Regional Capacity Building Strategies for Disaster Reduction

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Pan American Health Organization

- Established in 1902 by resolution of the Second International Conference of the Pan American States.

“it shall be the duty of the International Sanitary Bureau to lend its best aid and experience toward the widest possible protection of the public health of each of the Republics”
WHO Regional Office for the Americas

In 1949, the Director-General of the World Health Organization and the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau signed the agreement recognizing the Pan American Sanitary Bureau as the Regional Office of the World Health Organization for the Americas.
Disasters are not natural

Risk $\Rightarrow$ Hazard . Vulnerability
Vulnerability to disasters is not compatible with physical, mental or social wellbeing.
Scope

“Natural” Disasters

Chemical, radiological and biological Disasters

“Complex” Disasters
PAHO Disaster Program

- Established in 1976
- 1980 creation of MoH disaster programs
- 1985 Subregional offices
- 1992 Mitigation in health facilities
- 1999 Disasters and Development
- 2004 Regional approach and interregional cooperation
The focus given to risk and disaster management is continuously changing
From Ad-Hoc Disaster Response to Development

- 1970 Earthquake in Peru
- 1976 Earthquake in Guatemala
- 1985 Earthquake in Mexico
- 1998 Hurricane Mitch
Main Activities

1. Strengthening institutions
2. Training
3. Special Projects
   • Hospital Mitigation
   • SUMA
   • Regional Disaster Information Center
Strengthening Institutions

- Support the creation of national programs (technical staff, funding, access to the decision-making level)
- Promote intersectoral cooperation
A regional network of:

• Health disaster coordinators
• Ministries of Health
• Civil Defense/Protection
• Foreign Affairs
• Red Cross National Societies
• Universities
• PAHO/WHO Disaster focal points
Strengthening Institutions

We must work also with...

• Mass media
• Armed forces
• Industry/private sector
• NGOs and volunteers
• Parliaments
• Public opinion, schools
Increasing number and type of actors

World Conference on Disaster Reduction

CARE
CID
OCHA
UNHCR
JICA
SICA/CEPREDE
UNFPA
ECHO
ORAS/CONHU

SIDA
MSF
CRS
WHO
OAS
CAN/CAPRADE
UNICEF
OXFAM
USAID
CDERA
DFID
PADF
WFP
ICRC
Local NGOS

IFRC

The World Wide Web

Disaster information from a variety of sources

www.paho.org/disasters
Training: the key to progress...

From Vulnerability...

Workshops
Short Courses
University
Training

...to Safety.
Workshops / Short Courses

200-250 courses each year are sponsored/supported by PAHO with approximately 5,000 persons trained per year

- Emergency health management
- Hospital preparedness and mitigation
- Environmental health management
- Supply management (SUMA)
- Role of Ministries of Foreign Affairs in disasters
- Mass media and public information
- Community preparedness
International course to develop the managerial skills of those whose job is to deal with disasters and emergencies.

Focus on:
- Mitigation and development
- RISK REDUCTION VS DISASTER MANAGEMENT
- Exchange of experiences between participants and instructors
University Training

- Incorporation of disaster management contents in undergraduate and post-graduate curricula
- Specific Second Specialization
- Promotion of distance learning and virtual courses over the Internet.
Educational and Training Material

Print

• Scientific publications
• Self-study modules
• Technical reports
• Newsletter: “Disasters: Preparedness and Mitigation in the Americas”

Audiovisual

• Slide series
• Video programs
• Slide and video library
Scientific Publications
Virtual Health Library for Disasters

The Global Virtual Library of Essential Information Resources on Public Health for Disasters and Complex Emergencies
Hospital Disaster Mitigation

- Vulnerability analysis
- Improved design of new facilities
- Retrofitting existing facilities
- Standards, Norms, guidelines, and training
Disaster Mitigation in Drinking Water Systems

- Reduce damage risk of water supply systems.
- Improve preparedness to reduce interruptions in distribution.
- Ensure water quantity and quality in disasters.
SUMA
Supply Management System

A collective effort of Caribbean and Latin American countries to sort, classify, inventory and distribute relief supplies.

Coordination tool to aid governments and humanitarian organizations in the coordination, transparency and efficient management of relief supplies in a chaotic environment.
Regional Disaster Information Center for Latin America and the Caribbean

- Improve the compilation, processing, and dissemination of disaster information.
- Strengthen local and national capabilities in the establishment and maintenance of disaster information centers.
- Support the development of the Regional Disaster Information System.
- Collaboration with Regional Library of Medicine