1. Overview

1.2. Approaches to Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management
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Overhead Transparencies

1.2.1. Disasters and Emergencies are not Aberrant Phenomena
1.2.2. Disaster Prevention
1.2.3. Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management, Two Approaches
1.2.4. The Health Sector is Embracing the Two Approaches
1.2. Approaches to Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management
Trainers’ Guide

Objective:
To clarify that there are at least two approaches to Emergency Management (EM) and that health professionals are supposed to keep both in mind. (Knowledge/Attitudes)

Key-message:
According to what one reads or listens to, one may find EM approached by a social/anthropological or engineering/managerial points of view. Both views are legitimate and have their own value. Essentially Health is a social/anthropological value; Health Services are clearly a managerial thing. Ideally Public Health workers should recognise both views and look at both.

1.2.1. Disasters and Emergencies are not Aberrant Phenomena
Discuss and give/ask for examples. If states give more money for warfare and neglect development, when disasters strike these states cannot respond. If states invest in disaster prevention, they will cope better when an emergency happens and their threshold of susceptibility will be higher.

1.2.2. Disaster Prevention
Discuss and give/ask for examples. There are two ways to prevent disasters: 1. development gives the community a better capacity to prevent, prepare and respond, and hence it lessens the effects of a disaster, 2. good emergency management reduces the seriousness of the crisis; the emergency does not escalate and does not become a disaster.

1.2.3. Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management, Two Approaches
Present. Depending on the actors, disaster prevention can be approached in two different ways. The social/anthropological approach highlights a series of coping mechanisms, which originate in a social and cultural context. The second approach is engineering/managerial and disaster prevention is focused on vital systems.

1.2.4. The Health Sector is Embracing the Two Approaches
Make statement. The Health sector covers the two fields. Therefore it has to act as a link between the two approaches.

Complementary to other packages.
Essential Reading:
- UN-DMTP, Training Modules, UN-DMTP, 1990
24. Disasters and Emergencies are not Aberrant Phenomena

The Disaster-Development Continuum

Disasters and emergencies are not aberrant phenomena.

They are reflections of the ways societies structure themselves and allocate their resources.

(R. Kent, 1997)
1.2.1. Disaster Prevention

Disasters can be prevented by

- DEVELOPMENT
- EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT


Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management can be approached from two different point of views:

- **Social/anthropological**
  i.e. looking at the community’s coping mechanisms

- **Engineering/managerial**
  i.e. looking at the community’s vital systems

Both approaches are effective, as long as they integrate each other.

Specialists of one field must coordinate their efforts with those of other disciplines and sectors.

Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management are multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral endeavours.
1.2.4. The Health Sector is Embracing the Two Approaches

The Health Sector enjoys a comparative advantage in Disaster Prevention and Emergency Management, as it embraces the two approaches:

HEALTH belongs to the biological and socio-anthropological domain

HEALTH SERVICES belong to the engineering/managerial domain

The Health Sector has the responsibility of making use of its comparative advantage