Mental and Psychosocial Aspects

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Tsunami Health Conference

World Health Organization
Regional Perspective

• Some similarities but many differences between affected populations

• Responses varied between countries at all levels
Regional Perspective

• Response during the early phase and recovery phase

• Differentiate between mental health and psychosocial support
Maldives

- National Disaster Management Centre with Psychosocial Unit
- Well organized community-based campaign (Emotional Support Brigade)
- Facilitated by UNFPA, UNICEF and Red Cross
- WHO provided training material for physicians and development of psychosocial needs assessment instrument
Sri Lanka

• Psychosocial support group established by the President of Sri Lanka, accorded high priority

• Diverse organizations providing “psychosocial support”, no coordination

• Even existing backup mental health services, not being optimally utilized
Thailand

• Outstanding response

• Needs to be studied in detail

• Village health volunteers reach each and every family providing psychosocial support
India

- Government and technical experts quick to respond

- Strong community-based approach
Indonesia

• Mental health services being supported

• Response in the community needs to be studied further
Needs Assessment

• Is this needed?
• How should this be done:
  – Rapid assessment vs systematic assessment
  – Qualitative vs quantitative assessment
• Need for IT backup
Needs Assessment

- Development/adaptation of instrument in Maldives
Coordination

• Very difficult to manage other agencies

• WHO must provide technical leadership
Impact of WHO work

• Must measure impact not just process
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THANK YOU