



You Can Contribute!

Become Involved in the World Campaign!

Disaster-resilient hospitals and health facilities are everyone's right. They are also everyone's responsibility. Here are some ways in which you can play a role in making hospitals safe from disasters.

Governments

Take a leadership position — make this a national priority

Governments have the ultimate responsibility for the safety of their citizens. At the national level and in cities, municipalities, and communities, governments have much at stake when it comes to ensuring their health services are available should disaster strike. Strong political commitment can make a tremendous difference to whether or not hospitals are safe.

Create a framework in which all sectors and government levels can help make hospitals and health facilities resistant to natural hazards

The issue of “Hospitals Safe from Disasters” must figure

prominently on the national and local policy agendas and involve a wide variety of sectors including planning, finance, the environment, local authorities and others. The broader the participation, the greater the national commitment will be.

Draft, pass and enforce legislation in particular building codes that protect hospitals

It is not sufficient for countries to simply have building codes that take into account natural hazards. These must also be enforced. To do so requires the involvement of decision makers and legislators in countries worldwide and public awareness campaigns to engage the public.



UN, international and regional agencies and NGOs

Build on existing inter-agency mechanisms and strategic partnerships

The Campaign offers an avenue through which members of the ISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and other agencies can carry out activities that help achieve the Hyogo Framework for Action target of ensuring that all hospitals remain functional in disaster situations.

Highlight this cross-cutting issue on the agenda of agency or regional meetings

The last decade has witnessed a tremendous upswing in the involvement of international and regional agencies in all aspects of emergency management — from risk reduction and early warning to humanitarian interventions. The agencies and also NGOs should seek to mainstream health sector risk reduction into these efforts.

Collect, share and disseminate good practices

Identify your agency's or NGO's specialized niche within the framework of this Campaign and share your knowledge and expertise.

Health institutions and the health workforce

Participate in National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction

The health sector should take a proactive role in National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction or similar coordination mechanisms.

Become agents of disaster risk reduction

An intimate knowledge of one's own work environment can help make a health facility safe from disasters. Hospital plans are everyone's business and all health workers must contribute to their preparation.

Seek opportunities to update skills and knowledge

Health workers and all staff working in health facilities — from the largest to the smallest — must constantly update their knowledge and skills about hazards and risk reduction to improve their leadership role in emergency situations.

Mentor the next generation of health professionals

In the health sector, disaster risk reduction is still not a household word. Schedule presentations with universities, professional associations and other outlets to build awareness of issues concerning health facilities' safety from disasters.

Conduct media events in and outside of hospitals and health facilities



The donor community

Consider how donor-funded development projects can contribute to achieving the goal of hospitals safe from disasters

The international donor community can also give priority to fund activities that contribute to protecting health facilities from the avoidable consequences of disasters — which is essential to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Look for ways to mainstream health sector risk reduction into project design

In much the same way that the cross-cutting issue of gender is mainstreamed into a variety of projects, so too can issues related to hospitals' safety from disasters be included in other development projects.

Make “hospitals safe from disasters” a component of the larger disaster and development portfolio

Financial institution

Propose that all health construction projects have incorporated risk reduction measures

It is possible to design and construct new health facilities that are capable of protecting not only lives but also the investment in complex facilities such as hospitals. In some cases, the cost is negligible, since all that is needed is to choose a different location or change the underlying design philosophy.

Promote research and studies from an economic point of view

Help measure the magnitude of the problem and the cost effectiveness of introducing disaster risk reduction (prevention, mitigation and preparedness) measures in hospitals and health facilities.

Solicit government enforcement of existing legislation on building codes

To protect investments in health infrastructure, encourage health facility construction projects to take into account and incorporate all necessary risk reduction measures.



Universities, schools and professional associations

Develop modules or courses that contribute to hospital safety into university and professional curricula

Review and make changes to existing school and university curricula. A much-needed contribution, and one that would lend sustainability to these initiatives, is the development and delivery of continuing education courses, certification programmes and supporting technical publications.

Act as repositories of specialized expertise

Universities, as well as professional associations of engineers, architects, nurses, medical doctors and others, have a wealth of knowledge and specialized expertise. Add to a global knowledge base or knowledge management system by systematically collecting and sharing this knowledge with established information centres, thus providing a how-to blueprint for countries with similar risks and resources.

Encourage innovations and cutting-edge designs

Professional associations and institutions of higher learning can also stimulate innovations and cutting-edge designs by encouraging countries to continuously experiment with new courses of action to improve the performance of health facilities.

Publish articles for scientific and technical publications and journals

Encourage research into the magnitude of the problem and the cost effectiveness of introducing disaster risk reduction measures.

Contribute to the development and periodic review of national building standards