

Disasters and their Impacts on Public Health

MODULE I

Disaster

An event often occurring suddenly and unexpectedly,

Causing trauma to people and/or severe damage to the environment,

Exceeds or overwhelms the response capacity of the affected community.



KEY DEFINITIONS

Hazard: any *potential* threat to public health and safety

Emergency: any *actual* threat to public health and safety

Risk: the *consequences of exposure* to a hazard

Vulnerability: *determinants* of risk

Capacity: way the community copes and responds

Risk = Hazard x Vulnerability/Capacity



HAZARDS

Slow Onset:

Flood

Drought

Famine

Chemical Spill

Epidemic

Sudden Onset:

Earthquake

Cyclone

Flash Flood

Road Traffic Accident



5:12:52PM

Impact

Increased numbers of
deaths and injuries

Population
displacements

New cases of disease
and disability

Exacerbation and
increased numbers of
cases of psychological
and social behaviour
disorders

Possible food
shortages and
nutritional deficiencies

Disease from
environmental health
hazards

Damage to health
facilities and other
infrastructure

Diversion of
development
resources to
emergency relief

TRIGGERING EVENTS

NATURAL FORCES

Climatic / Geological

HUMAN ORIGIN

TECHNOLOGICAL

- Industrial accidents

**MASSIVE REPRESSION
OR TERRORISM**

- Massive destruction weapons
- Chemical or biological weapons
- Attacks on civilian population

**COMPLEX
EMERGENCY**

- Conflict / Civil war
- Displaced population
- Severe infrastructure losses
- Significant security problems

Vulnerable Populations

- Children and Youth
- Women
 - Pregnant
 - Lactating
 - Without spouse
- Elderly
- Disabled



Children's psychological and emotional needs

Often neglected following disasters, particularly when parents and other adults in their lives are having trouble coping with the event themselves.



Risks for Children

Physical victimization

Rape

Torture

Robbery

Exploitation

Child labor

Child trafficking / sexual trafficking

Child soldiering



PHASES OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- Preparedness
- Emergency response
- Recovery
- Prevention/ Mitigation



PREPAREDNESS

- Risk assessment and vulnerability analysis
- Information management
- Policy and planning
- Resource mobilization
- Coordination and partnership
- Community involvement
- Training and simulation



Emergency Response

- Notification
- Information management and communication
- Coordination
- Search and rescue
- Damage and need assessments
- Evacuation and sheltering
- Resource mobilization



RECOVERY

- Reestablish self-sufficiency
- Community planning
- Infrastructure rebuilding
- Health recovery
- Community sense of togetherness
- Hope for a better future
- Resilience





Prevention/ Mitigation

- Lessons learned
- Reassess preparedness
- Risk reduction and preparedness are sets of strategies and actions for local communities to prevent *hazards* developing into *emergencies* and *emergencies* into *disasters*