

A network diagram of the Asian continent, where nodes represent cities and lines represent connections. The nodes are circles of varying sizes, and the lines are thin white lines. The diagram is set against a dark red background.

*Building  
resilience  
to disasters*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Conference on

**Bridging the Gaps in Mental Health  
and Psychosocial Support in  
Emergencies in Asia**

*8–9 December 2015*

*Swissôtel Nai Lert Park  
Bangkok, Thailand*



# Background information

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Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) has become a growing priority in emergencies and disasters not only for the Asia-Pacific region but globally. As disasters continue to hit countries, there is a growing need and realization of addressing and improving the neglected cluster of psychological support of populations at risk. The lack of a multi-sectoral, inter-agency framework that enables effective coordination and collaboration among partners during emergencies is an identified gap, which leads to significant inefficiencies, duplication of efforts and waste of resources.

Building capacities of humanitarian actors in managing public health emergencies in the field covers a wide spectrum. In 2011, ADPC launched the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies Training Program to strengthen community safety and resilience through the capacity development of health personnel at various levels. Funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the objective of the program is to better manage psychosocial impacts of emergencies and disasters to increase the survival rate of disaster victims. ADPC organized the pilot training with BRAC Bangladesh, with the aim of establishing a system for enhancing the capacity of communities in psychological first aid to be able to manage victims immediately post-disaster; to strengthen the knowledge and skills of health workers in managing vulnerable populations; and to enhance the capacity of mental health professionals to assess, evaluate and manage the need for psychosocial support during a disaster. Later, the same program was successfully implemented in Vietnam in collaboration the Hanoi School of Public Health and the Center for Research, Information & Service in Psychology of the Vietnam National University.

The aim of the third regional conference organized under the program is to identify “gaps and bridges” to address challenges experienced by stakeholders dealing with psychosocial support in emergencies in Asia, and exchange lessons learned to foster and build regional resilience. The expected output of the conference is to establish a Regional Coordinating Body to take the lead in raising awareness and advancing MHPSS across the region.

The conference is organized by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in coordination with the Center for Crisis Psychology in Norway and Thammasat University in Thailand, and made possible through the financial support of the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The event is an opportunity for subject-matter experts from the Center for Crisis Psychology of Norway, the School of Psychology of the University of New South Wales in Australia, representatives from the World Health Organization, UNICEF and other UN agencies, government organizations, NGOs and INGOs, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and academic institutions in the region to come together and address gaps in psychosocial support in emergencies in Asia.

Representatives and key organizational leaders from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam will share lessons learned related to mental health and psychosocial support during disasters in their countries. At a poster exhibit taking place during the conference, each country will have the opportunity to showcase how they define and visualize MHPSS during emergencies, what challenges they have faced, and what their recommendations are for building resilience through mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies in the region.

The conference is the third in a series of ADPC's regional conferences focusing on mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies in Asia – the previous conference was organized in 2013 with the title Regional Conference Promoting Psychological Support and Psychological Recovery in Emergencies in Asia. The first conference in 2010 was titled Psychosocial Response to Disasters – Focus on Children in Asia.



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08.00–08.30

Registration

*Swissôtel Nai Lert Park, Gallery E (lobby floor)*

08.30–09.00

Opening of the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Poster Exhibits

09.00–09.40

### Welcome and introductions

*Master of Ceremony:*

**Ms. Maria Holtsberg**, Project Manager, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Welcome address*

**Shane Wright**, Executive Director, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Opening remarks*

**Prof. Marc Van der Putten**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Thammasat University, Thailand

*Words of encouragement*

**Ms. Unni Marie Heltne**, Director, Center for Crisis Psychology, Norway

*Words of inspiration*

**Dr. Panpimol Wipulakorn**, Deputy Director General, Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand

09.40–09.45

Group photo

09.45–10.00

Tea and coffee

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10.00–11.00

**Session 1.** Mental health and psychosocial support: global and regional perspectives

*Moderator:*

**Dr. Yvonne S. Duque**, Senior Public Health Specialist, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Presenters:*

**Mr. Dan Rono**, Regional Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF  
*UNICEF Priorities 2016 and Beyond*

**Dr. Atle Dyregrov**, Head of International Issues, Center for Crisis and Psychology, Norway

*Building community resilience after disaster: a realistic endeavor?*

**Dr. Liviu Vedrasco**, Technical Officer, World Health Organization, Thailand Country Office (TBC)

*Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) updates on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)*

11.00–12.30

**Panel 1.** Piloting of ‘MHPSS in Emergencies Program’ in Asia – lessons learned, scaling up and sustainability perspectives

*Moderator:*

**Mr. Sajedul Hasan**, Director, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Panelists:*

*Bangladesh* – **Ms. Bithun Tasnuva Mazid**, Senior Sector Specialist, Disaster Management and Climate Change Program, BRAC

*Vietnam* – **Asst. Prof. Dang Hoang Minh**, Director, Center for Research, Information & Service in Psychology, Vietnam National University (CRISP-VNU)

*Video presentations*

12.30–13.30

Lunch



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13.30–15.00

**Panel 2.** Country presentations

*Moderator:*

**Asst. Prof. William Brady**, Assistant Dean for Research and Academic Services, School of Global Studies, Thammasat University, Thailand

*Panelists:*

**MHPSS Multi-Country Experience in Asia** – **Ms. Patrizia Giffoni**, Regional Psychosocial Support Delegate for Asia, Danish Red Cross, IFRC Cambodia Country Office

**Myanmar** – **Mr. Ko Ko Tin**, Director General, Department of Human Resource and Education Planning, Ministry of Education  
*MHPSS as experienced during cyclones in Myanmar*

15.00–15.15

Tea and coffee

15.15–16.30

**Session 2.** Bridging initiatives, advocacy, and aligning MHPSS initiatives with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030

*Moderator:*

**Prof. Richard Bryant**, Scientia Professor & NHMRC Senior Principal Research Fellow, School of Psychology, University of New South Wales, Australia

*Presenters:*

**Mr. Atiq Kainan Ahmed**, Program Specialist, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and linkages to MHPSS initiatives*

**Ms. Unni Marie Heltne**, Director, Center for Crisis Psychology, Norway  
*Lessons learned from implementing low threshold psychosocial aid after war and disasters*

**Mr. Anothai Udomsilp**, Director of Academic Institute of Public Media, Thai PBS

*Responsible journalism during emergencies and disasters*

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**16.30-17.00**

Presentation and judging of Mental Health and  
Psychosocial Support Poster Exhibits

**17.00-18.00**

Cocktails  
*Swissôtel Nai Lert Park, Conservatory*



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08.30–09.30

**Panel 3.** Country presentations

*Moderator:*

**Asst. Prof. William Brady**, Assistant Dean for Research and Academic Services, School of Global Studies, Thammasat University, Thailand

*Panelists:*

**Philippines** – **Dr. Fidelita D. Dico**, Medical Officer IV - Health Emergency Management, Regional Coordinator, Region 8, Department of Health  
*MHPSS: The Typhoon Haiyan Experience – moving forward*

**Thailand** – **Ms. Chollada Jarusirichaikul**, Public Health Technical Officer, Bureau of Mental Health Service Administration, Department of Mental Health  
*MHPSS during the 2011 floods in Thailand*

09.30–11.00

**Session 3.** MHPSS resilience following disasters

*Moderator:*

**Dr. Atle Dyregrov**, Head of International Issues, Center for Crisis and Psychology, Norway

*Presenters:*

**Prof. Richard Bryant**, Scientia Professor & NHMRC Senior Principal Research Fellow, School of Psychology, University of New South Wales, Australia  
*Advances in resilience and how to implement them after disasters*

**Ms. Adelaida G. Chavez**, Coordinator, National Child Protection Working Group, Council for the Welfare of Children, Philippines  
*Evolution of the Child Friendly Space Philippine National Guidelines*

11.00–11.15

Tea and coffee



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11.15–12.45

**Session 4.** Building resilience: perspectives on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction – Group work

*Moderator:*

**Mr. Atiq Kainan Ahmed**, Program Specialist, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Themes:*

- *Building resilience*
- *Bridging the gaps*

12.45–13.45

Lunch

13.45–15.00

**Panel 4.** Country presentations

*Moderator:*

**Prof. Shaheen Islam**, Department of Education and Psychology, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

*Panelists:*

**Sri Lanka** – **Dr. Samantha Kumara Kithalawaarachchi**, Director to the H.E. President, Presidential Secretariat, Sri Lanka  
*MHPSS in complex emergencies – Sri Lanka experience*

**Indonesia** – (TBC)

15.00–15.15

Tea and coffee



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15.15–16.30

### Session 5. Development partners' perspectives on MHPSS

*Moderator:*

**Dr. Yvonne S. Duque**, Senior Public Health Specialist, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Presenters:*

**Mr. Michael Ernst**, South Asia Regional Advisor, U.S. Agency for International Development

**UNFPA** (TBC)

16.30–17.00

### Steps forward

- Planning for the next conference (responsibilities, duties, communication platforms)
- Selecting a country organization to lead an MHPSS working committee

17.00–18.00

### Closing ceremony

*Master of Ceremony:*

**Ms. Janette Lauza-Ugsang**, Senior Project Manager, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

*Speakers:*

**Mr. Sajedul Hasan**, Director, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

**World Health Organization** (TBC)

**Prof. Dr. Krasae Chanawongse**, Chairman of the Board of Foundation, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center





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