

# Climate Change, Mental Health and Flooding: Reexamining Vulnerability and Risk

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# Research area

Climate change > increase in extreme weather events > flooding:

How will this change the psychosocial well-being of those affected by floods?

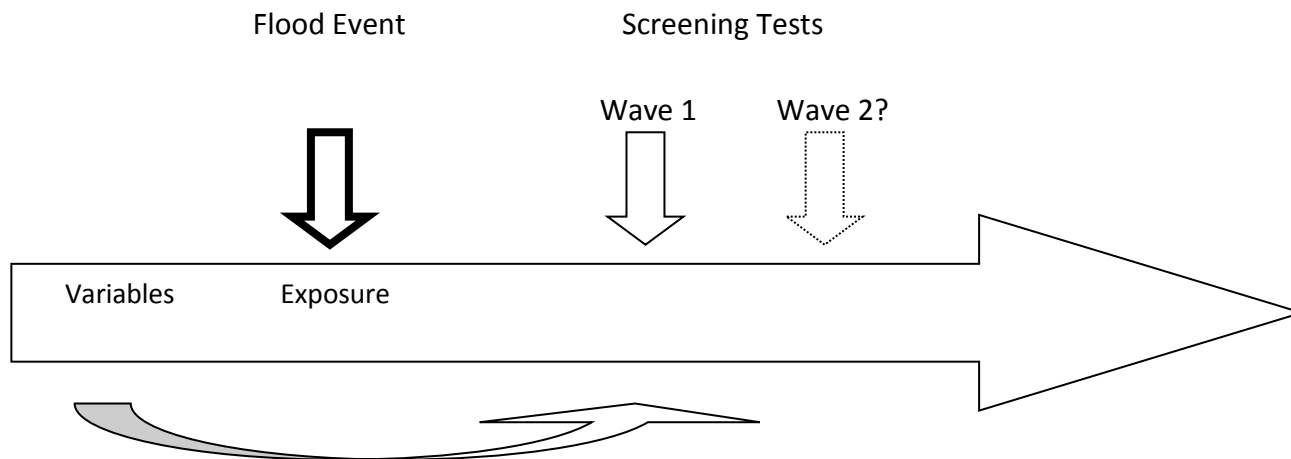
How should we understand vulnerability and risk?

# Epidemiological studies – basic aims

- Establish what problems there are (PTSD, Depression, Suicide, addictive disorders....)
- Establish how significant the problems are
- What the predictors are

# Basic model

Figure 1. The Epidemiological Model

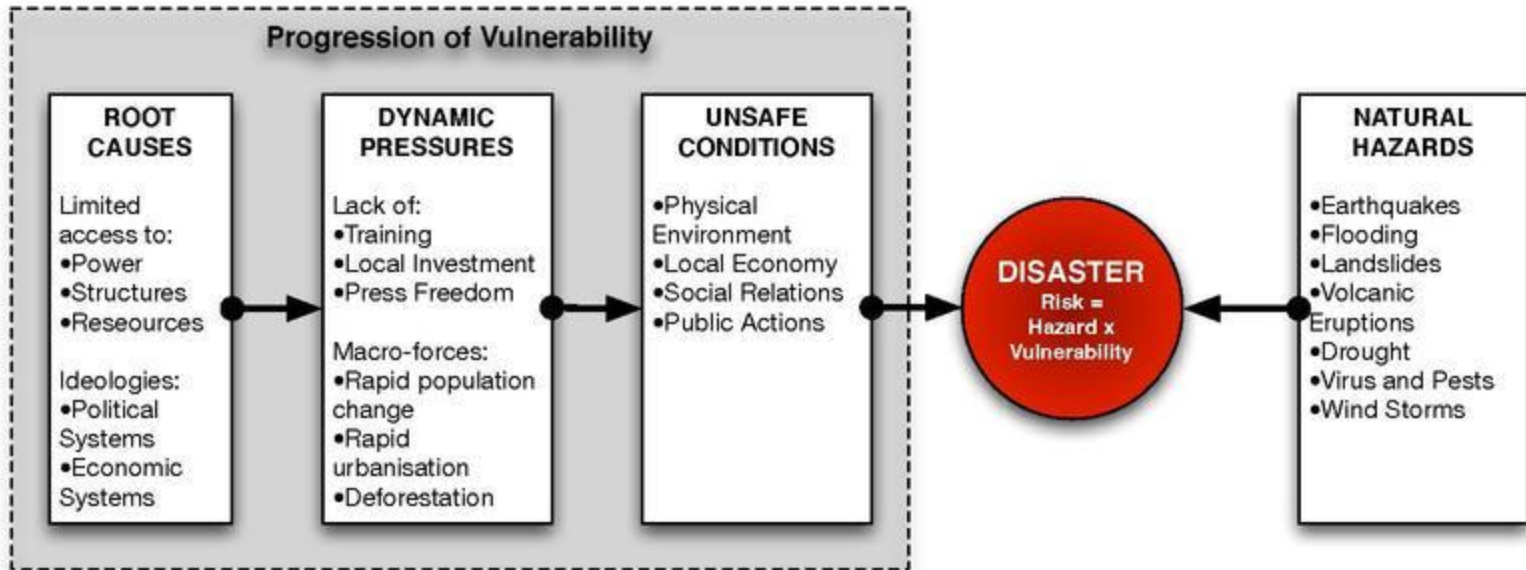


# The approach is taxanomic

- Exposure,
- age,
- gender,
- SES,
- previous mental health problems,
- social inclusion/exclusion
- culture

# AT RISK approach (Wisner et al. (2004) – situational

Risk = Hazard x Vulnerability



- The two models are compatible, but are they adequate?
- Culture
- Capabilities
- Expectations

# Culture – Rajni, Bihar, India following 2008 Kosi River flooding

- Meaning plays a central role
- People could understand the flood from within their worldview (Godess Kosi)
- Livelihoods are central, but assests have meaning (Kabir panths – vegetarians - cows)

# Negative effects not found

<b>Psychosocial effects</b>	<b>Possible reason</b>
<b>Suicide</b>	<b>Social inclusion, culture beliefs</b>
<b>Increased substance abuse</b>	<b>Cultural constraints</b>
<b>Shock following onset</b>	<b>Comparatively slow onset</b>
<b>Anger</b>	<b>Cultural beliefs</b>
<b>Grief due to lack of bereavement rituals</b>	<b>Cultural rituals</b>
<b>Post Traumatic Growth</b>	<b>Cultural understanding</b>

# capabilities

- Amartya Sen
- Importance of agency
- Vulnerable people are active not just passive

# expectations

- Both the epidemiological and the At Risk model see vulnerability as a result of the past
- Expectations about future well-being affect present well-being (no hope)

# Revising the formula

Risk = (Hazard x socio-cultural  
vulnerability) – capabilities ±  
expectations