



## Mental Health in Complex Emergencies (MHCE 13)

# Culture, perceptions & politics; humanitarian work in context



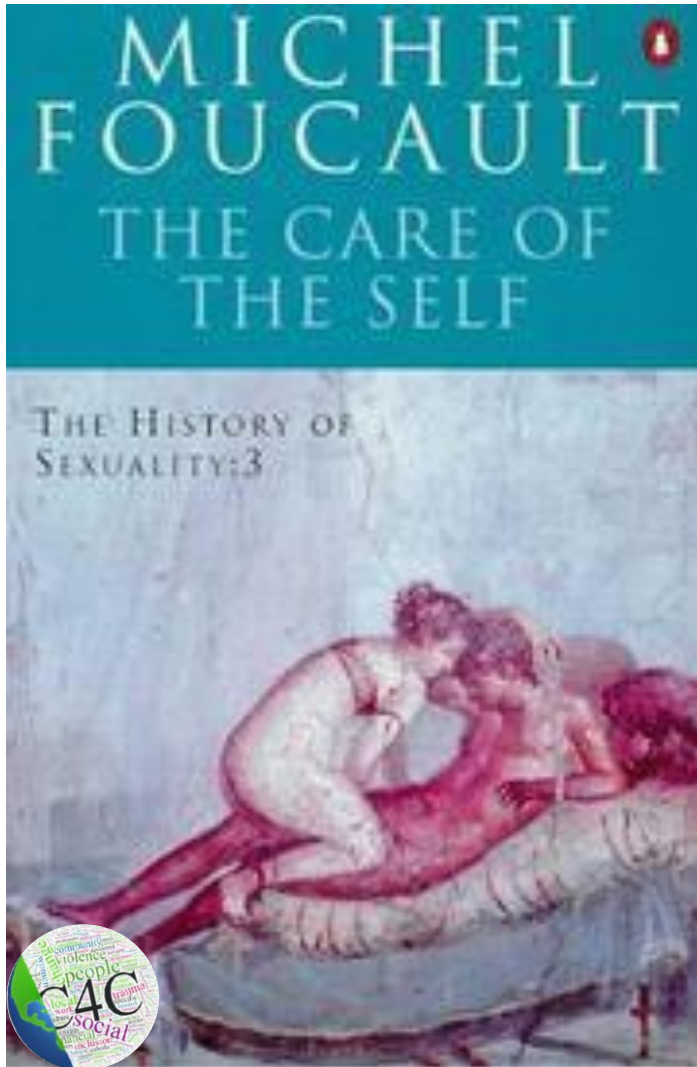


### **Mental Health in Complex Emergencies (MHCE 13)**

- 1. Developments in the (humanitarian) world – is there a ‘new way of working’?**
- 2. The self: cultural and ethical considerations**
- 3. A proposal: working with Communities & Culture**

# Bridging from the session on ‘taking care of ourselves’: What are contexts of ‘self’

- The self, our selves
- What is a ‘self’, other selves?



## Michel Foucault

Foucault's emphasis on the 'care of the self' is usually hailed as a significant challenge to the understanding of ethics.

With the tendency of ethics to focus on the 'other' and how one relates to that other, the turn to consider the construction of the subject seems to be radical. This was also Foucault's answer to the perennial problems of ethics: apart from the other, these include the tension between universal precept and particular origin, as well as the concomitant problem of moralising, of telling others how they should live.

# Taking care of our selves - bridging to the self in context

- Developments in the (humanitarian) world – is there a ‘new way of working’?
  - Continuum or contiguum: linking relief-rehabilitation-development (LRRD)
  - From humanitarian crisis to the crisis of Humanitarianism
  - A new way of working?
- The self: cultural and ethical considerations
  - Some examples from Cambodia
  - Other countries
- A proposal: working with Communities & Culture
  - Fight, flight & freeze
  - Listening

# Developments in the (humanitarian) world

- Vast change is taking place - also in the 'humanitarian world'
- Relief-recovery-development re-invented?
- Or the end of the window of humanitarianism – and a new way of working?

# Transition is all around us

## Interesting times:

- Climate change starts to show, the first climate wars have started;
- The refugee crisis stresses humanitarian systems and values are stressed: Over 130 million men, women and children depend on humanitarian assistance across the world, and the needs are constantly growing
- 'Crisis is becoming the new normal'
- The 'tipping point' is recognized by the new SDGs in place, the Paris COP21 climate meeting in December 2015, and the Humanitarian Summit in May 2016.

# Transition is all around us

- New technologies come faster and faster: big data, the '[internet of things](#)', robotization;
- Medical interventions outsmart ethical dilemma's;
- The power balance is shifting on a global level, there is new competition between Asian, European, African ideologies and governance systems;
- Humanitarian principles are challenged, and aid is now political;
- [Remittances](#) replace aid;
- In short: new 'issues' on top of classic problems of equity versus freedom are a search for new meaning, amidst new concerns about inclusion and sustainable environment.

# Sustainability, Exclusion and Meaning

- **Sustainable ecologies** – climate change leads to warfare and chaotic migration, sustainability has a new, concrete meaning
- **Inclusion** – growing inequity leads to friction, conflicts that are really about exclusion play out along religious and ethnic lines, migration poses new problems
- **Meaning** – life has been fractured by war, social instability results from a breakdown of standards and values; alienation and anxiety comes from a lack of purpose or ideals, religion changes, globalisation takes its toll.



# The changing humanitarian landscape

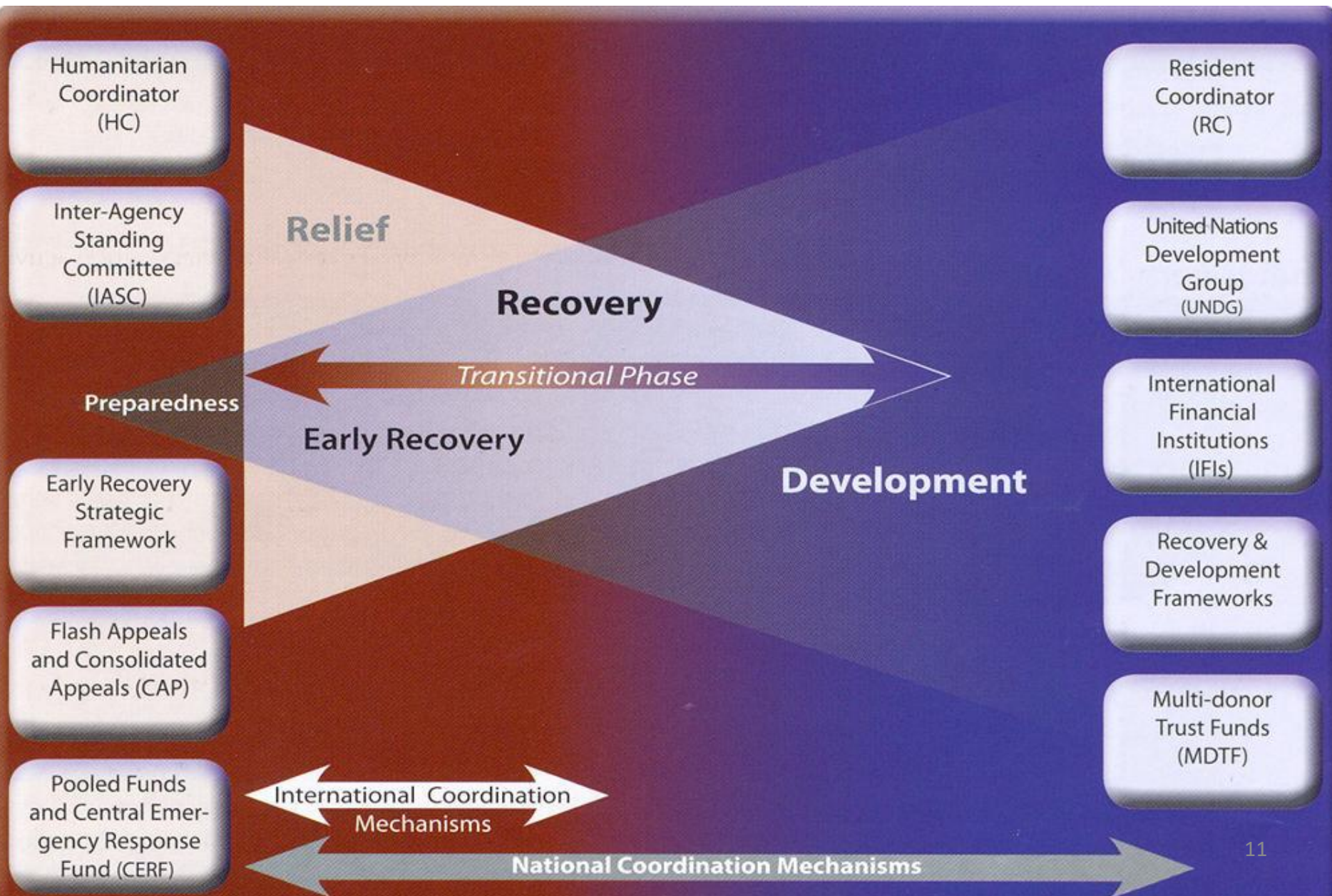
- In each of the last three years, international humanitarian organizations have targeted over **100 million** people for assistance
- The population in humanitarian focus countries is expected to **nearly double between 1990 and 2025**. This and other demographic changes – including rapid urbanization – will put pressure on resources for humanitarian assistance and require changes to how it is provided
- From 2006-10, only **3%** of official humanitarian aid was spent on disaster prevention and preparedness
- It is estimated that over **3,000 NGOs** were operating in the Haiti emergency
- People (and therefore, responders) are able to connect more quickly and easily than ever before – in **105** countries, there are more mobile phone subscriptions than people, and **50%** of people in developing countries will be using the internet by 2015



# The debate: relief or development

- Linkinf relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD)
- Talks going on for more than 25 years – little has changed beyond the drawing table and conference rooms
- Obvious alternatives to more and more international relief are increased prevention and local capacity – but are they not an excuse to ‘keep out the locals’?

# Keep thinking....

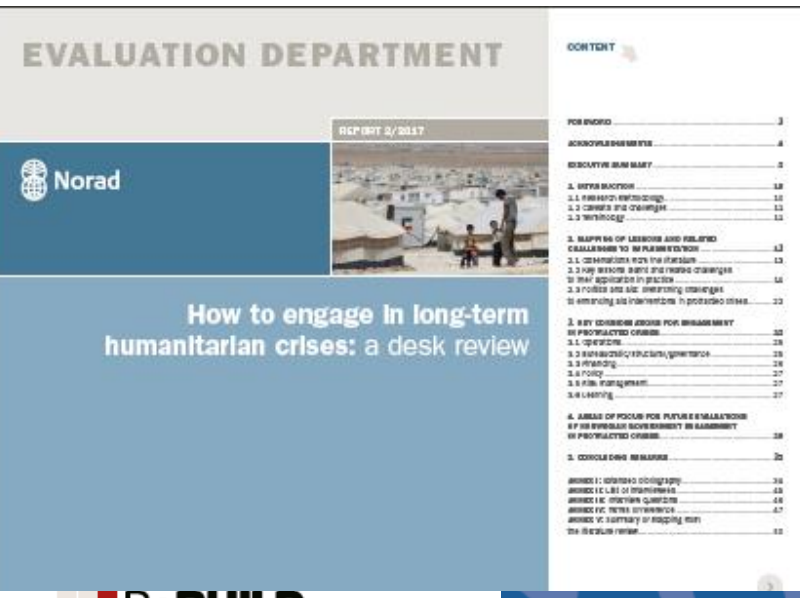




# Bring the elders together....



# Keep thinking....



**UNEG**  
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

## Reflecting Humanitarian Principles in

## Health in humanitarian crises 1

### Evidence on public health interventions in humanitarian crises

Karl Blanchet, Anita Ramesh, Severine Fitton, Emily Warren, Mazedo Hossain, James Smith, Abigail Knight, Nathan Post, Christopher Lewis, Anik Woodward, Maysoon Dahab, Alexander Ruby, Vera Sisternich, Sara Pantuliano, Bayard Roberts

Recognition of the need for evidence-based interventions to help to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian responses has been increasing. However, little is known about the breadth and quality of evidence on health interventions in humanitarian crises. We describe the findings of a systematic review with the aim of examining the quantity and quality of evidence on public health interventions in humanitarian crises to identify key research gaps. We identified 345 studies published between 1980 and 2014 that met our inclusion criteria. The quantity of evidence varied substantially by health topic, from communicable diseases (n=131), nutrition (n=77), to non-communicable diseases (n=8), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (n=6). We observed common study design and weaknesses in the methods, which substantially reduced the ability to determine causation and attribution of the interventions. Considering the major increase in health-related humanitarian activities in the past three decades and calls for a stronger evidence base, this paper highlights the limited quantity and quality of health intervention research in humanitarian contexts and supports calls to scale up this research.

## THE STATE OF THE HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM

2015 EDITION



Research for stronger health systems during and after crisis

Health systems during and after crisis: evidence for better policy and practice | Brief 8

### Developing health system research capacity in crisis-affected settings: why and how?



Research for stronger health systems during and after crisis

Health systems during and after crisis: evidence for better policy and practice | Brief 7

### Sustainability of health systems in crisis-affected settings: lessons for practice

Brief prepared by Sophie Witter and Benjamin Hunter

June 2017

HPG Commissioned Report

### Remaking the case for linking relief, rehabilitation and development

How LRRD can become a practically useful concept for assistance in difficult places

Irina Mosel and Simon Levine

March 2014



# And...A New Way of Working!!!



New Way  
of Working



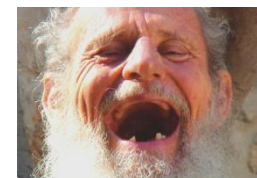
A **wide-spread shift** to working towards collective outcome...

Achieving **sustained and whole-of-system change** will require **overcoming political, institutional and structural obstacles at all levels**, as well as **realizing fundamental changes in attitudes, behaviours and approaches**. It will mean supporting new approaches in relevant contexts, **measuring concrete results over multiple years....**

The New Way of Working represents an opportunity to **deliver greater efficiencies and have a greater impact with the limited (and diminishing) Official Development Assistance (ODA) resources**.

This needs to occur hand in hand with a **smarter use of financing, as suited to each context– both in terms of what is financed** (with a greater focus on prevention, sustainability and **localized response**)....

...seriously?



# Humanitarian work and changes

*A monkey was walking along a river and saw a fish in it. The monkey said, Look, that animal is under water, he'll drown, I'll save him. He snatched up the fish, and in his hand the fish started to struggle. And the monkey said, Look how happy he is. Of course, the fish died, and the monkey said, Oh, what a pity, if I had only come sooner I would have saved this guy.*



## **The humanitarian system needs to be repaired: original questions for the 2016 summit in Istanbul were:**

1. The role of national governments and NGOs.
2. Access to populations in need, the role of security policies.
3. What when crisis becomes normal?
4. The role of new humanitarian actors.
5. What relevance do humanitarian principles still have these days?



# ‘Humanitarian Space’ - does it exist?

- Legitimacy – who do we think we are, do we really represent ‘impartiality, independence, neutrality? Can we? Do we want to?
- Accountability: upwards to the donors, downwards to the beneficiaries, sideways to academic world or governmental partners?

# Therefore, turn issues around

1. The role of national governments and
2. Access to populations in need, the security policies.
3. What when crisis becomes no
4. The role of new humanitarian
5. What relevance do hum  
still have these days?

# Issues turned around

1. What relevance do humanitarian principles still have these days?
2. The role of new humanitarian actors.
3. What when crisis becomes normal?
4. Access to populations in need, the role of security policies.
5. The role of national governments and NGOs.

# What relevance do humanitarian principles still have these days?

- **Humanity:** means concerned with or seeking to promote human welfare.
- **Impartiality:** complex situations in fragile states.
- **Neutrality:** is awarded by others.
- **Independence:** of stakeholders? Which ones: politics, donors, warring factions, beneficiaries?

# The role of new humanitarian actors

- Military: '3D' defense, diplomacy, development
- Business humanitarian industry
- Governments EU 'peace corps': politics
- Faith-based groups have different values



Tzu Chi (Compassionate Relief) is East Asia's largest humanitarian organization, and by extension one of the world's. Its founder, Chen Yen, is a nun in the Humanistic Buddhist tradition (人間佛教) whose adherents also include Thich Nhat Hanh.

# What when crisis becomes normal?

- That has been the case all the time – humanitarian community only begins to understand it now.
- Difference between relief and development is created by the humanitarian sector itself – it is not a natural given.
- *Humanitarian values* are based on political analysis made in the freeze of the cold war.

# Humanitarian values not updated

Because of the vested interests of stakeholders:

- Humanitarian NGOs (who have succeeded in becoming independent – but not of politics, but of accountability);
- Dominant governments use humanitarian activity as an excuse for political action;
- Receiving governments have an excuse to continue power play, leaving the population in the care of the a-political humanitarians.

# **Lets think of better ideas?**

- **Governments need to take responsibility - R4P should address the political answers – CS to put pressure.**
- **Key remains to support and facilitate communities' own relief and recovery efforts.**
- **Be clear on your own politics and values; define what you mean by local resilience.**
- **Include the 'diaspora factor' and remittances**
- **Dare to be a partner (not impartial), to be interdependent (not independent), make choices (not neutral).**



# How? Some suggestions

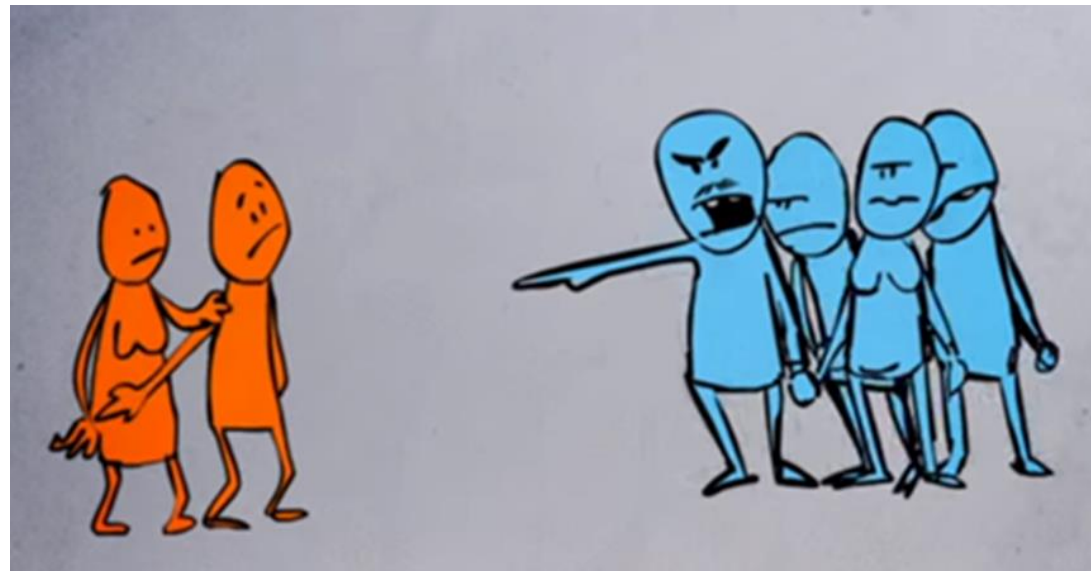
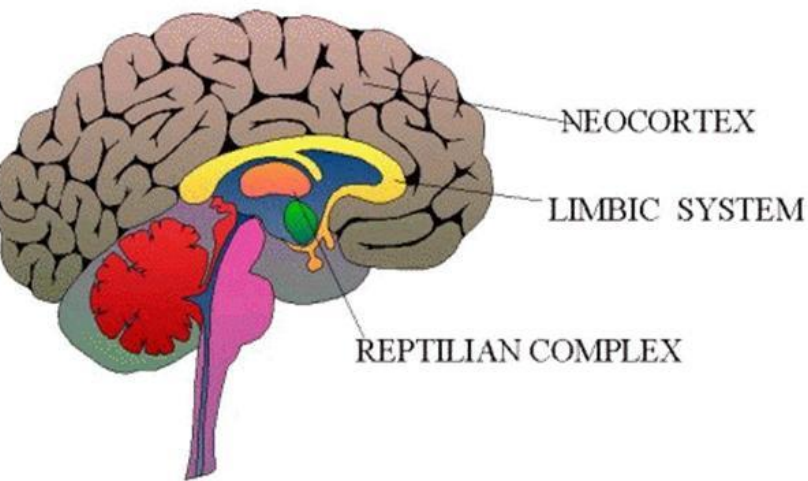


- The self: cultural and ethical considerations
- A proposal: working with Communities & Culture



# Universals in trauma...

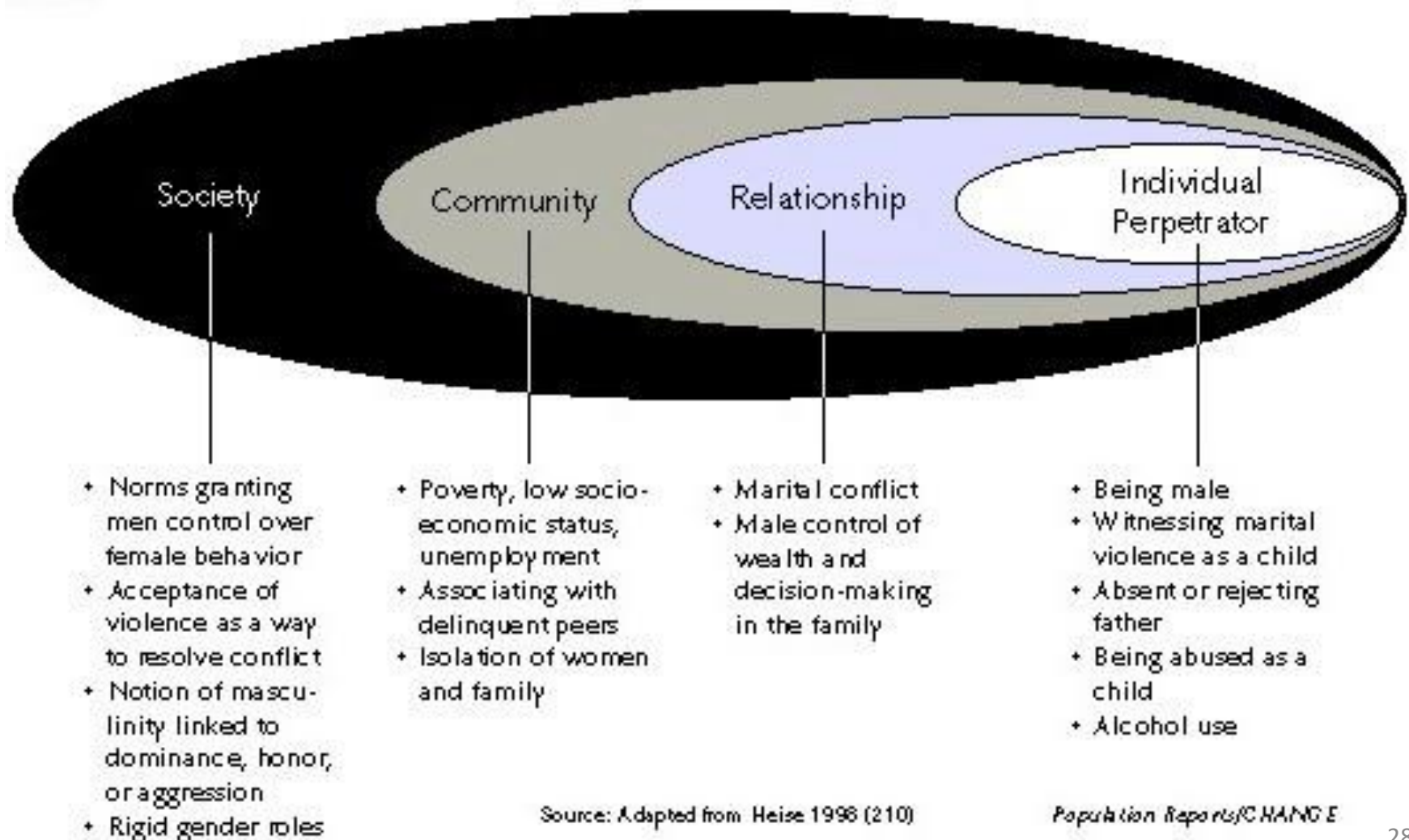
- Huge steps forward in understanding the brain..
- Also universals in building up hate.



...and large variety in culture, politics,  
and worldviews



# Contexts - you know this



# Collective Trauma

The discourse in the West about violence, loss, and trauma is focused on the long-term effects of what happens *inside the body and the psyche*.

In other cultures abuses may be perceived not so much as an assault on the 'individual self', but more as destruction of family and group *relations* and a disruption of the moral order. Relational, *socio-cultural wounds* then have priority over individual wounds, or are at least of equal importance.

In such cases we can speak of psycho-socio-cultural trauma, or collective trauma, trauma which besides healing on an individual level requires healing of the post-traumatic stress in the fabrics of culture and society.

# Collective Trauma in northern Sri Lanka

- Fundamental changes in the functioning of the family and the community were observed in Sri Lanka
- At the family level, the dynamics of single parent families, lack of trust among members, and changes in significant relationships, and child rearing practices were seen.
- Communities tended to be more dependent, passive, silent, without leadership, mistrustful, and suspicious.
- Additional adverse effects included the breakdown in traditional structures, institutions and familiar ways of life, and deterioration in social norms and ethics.

# Collective Trauma in northern Sri Lanka

Complex situations that follow war and natural disasters have a psychosocial impact on not only the individual but also on the family, community and society.

Just as the mental health effects on the individual psyche can result in non pathological distress as well as a variety of psychiatric disorders; massive and widespread trauma and loss can impact on family and social processes causing changes at the family, community and societal levels.



# Research done

Social Science & Medicine 75 (2012) 1715–1720



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Social Science & Medicine

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/socscimed](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/socscimed)



## Short report

# The mechanisms that associate community social capital with post-disaster mental health: A multilevel model

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Available online 27 July 2012

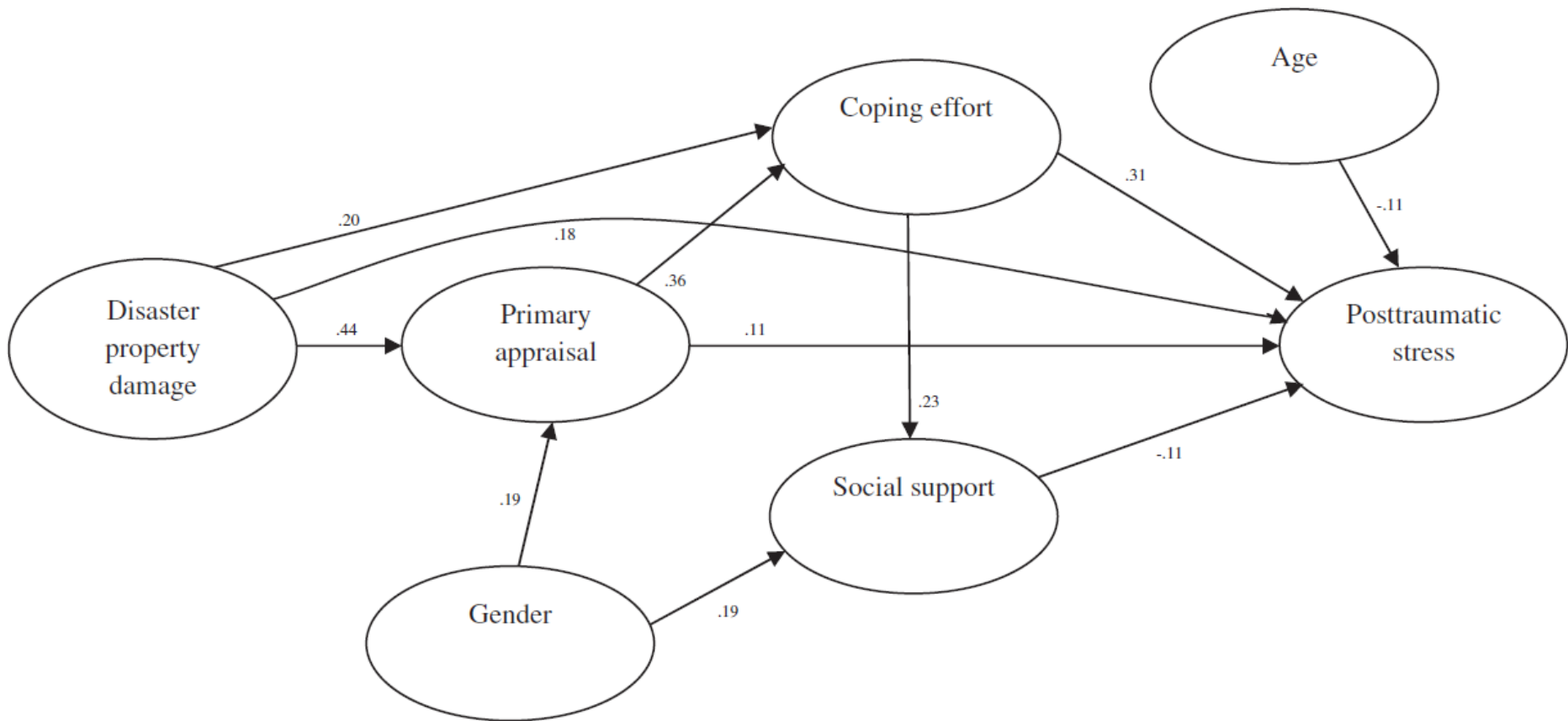
### Keywords:

Social capital  
Mental health  
Disaster  
Multilevel modeling

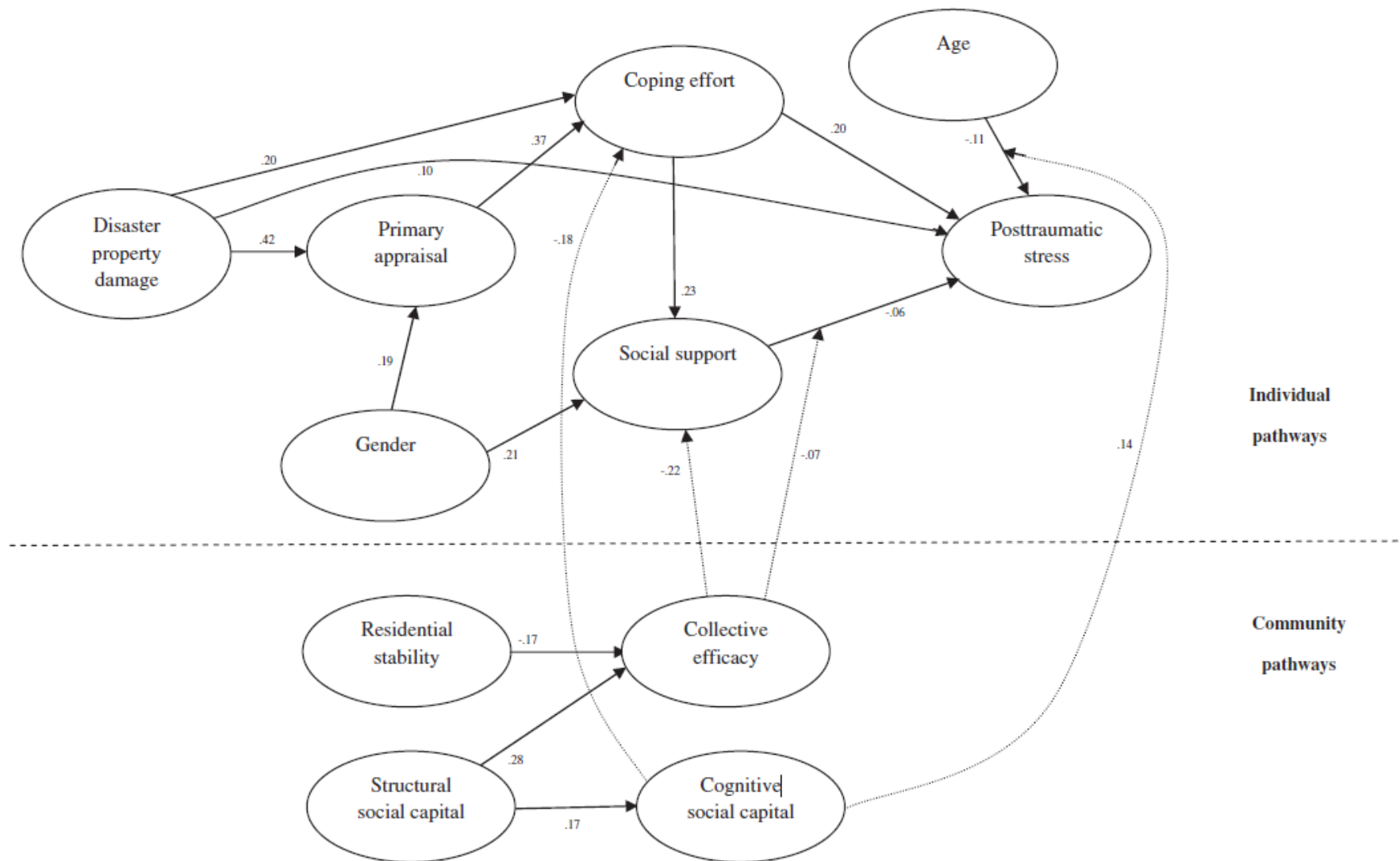
## ABSTRACT

Many scholars have advocated that the time has come to provide empirical evidence of the mechanisms that associate community social capital with individual disaster mental health. For this purpose we conducted a study ( $n = 232$ ) one year after a flood (2008) in Morpeth, a rural town in northern England. We selected posttraumatic stress as an indicator of disaster mental health. Our multilevel model shows that high community social capital is indirectly salutary for individual posttraumatic stress. In particular, in communities (defined as postcode areas) with high structural social capital, the results suggest that individuals confide in the social context (high cognitive social capital) to address disaster-related





$$\chi^2(10) = 13.73, n.s.; RMSEA = .056; AIC = 4030.63; LRT = -1997.32$$



Community indicators are as important as individual analysis. Residential stability is lost when communities are uprooted. Structural social capital often weakened by decades of conflict. Cognitive social capital is the level to which people know how to make use of local resources. Collective efficacy represents the perception of being able to make a difference as a community having control. Mental health outcome is mediated as much by community characteristics as internal characteristics at the individual level.

# Understanding the contexts

In order to understand problems and come to effective interventions one has to be at least *aware* of

- cultural factors
- political - historical factors
- social factors

# Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS)

This topic remains under-researched....Eurocentric thinkers tend to place a low value on indigenous knowledge because they find IKS to be less systematic than Western science....unsuitable to meet the productivity-focused needs of a Western-driven “modern” world.

However, applying Eurocentric knowledge to interventions in non-Eurocentric contexts has resulted in failure to achieve the envisaged care and support outcomes (Battiste, 2005).

By implication, interventions relying solely on Western theories that do not incorporate IKS may misrepresent the challenges in an African indigenous context, and thus have a profound influence on people's experiences of and responses to interventions.

Received: 16 April 2016 | Revised: 18 November 2016 | Accepted: 14 January 2017  
DOI: 10.1002/jcop.21889

WILEY COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

## ARTICLE

**Age-old care and support practices in Southern Africa functioning robustly as sophisticated social technology interventions**

Liesel Ebersöhn | Tilda Loots | Ruth Mampane | Funke Onigbire |  
Marlize Malan-van Rooyen

# Don't mix it up: Risks in installing 'pidgin psychiatry'

- In Liberia, an Open Mole, or “hole in the head” (sunken fontanelle), occurs in adults, along with symptoms of pain, dizziness, headache, confusion, social withdrawal and occasional fugue states.
- Abramowitz demonstrates a process by which Open Mole is transformed from a **culture-bound disorder** into a **local idiom of trauma**, and from a local idiom of trauma into an **object of clinical psychiatry**.
- Something similar occurred in Cambodia where the illness ‘thinking too much’ was attributed to the Khmer Rouge regime by foreigners.
- **Efforts to integrate local idioms of distress into diagnostic practice in ‘culturally sensitive mental health projects’ have a confusing logic and uncertain consequences for patients and for staff, posing potent questions for the practice of cultural sensitivity and community based mental health in post conflict-settings**

# Different taxonomies

## Ethic view

Population based study CIDI (people aged 15-65, N= 610 )

- anxiety disorder 40 %
- lifetime prevalence PTSD 29 %
- major depression 14 %

53 % have either anxiety disorder, PTSD, mood disorder or somatoform disorder.

## Emic view

- Disorders caused ambiguity between the world of humans and the world of spirits. *Ckuet ampeu* (action madness)
- Disorders stemming from conflict among people (lovesickness, sorcery)
- Disorders caused by violations of codes of conduct: in pregnant women, healers
- Disorders of thinking too much: *ckuet saasey aaram*.

# Cosmology & Worldviews in Cambodia

Such as civilisation versus  
Wilderness, the reality of a  
spirit world, karma and reincarnation

...is cause or '**waves of fainting**',  
and the '**previous mother problem**'





# Cambodian female workers in Nike, Asics and Puma factories suffer mass faintings

## Hundreds of Cambodian garment workers faint

*At least 200 workers hospitalised after mass fainting at factories that make products for major sportswear companies.*



Fainting is frequent in Cambodia's growing garment industry [Reuters]  
More than 200 Cambodian garment workers have been hospitalised after episodes of



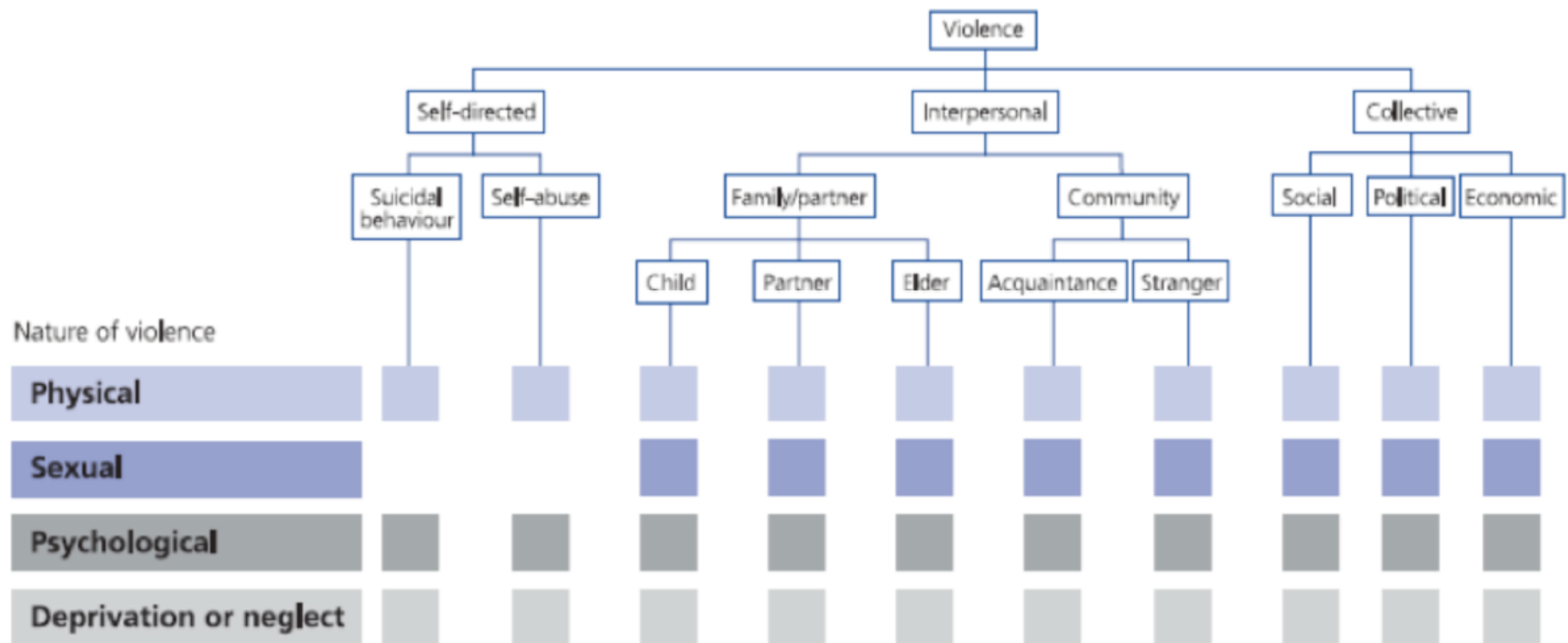


# CONCEPTUALISING VIOLENCE: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

AUTHORS: SCRIVER, S., DUVVURY, N., ASHE, S., RAGHAVENDRA, S. AND O'DONOVAN, D.  
WORKING PAPER PUBLISHED: 20 NOVEMBER, 2015

Ending violence against women requires a useful typology of violence

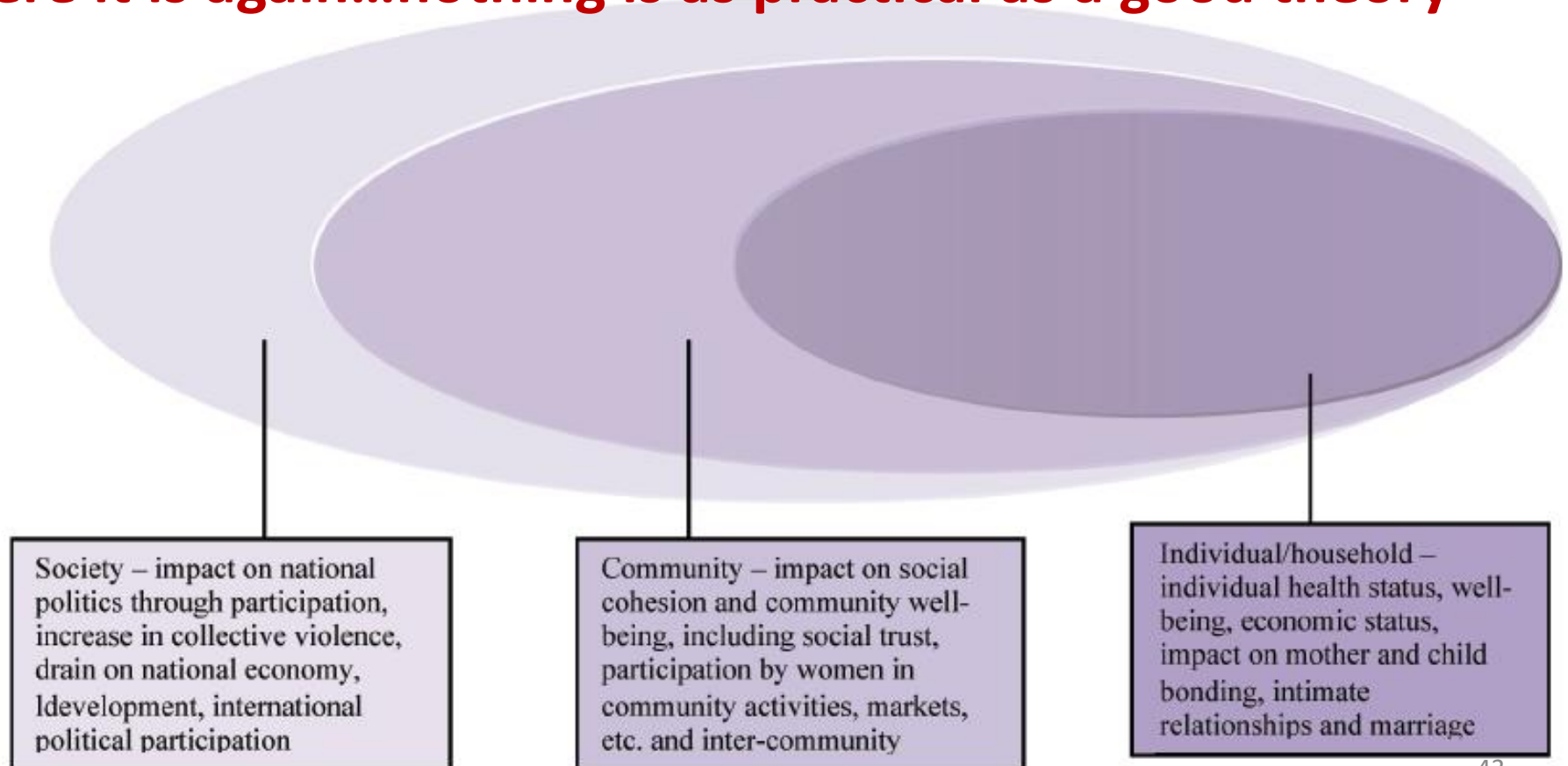
Fig. 3: WHO Typology of Violence



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**Here it is again...nothing is as practical as a good theory**



## Applying Khmer local knowledge

### E.g. Intervention – Family therapy

The impact of interventions by monks and healers to ameliorate enmity and violence within the family, showing the nuances of feelings that are intended to be induced by range of ritual interventions such as Yantra, and ceremonies that 'call the souls' of the perpetrator and, beyond that, the wider family circle including the ancestral spirits who had been in conflict. These interventions, in effect, function as a form of family therapy

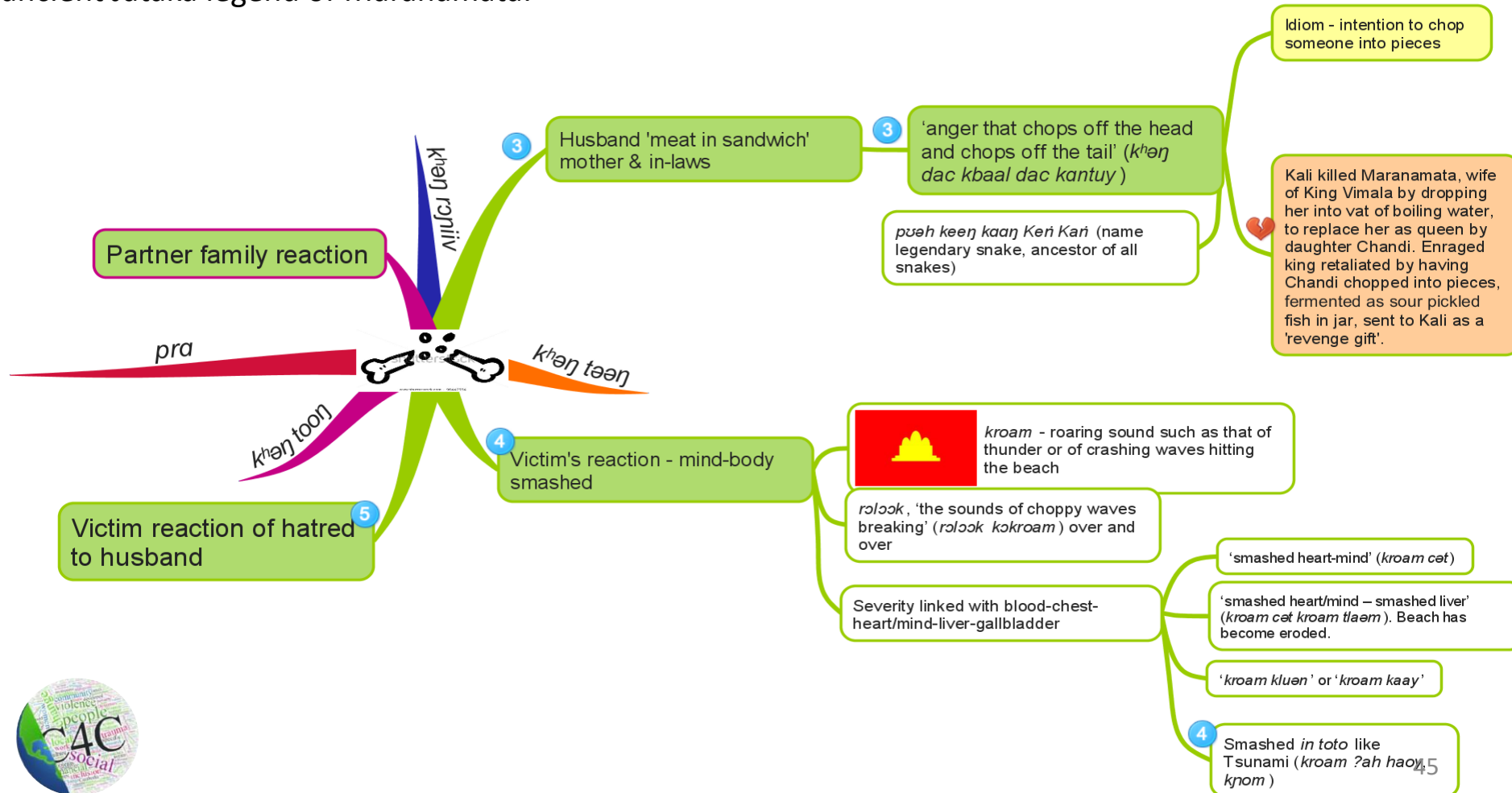




## Applying Khmer local knowledge

## Expressions for the experience of violence

An expression called 'the mind and body have been smashed'. The progression of the tone of 'roaring or crashing sound' from the 'heart-mind' to 'liver' to 'total' is shown in the lower right quadrant, as is the connotation from the Khmer Rouge ((symbol of Democratic Kampuchea flag). Note association with ancient Jataka legend of Maranamata.



**Where to get this information: researching  
your way into a community - fast & fun**

## Research

# Context is not in a survey: use a variety of techniques

secondary data review

key informants

semi-structured interviews

Immediate rapid report writing in field

triangulating

mapping

quick quantification

ranking and scoring

taking part in activities

ethno histories, time lines

direct observation-stories and case studies

group interviews

short, simple questionnaires

chains (sequences) of interviews

## LISTENING



# Research!

## Method in madness

**Action research – a proven, effective way of working with people towards acceptable change, adapting global knowledge to local application**



(the blindfolds in the picture are a metaphor for not knowing in advance what you will find...)



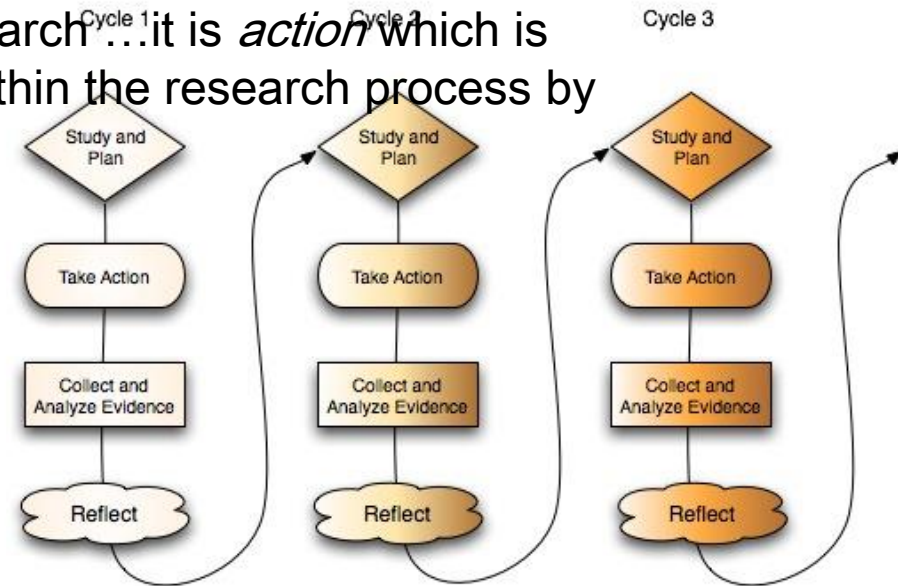
# Research!

## Action research

Participatory Action Research is research which involves all relevant parties in actively examining together action in order to change a situation which they experience as problematic.

This is done critically reflecting on the historical, political, cultural, economic, geographic and other contexts which help to understand the problematic situation

Participatory action research is not just research...it is *action* which is researched, changed and re-researched, within the research process by participants.





50  
2014

# Applying Khmer local knowledge

## Local resources for healing

*preah sang*: Buddhist monks

*aacaa*: ritual assistants, heads of families

*doon cii*: nuns

*kruu khmer*: traditional healers

*kruu chool ruub*: mediums

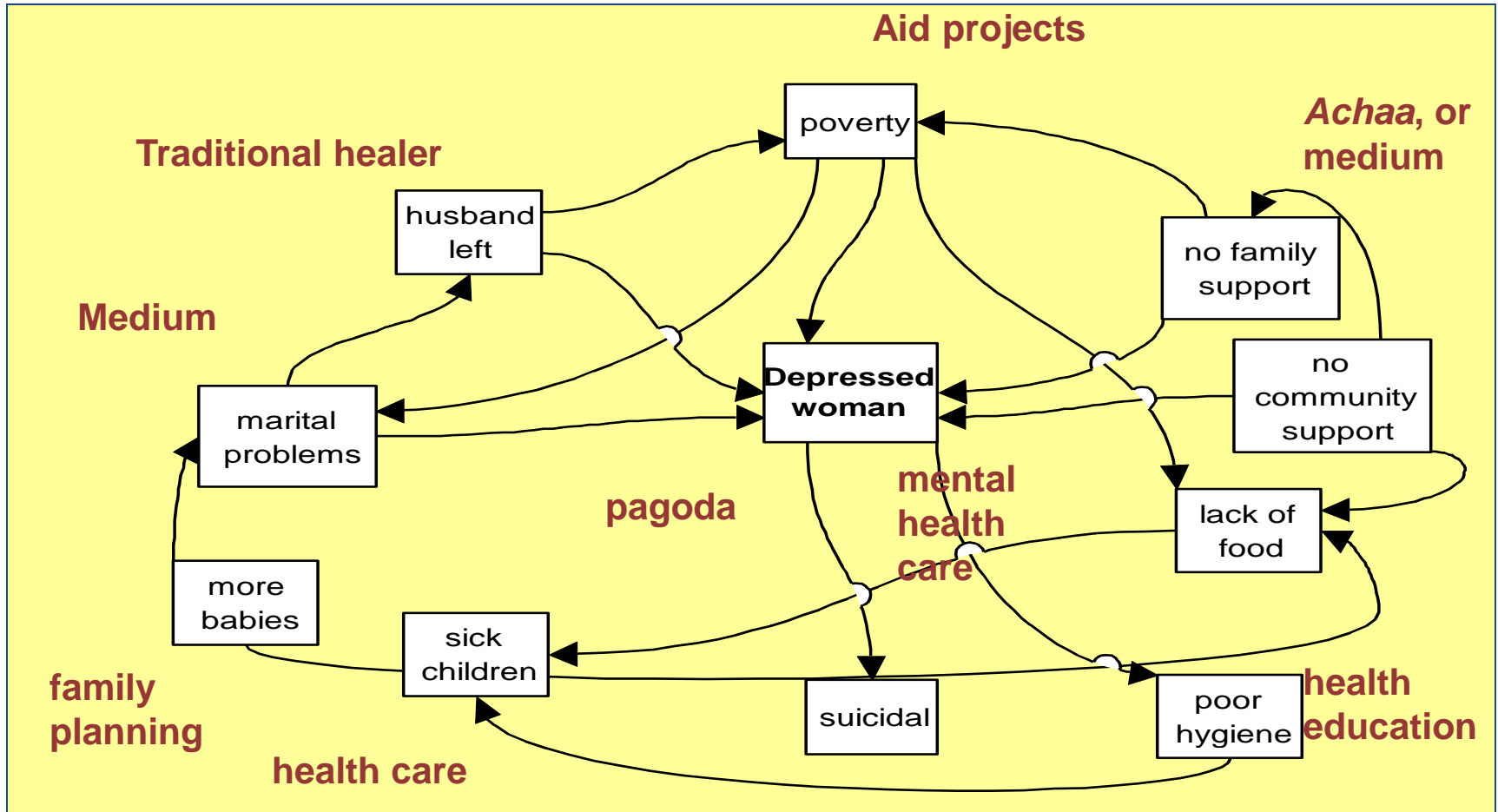
*cmap*: traditional birth attendants

various types of fortunetellers and lay healers



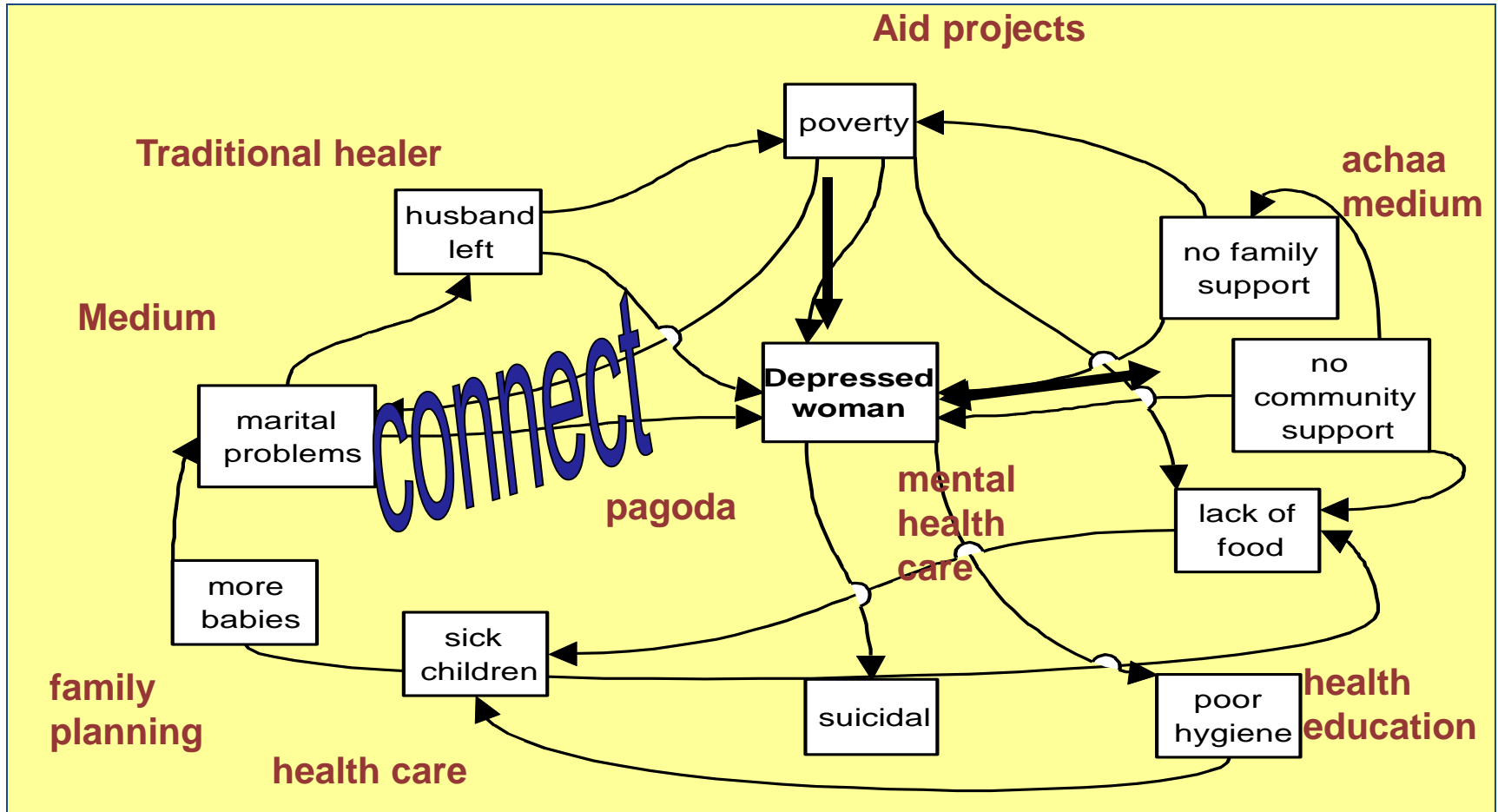
## Applying Khmer local knowledge

# Mapping Problems & Resources



# Applying Khmer local knowledge

## Matching Problems & Resources





Country examples

# Afghanistan

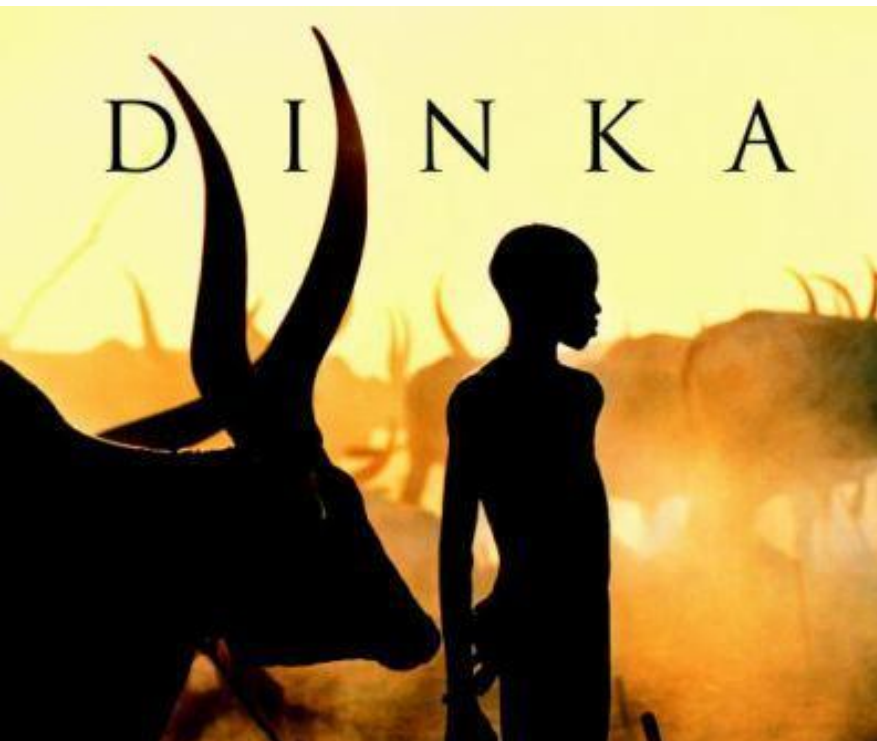


Asking questions in a culture of answers

## Country examples

# South Sudans Lost Boys

- A problem since the late 1980s
- Self conscious groups with internal discipline, used to be drilled by SPLA
- Young boys stuck in their role: minors of old age





## Country examples

# Kosovo

- Strong, traditional bonds within families
- Husbands are leaving
- Problems between mother-in-law and
- daughter-in-law

A medical assistant in a rural area in Kosovo used an oxygen tank to help calm down women who were left in their husbands families after their husbands died in the war. Bad relations with the mother in law and impossibility to leave the household with their children caused stress – and there was no quick fix in sight. He thought of the oxygen tank as a means to provide the women with an excuse to leave the house for a while and talk together. His dispensary became an ad-hoc social gathering place that helped the women a lot.





# Different situations, different contexts



Summerfield: To assume that Western knowledge is universal, whereas indigenous knowledge is local, casts culture as an obstacle and ignores the plight of huge numbers of non-Western peoples mired in bare survivalist ways of life.





## inspiring life in frozen communities

## What is C4C?

Deel deze pagina

 [Deel op Facebook](#)

 [Deel op Twitter](#)

 [Deel op Google+](#)

C4C applies culture to realize change. C4C is the combination of a) a deep insight in cultural norms, values and beliefs and b) a shared understanding of the impact of warfare and poverty. Based on these two pillars we help bring change by addressing collective trauma. We activate 'frozen communities'.

C4C works with people that have little left to lose. Women at the end of war rape and poverty, communities fragmented by warfare, refugees excluded from any services. We work anywhere where people want to change – from the most remote areas in fragile states to the excluded populations in wealthy nations.

# Working with Communities & Culture

...and what about human rights?

A rights-based approach aims to achieve a positive transformation of power relations among the various development actors.

- There are two stakeholder groups in rights-based development, **the rights holders**, or the group who does not experience full rights, and **the duty bearers**, or the institutions who are obligated to fulfill the rights of the rights holders.
- Rights-based approach aims at strengthening the capacity of duty bearers and empower the rights holders.



# Working with Communities & Culture

## ...and what about human rights?

## A human rights discourse...

- Can be used as a source of information to discuss acceptability of behaviour
- Provides a framework for action
- May include calling for (transitional) justice...when impunity remains the biggest problem



# Human rights, individualism, communitarianism

- Rights based approach versus respect local beliefs, tradition and culture – is there a contradiction?
- No....

Communitarianism is a philosophy that emphasizes the connection between the individual and the community. While the "community" may be a family unit, it is usually understood in the wider sense of interactions between a community of people in a geographical location, or who have a shared history or interest.<sup>[1]</sup> Communitarian philosophy is derived from the assumption that individuality is a product of community relationships rather than only individual traits.





# New ideas, old ideas about community

**Social cohesion is needed:** “what we need are communities that balance both diversity and unity. To prevent the wholeness from smothering diversity, there must be a philosophy of pluralism, an open climate for dissent, and an opportunity for subcommunities to retain their identity and share in the setting of larger group goals” (Amitai Etzioni, . The Spirit of Community. Crown Publishers, New York 1993)



# Assumptions in a community based approach

- Who belongs to a community
- Who does not – who are excluded
- What *is* a community?



**SOCIOLOGY**  
UCD-TCD LECTURE SERIES



Expulsions: The Fifth Circle of Hell

Professor Saskia Sassen

Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology & Co-Chair of the Committee on Global Thought  
Columbia University



# What is a community

"When the term community is used, the first notion that typically comes to mind is a place in which people know and care for one another...Communities speak to us in moral voices. They lay claims on their members. Indeed, they are the most important sustaining source of moral voices...".

(Amitai Etzioni,. The Spirit of Community. Crown Publishers, New York 1993)



Understanding a community: [a talk about community reaction to violence](#)

# Diversity and unity

“what we need now are communities that balance both diversity and unity. To prevent the wholeness from smothering diversity, there must be a philosophy of pluralism, an open climate for dissent, and an opportunity for subcommunities to retain their identity and share in the setting of larger group goals”

(Amitai Etzioni, . The Spirit of Community. Crown Publishers, New York 1993)



# Bring action in communities

- Participative community mapping identifies local priorities and resources for support that may have become unproductive due to conflict; and serves as a monitoring tool that brings the theory of change to practical use.
- Locally identified, cross-sectoral initiatives help groups to not only face the trauma of the past, but also build on resilience and select new ways of cooperation for the future.
- Change in **social capital** is used as an indicator for success.

# Build links between villages, speed up the spread of information



Community mobilizers in Burundi, who share their life stories on video



# Conceptualize social capital

Structural and cognitive, bonding and bridging.

- Bonding capital is found among people who live in the same or adjacent communities,
- Bridging capital extends to individuals and organizations that are more removed.
- Structural social capital: mutually beneficial collective action through established roles and social networks supplemented by rules, procedures and precedents
- Cognitive social capital: shared norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs, predisposes people towards mutually beneficial collective action



# *Chinar and her daughters*

## *An example , part 1*

Arthaf and Chinar are a middle aged couple living in a refugee camp in northern Duhok, northern Iraq. We meet them in their tent together with Khatoon, their 30-year-old daughter, one of the seven children of the family. The camp offers shelter to about 11,000 refugees, most of whom escaped the Syrian Sinjar province because of the violence that the "Islamic state" (IS) fought the "caliphate" warriors against the Yazidis. This Yazid family tells us that not all children are with them; two of their daughters are taken by IS. They have reason to hope they are still alive - because they sometimes get a call from one of them. That happens usually when an IS warrior allows them to use his mobile phone, when he is done using her as his sex slave.

Mother Chinar is desperate. Every day she goes to the camp's administrators to ask what they can do to find her daughters. Arthaf, the father, is not happy at all with this conversation. He turns away after interrupting us to ask if we can give him some money to buy a new wife. Chinar reacts immediately to us: "If you give money to my husband for a new woman, I will kill you."

Chinar and her daughter Khatoon tell us that the constant concern about the two missing girls takes away all their energy. Khatoon is illiterate and wants to learn something. She has nothing to do in the camp, and she has 'bad memories'. She has recently started cleaning toilets, to have something to do, and feel a bit better.

We ask if they are interested in joining groups of women sharing the same concerns. The eyes of Chinar light up immediately; she is excited. Yes, she would be very happy if she could help us to mobilize other young women to start a sewing machine or shop that would allow her to do something. Khatoon can help her - better than just cleaning the toilets, she says.

After a week, about 25 women followed a first training on setting up mutual support networks, finding ways to organize educational activities and generate some income. But they are most excited about the communication capabilities we can provide with a tablet on solar powered internet access.

The women help each other in using Skype to talk with family members who can find information. They are also in contact with acquaintances and relatives in Germany and other countries, where relatives help them expand their network. There is at least the possibility of doing something. On a next visit, Chinar shows us her vegetable stall, which she started with a girlfriend. "Our shop is open to women who do not dare to go to the market"...

# Chinar and her son

## *An example, part 2*

Four months later, Chinar explains that women who come to their vegetable stall just now start talking about the horror of what happened, how they escaped, or about the surgery they had to recover virginity. "Yes, we can do things ourselves, we can try to rebuild our lives, but we also need people from outside who listen to us without judging us and help us in a practical way."

We are talking about an important issue: the difficulty that Arthaf and other men have with the sexual abuse of their daughters. They are torn apart between love for their child and the enormous importance of the honor of the family - and some men have felt obliged to kill their daughters and sisters.

How do we deal with this part of the Yazidi culture? How can we change this? \*

Chinar asks us to see her son, who spend most of his time in a an internet game shop, which has been improvised in a container. There he plays computer games with his friends all day long. She is worried because he is changing. Not only in his language, but he has also become very cynical and aggressive. He has seen a lot of horrible things during the escape of Mosul, but he is not talking about it.

We ask if the boys are interested in doing something together. Given the general boredom in the camp, it's not strange that they are initially enthusiastic. We begin to explain this group of boys what else they can find on the internet. We also try to talk to them about the violence in the games, and how it relates to the violence they have all seen close up.

Then we realize how difficult it is to hold their attention. We have to compete with the excitement of computer games. We change our tactics and talk in the next sessions about what matters most to them in the games. This also helps us to look for ways to put 'triggers' in the often violent games, giving them an exiting, competing option to spend time on other ways to look at violence and its effects.

We make an action plan for a future computer store of theirs, where they can combine gaming and business with passing on positive messages.

\* Some months later a start was made by Baba Sheikh, the Yazidi's spiritual leader, who made a doctrine that allows women to reintegrate after imprisonment and rape.

