

Documentation Collection, Information Distribution and Publications

THE BUILDING up of a specialized library on disasters and health emergencies continues to be one of the major projects of the WHO Panafrican Centre for EPR.

The centre has now over 3000 articles, journals, books and audiovisual materials, dealing with health emergency preparedness and response in Africa. The reference system is computerized and a updated catalogue of available titles has been produced (Dec 90) and will be sent to all member countries.

The main areas covered include: Country Reports, Health / Medical, Agriculture / Environment / Nutrition, Emergencies / Disasters / Epidemics / Outbreaks of Diseases and Development

Publications

the ark



The production of *The Ark*, the bulletin of the Panafrican Centre continues, with four issues produced and circulated over the past year to some 3000 addresses globally. The response received to date encourages us in our efforts to continue to build up a global awareness of preparedness to disasters. Although the contents of *The Ark* refer mainly to Africa, examples from it may be used in any country in the world taking into consideration the local culture, social behaviour, life styles and so on. The building up of preparedness measures is not an easy task, we do realize there is a certain fatalistic attitude to disasters which can lead to a state of hopelessness being experienced by those who should be reacting. The title *The Ark*, does not refer to disasters, we work towards the reduction of their effects and try to encourage our readers that disasters can and must be prevented. *The Ark* is divided into five sections which includes: 1. General, 2. WHO/EPR Activities, 3. Member Countries, 4. Meetings, Conferences and Workshops 5. Review of Publications

Health For All When A Disaster Strikes Health Emergency Preparedness and Response in African Countries

Volumes One, Two and Three

This is a periodic publication on disaster reduction management, training and planning in Africa. The booklet deals mainly with the needs of working towards the building up of preparedness and response to health emergencies in large populations. A selected number of topics are chosen and expanded on in depth.



Volume 1

This first volume contains three main articles on WHO/EPR policy.

- * Dr Olavi Elo, Head of EPR at WHO Headquarters, writes on *Community Participation in Disaster Preparedness*,
- * Dr. Luciano Carrino from the Rome-based WHO Collaborating Centre discusses *Disaster Preparedness*;
- * *Management and Planning for Health Emergencies for Large Populations* is presented by Dr. Sandro Calvani, Director of the Panafrican Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Response.

The volume is introduced by Prof. Gottlieb Lobe Monekosso, WHO Regional Director.

Volume 2

- * *Disaster Reduction Towards the 90's* EPR program WHO Headquarters
- * *Natural Disasters are a Challenge to the Earth* WMO
- * *Health Aspects of Disaster Preparedness and Response*, Dr. S. Lazzari
- * *Training and Education for Disaster Preparedness. Why Do We Need Training? For what, for whom and how?* M.O. Erdik

The forward is written by Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, WHO Director General.

Volume 3

Conflict and destabilization in Africa is one of the major causes of man made disasters, with a human cost that can never be measured. What could or can be the role of the health sector in such situations? This third volume places emphasis on the effects that man-made disasters have on the health of the community.

- * *Health and Disaster Reduction Opportunities for the 1990s* by Dr Olavi Elo
- * *Displaced Persons: A New Challenge for Disaster Reduction in Africa* adapted from Mr Lance Clarke presentation speech to the Refugee Policy Group
- * *Health Care for Displaced Persons and Refugees: The Georgetown Declaration* taken from the Georgetown Declaration on Health Care for Displaced Persons and Refugees
- * *Health Relief Actions: Effective Response comes from Appropriate Training* adapted from an article on EPR training produced by WHO, Regional Office for Americas
- * *A Call for Emergency Health Care Development in the 1990s* Ad-Hoc Committee of the International Conference on Emergency Health Care Development, Washington, D.C.
- * *Role of the Health Sector and Nongovernmental Organizations in Planning Activities for Reduction of Natural Disasters* adapted from the meeting on Disaster Preparedness and Response in Latin America and the Caribbean
- * *The Public Health Effects of Situations of Insecurity, Wars, Civil Strife and Political Violence in Africa* synthesized from an article by Dr Anthony Lwegaba, WHO Panafrican Centre

Training and Information Exchange on Environmental Health Management in Refugee Areas

Based on EMRO's Regional Workshop on "Environmental Health Management in Refugee Areas" the document emphasises the management of training and the importance of environmental health for refugee communities. It reveals the health problems faced by

refugees and gives guidelines on the possibilities of training refugees as Primary Health Care workers. Appendix 1 gives details of Training in Environmental Health in Refugee Areas. Appendix 2 relates Diseases Associated with Water.

OAU Council of Ministers Resolution on Disasters in Africa

Over three pages, the results of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity meeting in its Fifty-first Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 19-24 February are portrayed. It also documents the resolutions made by the Council of Ministers on disasters in Africa. It recommends among

other activities the organization of a regional meeting on disasters in Africa to identify project priorities at national, sub regional and regional levels to be implemented during the IDNDR. This meeting is now scheduled to be convened in September 1991.

Disasters In Africa: Guidelines for Disaster Preparedness and Response

This document includes 23 pages plus annex. It comprises of two major objectives: first it seeks to sensitize the people of Africa, African Governments and the donors community on disasters most prevalent

to Africa and their extent. Secondly, it focuses on the guidelines for the formulation of a plan of action to mitigate disasters in Africa.

Guidelines for a Plan of Action for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response In African Countries

WHO confirms its commitment to support Member States in disaster preparedness training, planning, relief and rehabilitation of the health services and infrastructures. It also continues to pledge its cooperation with OAU. At the request of Member States, support will be given to planning of health sector

programmes. Activities for immediate implementation include the strengthening of epidemic control in Africa, emergency preparedness of the front line states of Southern Africa and programmes for displaced people linking the emergency and health development programmes.

Report on the Seminar on Africa's Role in Nuclear Science for Peace and Development

The OAU Secretary General in collaboration with the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), UNESCO, FAO, WHO, UNDP and so on organized the seminar in Kampala, Uganda from 12-16 March 1990, which was hosted by the Ugandan Government.

Attendance included nuclear scientists and officials representing 28 member states, 4 international organizations and one observer from Palestine.

The seminar was divided into 5 themes, in which presentations were made. Dr Amin Salama of the WHO Panafrican Centre for EPR presented a paper on "Nuclear Accidents, Prevention, Preparedness and Response."

The seminar concluded making six recommendations which may be summarized as follows:

- The establishment of a technical committee creation of the ECA
- Establishment of an operational network of

nuclear centres

- That African Member States should access as soon as possible to the African Regional Cooperation Agreement (AFRA)
- The OAU Member States should draw up programmes and projects that would enable them to achieve an indigenous development in nuclear science
- That Member States direct special attention to the conditions of work of experts and researchers in nuclear science
- That Member States should consider nuclear safety, protection and nuclear accident prevention preparedness and response as their main concern in case they decide to use nuclear science for their economic development.

In conclusion the seminar was timely organized and far sighted in its development objectives for the African continent. Nuclear Science was considered as a way out for the underdevelopment of Africa and a means to be used for fast progress.

Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection - Nuclear Accident Prevention Preparedness and Response

This document of eleven pages examines: the background of nuclear science, the principles of the disastrous effects of radiation, prevention and response.

As nuclear science is a part of the technology that Africa requires to usher in development, dose is the key factor that determines radiation harm and must be controlled through legislation, code of conduct and

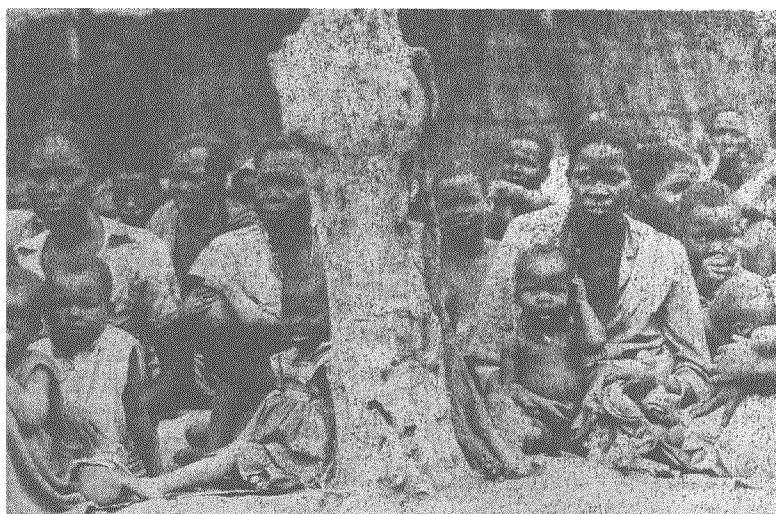
constant monitoring. The establishment of radiation safety officers as well as training of other appropriate workers is important. Africa and indeed most nations are, as of now, ill-equipped to deal with nuclear accidents should they occur. Hence the need to take all appropriate precautions. A number of recommendations have been made to the OAU for adoption and implementation by Member States.

The Public Health Effects of Situations of Insecurity, Wars, Civil Strife and Political Violence in Africa

Wars and civil strife are rated second to drought and famine as a cause of disasters in Africa. This article demonstrates the serious effects of wars and civil strife and the consequences they have on public health. The contents cover a wide range of issues including: is war and violence new to Africa, how frequent are wars and violence, how important are situations of insecurity to public health, how serious are the casualties due to war, violence and insecurity, why violence? why is the African population extremely prone to the effects of

chaos? can militarism promote public health, what are the negative experiences of militarism in Africa, can such effects be prevented or mitigated.

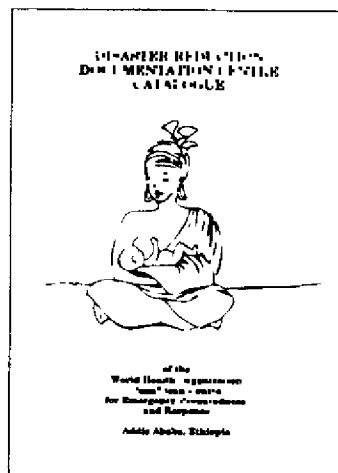
The article concludes by requesting health workers and administrators to innovate the most appropriate health services possible in one of the above situations. A state of complete calm cannot be achieved overnight, as can be seen by the insurgencies in many African countries such as - Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Chad. To wait calls for further deterioration.



"Today Ethiopia is one of the world's principal asylum countries. The effort we still have to make is enormous."

"Nothing under the sun is accidental" Gotthold Ephraim Lessing

Documentation Centre Catalogue of the WHO Panafrican Centre for EPR



This catalogue of 386 pages represents work to date (December 1990) in the Documentation Centre. Inevitably, very recent acquisitions are not listed. The index uses "descriptors" which are included in the records of every item. These are not intended in any way to *summarize* the text, but aim to provide a framework for on - line searches. We are in the process of standardizing the vocabulary used, broadly following the vocabulary of *Spines Thesaurus*, published by UNESCO., but acknowledging the need for a specialist vocabulary in the fields of emergencies and health.

More detailed and specific searches are possible, combining several descriptors, stating preferred language, year of publication and so on. Inquiries are welcome and can be performed by directly searching our database. The body of the catalogue excludes periodicals, a list of which is annexed. This information is stored in dBase IV software, and is available on diskette. A free photocopy service up to a maximum of 50 A4 pages is available from the centre.

WHO Action in Emergencies and Disasters

This twenty page document includes guidelines from the World Health Organization on their actions and policies in relation to emergencies and disasters. It includes: purpose, definitions, policy basis, objectives,

principles for emergency response, finance, responsibilities for emergency preparedness and response, coordination and cooperation with other organizations.

Joint Technical Group on Emergencies (JTGE) WHO/UNICEF

The third meeting of WHO/UNICEF JTGE was held in N'Djamena, Chad from 26-28 March 1990. This 16 page report plus annex (available in French only) includes the discussions of the meeting. In brief following the Fifth Annual Consultation of the Regional Directors in December 1989, it was endorsed that the biannual technical consultative meeting would continue. Country Representatives were requested by their

Regional Directors to continue their efforts at country level, to enhance partnerships with governments. These partnerships should focus on the priority needs of mother and child health and emergency preparedness activities. The main objective of the JTGE is in fact to strengthen collaboration between UNICEF and WHO on disaster reduction activities.

Health Aspects of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Emergencies

Over eleven pages plus annex the Health Aspects of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Emergencies is portrayed. The sad reality of Africa's refugee and displaced persons is that the gravity is ever deepening qualitatively and quantitatively. It calls on governments, inter- and nongovernmental organizations to allocate

funds and staff in an equitable manner between communities and services. The need is also stressed for active participation by refugee communities at all stages of decision making and planning. The health care of refugees must be seen as part of national emergency plans.

New Basic Books, Data Base and Educational Publications

The Challenge of African Disasters

The Centre has prepared a book on disasters affecting the African continent entitled *The Challenge of African Disasters*. The primary aim of the book is to sensitize readers to the issue of disasters, their far-reaching consequences on African societies and the importance of preparedness in disaster mitigation. A secondary aim is to offer a meaningful contribution at the beginning of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999).

The book contains eight chapters addressing the main disasters and related issues in Africa. The general emphasis of the book is on the health effects of disasters. Following an introduction to disasters and their consequences on health and health systems, the book presents discussions on epidemics, floods and tropical storms, refugees and displaced persons, famine, disaster relief and training in disaster preparedness. The Centre invited guest authors, among the most recognized experts in each field, to write the chapters based on their experience and research.

The chapters on the disasters themselves begin with an explanation of the phenomena, the underlying causes and a discussion of the vulnerability of certain population groups. Proposals for preparedness actions are put forth and discussed. The chapter on disaster relief is a thought-provoking presentation of the socio-political aspects involved in the provision of relief at the donor level and of the factors that are involved in the distribution of relief at the national level. The issue of the lack of disaster training institutes in Africa and the objectives and methodology of such training are dealt with in a separate chapter.

The book is to be published early in 1991 by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) who have supported this initiative by the Centre right from its inception. We would like to take this opportunity to thank UNITAR for its sustained interest and support in seeing this project through to the end.