



Preparedness activities

2. Emergency Preparedness and Planning

Country EPP programmes

WHO selects disaster-prone countries in particular as the focus for Emergency Preparedness and Planning (EPP) programmes at national level. The goal of the programmes is primarily to promote national self-reliance in emergency preparedness, and to ensure that locally available resources for the health sector are used to their fullest potential during all phases of an emergency, from first-line response to long-term development of the health infrastructure. WHO conducts country-level EPP programmes and activities through WHO representative offices, regional offices, collaborating centres and intercountry programmes.

How a national EPP programme works

A comprehensive EPP national programme for the health sector is based on a five-sequence plan of activities:

- **Risk mapping.** Determine natural and man-made hazards for the region;
- **Health assessment.** Assess the country's vulnerability to these hazards;
- **Development.** Identify and implement the most cost-effective measures to reduce vulnerability;
- **Coordination and planning.** Develop logistical plans and create national committees to coordinate emergency response and manage post-disaster assistance;
- **Education and training.** Ensure that plans are disseminated, understood and implemented by local officials and the community at large in disaster-prone areas.

In 1993 WHO EPP country activities were ongoing or initiated in: Bangladesh, China, Egypt and India. (For 1993 country activities in sub-Saharan Africa, see Chapter 4, "Intercountry Programmes"; and for the Americas and the Caribbean, see Chapter 5, section on "Regional Office for the Americas")

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, EPP had evaluated some years earlier health disaster management practices and had developed a medium-term programme to improve emergency preparedness for the health sector. EPP is working through the disaster management cell of the Government to implement its current programme for Bangladesh, which runs through 1994. The final ob-

jective being to ensure that the country establishes effective emergency preparedness mechanisms for efficient, timely mitigation of the effects of future disasters, natural and man-made. The current programme includes medical kits and supplies, disease surveillance and nutrition surveys, laboratory support, health education, communications improvements and training for rapid health assessment. The programme is being funded by Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, as well as DHA.

China

WHO had provided preparedness, mitigation and relief for the 1991 flood victims through two \$10 million UNDP projects, which were implemented in 1992. WHO also had initiated a preparedness project in early 1991, funded by Finland, which provided technical support to China's Ministry of Health to strengthen emergency preparedness within the national IDNDR committee, epidemiological disaster research in three provinces (Yunnan, Shanghai and Anhui); disaster events software; training modules for health surveillance; and microcomputer training to develop local disaster profiles and maps in Anhui. The project's objectives stressed interagency and intersectoral contacts, hazard maps and training for technological disasters (starting in Shanghai) and epidemiological disaster research in flood-prone areas.

Unfortunately, there was no funding available for the project in 1992-1993. (For more information on China, see section on "WHO Collaborating Centre in Kuopio, Finland" in Chapter 6.)

Egypt

In Egypt in 1993 EPP conducted an assessment of the country's EPP status and finalized an EPP plan of action. It also conducted, in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) and the International Civil Defense Organization (ICDO), a multisectoral workshop and helped to draft a national policy and strategy document on emergency management. And for the health sector, EPP provided a data bank on training and a contingency plan.

India

On 30 September 1993, a serious earthquake struck India killing, injuring and leaving homeless many