

Build Better Before

Scaling capacities for mental health and psychosocial support
preparedness and risk management



World Health
Organization

Dr Brandon Gray

Mental Health Unit, Department of Mental Health and Substance Use
World Health Organization

Rationale for the project:

What if?



What would do if you knew, six months before:

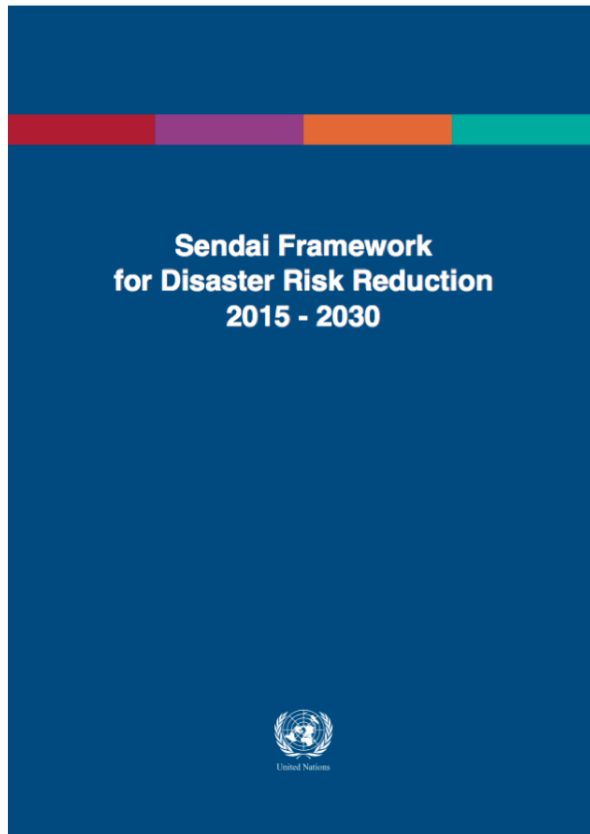
- An 8.2 earthquake
- A category 5 hurricane
- A large-scale war

What would be the **MHPSS actions** you would take **before** the event to mitigate its impacts, to reduce suffering and to improve mental health and psychosocial wellbeing?



Rationale for the project:

What would you do?



Sendai priorities	Examples of DRR activities
Sendai priority 1: Understanding disaster risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Conducting multi-hazard risk assessments to identify and analyse emergency risks✓ Monitoring and evaluating risks, capacities and progress towards meeting DRM objectives
Sendai priority 2: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Adopting and implementing national and local DRR strategies and plans✓ Establishing coordination forums and designated national focal points for implementing these strategies
Sendai priority 3: Investing in DRR for resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Developing social safety nets linked to and integrated with livelihood enhancement programmes and access to basic health services✓ Allocating resources to the development and implementation of DRM strategies, policies, plans and/or laws and regulations
Sendai priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “build back better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Developing and regularly testing capacities for emergency preparedness and response✓ Developing and testing early detection and inclusive warning systems <p>“To enhance recovery schemes to provide psychosocial support and mental health services for all people in need”</p>

Scaling up capacities for MHPSS Preparedness and Risk Management



Ongoing Initiative

- Development of MHPSS preparedness and risk reduction package
- Field testing and piloting
- Implementation in global capacity building workshops and simulation exercises
- Ongoing technical support and follow up
- Documentation of key case studies and lessons learned
- Development of tools and resources (e.g., risk assessment, high risk topics)



Build Better Before Workshop and Simulation

Global Capacity Building Initiative

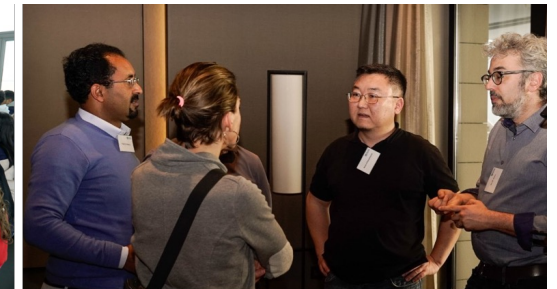


Days 1-2 Theoretical and Practical Knowledge

- **Innovative methods:** Field trips, mastering stations, case studies and adult learning
- **Key resources and tools:** MHPSS preparedness checklist, templates
- **Reshaping:** Changing perspectives and bridging fields

Days 3-4 Emergency Simulation

- **Multisectoral and field-based:** Field missions based on key MHPSS topics and sectors
- **All-hazards approaches:** infectious disease outbreaks, CBRN, conflict, natural hazards
- **Diverse Actors:** health, education, protection, nutrition and others.



Next steps and the way forward

Build Better Before Workshop and Simulation #3

Tallinn, Estonia 19-22 September

- WHO ongoing support to Estonia on MHPSS
- High-level commitment in Estonia government to strengthening preparedness in the region

Challenges and opportunities

- Limited awareness of and attention to MHPSS, but growing in HEDRM field (thanks to you!)
- Lack of capacity to study the impact of MHPSS preparedness actions over time
- Need to develop and implement action-oriented MHPSS preparedness and risk management action **and** to study their impact on resilience over time



The poster features the logos of the Republic of Estonia Ministry of Social Affairs and the World Health Organization at the top. The main title is 'Building Better Before: Scaling up capacity for mental health and psychosocial support preparedness', followed by 'Global Capacity-Building Workshop & A Full-scale Multisectoral MHPSS Simulation' and the dates '19 - 22 September 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia'. A central image shows a panoramic view of Tallinn's Old Town. Below the image is an orange box with the question: 'Are you fully prepared to respond to the next emergency's mental health and psychosocial needs?'. The text below describes the event's global context, the specific workshop and simulation exercise in Estonia, and the topics to be covered, including MHPSS preparedness, disaster risk management, and emergency response.

Building Better Before: Scaling up capacity for mental health and psychosocial support preparedness
Global Capacity-Building Workshop & A Full-scale Multisectoral MHPSS Simulation
19 - 22 September 2023 | Tallinn, Estonia

Are you fully prepared to respond to the next emergency's mental health and psychosocial needs?

What is this event?
Globally, there is a clear need and increasing interest in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) preparedness capacity building. This has been emphasized following statements by WHO Member States during the Seventy Fourth World Health Assembly in May 2021 on the need to develop and strengthen MHPSS services as part of strengthening preparedness and through the inclusion of an indicator on MHPSS preparedness in the updated WHO Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013-2030. As a result, WHO has been organizing a series of capacity-building workshops to scale up MHPSS preparedness across humanitarian actors worldwide. The first iteration in February 2023 was evaluated with a 9.5 out of 10 on average by the representatives of participating agencies.

WHO and the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia have now joined forces and are organizing a global **capacity-building workshop** and a full-scale **multi-sectoral and field-based emergency preparedness and response mental health and psychosocial support simulation exercise** to support scaling up MHPSS preparedness capacities globally. This will be a unique **MHPSS-focused simulation exercise** and will facilitate the opportunity for relevant MHPSS stakeholders to practice, review and discuss MHPSS preparedness procedures, plans, and decision-making processes.

What will be covered?
The workshop will be based on a training package developed and field tested by the IASC MHPSS Reference Group, focused on MHPSS preparedness (specific modules below). These have been developed for national actors in disaster risk management (DRM), emergency preparedness and response (EPR), MHPSS technical working groups, and other preparedness and response actors. The anticipated outcome of the training will be the development of skills to better