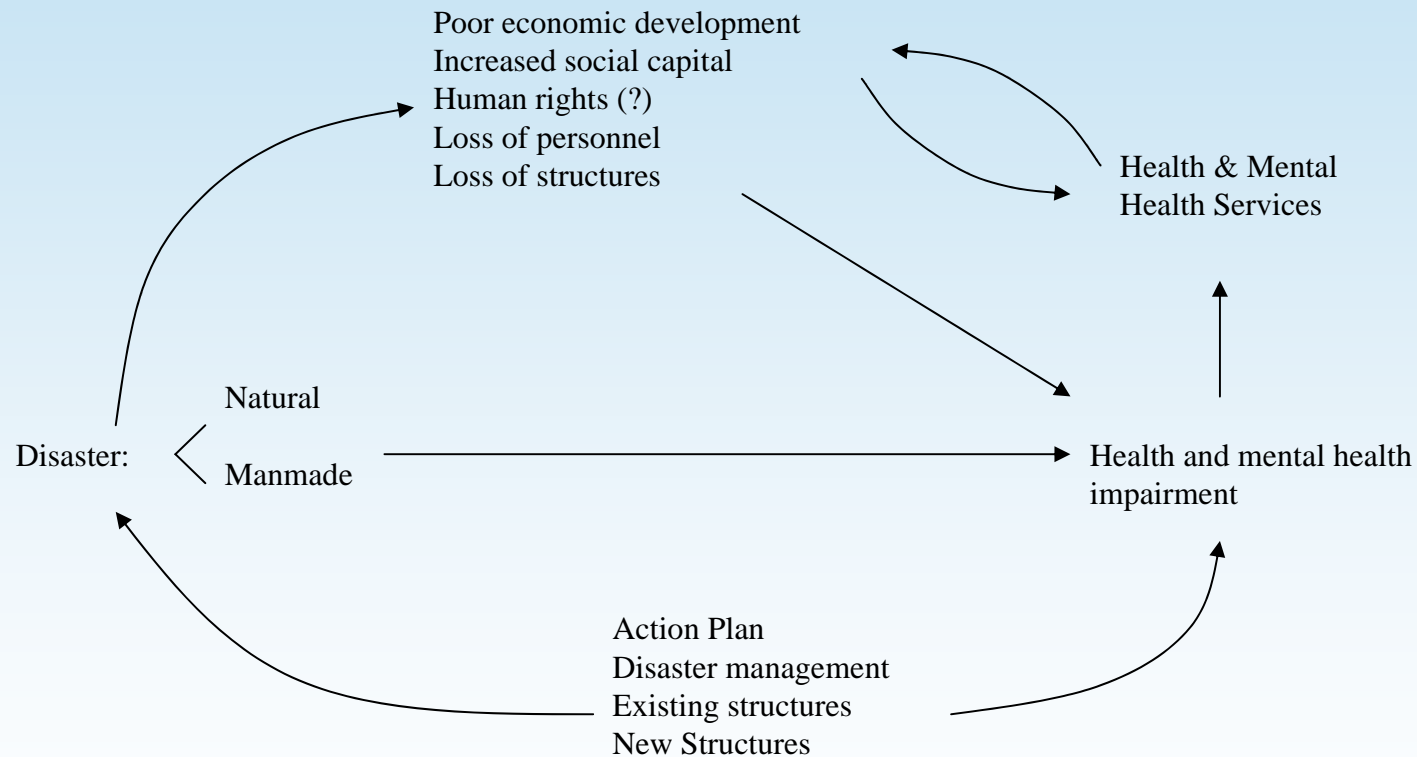
**Disaster is a severe disruption: ecological and psychosocial which greatly exceeds the coping capacity of the affected community.**



**A complex emergency is a social catastrophe marked by the destruction of the effect of the population's political, economic, socio-cultural and health care infrastructures. Economic collapse associated with destruction and displacement.**



# Fig: Macrolevel Interactions



# Mental Health Care

- **Coordination and collaboration**
- **Assessment and monitoring**
- **Early intervention-”psychological first aid”**
- **Existing care vs. urgent needs**
- **Training and education**
- **Culturally appropriate**
  - **Language**
  - **Cognitions**
  - **Idioms of distress**
  - **Sociocentric/Egocentric interventions**



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# Mental Health Care

- Ethics
- Human rights
- Community participation
- Caring for the carers
- Outcome assessment
- Focus on needs, distress NOT diagnosis.  
NOT PTSD



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**Disaster Preparation**  
**Disaster Management**  
**Coordination**  
**Information sharing**  
**Building on existing resources**  
**Reconsolidation**  
**Evaluation**



# Conclusions

**Mental health integral to delivery**

**Be sensitive to cultural needs**

**Be sensitive to local idioms of distress**



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