



**LACDE - LOCAL AUTHORITIES CONFRONTING
DISASTERS & EMERGENCIES**

THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

P R O C E E D I N G S

of the

**The 3rd International Conference
of the**

**LOCAL AUTHORITIES CONFRONTING
DISASTERS & EMERGENCIES**

L A C D E

Vina del Mar, Chile

30 November - 3 December 1998



LOCAL AUTHORITIES CONFRONTING DISASTERS & EMERGENCIES

THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear Reader:

These are the proceedings of presentations given, in English and in Spanish, at the 3rd International LACDE Conference, which took place in Vina del Mar, Chile, during 30 November - 3 December 1998.

It is to be noted that not all papers have been received. This booklet includes all the material that was collected.

We hope that these contents will be educational and will serve as one more tool to facilitate the exchange of practical information for the benefit of all sectors involved.

The LACDE Secretariat



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3rd International Conference
of Local Authorities Confronting Disasters and Emergencies
(LACDE)

Vina del Mar, Chile, 30 November-3 December 1998

DISASTER REDUCTION IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

Keynote Address by:

Mr. Philippe Boule
Director - IDNDR Secretariat
International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction
United Nations

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed an honour - and a great pleasure - for me to be given the opportunity to address this Third International Conference organised by the Association of Local Authorities Confronting Disasters and Emergencies.

Let me first of all convey my thanks and congratulations to the Government of Chile and the Mayor of Vina del Mar for hosting this event; and of course to the International Union of Local Authorities, and LACDE in particular, for this valuable initiative. The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction is very glad to be involved, as a main partner, in the process of making local communities and cities more resilient to natural disasters.

Natural disasters are the most debilitating events a country can go through except for war. There is an impressive collection of figures to remind us that disasters have an important negative impact on the development of the economy and the pursuit of sustainable development. The United States estimates they lose one billion US\$ per week to disasters.

The Central American countries hit by the recent catastrophic events linked to Hurricane Mitch are a painful illustration of how disasters wipe out a large part of the Gross National Product in a matter of hours.

The consequences of disasters on society and the economy go far beyond the immediate devastation we can all witness through the media. As an example, the Central American case shows that disasters are responsible for the loss of about 2.3% of the total GNP in the region. This, combined with an average demographic increment of 3% puts at serious risk the economic performance of most countries and requires additional efforts for their economies to grow steadily. As anyone can understand, this set of conditions calls for an integrated preventive approach.

Yet, because of the human loss and suffering, there is a tendency to look at disasters only from a humanitarian angle. Such an approach may cause us to give absolute priority to the response of disasters. Preparedness for response is indeed an essential element of disaster management, as a part of a comprehensive approach to prevention. We should therefore continue to improve and strengthen our response capacity, while engaging in working together to build a "global culture of prevention".

At almost one year from the formal conclusion of the IDNDR, the good news is that we do not need anymore to convince the world of the central importance of the IDNDR message: in all quarters of society there is sound recognition that natural hazards, which are inevitable, need not result in human, economic and social disasters, and that it is possible to decrease our vulnerability to these threats. The bad news is that beyond this conceptual awareness there lies the immense work we all have to do in the future to bring about concrete and effective action.

The world of the 21st Century will inevitably be more complex and interdependent; so will natural and technological hazards. Statistics tell us that the number of major natural disasters in the last ten years was four times as high as in the 1960s.

The future will therefore put us face to face with the challenge of integrated disaster management and prevention. The only affordable solution is to invest in the reduction of vulnerability to natural hazards.

In the future, we will need to give increased attention to scientific research on natural phenomena because progress in science and technology has proven successful in contributing to a better understanding of how natural hazards develop and behave.

But what is even more important is the appropriate application of science and technology to vulnerable societies. We need to take into account the human factor when developing disaster prevention strategies and we must involve local communities in this process.

This has been the *raison d'être* and the logic behind the launching by the international community of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in 1989.

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"Social Involvement in the monitoring of the hills of Recife"

Francisco Barreto, Secretary of Social Policies and Chairman of the Commission on Civil Defense of Recife
Wilson Miranda, Executive Secretary of the Commission on Civil Defense of Recife

Hills represent 40% of Recife's urban area, with a population estimated to be of approximately 400,000 inhabitants. Within this geographic area, the inhabitants are employees of the public sector, merchants, of which the majority is linked to the delivery of services in the informal sector.

Human settlements in slopes cause serious damage to the environment. Thousands of homes with safety problems, related to the stability of buildings on slopes, were registered in Recife's upper suburbs.

The Commission on Civil Defense of Recife (CODECIR), reported more than 6,500 points of risk in its Operations Center. Many of these resulted in disasters during the winter of 1996. During this period, approximately 800 families were left homeless. Currently, they continue in this situation, awaiting a solution from the municipal government.

The scope of the problem demands actions focused towards the reduction of the situations of risk in which the population is found. In this regard, the Prefecture of the city of Recife has mobilized all sectors of society for joint action, as human and material resources, which are under the control of the public sector, are insufficient to face this challenge.

We begin from the principle that the resources are in the community, and that the active participation of the citizens are indispensable elements in the active civil construction.

A civil defense system based on the reality and dynamics of the localities is currently being implemented in 143 localities in the hills of Recife.

In this regard, the criteria established in the grouped localities were: the physical – geographical identity of the localities and the strengthening of existing interconnections.

Following these norms, it was possible to form 5 groups in the localities themselves that generated the Community Civil Defense Commissions. Currently, these commissions are being trained for voluntary work, with the creation of two local Civil Defense Hubs, which would be linked to the Civil Defense System (SINDEC).

The planning and movement of these hubs involve more than 183 community leaderships and they are directed by the Office of Social Policy of the Prefecture of the city of Recife through the Office of Civil Defense and social follow up.

The first step in this action is to develop a sociological survey of the local social organizations with the objective of incorporating the totality of the organizations. This will provide prevention during critical moments, expediting and taking care of the families located in the area at risk during emergencies.

In the medium term, we will progress in reducing vulnerabilities through a joint effort with the population, strengthening the mobilization and the conscious activity of the citizen, qualified to participate in the construction of the citizenry.

We hope that with this presentation we have clarified some of the questions on the subject and can gather expertise and suggestions that without a doubt will enrich our actions with regards to this challenge.

TRANSFORMATION OF VULNERABLE PLACES, A CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT.

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ABSTRACT

Anyone can rightfully ask himself about his role in the determination of the future. Are we going where we want to, avoiding or reducing risk in our lives, property and environment? Are we doing enough? The main problem lies in the fact that if we are dragged by the force of events towards an unknown end or do we know where to go and we are directing or contributing to manage the process dynamics towards a desired course. Are we pulled or do we lead the way? Because today we live what was previously the future and the problems that are we now face could have been solved.

These questions reveal the effective need to direct and plan our actions in some way, since they have a change and transformation potential that can lead to a greater progress and well-being, and at the same time, an impairment in living and safety conditions.

When planning, we must assume that the environment in which it is carried out is a resistant environment that opposes to our will and that such opposition does not come from nature but from other human beings with different ideas, objectives, resources and power, who also think about the future and have the same or greater possibilities than us to lead the social process towards a course that differs from ours.

Transformation, configuration or administration of a territory implies a planning process that stipulates the criteria assumed as a foundation of the development process. Such development should tend to create the most favourable conditions to make good use of the available resources, whose social and economic potential will be given by the value of the resources, their natural and cultural conditions and by the institutional response (political-administrative) in relation to the management of those resources.

Moreover, we should acknowledge that Nature is a dynamic environment in equilibrium, whose natural processes react to or are a product of " permanent and continuous adjustments" of its own development or evolution process.

The interaction between Man/Society and Nature makes it possible to acknowledge, to learn, to develop and value each aspect of this interrelation and how they should adapt to construct and administrate a common territory.

We must focus on this "adaptation", since our current reality shows us that these areas, Man/Society and Nature are in constant conflict when the first does not value nor acknowledge in the second processes or phenomena of its own, because such processes threaten or diminish the "valuation" of the existent resources or simply regards these resources as reclaimable or unlimited.

These conflicts are the source of Risk. Risk is also explained by these two areas, since Risk is determined by the relation between Threat (external factor) and Vulnerability (internal factor)

From this perspective, the spatial dimension of Risk, that is to say of its location, distribution and origin we can recognise and characterise those spaces with a potential for or currently in conflict (vulnerable). Given that a conflict is the expression or revelation of a configuration or administration of the territory, which is inconsistent with the dynamics, and the processes of the natural environment, with the dynamics and the processes of the socio-economic development.

The assessment of this spatial dimension of Risk and the inherent threat and vulnerability potential that it bears, allows for the recognition of both natural and anthropic phenomena that can have an impact on the social system. On the other hand, the social organisation that occurs in any community has its own vulnerabilities, given by the legal, administrative, economic and cultural conditions

A spatial analysis under an integral perspective of the vulnerability of the territorial administration leads us to to analyse our development option. And if in said option we included what we call Risk Management, whose main pillar is sustained by the recognition and arrangement of the elements, resources and processes that configure, administrate and transform the territory.

The fact of adopting the inclusion of the spatial dimension of risk in our development policies, whether they are local, regional or national, make it possible for the man-developed social spaces to have the same characteristics of vulnerable or not vulnerable, thus determining if the transformation or configuration of the territory are subject to high or low probability for emergencies or disasters.

2 December,
Santiago, Chile.

A MANAGEMENT MODEL IN CIVIL PROTECTION FOR THE LOCAL LEVEL

THIRD STAGE UPPER MODULE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN CIVIL PROTECTION

The National Emergency Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior (ONEMI), the Chilean State's leading institution in planning and coordinating for emergency and disaster prevention and relief, aware that the local level is the first and basic link for an effective and efficient people, their property and environment oriented, integrated safety and protection management, started in 1994 a process to improve local capacities through permanent relationships between theoretical statements and concrete resources reality, starting from a hazard point of view as gravitating factor of sustainable growth, clearly expressed on people's life quality.

The process started with the strategic planning of a local Management Model to be lead and conducted by Municipalities, which are, in Chile, the political-administrative institution closest to people.

The 1995 period was devoted to the design of the corresponding methodologies, techniques and instruments for the Model's start. At the same time, a sensibilization and socialization of this instrument was started, including Regional, Provincial and Communal levels, the first of them being the most effective promotor and coordinator of the process, and the latter the final user of the Management Model.

In 1996, once the design stage had concluded, ONEMI started an experimental application of the model in 3 communes (Municipalities) of the country. Once the first stage was finished, and due to the promising results achieved, ONEMI decided in 1997 to prolong the experience to 13 additional communes in different regions ranging from Tarapacá in the far north down to Magallanes at the extreme south of the territory. Simultaneously, it was included in the Permanent Professional Training Program in Civil Protection and adapted to the use in formal education plans by designing a new School Security Plan.

LOCAL PLANNING

Briefly explained, the Local Management Model for Safety and Integral Protection of People, Goods and Environment ONEMI offers the Chilean communes, points toward the generation of communal plans based on a participative process and permanent risk management and administration, considering both Prevention and Preparedness, and, with special emphasis in Response to unavoidable disasters and emergencies, and afterwards, the assumption of Reconstruction stages with a foreseeing criterion.

Institutionally convinced that real and effective cooperation must exceed diffusion or transmission of mere orientations, the process considers the development of working platforms: Local Committees for joint management between local authorities, technical institutions, academic and scientific institutions and the organized community. Thus way, the most varied interests and capacities, up from the base, are available to achieve a common purpose: better safety and thus improvement of people's life quality.

Once the Local Committees for Protection and Safety are set, the Local Government sectorizes the commune and starts developing a detailed risk assessment work, based upon relations between specific hazards and vulnerabilities in the area, as well as resources available for the management and prioritized reduction of such hazards, intervening either hazards or vulnerability. This is the stage called Microzoning of Risks and Resources.

Here, community expresses its perception of hazards, thus providing substantial information for studies and research carried out by scientific and technical institutions and for the planning of local development by the Municipality. In other words, the Model points towards the incorporation of risk analysis into the Local Development Planning, focusing on real solutions by considering community perception and contribution.

Thus, planning of management of the detected hazards, according to available resources, also considers active participation of the organized community in its most varied expressions: Neighbormeetings (Juntas de vecinos), Sports Clubs, Business and Trade Chambers, etc.

The final product to obtain is an Integral Plan for Protection and Safety at Hazardous Situations, whose implementation is assumed in an integrated way. This Plan, under permanent actualization, must consider prevention, relief, preparedness, response and rebuilding projects and programs.

SUCCESSIVE STAGE IMPLEMENTATION

The Model is applicable in two successive phases, each one conformed by different specific stages:

First Phase involves 4 stages, namely diagnosis, analysis, prioritization of risks and resources as an informative base for further planning.

Second Phase is conformed by a first step consisting in the generation of a Coordinated Response Program, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, in order to achieve optimal attention actions and resource use. The second step of this Phase leads to the Integral Planning process.

The application of each one of these Phases of the Management Model takes about two year work. Once this period expires and the plan is ready, the Committee must continue coordinating actions to update the plan according to needs appearing during its implementation and meet and jump into action as soon as an emergency situation shows up, affording new experiences and lessons to be learned, which will allow improvement of further planning.

METHODOLOGICAL SUPPORT

For proper development of each stage, ONEMI designed methodologies, procedures and instruments to be used, first, by the local Government, and, on the other hand, by the Community itself, as well as by both simultaneously:

Diagnosis, Analysis and Priorization Methodologies; Planning Methodologies; Project Design Methodologies; Community Participation Techniques; Response Plans and Programs Elaboration Methodologies; Training and Exercising Techniques; Damage Evaluation and Analysis of Requirements Systems, from the local level, in order to support timely and efficient decision taking and response in emergency and disaster situations; Methodologies for Permanent Updating and Follow up of Plans, are, among others, the variety of tools that allow the concrete application of the Management Model designed by ONEMI.

TO CONFORM A GLOBAL NET

This Management Model is currently being performed on three ways:

- 1.- Direct experimental application by ONEMI in 16 communes.
- 2.- Joining the Model and its Methodologies with the Program of Professional Training of ONEMI's National Training Plan in Civil Protection, pointing towards regional, provincial and communal levels.
- 3.- Including the adapted Model and its corresponding Methodologies in the new School Safety Plan of ONEMI, launched nationwide in 1997 and currently at Training Stage.

These action courses have made it possible that over 60 communes in the country, by initiative of their own local authorities, are currently running the Model.

ONEMI's proposal has been enriched in each one of its steps with contributions of all participants, mainly communities, which, although not specialized, experiment a clear perception of their risks and hazards and are strongly in disposition to be actors of a multidisciplinary and effectively integral management, though not conceiving biased responsibilities for the management of the different types of hazards they face day after day and with evident capacity to be self-actors of their own development.

This way, the National Bureau of Emergency of the Ministry of the Interior, is conducting the consolidation of a Systematic National Management on Civil Protection.

Each step contributes to the support of a global action network, from which fundamental landmarks stand out: Planning for Steady Work, Cooperation as a Commitment factor, Analysis of the Concrete Reality, all pointing towards the determined goal of the national Civil Protection policy: make out of Chile a safer place where to live in the XXIst Century.