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**IASC Weekly Meeting (25 Mar 09)**

**World Health Day 2009**

***"Save Lives: Make Health  
Facilities Safe in Emergencies"***

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*Health Action in Crises*



**World Health  
Organization**

# What is World Health Day 2009 about?

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Making **ALL** health facilities safer, to provide quality health care in emergencies.

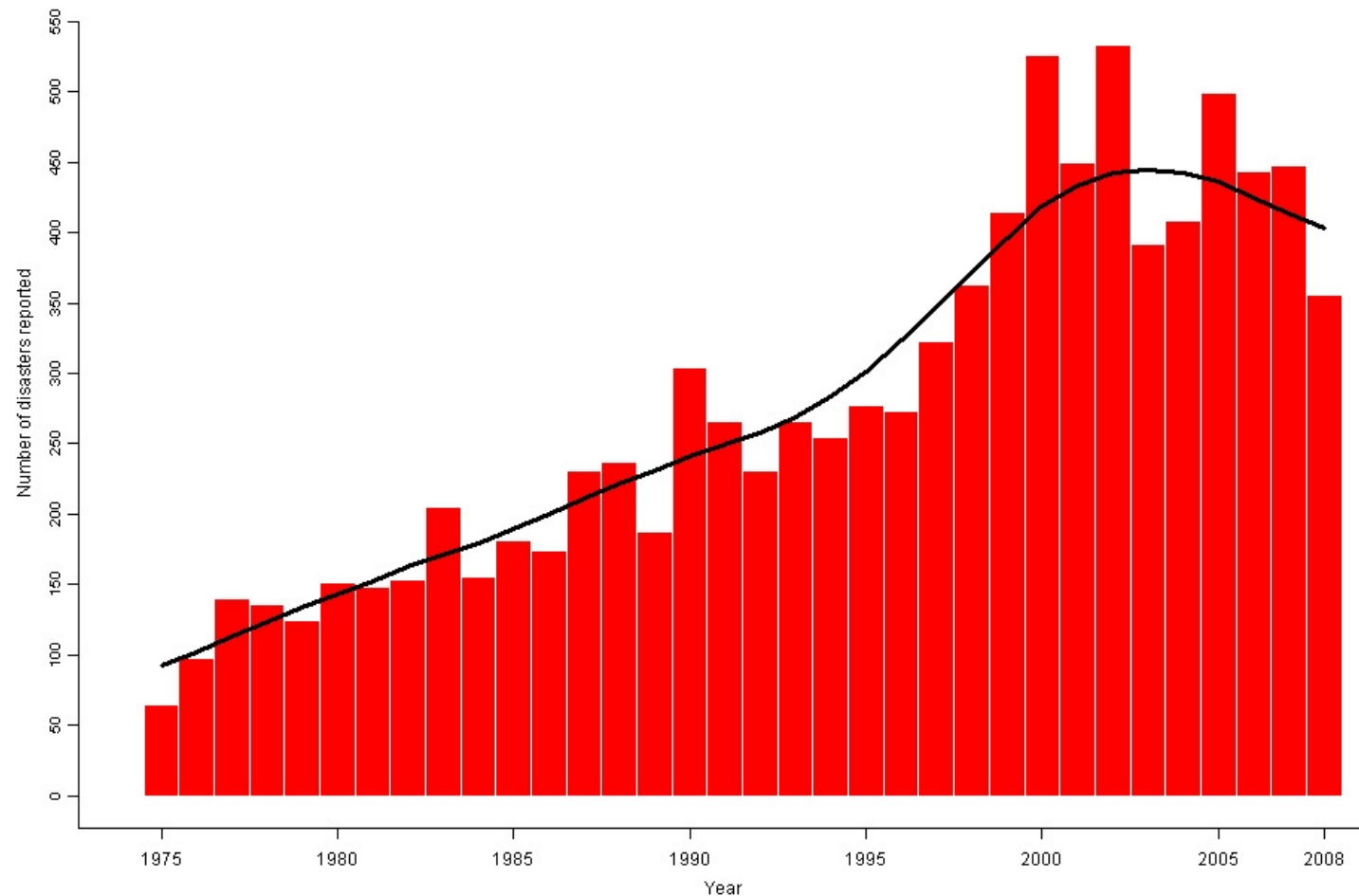


# Why choose this theme?

- **Natural and human-made emergencies pose an enormous threat to public health, affecting the lives of millions of people each year**
- **Hospitals and health clinics are destroyed and damaged, and many health staff are killed or injured**
- **Weak health systems that barely function day-to-day are not likely to be able to scale-up adequately in an emergency**



# Natural disasters reported 1975-2008



EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database - [www.emdat.be](http://www.emdat.be) - Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels - Belgium

# What are the threats facing health facilities?

- Natural disasters
- Conflict



- Communicable disease outbreaks
- "Everyday" emergencies

# What are common vulnerabilities?

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- **Chronically weak health systems**
- **Under-investment**
- **Poor facility location, design and construction**
- **No emergency plan**

# What are the solutions?

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- **Select safe sites** for the location of health facilities.
- **Design and construct** safely.
- **Assess safety of existing facilities** and take action to reduce vulnerabilities.
- **Protect** the safety and security of **health workers**.
- **Protect equipment, medicines and supplies**.
- Ensure health facilities receive **essential services** before, during and after emergencies.

# What are the solutions?

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- **Form partnerships** between facilities and the community.
- Create **emergency risk management programmes** in health facilities.
- Develop **health facility emergency response plans**.
- **Test** and update response plans with **drills** and **exercises**.
- **Train** health workers to respond to emergencies.
- **Learn lessons** from past emergencies and disasters.
- **Overall, develop & implement national policies and programmes.**



# Lessons learned: 1985 Mexico earthquake

1985

- Five hospitals collapsed and 22 suffered major damage, 6000 beds lost.
- 561 people died at Juarez Hospital alone.



Today

- More than 500 people are trained to use the PAHO Hospital Safety Index, which has been applied to 200 facilities across the country.
- Index lets authorities determine which facilities are "safe" and which must be improved.

# Lessons learned: cyclones in Bangladesh

- 1991: >140 000 people killed
- 2008: 3000 people killed



- The dramatic difference was due to effective early warning system and use of wind- and flood-proof community centres (including health) where people could take refuge and seek care.

# Lessons learned: Gaza, Dec. '08-Jan. '09

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- 15 of 27 hospitals damaged
- 43 PHC clinics damaged or destroyed by direct or indirect shelling
- 29 ambulances damaged or destroyed, and 2 ambulance stations destroyed
- 16 health staff killed and 25 injured

# Lessons learned: Gaza, Dec. '08-Jan. '09

- Implementation of an emergency management plan
- Elective surgery was stopped in the week leading up to the conflict
- ICU and operating room space was expanded
- Coordination between all health providers, including NGO and other UN agencies, especially UNRWA



# Call to action



- Advocate for protection and strengthening of ALL health facilities
- Planning and investment today will save lives
- Promote safety and emergency preparedness
- Community participation, key to awareness

# World Health Day 2009



- Year-long campaign brings together technical and communications/advocacy activities

# Events and products, 7 April 2009

- **Global launch, Beijing**
- **WHD launches in all regions**
- **WHD event in Geneva**
- **Short film, public service announcement, press kit, regional information materials**



# Beyond the day

- Supporting countries to implement proven measures, effective policies
- Continuing WHO support for the World Disaster Reduction campaign on Hospitals Safe from Disasters with ISDR and World Bank
- WHO is partnering with other UN Organizations, NGOs, engineers, architects, financial institutions, emergency services, hospital managers and other health organisations to build safer, plan better and train together - towards a global programme





## Slide 16

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WHO is a joint partner with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the World Bank in the 2008-09 "Hospitals Safe from Disasters" campaign, which focussed on the impact natural events like earthquakes and cyclones have on hospitals.

Our 2009 World Health Day campaign takes this further by advocating for the protection of ALL health facilities, whether they be tertiary hospitals or PHC clinics, in multiple emergency settings, from war to hurricanes and drought. It also includes road accidents and burns, the types of "everyday" emergencies that kill millions annually

Paul Garwood, 2009-02-23

# Open invitation

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To all IASC members to celebrate  
World Health Day in Geneva:

- Venue: Main Building, World Health Organization
- Date: 7 April 2009
- Time: 11.00-12.30pm



# *Save lives. Make hospitals safe in emergencies*

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Thank you.